

Case study



Soar Printing

Embracing environmental management has helped Auckland company, Soar Printing achieve cost savings of over \$150,000 per year, attract new customers and further improve staff morale. Enviro-Mark®NZ Programme Manager, Charlie Bartlett talked to Soar Printing Marketing Manager Craig Brown about the improvements.

Why did Soar Printing decide to focus on its environmental management?

Soar Printing has always been at the forefront of technology and service improvements in printing. Five years ago key staff were considering the future challenges the organisation might face and we identified the need to improve our environmental performance. I think many companies want to be seen to be doing the right thing, but we wanted to bring about genuine improvements and were excited by the possibilities.

So how did you go about that?

We were introduced to the Enviro-Mark programme. We could see how the five steps and the tools would guide our programme. Our environmental approach quickly became a big part of our business and continues to drive our culture today.



Soar Printing Marketing Manager Craig Brown

Enviro-Mark®NZ Diamond: a complete and effective environmental management system, that also meets the technical requirements of ISO 14001:2004

Enviro-Mark Diamond certification means that an organisation:

- Periodically has top management review and update its environmental systems and performance;
- Has an internal EMS audit programme in operation;
- Has implemented operational procedures to control activities that could have an impact on the environment;
- Monitors and measures the environmental effects of its activities;
- Communicates internally and externally;
- Has developed, implemented and tested an environmental emergency plan;
- Has formalised the roles and responsibilities for people working for and on behalf of the organisation;
- Has set objectives and targets for driving continual improvement and has programmes detailed to meet those targets;
- Has identified and evaluated the significant environmental aspects and impacts of its activities, products and services;
- Has produced an environmental policy statement;
- Is fully compliant with New Zealand's most common and widely applicable health and safety and environmental legislation.

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You have achieved Diamond certification. Tell us about some of your improvements.

We track everything from water use, power, fuel, consumables and much more. We align ourselves with like-minded suppliers where possible and make sure the products supplied to us are as environmentally friendly as possible. Our recycling plan is important. We have reduced our waste to landfill from 90% to 10%, and achieve rubbish savings of up to \$1000 a week. The most exciting thing is we now get money back for our recycled rubbish. So finding solutions saves on tip and collection fees but actually being paid for our effective handling of waste is a huge bonus. All up, we are saving more than \$150,000 per year, mostly through waste management and energy savings.

Any other benefits apart from cost savings?

It has opened doors to new customers. Companies are very interested in this kind of approach and often the conversations take you away from selling a service or product. It helps build understanding and relationships, and makes selling the service or product easier. We can show the customer how we can assist them to get the right message to their audience. Smart companies can get some real mileage by taking the lead in this area. Internally, our environmental programme has really united the team. We take pride in our environmental performance and look forward to each month's results.

What are the environmental challenges of choosing and operating printing presses?

We look at the lifecycle of printing technology: for example, how it was made, power consumption and any harmful chemicals it will use, and what will happen at the end of its life. We have just purchased the most advanced printing technology, the Anicolor press. We can save customers up to 390 sheets of paper waste to make ready each job. As well as being good for the environment, this advanced offset press is saving our customers a fortune. The best part is the Anicolor uses considerably less paper, ink, power and consumables. Our customers feel good about placing their print business with Soar Printing because jointly we are helping the environment and they are saving money by doing so.

What about inks and paper?

We use soya and vegetable based inks. Two years ago we became certified for FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification schemes) which means our customers are assured the paper we use is from sustainable resources and traceable right back to the forest it originated from.

What challenges to implementing an EMS have you encountered along the way?

Initially there was a lot of hard work and we needed to change the thinking of our staff and to a degree our suppliers. But we had commitment from management and resources were made available. As we obtained certification for each level it gave the company greater drive to achieve the next target. Now we have an induction book that tells new employees what is expected of them in their roles, and it also gets buy-in to the environmental programme, health and safety and so on.

What has been the key to your success?

Communication and getting buy-in from all parties, starting from the top. Without the financial commitment and support it would not have gone anywhere. Sheer drive and determination kept us on track initially and as benefits accrued our staff could see this was well worth getting in behind. Things happen automatically now but we don't get complacent, we are always looking for new ways.

For further information:

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