

A large, stylized green leaf graphic composed of several overlapping curved segments, positioned on the right side of the page. The background features a large, light beige circular shape on the left and bottom.

TAIGA COMPANY[®]
oxygen for your business

Paperless Office

Introduction

Paper is the number one material thrown away and also one of the biggest polluting industries. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency, paper constitutes 35% of our waste stream, and only 48% of the paper we discard is recovered for recycling. Companies interested in reducing cost and building business sustainability are actively pursuing a paperless office. While a completely 100% paperless office may be unattainable, a few decisive steps applied over enough time can dramatically reduce if not eliminate the vast majority of paper in your office.

Benefits

- § Increase productivity
- § Eliminate storage space
- § Reduce expenses
- § The ability to work remotely
- § Enhance customer service
- § Increased security
- § Improved disaster recovery protection
- § Reduce your environmental impact
- § Improve your competitiveness in the industry

Strategies

Benchmark

Identify all the activities in the business that utilize paper. The obvious areas that come to mind include printers, copiers, mail, and collateral. Don't stop at the obvious areas - dig deep here and explore other areas of your business.

- How much paper do you use for events, trade shows, invoicing, literature, packaging, shipping materials?
- What about the kitchen areas and bathrooms? Remember, it's not just paper but paper products.
- Consult with people in other departments and get a clear picture of the paper they are using, where it is coming from, when they are using it, and how they are using it.
- You might want to talk to your purchasing department and learn more about how much is being spent on paper products.



Deploy a Paper Reduction Plan

By utilizing the sustainability concept of the 3 R's: reduce, reuse, recycle:

- Target identified areas for paper reduction
- Reduce your paper consumption by working with your purchasing department to reduce the amount of paper purchased and switch to buying recycled paper (100% post consumable is best).
- Reuse paper by placing bins next to the copiers and printers for easy reuse of single sided scraped paper.
- Recycle paper that has been used.

Educate and Train

It important to articulate and communicate the vision, and the "how's" and "why's" of your plan. Remember to schedule ongoing training. Celebrate successes and identify areas for ongoing improvement.

Monitor and Measure Progress

monitor the success of your program. Share your success stories with employees, prospect, clients, and suppliers. Engage all stakeholders in the process.

Tips for Reducing Office Paper Waste

General Best Practices:

- Place phone directories, human resources documents, and corporate policy manuals online (intranet or network folder) to avoid constantly updating paper versions.
- For correspondence, such as birthday cards, and events: utilize e-cards or online event/party planning tools.
- Reduce office junk mail.
- Online e-zines, blogs, and PDF versions of printed magazines are becoming more and more popular, both as a replacement for and a supplement to printed publications. If a printed copy is required, circulate it within the office/ department.
- Use reusable bags to carry items.
- Reuse packaging such as bubble wrap, boxes and packaging material.

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Utilize Technology:

- Use the Internet and e-mail to deliver soft proofs to clients.
- Use scan-to-e-mail instead of faxing.
- Replace paper planners with electronic ones. PDA's: Blackberry and smart phones all have contact management capabilities.
- Commit to all online banking: invoicing, statements, and payments.
- Engage your clients as well as your suppliers in utilizing technology to reduce paper consumption.
- File taxes electronically.

Rethink Printing and Copying:

- Install PrintGreen, which offers you the option to remove unwanted pages before printing
- If you must print, print to both sides or use single sided paper as scrap paper.
- Purchase 100% post recycled content paper to use in your printer.
- Set computer defaults to print double-sided.
- Make double-sided copies when possible.

Office Supplies:

- Use Digital Post it notes.
- Reuse folders.
- Purchase recycled paper and paper products.
- Empty file cabinets: scan and store electronically. Use the paper as scratch paper then recycle it.

Sales and Marketing:

- Utilize social media tools (Facebook, digg, StumbleUpon) to publish information and connect with clients.
- Share your company photos online with Flickr.
- Create an e-brochure vs. a printed brochure.
- Sales calls and presentations: use a USB memory stick and electronically leave your e-brochure and presentation with your client.

Kitchen Area:

- Eliminate plastic wear in your kitchen: use only reusable dishes, utensils, and glasses.
- Replace paper napkins with cloth napkins.
- Replace paper towels: use kitchen towels or at least use recyclable paper towels.
- Use recycled facial tissue paper.



Resources

Environmental Defense Fund's Paper Calculator <http://www.papercalculator.org> Compare the impacts of several papers you use today with a set of recycled alternatives.

EPA Waste Wise Program: <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/wastewise.html>

Paper Task Force Recommendations for Purchasing and Using Environmentally Preferable Paper http://www.edf.org/documents/1688_synopsis.pdf

[Paper Consumption, Using Less Wood Quick Facts Series, Resource Conservation Alliance \(PDF\)](#)
Statistics on paper consumption in the US, impacts on the environment, techniques for reducing paper usage in the office, links for more information

Business Junk Mail Reduction Project
<http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/nwpc/bizjunkmail.htm>
<http://www.reduce.org/>

Environmental Paper Network <http://www.environmentalpaper.org/index.html>