

BY PAUL POMPEO

## H I R I N G

In keeping with the theme of the IESNA Centennial “Celebrating the Past...Imagining the Future,” the two previous “Careers & Hiring” columns in 2006 looked back and forward. The first, in January, painted the picture of the “perfect candidate” of the future. The second, in April, looked at how jobs have changed in our industry. This third and final part will examine a few hot markets in lighting and what career opportunities they may create.

Energy-efficiency. “Eighty percent of the buildings in the U.S. have lighting systems that are over 20 years old. Standard products will not meet new energy standards in most applications anymore,” says

in the completion of projects. In the coming years, systems integrators and commissioning experts will become a very popular and lucrative market segment.”

LEDs. LEDs have loomed on the horizon for many years; now it seems their time has come. “Retail, grocery, property management, healthcare and industrial settings—big facilities with big utility bills or companies with hundreds or thousands of locations—are primed for LED applications,” says Jim Campbell of GE Lighting.

As the applications for LEDs increase so do career opportunities. Says Muji Mujahid of Insight Lighting, “LED companies will be expanding fast and creating jobs.”

### **‘Lighting design firms will start to mushroom in medium-size cities,’ which should be good news for both designers and design firm principals**

Neil Schrimsher of Cooper Lighting. Veda Clark of Litecontrol adds, “with the greening of America, energy-efficient products/systems will be [a] hot segment for the next 10 years.”

Where will the jobs be? Lighting designer David Orgish observes that the emergence of highly sophisticated lighting control systems will require more commissioning of these systems at project closeout. “In addition, LEED certification commissioning agents and California’s Title 24 acceptance testers will play a more prominent role

Fred Oberkircher of Texas Christian University feels that much of the job growth will be on the technical side, as is the case with any evolving industry. “Solid state lighting will mostly impact technical positions—research, engineers, and applications positions filled by people with specific technical expertise.”

Engineering & Design. Good news for engineering and design professionals—most feel that the job market in lighting for technical professionals will be strong. “Those with the ability to develop high-end prod-

ucts and integrate new technology into innovative products will be in demand,” predicts Ray Zaccagnini of the Genlyte Group.

Mujahid projects that “lighting design firms will start to mushroom in medium-size cities,” which should be good news for both designers and design firm principals.

Denise Fong of Candela Lighting Design adds, “On the design side, we will continue to see demand for designers similar to what we have now, but there will be pressure to be more knowledgeable about how the market works, meet the client’s demands for meeting budgets and give them an edge over their competition with the quality of the design.”

Jim Benya, Benya Lighting Design, feels that “designers with daylighting and advanced calculation skills will be at a premium.”

International. To say lighting has truly become a global industry is no longer hyperbole. “The value of skilled and seasoned sales professionals cannot be overstated, particularly as opportunities continue to flourish in ‘hot’ geographic markets like China and the Middle East,” says Bill Sims of Color Kinetics. “There is greater need for geographically-dispersed sales personnel who understand the lighting industry.” TCU’s Oberkircher adds that “lighting practitioners and designers who are knowledgeable about Latin culture and language possess tremendous job potential.”

Wolfgang Egger of Zumtobel feels the globalization of lighting

will spark an increase in demand for operations and manufacturing professionals “We are increasingly dealing with components and products that are produced in other parts of the world. In these positions, people need to be open to and understanding of foreign cultures. The ability to speak another language is increasingly important.”

### **GOING STRONG**

Schrimsher and Campbell predict retail will be a growing “sub-market” in the years to come, creating job opportunities accordingly. In addition, as Baby Boomers age, healthcare applications will create opportunity on the product development side of the industry.

As for the big picture, most interviewed agree that the job market in the lighting field will be strong over the coming years. Says Color Kinetics’ Sims, “It’s an undeniably exciting time to be in the lighting business.” So don’t blink. You might miss another market and career opportunity opening up before your eyes.



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