

## Case Study - The Kent Art Printers Ltd

### Company Background

Kent Art Printers (KAP) has been providing quality design and print services since 1934. In 1990, it moved to an environmentally sensitive site near an aquifer in Chatham and decided to look at some of the greener production options available. One of these was the developing technique of lithographic printing without the use of Isopropyl Alcohol (IPA) in the production process.

In 2002, KAP adopted a mission statement that incorporates green principles, recognising that its activities have an impact on the local and global environment and committing to minimise any detrimental effects that its processes may cause. The company's environmental commitment is to reduce, reuse and recycle, through actively looking at reducing the environmental and social impacts of its operations.

### Sustainability Initiatives

KAP has been active in implementing environmental initiatives for many years, moving away from traditional IPA printing in 1990 to non-Isopropyl Alcohol based printing, reducing the amount of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) released to the atmosphere. Digital print, e-delivered products and services are also offered by KAP's design studio, which enable cost effective, "zero waste" short run and print on demand facilities.

More recently KAP has implemented a wide ranging waste segregation and recycling scheme, together with a focus on waste reduction at source using advanced closed loop colour controls on the press. The company's sustainable initiatives have been recognised most recently by the awarding of two Business in the Community (BITC) Big Tick Awards, relating to its work to reduce environmental impact of its operation and its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) work.

### Contribution to a Sustainable Economy

KAP has used the success of previous awards as a marketing tool, the benefits on a purely financial level of adopting sustainable approaches are being seen at KAP. In the year to date, it now sees 28% of its currently active accounts having come to them because of CSR/environmental issues.

Staff are encouraged to participate in seminars and conferences relevant to sustainable issues such as South East Waste Forum and are regularly briefed in KAP's latest work, techniques, awards etc through a number of methods. Increased staff awareness enables KAP to best serve its clients and deal with suppliers.

### Summary of Key Achievements

- Since 1990 KAP has developed its expertise in "alcohol-free" lithographic printing which does not require the addition of IPA and therefore prevents the release of around two tonnes of airborne solvents per annum



- Waste reduction and recycling programme resulted in a 35% reduction by volume to landfill in the period 2002 to 2003 with a further 35% reduction between 2003 and 2004



- Reduced water consumption by 25%, equivalent to 250,000 litres through the implementation of an enhanced water saving and maintenance programme



- Active member of the local community providing work placements, awards sponsorships, sharing of best practices with others and support of charitable organisations through donations of company time, resources and funds



- Marketing of KAP's awards and commendations in order to derive business benefits whilst also showing its existing clients, potential clients and suppliers the benefits of printing in a sustainable manner



- Development of an Environmental Management System



#### KEY



ENVIRONMENTAL  
BENEFITS



BUSINESS  
BENEFITS



ECONOMIC  
BENEFITS



SOCIAL  
BENEFITS



Digital print, e-delivered products and services offered by the design studio enable cost effective, "zero waste" short run and print on demand facilities



KAP has identified 40 different waste streams which it manages through segregation, recycling and reducing volume of waste to landfill by over 60% in two years

## Enhancing Environmental Quality

KAP has implemented a wide ranging waste segregation and recycling scheme, with 40 different waste streams identified. By segregating and recycling and improving staff awareness, KAP has been able to reduce the volume of its waste going to landfill by 35% in 2003 and a further 35% reduction during 2004. This saving is equivalent to some 93 m<sup>3</sup> of waste, a saving of approximately £600 per annum from disposal costs.

KAP has reduced the actual volume of waste produced by its operation by investing in new technologies such as closed loop colour control, which reduces colour variation and enhances consistency. This results in better quality and reduced waste and power consumption. Jobs are also grouped depending on ink/coating requirements, reducing “wash up” cycles and improving efficiency.

By adopting “alcohol-free” lithographic printing since 1990, KAP has prevented the release of some two tonnes a year of airborne VOCs to the atmosphere. This helps minimise environmental impact of its operation and significantly improves the working conditions in the print room.

KAP is proactive in encouraging its customers to consider the different options available to them for its printing to help reduce environmental impact. KAP’s softly-softly approach of listening to its customers’ requirements and having staff knowledgeable in the different products and related environmental considerations, means that customers are becoming more aware and the use of recycled papers and degradable laminates have both increased.

KAP is leading by example in the use of recycled papers - at the latest re-print of KAP’s stationery, a 100% recycled paper was used. By encouraging the use of recycled products, KAP hope to “close the loop” – the recycling process is not complete until recycled products are used.

Vegetable-oil based inks are used for all of its work, which has enhanced sustainability when compared to using inks from a finite mineral oil base.

KAP reviewed its energy consumption to make more efficient use of its energy needs, with studio computers automatically switching off overnight once backed up, and all office computers backing up during the day enabling them to be shut down overnight. KAP has also switched its power supplier to Ecotricity, a company committed to developing wind power.

KAP implemented an enhanced water saving and maintenance programme, for example placing “hippo” bags in toilet cisterns, has seen its water consumption drop by 25%, a saving of £400.

## Improving the Social Wellbeing of Stakeholders

KAP is an active member of the community, supporting a number of charities through a combination of corporate donations and/or fundraising in company time. KAP also donate company time to help run a local charity payroll scheme and have also donated its printing services and goods, such as brochures and leaflets to organisations.

KAP’s involvement with the community includes working with schools and colleges with the sponsorship of an award for graphic design students at the Kent Institute of Art in 2003 and the offering of work experience placements. KAP typically offer seven weeks to local schools for work experience. Through its links with a French lycée in Poitiers, KAP has provided a seven week work placement for a trilingual student for the past four years. KAP also support a local school by having an interactive “hands on” design and print session for groups of 20 children.

KAP is very proactive in its desire to share best practice with others, speaking at events such as Kent Green Buyer’s Club, all to promote sustainability as a key issue in a company’s future success.

KAP is an active member of Enviroprint, a group of colleagues from other print companies in the south who engage in sharing best practices.

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Staff are encouraged to participate in seminars and conferences relevant to sustainable issues such as South East Waste Forum, and are regularly briefed on KAP’s latest work, techniques, awards etc. The increased awareness of the company’s staff enables them to best serve its clients and deal with suppliers.

## Company Contact

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