

Case study – Canon



The corporate philosophy that sustains one of the world's great brands

Many global companies believe that in pursuing profits for shareholders they also have a duty to be good corporate citizens. For Canon, the answer is *kyosei* – a business philosophy that promotes the idea of living and working together for the common good.

As a management system, *kyosei* gives all Canon product divisions the goal of achieving outstanding performance across all areas of sustainability. The divisions are scored against each other, which means environmental awareness is built into the company.

Canon believes this spirit of co-operation and competition has been integral to the company's rise to become one of the world's most respected, innovative and successful manufacturers of technology.

For years, Canon has been working to reduce the impact its products have on the environment. The company claims that its latest large multi-function devices use half the energy of competitors' machines and every new version of the firm's consumer products is smaller, lighter and more energy-efficient than the model it replaces.

Canon Australia joined the Sustainability Advantage Program in 2009. Manager of Quality, Safety and Environment, Janet Leslie, says 'Canon had done some basic carbon audits and was looking for more rigour to devise a resource reduction plan. ►

In brief

Established in 1978 as a wholly-owned subsidiary of the US\$45 billion Canon Inc, Canon Australia is headquartered in North Ryde, Sydney, and employs more than 1100 people across Australia.

Canon believes companies should bear the responsibility for the environmental impacts of their business activities. The company strives to enhance its brand value through community involvement, employee engagement, sustainability and respect for the environment. For example, Canon Australia has been a strong advocate of a national e-waste recycling scheme.

Canon Australia joined the Sustainability Advantage Program in March 2009 and has since achieved the following:

- reduced Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions in Oceania by 18 per cent
- reduced waste to landfill by 13 per cent
- reduced electricity usage by nine per cent
- increased ink and toner cartridge collection by 10 per cent.



- 'We wanted to reduce our carbon emissions,' says Leslie. 'We used the Sustainability Advantage methodology to put together our carbon strategy. We formed a small team, identified potential ways to reduce our emissions, and then did a McKinsey cost of abatement curve to identify our biggest opportunities.'

'As a sales and marketing company in Australia it wasn't surprising that the biggest opportunities to reduce emissions were within our own buildings. We moved all our state offices into smaller, more energy-efficient premises, and we are looking at options to improve the energy efficiency of our head office at North Ryde.'

Canon also invested in a carbon monitoring tool. Information from the company's electricity meters is fed directly into the tool so each business unit can monitor power usage. This allows them to recognise ways to reduce their carbon emissions.

'Canon is committed to reducing its environmental impacts at every stage of our products' lifecycle – from sourcing raw materials and technological innovation at a global level to efficiently managing our local facilities and supporting national product stewardship programs,' says Leslie.

In Australia, Canon has recycling programs at all its sites. Products and parts returned to Canon are reused, refurbished or recycled. Canon has also been involved in industry and government programs to establish national schemes to collect and dispose of e-waste.

'This is a big deal for us,' says Leslie, 'because it is one area where we can have a huge impact. Since we sell consumer products we have always encouraged collective industry schemes.'

For example, Canon Australia is a founding partner of the Cartridges for Planet Ark Program which

collects toner and ink cartridges, toner bottles and other consumables from offices and retail outlets to divert them from landfill.

'We wanted to do something similar with printers, computers and other hardware,' says Leslie. 'After lobbying for more than a decade to get legislation for e-waste, laws have just been passed and we are now working with industry to establish a national e-waste collection program. These products are a valuable resource and we should not be sending them to landfill.'

Canon has an enviable reputation to protect. *Forbes Magazine* named Canon one of the *Ten Companies That Are Genuinely Green* in 2011. Canon was also recognised among Australia's most innovative organisations, winning two Australian Business Awards in 2011 for uniFLOW – a solution that helps companies take control of their printing by cutting costs, improving productivity, strengthening security and reducing impacts on the environment.

'The whole Sustainability Advantage experience has been inspiring,' says Leslie. 'When you see what other companies do, it creates a great impetus to get your own staff involved. We have found real value in getting together with like-minded companies and we see great potential in entering projects with others. This will be our next step.'

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