



Three Beans Cafe Group

Solar My Business: case study

“If you’re an energy-hungry business, solar would be the best investment you’ll ever make.”

Matt Howe, Co-Owner, Three Beans Cafe Group

Three Beans Cafe Group has 25 cafés across Sydney and Brisbane. Co-owners and brothers, Matt and James Howe, run the business from their head office and commercial kitchen in Brookvale, which employs 15 people and operates five days a week. They source organic foods and products that make a difference not only to the taste but also to the environment.

Their head office consumes a significant amount of power with its ovens, coolroom, mixers and dishwashers so in 2015 the brothers decided to go solar.

Matt Howe explains, “Our energy bills were expensive, we tried different ways of saving energy. None of that worked. So we spoke to David from Solarpro.”

Which solar system did you choose and who installed it?

Working with Solarpro, Three Beans Cafe Group chose a 40kW system comprising 152 panels covering all available roof space. Included were two SolarEdge 17kW inverters, individual panel optimisers and a SolarEdge consumption monitor. Matt recommends Solarpro, commenting: “The panels were installed over three days plus half-a-day for the inverters. It was all pretty seamless. There was no disruption to our business”.

What was the cost and how did you pay for it?

The total system cost \$70,000 incl GST but after the \$32,000 STC rebate was applied, the final cost to the business was just \$38,000 which was paid for from cash reserves. Matt Howe comments, “100% return over two-and-a-half years. Where else can you get that?”

Cost of solar installation after STC ¹ rebate	\$38,000 ex GST
Annual electricity cost before solar	\$33,600
Annual electricity cost after solar	\$18,720
Payback period	2.5 years

1. Systems up to 100KW are eligible for rebates called small scale generation certificates (STCs)

Key benefits

<p>C0² emissions</p> <p>43 tonnes saved</p> <p>per annum</p>	<p>Car kilometres</p> <p>251k kms saved</p> <p>per annum</p>	<p>Trees</p> <p>646 trees planted</p> <p>per annum</p>	<p>Electricity bill</p> <p>\$14.9k power savings</p> <p>per annum</p>
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