

€coCert

Membership Newsletter, Summer 2012

Make The Most of Your EcoCert Award

Market research consistently shows that given the choice, customers prefer to deal with genuinely 'green' businesses. This applies equally to business customers and the general public.

But more often than not they won't be willing to pay extra for the privilege!

Fortunately this is not a problem because your EcoCert saves you money anyway.

In these tough business times, it is more important than ever to maximise your advantages.

- ❖ If you sell to government departments, local authorities or other publicly funded agencies, be aware that they are now obliged to consider environmental performance as well as value for money when they choose their suppliers. **Your EcoCert is recognised in the new government policy which specifies this.**
- ❖ Larger companies with in-house environmental policies are now starting to look at their supply chain. This will be a continuing trend. **Econcertive is already working with two multi-nationals to help 'green' their supply chains in Ireland.**



Top Tips

- ☑ Have your EcoCert framed and visible in your premises (e.g. at reception or customer serving area).
- ☑ Make sure your staff know what it is about, so they can confidently answer customers' questions.
- ☑ Make sure your EcoCert and your environmental policy feature in your website.
- ☑ Link your website to the EcoCert website (there is already a reverse link in place).
- ☑ Include information on your EcoCert with every tender you prepare – even if environmental credentials are not asked for.
- ☑ Add the EcoCert logo to your letterheads, compliments slips and other publicity materials.
- ☑ Put together a case study of your environmental improvements and how much you have saved, ideally both in hard cash and in carbon emissions.
- ☑ Put this case study on your website and submit it for inclusion in the EcoCert website and newsletter.
- ☑ Make sure your premises are kept tidy and demonstrate good housekeeping to any visitor.



So don't just use your EcoCert to control your energy, waste and water costs. Make sure you are taking full advantage of it as a marketing tool to give you competitive advantage.

ECOCERT CASE STUDY – COUNTY WEXFORD



3Tek is a Wexford-based IT company serving both the business and consumer sectors. It is owned and run by its directors, Kevin McHale & David Scallan.

Being based in Wexford Enterprise Centre, waste and water are included in the tenancy agreement, so the focus for savings was electricity & printing.

Although the business comprises just two people, the company saved €1,478 in the first 12 months through implementing its EcoCert improvements.

Lighting

Adequate lighting is important for a business that involves tasks such as repairing computer hardware. Through the EcoCert process, 3Tek discovered that it had about twice as much lighting as it needed.

The 3Tek office was originally fitted with eight sets of four fluorescent tubes. Phil brought in a light monitor and discovered that half of the tubes could be removed and the 3Tek team would still have perfect working light. The removal of 16 fluorescent tubes has resulted in a saving of four electricity units per day. With each unit priced at 21c, this adds up to €375 annually.

The 16 spare tubes can now be used to replace the ones in situ, and the savings on replacement costs will be passed on to the Wexford Enterprise Centre.

Server Efficiency

The server was already five years old, so 3Tek decided to invest in a new, energy-efficient server. The immediate saving was five units of electricity a day, a cost reduction of €1.05 per day.

Monitoring the meter readings has become part of the daily routine at 3Tek. Naturally, the office's day usage fluctuates. But because of the measures it has taken, it knows what its electricity bill will be – to within a few euro.

The EcoCert process prompted the two 3Tek directors to look at everything consuming electricity.

Water Cooler

Another electrical unit in the office was the water cooler. Through monitoring electricity usage, 3Tek discovered that this was using one unit of electricity overnight. The company has saved on cost by turning it off at the wall in the evening.

Energy/Ink-Saving Printer

Another energy-saving investment was a new energy and ink-saving printer. The printer is 60% more efficient with ink than a laser printer. This will be of great benefit when 3Tek prints out letters for a marketing campaign to Wexford businesses.

What's more, if you don't use the printer for more than half an hour it goes into energy-saving mode.

Another benefit for the business is the fact that it can recommend energy-saving printers to both business and domestic customers. 3Tek is always recommending energy-saving models because it has experienced the savings on the printer.

Printing/Paper/Postage

The company is achieving greater savings on printing costs than it could have expected, due to changing how it sends out invoices and statements to customers. It now emails clients rather than printing and posting.

The cost of sending paper invoices and statements was estimated as 57c per item. The stamp, at 55c, was the largest outlay. The envelope, paper, ink, and a very small amount of electricity came to 2c.

Having sent out just over 1,000 such documents by email rather than post within the first year, the savings really started to add up. 3Tek estimates that it has already saved approximately €581.

Summary of Savings for 3Tek (€1,478)

New server: **€434.99**

Removal of extra fluorescent tubes: **€374.99**

Water cooler switch-off: **€87.00**

Emailing invoices: **€581.40**

So what difference can almost €1,500 make to a small business? It will pay for the price of a new server within 18 months, which contributes to ongoing savings.

For the full case study, including how Kevin and David went on to make savings in their respective homes, go to www.ecocert.ie