

CREATING WIN-WIN SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY



IMT is a valuable strategic partner in COSE's drive to educate and engage local businesses and chambers of commerce on building efficiency.

IMT's expertise in collaborative landlord-tenant efficiency solutions makes it easier for the businesses we work with to align incentives, put our recommendations to work, and drive economic development by cutting utility costs.

**NICOLE STIKA, VICE PRESIDENT,
ENERGY SERVICES, GREATER
CLEVELAND PARTNERSHIP |
COUNCIL OF SMALLER
ENTERPRISES (COSE)**

EXPANDING MARKET AWARENESS OF AND DEMAND FOR EFFICIENCY

The Coffee House at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio, fuels local residents with homemade pastries and teas, but itself consumes a strong diet of electricity and natural gas, costing more than \$18,000 a year.

Energy is a top cost for small businesses, often ranking behind only labor and rent as a portion of annual expenses. However, building owners and tenants often face competing needs and priorities that stop them both from capturing the tangible financial, health, security, and productivity benefits that high-performance buildings deliver. This divide is especially cumbersome to small businesses, who occupy 94 percent of commercial buildings 50,000 square feet or less and over 25 percent of all commercial floor space in the U.S.

EMPOWERING COLLABORATION TO SAVE ENERGY

Through the Cleveland Energy-Aligned Leasing Program, IMT and the Council of Smaller Enterprises (COSE) [worked](#) with a network of real estate stakeholders including the City and County sustainability officials and the Cleveland 2030 District, to engage over 60 local building owners and small business tenants to create collaborative, replicable solutions that capture major savings through smarter leasing language, cost-effective best practices, and innovative technology.

For the Coffee House, an energy assessment identified 13 energy conservation initiatives that could reduce electricity consumption by 12 percent and natural gas consumption by 32 percent, saving almost \$3,000 on expenses each year with a simple payback of 2.9 years. Although the payback was short, the investment was still more than The Coffee House could pay up front. Negotiating a 10-year lease renewal, The Coffee Shop and Case Western tapped IMT and COSE to create a solid framework for more-informed and credible conversations where both parties work to reduce energy consumption and share the costs and benefits over time. The result? Scheduled early implementation of lighting retrofits and controls that payback in 1-5 years and show up to 20 percent energy savings, as well as recommendations on how to further grow savings.

A BLUEPRINT FOR LASTING CHANGE

IMT's work in Cleveland produced energy-saving blueprints for businesses across the U.S. to cut energy costs in rented commercial space. Putting this into action, IMT and COSE have since expanded their efforts, named the [Small Business Energy Initiative](#), to Traverse City, Mich. and Chapel Hill, N.C., working with their respective chambers of commerce to provide free technical assistance to save energy and put money back in landlords' and tenants' pockets. **Learn more at imt.org/real-estate-and-finance.**



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