

## Case Study - Seacourt Limited

### Company Background

Seacourt Ltd is a leading environmental design and sheet fed printer based in Oxford. It was founded in 1946 and provides design together with colour print services to a broad range of clients including many blue chip companies and government agencies. The company has 21 staff, many of whom have been with the company for over a decade.

Seacourt has operated from its current site for over 30 years. The 800m<sup>2</sup> premises are located in an industrial business park and have undergone significant changes during this time, including a complete replacement of the former building.

Seacourt provides design and printing services to a broad range of customers across the UK. It produces short-run leaflets and letterheads, high-volume product or event brochures, catalogues and booklets. It believes that despite a recent decline in demand for printing services and strong competition, its firm position on environmental issues has played a key role in maintaining a profitable business.

### Sustainability Initiatives

Seacourt recognised fairly early on in its environmental programme that it is inevitable that its operations will always have some environmental impact and that its job should be to minimise this impact wherever possible.

Seacourt's Mission statement is explicit in its commitment to the environment:















*"To provide the highest quality printed material, work to the most stringent environmental standards and to reduce both our and our client's footprint on the planet. We believe it is imperative for all businesses to take responsibility for the environment – to make a positive difference."*

### Contribution to a sustainable economy

Seacourt has been a trusted employer in Oxford since 1946. The dedication of the company to its staff is manifest by the low staff turnover and long service of many of its staff. It is committed to running a profitable business whilst being leaders in environmental management and this leadership position has supported the business during downturns in the printing industry.

Its shift to waterless printing in 1997 has also supported the continued profitability of the company.

### Summary of Key Achievements

- Leadership position on environmental issues has secured new print contracts in a tough market for printers 
- Higher print quality by changing to waterless offset 
- Reduced emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) by 98% through shift to waterless offset printing processes  
- Further reduction of VOC's through the use of vegetable-oil based inks  
- Water consumption reduced from 400m<sup>3</sup> in 2003 to 150m<sup>3</sup> in 2004  
- 400 saplings planted in 2004 in Scotland and Cotswolds by Future Forests intended to offset Seacourt's carbon dioxide emissions 
- Electricity sourced from renewable sources through Ecotricity 
- First printer to achieve the Biodiversity Benchmark Award with the Wildlife Trust  
- General waste reduced from 312 bins in 2003 to 208 bins in 2004  

#### KEY



Seacourt's premises



Seacourt's waterless press

### Enhancing environmental quality

Seacourt's environmental commitment was initially customer driven in the mid 1990s. It had a strong desire to manage the environment properly and after consultations with the British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF), it was decided to achieve certification to BS EN ISO14001. The certification process required the company to retain detailed records on its environmental performance, particularly on waste streams.

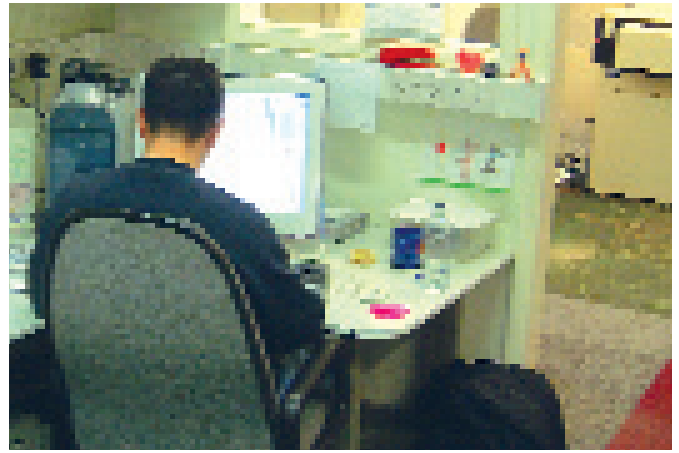
Once Seacourt had achieved certification to ISO14001, it then decided to go one step further and achieve EMAS accreditation. Seacourt monitors environmental performance across the business with defined key performance metrics for energy consumption, water consumption, business mileage and waste amongst others. Seacourt is audited annually by BM Trada to ensure continued compliance to EMAS.

In 1997, Seacourt decided to change its printing process to waterless offset. This means it no longer needs to use alcohol in the printing process and consequently its emissions of volatile organic compounds\* (VOCs) has been reduced by 98%.

The shift to waterless offset also means that Seacourt no longer need to use any water in the printing process unlike offset lithography, which requires a considerable amount of this finite resource.

In order to continue the organisations' drive to reduce its environmental impact, Seacourt changed its sales representatives' cars to LPG in 2002.

Seacourt is a member of the Waterless Printing Association, the Corporate Environmental Responsibility Group, the Oxfordshire Business Environmental Group, the Environmental Industries Commission and has been credited as CarbonNeutral® by Future Forests.



Mac operator at work in the studio

Since 1998, Seacourt has issued questionnaires to all suppliers requiring details of their environmental policy.

### Improving the Social Wellbeing of Stakeholders

Seacourt has an active programme to generate awareness of good environmental practice. Since 2000, it has held 'The Seacourt Seminar' as part of this programme. The numbers of people attending the seminar has steadily increased from 14 in 2000 to over 100 people in 2004. Eminent speakers are invited to present current views on environmental issues particularly within the printing sector. The 2004 event was held at the Houses of Parliament and speakers included Rt. Hon. Micheal Meacher and Prof. Norman Myers.

Silver from waste printing film is recycled by Seacourt's waste contractor and generates approximately £400 per year for the company. This is donated to the Wolvercote Watch Group (part of the Wildlife Trust).

One of Seacourt's longer standing members of staff, was recently sponsored by Seacourt to attend the Oxfordshire Common Purpose programme. This is an initiative that introduces senior individuals from business to many aspects of the local community, such as healthcare, crime, education and the arts. The programme enables companies to better understand the interrelationships between their own businesses and their community.

Finally, Seacourt plays an important role in supporting local sports in the community. It currently supports the Rover Oxford Hockey Club by covering all their printing and admin costs.

\* VOCs contribute to the formation of ozone and when mixed with nitrogen oxides cause smog which can contribute to asthma.

### Company Contact

Roy Williams, Seacourt Ltd, Pony Road,  
Horspath Road Industrial Estate, Cowley, Oxfordshire, OX4 2SE  
T: 01865 770140 F: 01865 747347 E: roywilliams@seacourt.net

Awards supported by:

