

## Green is good for business

Wednesday, 11 June 2008

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GREENVILLE -- Spartanburg-based QS/1, a division of the J M Smith Corporation, the fourth largest privately held company in South Carolina, turned green and got greener results.

An innovator in the pharmacy management software industry since it was founded in 1977, QS/1 teamed up with Cullen Pitts, AIA of McMillan Smith & Partners and mechanical engineer Wade Crow to embark on what Pitts called, "a green adventure" to create a new corporate headquarters.

The result was just as forward thinking in design and building management as QS/1's software solutions. The 120,000-square-foot building in downtown Spartanburg earned a LEED Silver rating from the U.S. Green Building Council in 2004, the first commercial new construction high-rise in South Carolina to be LEED-certified.

Outlining the journey from plans to project completion to profitability, Dan Gerst, a QS/1 marketing operations manager, together with Pitts and Crow, made a compelling PowerPoint presentation to a group of about 50 at the Carolina First Center in Greenville on Tuesday.

Pitts said that QS/1 management's goals for the new headquarters were to contribute to urban renewal as well as to provide a quality environment for employees while employing energy saving measures. As such, Crow detailed how the facility was designed with an energy-conserving building envelope and high-efficiency HVAC, lighting and plumbing systems.

The building's environmental impact was lessened beginning with the redeveloped site and the 20,000-gallon rain water collection system that supports irrigation, to the fountain at the entrance that provides protection in case of fire.

These measures came at a cost, which Gerst admitted were approximately 13%-14% higher than that of a standard building.

"Not many people want to pay money on the front end," Crow explained. But the payoff is in the results. Crow said that QS/1's energy use was 33% less than a comparable building and the payback is just 3-5 years, while Gerst pointed out that the payback for the entire structure is under 10 years.

Crow also noted that the carbon footprint for all utilities was drastically reduced. "Four hundred and sixty tons of carbon are avoided and 1,700 tons of carbon dioxide are avoided annually. It's astounding because it is not that big a building," he said.

QS/1 is going green from the outside in by implementing products and services designed to help their customers conserve resources and reduce waste according to Gerst. He said QS/1 is enjoying lower operating costs, stronger customer relations, enhanced brand value and increased revenue because of these measures.

John Tynan, manager for Upstate Forever's Clean Air and Climate Change project, who sponsored the presentation said, "Climate change is an inherently global problem and we are looking at local solutions. Companies that green themselves, their products and clients have a competitive advantage."

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