



Production Manager Adrian Kennedy with the rain water tank which helps reduce their tap water usage.

PRINTGRAPHICS Printgreen

A Mount Waverley-based printer has cut its landfill waste by 90 per cent over just three years through a range of recycling and efficiency measures.

Printgraphics – a company that specialises in full-colour promotional material, magazines, catalogues, brochures, posters and annual reports – has made such a dramatic impact on landfill waste that it has been able to replace its industrial-sized skip with standard household wheelie bins.

“Four years ago we used to fill a four-cubic metre bin three times per week. We analysed the contents and looked for ways to divert those waste streams through an intensive recycling program,” says Ray Keen, Managing Director.

Waste reduction was all the more challenging at this time because production shot up by 23 per cent after a new printing press was installed, which increased the amount of printed sheets per year. The plan was extremely effective: compared with the 2004-2005 financial year, when Printgraphics contributed an estimated

428,000 litres to landfill, the yearly output has dropped to just over 31,000 litres – a reduction of more than 90 per cent, saving more than \$5,000 in waste removal costs every year. “Our staff members are on board because they were involved in developing our systems for separating waste and have taken ownership. They make sure it happens,” says Ray. →



ACHIEVING BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

Gold Club Members are businesses that have achieved measurable reductions in at least one resource area of water, waste or energy, and are working towards incorporating environmental sustainability into all business operations.

HOW PRINTGRAPHICS IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

90 PER CENT REDUCTION IN LANDFILL WASTE ACHIEVED BY RECYCLING:

- cloths used to clean printing press rollers
- wooden pallets
- old offset blankets to make thong footwear
- all plastics, including shrink wrap and pallet strapping
- empty steel ink cans (residual ink reclaimed and used as furnace fuel)
- aluminium printing plates.

30 PER CENT REDUCTION IN ENERGY USE RELATIVE TO COPIES PRINTED ACHIEVED BY:

- upgrading office computers to energy-saving models
- installing capacitors in factory to reduce peak demand from grid
- avoiding unnecessary air heating/cooling.

30 PER CENT REDUCTION IN TAP WATER CONSUMPTION REDUCED BY:

- bringing pre-plate process in-house, using state-of-the-art water-saving machines and recycling water
- harvesting rainwater for use in production
- adjusting the float level in the toilet systems.

GREEN CREDENTIALS AND INITIATIVES

- Environmental Award 2007, Victorian Printing Industry Craftsmanship Awards
- ISO14001 (Environmental Management System) accreditation
- Forestry Stewardship Council Chain of Custody accreditation
- Greenfleet member
- Tree Planting Project (the Ross House Association) joined 2008: 1500 trees planted in Mount Macedon area to help link national parks to create corridors for wildlife.

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Grow Me The Money is a joint initiative of the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI), Environmental Protection Authority (EPA Victoria), and the State Government of Victoria.



Printgraphics has also made a sizable dent in paper waste. Unusable off-cuts are an inevitable by-product of commercial printing because each finished item is trimmed. Ray believes the single most effective strategy for reducing paper waste is careful planning to match the paper to the job.

"There is always a compromise between ensuring that an adequate margin is left around the printed area to allow for ink 'bleeding', and avoiding paper waste," Ray explains. "Over time, we have fine-tuned our methods to minimise wastage. We found that we could source ideally sized paper from overseas. We formalised our written procedures to ensure that our purchasing department consistently orders the correct paper sheet sizes."

Over the first year of implementing paper-saving measures, Printgraphics reduced the volume of paper waste per number of sheets printed by an estimated 28 per cent. This enabled paper purchasing to be cut by approximately ten tonnes, at an annual cost saving of over \$700, despite an increase in job turnover.

Installation of a water recycling unit cut water consumption per printing plate from 11 litres to 200 millilitres, with an estimated annual saving of 200,000 litres. Whenever possible, the printing press and plate makers run entirely on rainwater harvested from the printery roof. Overall water use was reduced by 30 per cent in the 2007-08 financial year. Electricity consumption per million pages printed was also cut by 30 per cent between 2004 and 2007.

Ray describes staff attitudes to environmental responsibility as "very positive" across the whole of the business. "We've found that we have a lot more 'greenies' in the place than we thought!" ■

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Printgraphics staff taking part in the Tree Planting Project which they hope to do annually.



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Grow Me The Money is a free program for Victorian small- to medium-sized businesses to help them to reduce their impact on the environment and save money doing it.

We guide participating businesses through the process of measuring and reducing their energy use, water consumption and waste output.

For more information on how we can help your business, visit www.growmethemoney.com.au