

Illumitex Lights up Microsoft



Illumitex's attractive and sophisticated Stratus LED lights are the talk of the design community in Seattle, according to an industry insider.

Custom Stratus fixtures offer the right photosynthetic light in a sleek and modern aesthetic that lights up three lush and vibrant living walls in a recently redesigned building on Microsoft's Redmond, Washington, campus.

Envisioned by architecture firm Zimmer Gunsul Frasca, the grow walls are now the centerpiece of the redeveloped building's reception area. ZGF, which specializes in sustainable design, turned to Denise Fong, principal at Candela Lighting Design, who worked with Lighting Group Northwest to suss out the perfect lighting for the walls, which were designed by Green Over Grey.

Case study job specifics

Customer: Microsoft

Sector: Architectural

Location: Redmond, Washington

Solution: Custom Stratus fixtures

Result: Lush and thriving grow walls

Case Study ■ Illumitex

Just the right light for plants and humans



Lighting grow walls can be tricky, says Fong. And this project, which included a massive three-story living wall, posed a particular challenge. Even though a skylight in the space offered some illumination, careful analysis indicated that additional light would be required to keep the plants healthy and thriving. “We knew we’d have to provide a supplemental light source,” she says.

Fong knew she didn’t want to use huge, unattractive and energy-inefficient metal halide lamps for this project. “Giant lights would overpower the space,” she says. She needed smaller-form-factor lights that were also energy-efficient.

Fong was familiar with Illumitex’s groundbreaking work in the plant-growth lighting industry, so she reached out. She needed light fixtures with a cutting-edge, modern appearance that provided plant-specific light. Illumitex rose to the challenge, designing custom mountings for our Stratus High Bay, and adding LEDs that give plants the specific light they need to flourish while also making the plants look attractive

to the human eye.

The resulting fixtures offer two mounts, a flexible arm and a U-mount, to address various architectural needs in the space. The custom Stratus fixtures utilize Illumitex’s X5 LED array, which addresses both plant and human needs.

The lights now give life to more than 2,000 plants covering 509 square feet. “The architect said the form factor was very cool and was a perfect fit for the overall aesthetic,” says Fong. “These lights are perfect for this space — they’re just great.”

The walls — featuring 38 species of plants — are productive, too, according to Fong. “They plucked a couple pineapples from the wall recently,” she says. What a tasty employee perk — lunch break takes on a new meaning when employees can select fruits and veggies from a grow wall right in the office!