

Case study – Bright Print Group



Bright Print Group: a lean, green printing machine

The directors of the Bright Print Group have ink in their blood. Four generations of Brights have spent their working lives around printing presses, leaving the current custodians of the business, including Debbie Burgess, with a proud heritage they want to protect.

Burgess' great-grandfather started in the printing industry as a typesetter in the early 1900s. By 1918 he had saved enough to buy a small newspaper in Taree, *The Manning River Times*. Forty years later he sold his publishing company to a young Rupert Murdoch. Burgess' grandfather and father also started as typesetters before helping to build what the company has become today.

'After such a long family commitment to printing, where our forefathers have always been successful, we want to preserve their legacy,' says Burgess.

'What is relevant for our tenure is sustainability – financial, environmental, and social. Awareness of how a business is intertwined with its physical environment is much more important now than in the past. So we are mindful of our place in the industry and we feel very strongly about making sure we succeed on all levels.'

Bright Print Group, based in Sydney, employs about 100 people in providing print and related services to a mix of clients across Australia. ▶

In brief

Taking a more sustainable approach to business has helped Bright Print Group reduce its impact on the environment; save money on water, electricity and waste charges; streamline its business systems; tender for work with clients who value green principles; generate new marketing opportunities; and learn more from like-minded organisations.

Bright Print Group is proud of its achievements which include:

- reducing water use by 70 per cent since 2007 – a saving of \$15,000
- reducing overall electricity usage by 7.5 per cent – with a corresponding cut in greenhouse gas emissions
- recycling 98 per cent of all waste
- upgrading air-conditioning and installing LED lighting throughout its plant, saving 150,000 kilowatt hours or almost \$36,000 per year
- installing a water recirculation unit on its computer-to-plate processor – saving 92 per cent of water used in this process, or about \$1000 per quarter.



- ▶ Bright Print Group identified best practice sustainability as a goal before the idea became fashionable. The company had already achieved ISO 14001 – an environmental management standard that helps organisations minimise their impact on the environment. However, the company wanted to take a more holistic view of its sustainability performance, ensure its approach was as robust as possible, and measure itself against others.

Bright Print Group joined the Sustainability Advantage Program in January 2009. The company worked with environmental experts to investigate its existing operations and develop a plan to adopt more sustainable practices.

‘Sustainability Advantage played a big part in ensuring transparency and in adopting ideas that could enhance what we already had in place,’ Burgess says.

‘We were aware of sound environmental practices. Sustainability Advantage helped us to refine our operations and make sure we had plugged any gaps, especially with our resource usage and carbon emissions.’

Bright Print Group commissioned an independent energy and greenhouse gas emissions audit to provide a benchmark for reducing carbon emissions. The audit covered all aspects of the business, including equipment; utilities; employee services; ground transport; and other services such as couriers, postage, advertising and cleaning.

The company has saved 75 mega watt hours per year by taking practical steps such as replacing all fluorescent tubes, turning off halogen downlights during the day, using zone lighting, replacing mercury vapour high intensity discharge lights with fluoro lights and installing timer devices on all hot water units.

Historically, the printing industry has used large amounts of volatile chemicals, water and electricity and generated considerable waste.

Today, Bright Print Group uses soy-based inks; recommends recycled paper stocks; installs computer-to-plate technology; uses water recirculation units; eliminates toxic chemicals; uses alcohol-free printing presses; selects energy-efficient machinery and computer devices; avoids excess packaging and disposable products; and recycles printing plates, paper, cardboard, plastics, ink, toner cartridges, bottles, cans, food containers, printers’ rags, and even computer parts and mobile phones.

‘When we started the environmental push we looked closely at everything coming into the factory and what we were sending out,’ says Burgess. ‘It was clear we needed to reduce our waste to landfill. Through better purchasing, returning surplus items to suppliers, and separating our waste, we went from four collections of a 1.5 cubic metre waste bin per week to one per fortnight.’

‘We never expected such a reduction. But we look back in hindsight and see that it was so obvious. We wonder why it took us so long.’

Your next step

To find out how your business can join the Sustainability Advantage Program, contact the team:

Email sustainbus@environment.nsw.gov.au

Call 02 8837 6000

Visit environment.nsw.gov.au/sustainbus/sustainabilityadvantage.htm