

Sustainable Procurement of Print Requirements



EPOW Targeted Assistance

The European Pathway to Zero Waste (EPOW) programme seeks to deliver practical ways of achieving zero waste to landfill in the South East of England.

As part of the programme the EPOW Team worked with a number of organisations, to improve the procurement and sustainability of “print services”.

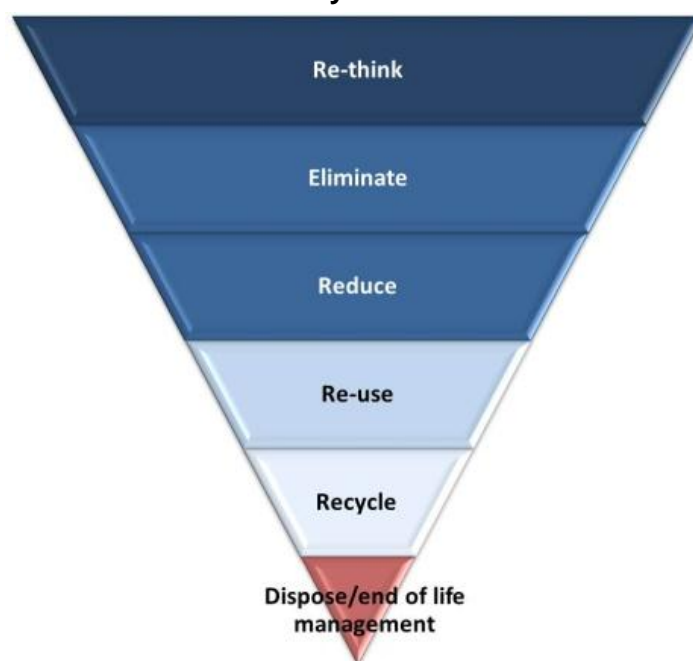
This case study highlights the work undertaken with the Royal Holloway University of London to assess the benefits of installing Multi-Functional Devices (MFDs) and with Portsmouth City Council to help develop the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for print services.

Sustainable procurement of print requirements

Printing involves considerable resource use (printers, paper and consumables) as well as associated environmental impacts, such as energy consumption, material consumption and waste.

These impacts can be mitigated by initially reviewing whether the print is necessary - and reinforcing through an effective print policy. If it is necessary to print then ensuring that resource efficient printing is an outcome requires a focus on key environmental issues within the procurement process. Before developing an appropriate specification it is essential to determine the need and how the print function, whether its internal or external, may be most effectively delivered, reinforcing the procurement hierarchy, see Figure 1.

Figure 1: The Procurement Hierarchy



The Procuring the Future¹, Sustainable Procurement National Action Plan identified ‘pulp, paper and printing’ as the sixth priority spend area in the public sector in terms of influence and scope to achieve greater efficiencies.

¹ <http://www.defra.gov.uk/publications/2011/03/28/pb11710-procuring-the-future/>

Royal Holloway, University of London is one of the largest multi-faculty colleges of the University of London with 9,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students and over 1,500 staff at its 135 acre campus in Egham, Surrey.



Apart from being listed as one of the 16 most picturesque universities in the world, it is renowned for its academic and research success.

Printer review

Royal Holloway had embarked on a limited move towards the use of MFDs in the past. However, it was decided to review the benefits, both financial and environmental, of a wholesale move towards MFDs in lieu of networked and non-networked printers, scanners and photocopiers, so that the procurement requirements could be established.

MFDs tend to offer much greater functionality than local or work group printers and are much more cost effective from a total cost of ownership perspective². Furthermore, software enhancements can enable centralised printing that reduces waste from remote printing and can even inform the user of the financial and carbon impacts of their print request prior to printing.

Analysis

In order to assess the costs and benefits of moving towards MFDs, an analysis of a range of factors was undertaken, including:

- existing devices - types, locations and numbers;
- expenditure - procurement on printers and consumables;
- paper use;
- associated waste costs and quantities;
- energy costs and consumption, including Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme costs; and
- Scope 3 Carbon Procurement emissions.



The analysis, using a mix of sample and collected data as well as previous analyses, identified potential savings in paper and printer/MFD procurement costs and quantities, consumable costs and quantities, as well as other potential benefits including:

- enhanced service due to a single supplier;
- reduced maintenance;
- reduced disposal costs;
- reduction in capital requirements due to the anticipated move towards a leased MFD service;
- reduced management and administration time currently spent on ordering and processing supplies for a range of non-standard printers and consumable items;

² <http://www.multifunctionaldevices.co.uk/>

- reduced supplier delivery vehicle movements to Royal Holloway;
- enhanced accountability for print and associated costs; and
- reductions in embedded carbon in paper - reduced paper use will positively impact on the embedded carbon as paper production generates a significant carbon impact. This will be reflected in Royal Holloway's Scope 3 Carbon Footprint, which has recently been provided by Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Results

Initial results suggest that significant financial and environmental savings may be possible:

Conservative assumptions suggested savings up to 10% of print and consumable costs, 12% on energy consumption and costs and 5% on waste quantities and costs.

Estimates of financial savings amounted to up to £90,000 per annum.

The analysis reinforced the importance of good quality data to inform such an analysis as well as a scope which considers not just financial impacts but environmental, management and behavioural issues, while ensuring that print requirements effectively meet the needs of schools, departments and students.

Sharing the benefits

As a result of the analysis, Royal Holloway is embarking on a case by case approach, recognising the importance of obtaining support for the transition to MFDs, based on evidence of effectiveness. Transition will be rolled out within specific departments with results assessed and case studies developed highlighting results and lessons learned, before any wider roll-out is implemented.

Link to procurement

In order to realise the full benefits, the analysis emphasised the importance of applying the procurement hierarchy and specifically **identifying the need** before setting procurement requirements. Financial and environmental savings from standardising devices and consumables are potentially significant if the right procurement practices are adhered to.

Ensuring the most effective initial procurement of MFD options includes careful consideration of the options:

- lease options, rather than purchase; and
- environmental specifications such as energy efficiency, warm up times, packaging and others (for example those specified in the Government Buying Standard for MFDs³).

The analysis and case by case approach has been further enhanced by the development of a sustainable print policy by Royal Holloway which provides practical guidance for printing with the emphasis on reducing waste and saving costs.

Anna Kosteletos, Energy & Sustainability Manager (Anna.Kosteletos@rhul.ac.uk):

³ <http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/products/office/laser-multi/standards/>

“The review of existing and possible increased MFD use within Royal Holloway in conjunction with the EPOW team has helped determine potentially significant financial and environmental savings. Together with other assistance on embedding sustainable procurement messages and practices this should, over time, help us to lower our carbon footprint and reduce material consumption”

Portsmouth City Council (PCC) recently adopted a revised Responsible Procurement Policy, as part of its commitment to be a sustainable city, and seeks to identify and capture opportunities for resource efficiency within its supply chain from its annual £200m procurement spend.



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Print review

Recognising that printing costs represented a significant burden on the Council's procurement spend, as well as a source for potential reduction of environmental impacts, a thorough review of print requirements was commissioned in 2012.

This started with an assessment of devices and usage throughout PCC, whether for internal or external distribution of documents, using a survey of key stakeholders.

The print audit identified potential financial and economic savings and other efficiencies through the investigation, assessment and evaluation of the contracts, costs and processes involved in the Council's entire design, print and design production lifecycle (including outsourced costs, and spend on activities such as design agencies, print, paper, distribution).

The review provided a baseline from which the Council implemented process improvements and can now, if required, tender for new contracts to deliver better services that add value (both financially and environmentally and in terms of achieving greater quality outputs) to the Council's communications.

The baseline also provides the Council with the ability to monitor and report progress.

While the print review is on-going it was also linked with the replacement of an existing MFD lease contract that expired in October 2012.

MFD Invitation to Tender (ITT)

Reviews of the scope of the contract highlighted a range of factors to be considered, which were embedded into the ITT. These included:

- Reinforcement of the Council's commitment - *'PCC also wants the provision to enable greater efficiencies to be made within the printing environment and to promote its sustainability and environmental objectives'*.

- Requirement for potential bidders ‘to demonstrate how they will reduce overall print levels, reduce wastage including packaging and consumables as well as integration, compatibility and technical requirements.’

Darren Thirwall, IS Project Manager, Information Service at the Council stated that:

“The review of the print contract by the EPOW team and input into the print review provided useful advice which was incorporated into the specification, ITT and review. These, combined with the on-going review of print needs, should help the Council make significant financial and carbon savings, whilst ensuring that an efficient print function is in place.”

Summary

Through the targeted assistance programme provided by EPOW, Royal Holloway, University of London and Portsmouth City Council identified that both cost and environmental savings could be realised by reviewing their current print policy and procurement of devices and consumables.

The key actions taken and benefits could be replicated across many organisations and are summarised below:

Key Actions:

- Review the need for the service or goods (review of all requirements).
- Benchmark current performance (cost / environmental impact).
- Understand what the market is able to offer.
- Review procurement options (lease / rent vs buy).
- Trial the proposed solution.
- Capture and report performance against benchmark.

Key Benefits:

- Realise cost savings.
- Reduced embedded carbon impact.
- Reduced energy consumption.
- Fewer delivery vehicle movements.
- Reduction in packaging.
- Reduced administration and management of print services.

For more information on The European Pathway to Zero Waste (EPOW) programme and WRAP tools and resources for embedding sustainable procurement, please visit <http://www.wrap.org.uk/content/sustainable-procurement>.

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