

## Scaling Energy Services Using BuildingAdvice

# Hill York Case Study

by the Building Advisor™

### Customer profile:

#### Hill York

Founded: 1936

Headquarters: Ft.

Lauderdale, FL

CEO: Robert W. “Chip”

Lafferty

No. of Employees: 300

Website: [www.hillyork.com](http://www.hillyork.com)

In 2008, Hill York, Florida’s oldest and largest air conditioning contractor, implemented a new program, **hygreen** - Optimized & Sustained Building Solutions, under the leadership of Jeff Phillabaum, the company’s president. This move aggressively launched Hill York into the world of sustainability. They did not want to “green wash” the market, so building the right strategy, staffed with the right people, and incorporating best-in-class products and solutions were all critical to laying the foundation for success. Larry Clark, the director of corporate business development, was moved over to the new Performance Group to provide support in order to help achieve the company’s goals.

Under Clark’s guidance, Hill York is now a little over a year into their **hygreen** program, and despite the depressed economy, their sustainability business is thriving. As they continue to land new, interesting projects, they have added some outstanding employees and rounded out our program offering to their clients.

Like most contractors, their market is full of small to mid-sized buildings (under 200K sq. ft) that are in need of help in reducing their energy utility bills. The initial phase of the company’s strategy focused on larger institutions because of the economics of delivering complicated, engineering intensive services. Because of this, they had “ignored” the vast number of smaller buildings in their market.

That changed with the addition of BuildingAdvice™ to their service offering. BuildingAdvice enables Hill York to offer their small and mid-sized building customers energy-saving solutions that drive Service Agreement revenue growth and help to justify energy saving retrofit/replacement projects.

Given the long lead time in securing larger projects, they found that diversifying their efforts to the mid market hedges project risk.

Hill York put BuildingAdvice™ through a pretty rigorous evaluation process, having tested it over a 6 month period. Not only did they test the technology, the accuracy of the EnGen™ energy modeling software, and AirAdvice support, they also wanted to validate that they could deliver these services with far fewer engineering hours.



Their overall experience prompted them to move forward with the program.

The company's first test involved their own headquarters in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This is a single-story, 13,427 square foot building, originally built in the 1940s, that has been extensively remodeled over the years. The air conditioning system is predominantly water source heat pumps.

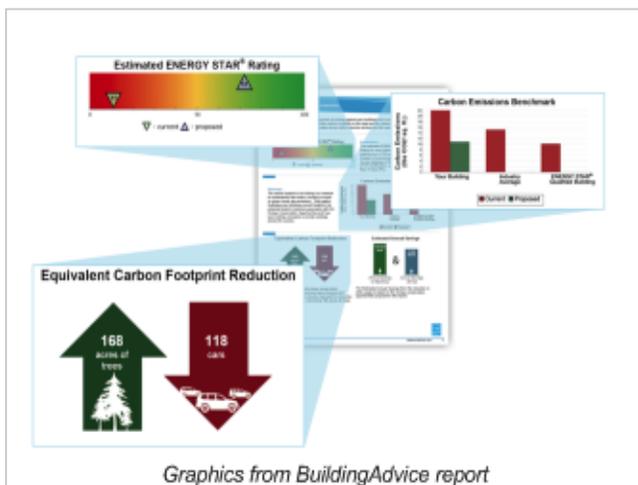
After collecting utility bills for the prior year and gathering some basic data about the building, its cooling schedules, and some information about the equipment, they placed BuildingAdvice wireless sensors throughout the building. The sensors measured temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide, and light levels and communicated back to a cellular gateway that was placed in the center of the building. "One of the nicest things about the system is that we didn't have to connect to our network or try



Wireless monitors from a BuildingAdvice kit

to obtain internet access. And we received hourly updates at the website so we could see what was going on. The whole setup process took less than an hour," explained Clark.

After about a week of collecting the sensor data, Clark and his team began inputting the utility data and the building survey data which, again, took less than an hour. Once completed, the model matched outdoor temperatures with the utility data for the one year period and calibrated an energy model that was reviewed. When they were comfortable with the model, they began to review the list of Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) that they felt were needed to lower energy costs. The sensors provide great clues regarding scheduling issues in the building. Often, someone always overrides systems and forgets to set them back. The sensors capture that and display data graphically.



Graphics from BuildingAdvice report

As they entered each ECM, the system prompted them for the price of implementing that solution. When the list was complete, the system automatically calculated the energy savings of each ECM and the attendant utility savings and then totaled it. It also automatically calculated the new Energy Star rating and carbon emissions savings based on the changes. After completing that process, the system automatically generated and emailed a 17-page color graphic report with carefully laid out financial justification for the proposal.

As a result of that assessment, and the company's intention to get the building LEED certified, they are designing an entirely new AC system.

Next, they did an assessment on a customer's retail store. As a result of that effort, they identified more than \$4,800 in annual potential energy cost avoidance at no cost to the owner.

These cost savings were achievable merely by resetting the unoccupied period temperature setpoint and reducing outside air ventilation rates to ASHRAE 62.1 levels (the building was being significantly over-ventilated). Delivering those kinds of savings at little cost to customers builds trust and positions Hill York for additional business.

"Initially we are targeting some of our most strategic clients for this service. We have completed several additional assessments and presently have one underway in a mid-sized medical arts facility which we just picked up as a service customer," Clark told AirAdvice.

"Success in the mid market is all about scale. The fact that we can use less costly resources to deliver large parts of the service scope and use our scarce, costly engineers to do the analysis solves our scale problem," continues Clark.

By reducing the amount of time that engineers need to allocate to each project to only 1-2 hours, the cost of delivering the service drops dramatically and enables them to engage with owners at a price point they've never seen before.

Not only does BuildingAdvice position Hill York for renewals by delivering a differentiated service, but they continue to prove that they are the trusted advisor and that they have been since 1936. It's all about service!

For more information about Hill York, visit [www.hillyork.com](http://www.hillyork.com)

### About AirAdvice and BuildingAdvice™

AirAdvice is a Portland, OR company that is an acknowledged leader in developing cutting edge technology and programs for improving buildings' energy efficiency and performance. The BuildingAdvice™ energy services program enables commercial HVAC professionals, energy consultants, and engineers to use automated benchmarks, assessments, and audits to deliver cost savings and greener buildings for their clients through energy efficiency.

[airadvice.com/solutions](http://airadvice.com/solutions)

**AirAdvice**  
707 SW Washington  
Suite 800  
Portland OR 97205

866.247.4800