

Long Island Business NEWS

Where Business Gets Down to Business

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Going Green

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Greening of data centers

Two years ago, Future Tech Enterprise, Inc., an IT solutions provider in Holbrook, claimed to have installed the East Coast's first structurally secure, green data center, which it uses for both internal applications and hosting. According to Bob Venero, president of FTEI, the center, which uses iFortress technology, has saved the company 20 percent in energy costs.

Data centers are of particular concern to environmentalists because they consolidate a tremendous amount of power in one area, generating more carbon emissions per square foot than any other entity.

"The power it took to put a man on the moon in the 1960s required buildings to house all the equipment," said Jerry Lyons, chief executive of iFortress, which is based in West Paterson, N.J. "Now, you have more power in your laptop." According to Lyons, iFortress is currently being considered for LEED certification.

FTEI is a licensed integrator for iFortress, and, according to Venero, the company has three clients in Long Island – in the hosting, manufacturing and medical fields. FTEI calls iFortress "an impenetrable bunker that is resistant to natural disasters and human intervention." Able to withstand fire, floods, humidity and other perils, it is a modular, self-contained unit that can be scaled to any size. An airtight, insulated enclosure, it does not allow heat or cooling exchange, which keeps the air inside at a preset temperature. "The heat is isolated to the sealed area, which allows for much more efficient cooling," Venero said.

Additionally, the reflective interior panels reduce the need for bright lights during maintenance.

According to Venero, an iFortress data center will pay for itself in energy and insurance savings in three years.

Part of the green appeal, Venero said, is that the data center is portable. "If you build it for your office in Holbrook, and then you move to Hauppauge, you can just take it down, drive it over and set it back up," he said. "It's green from the start to the end of its lifecycle. There's no waste – you don't have to knock it down or try to sell it. It remains an asset of the corporation."

A call for green jobs

What jobs are needed to transform the United States into a green economy? This month, the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst released a report entitled "Job Opportunities for the Green Economy: A State-by-State Picture of Occupations that Gain from Green Investments," which takes a look at jobs in six categories: building retrofitting, mass transit, energy-efficient automobiles, wind power, solar power and cellulosic biomass fuels.

For instance, retrofitting buildings requires electricians, carpenters, construction equipment operators, roofers, building inspectors and others.

The report, which looks at the number employed in each occupation in 12 states, including New York, and how much they earn, concludes that projects to defeat global warming would increase demand for a wide range of jobs.

Gas prices aren't done climbing

Just how much have gas prices gone up? According to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, the

average price of a gallon of regular-grade gas for the week of June 9 was \$4.21 in downstate New York. That's up 30.2 percent from the average of \$3.23 a year earlier, and up 247.9 percent from the end of 2003, when regular gas averaged \$1.69 a gallon here. And prices are not done climbing, the Energy Information Administration said in its latest Short-Term Energy Outlook, which came out June 10. According to the national report, regular-grade gas prices averaged \$2.81 per gallon retail in 2007, and the average is projected to climb to \$3.79 for 2008 and \$3.92 for 2009.

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