



Easy, simple ways to go green and cut costs

A small manufacturing businesses

Phoenix Spraydecks, Nottingham

Phoenix spraydecks was established in 1993 by Joel Scott with the commitment of making the highest quality bespoke spraydecks. As well as constantly improving and developing their own range of Phoenix decks, they've also become Britain's leading manufacturer of own brand decks to the trade.

The company has always tried to operate in the most environmentally friendly way and in 2004 joined a group of canoe and kayak manufacturers and distributors in signing up for an environmental audit from Envirowise (see case study5). Although the business is relatively small the results of the audit were very positive and pointed out that Phoenix did in fact already have a number of recommendations and environmental best practices in place. This case highlights how being green doesn't necessarily involve initial financial investment and can be achieved by any business no matter what their size.



Recycling



Phoenix's waste was already being recycled before the Envirowise audit. However, it did involve Joel taking the rubbish in his own car to the recycling centre costing valuable time and involving numerous trips. By looking around and changing the waste contractor and bin supplier the cost of recycling has become significantly less expensive. This has positively encouraged waste to be recycled whenever possible rather than throwing it to be taken to landfill.

Reducing resource use

Reducing the amount of resources you consume in the first place creates less work and expense for waste disposal. It costs nothing to put in place and again can actually end up saving you money. The work area of Phoenix Spraydecks accommodates all the stages of manufacture and so not all areas of the building are being used continuously. The workshop is lit by strip lights with energy efficient light bulbs, this alone will contribute to efficient resource use. This has been taken a step further however by only lighting those areas which are being used. Either both strip lights or just one will then be used depending on the amount of light needed in that particular area.

Re-using

Manufacturing goods will inevitably produce waste materials and consume resources and not all of these are able to be recycled. In cases such as these it is worth further investigation to see if they can be re-used either in house or anywhere else. The

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most obvious waste product is neoprene offcuts. These are in the shape of a circle having been cut out from the spraydeck or strips left from cutting the whole shape out of a larger sheet. Obviously, the first thing to do is ensure you are laying the templates in the most efficient way but inevitably there will always be remnants. Unbelievably, Phoenix have managed to find individuals to take both types of offcuts off their hands and make use from them.



The neoprene discs (pictured) are collected by a local play forum and have proved to be very popular with children for craft activities. They are collected whenever a good enough stash has accumulated and are always in demand! To find a good home for large neoprene offcuts is not such a challenging task but for small scraps it's not so easy.... unless you have a punch bag manufacturer nearby. Similarly to the discs, any scraps are stored on site and collected by a local man who previously stuffed his bags with rice until he discovered

neoprene and found it a much more suitable material for the job. There are a few organisations and web sites around that will provide a 'waste exchange' working on the basis that one mans waste is another mans treasure (see below for details). The play forum has also found a use for the used reels of thread which constitute another main source of production waste.



Packaging from suppliers is either returned to them to be reused or if this is not possible used again by Phoenix when sending out products themselves.

Behaviour change

What became apparent to Joel and his staff is that many of the small practices they adopted in the workplace e.g. only filling the kettle with as much water as you need, turning off lights when you leave a room and using scrap paper for notes were becoming second nature and they found themselves doing the same at home. This alone is a success and something everyone can do if they're not already doing so.

More information

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To find out if your waste can be used by another company or you can make use of someone else's waste materials visit www.wasteexchangeuk.com or email info@wasteexchangeuk.com

Many local councils and organisations have their own system in place. Search the web to find the nearest group to you.

The Carbon trust provides stickers and posters free of charge for workplaces encouraging staff to turn off lights and monitors for example www.carbontrust.co.uk