

BONUS
POSTER

Look for a
step-by-step
reference guide
for making your
firm greener



ECO PRINTERS

Early adopters share their stories about embracing a green business model

"THERE WAS ONLY one FSC-certified mill in North America—that was Lion's Falls in upstate New York. I remember we had to arrange for a load of logs to be driven down from Haliburton Forest [a certified woodlot north of Toronto]. And then the flatbed got stopped at the border, and the custom people gave us a hard time about the mud on the tires," says Stephen Pugh, president of MPH Graphics in Markham, Ont. That was back in 2000, shortly after MPH became the first printing company in Canada—actually, corrects Pugh, in the world—to be FSC Chain-of-Custody certified, and shortly before Lion's Falls went belly up.

When MPH opened its doors in 1988, Pugh's goal was for the company to be as green as possible and he gathered around him a core group of philosophically aligned clients—environmental NGOs, specifically World Wildlife Fund Canada. You could not separate MPH's greenness from its printing services—they are one and the same. However, it is different for most other print companies. Green consciousness has evolved in the printing industry and most in management probably couldn't tell you exactly when the decision to go green was made. It just seemed

like the obvious thing to do—the smart thing to do to stay in business. It's in the air. It's our collective 21st century reality.

But is today's environmental consciousness here to stay? And if your company turns green, will the result be reduced costs and new customers? Industry leaders in this burgeoning field of "green printing" have tackled these questions from all angles. And they've come up with a variety of solutions.

STARTING OUT

Once you have decided to go green, an initial audit of your current practices, processes and products is in order. You can do this through a third party or internally, tackling one department at a time. (For more information about specific greening initiatives see poster outsert.) Whatever you decide, some internal structure is essential. Many companies have separate environmental committees. Some of these committees comprise just the management staff, others include representatives from each department. Still others incorporate green initiatives and concerns within their departmental and management meetings.

But it's not enough just to have a committee, someone has to do the work.

Hemlock Printers, in Burnaby, B.C., came to the same conclusion. Its sustainability committee comprises 13 members from various departments—all of whom have other duties. So, two years ago the company advertised for a summer intern, hoping to get an Environmental Studies student to help with green initiatives. This worked so well that the student, Kate Scholz, now has a permanent position as Hemlock's environmental manager. Since she is still in school, the job is full-time in the summer and part-time during the rest of the year. Currently the committee acts like a think tank, while Scholz makes what they're thinking reality.

THE GREENEST TECHNOLOGY

Printing is a dirty, resource-consuming, greenhouse-gas-emitting industry. It's actually a lot better than it was—many players have eliminated film from prepress operations and isopropyl alcohol from litho processes. Overall, the latest presses, loaded with automation, are a lot more efficient with consumables, which cuts down on waste. No, the argument now is which way to go. Is waterless litho the cleanest method? Or is it UV litho or conventional litho with low-VOC, soy-based inks? Or

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BLINDFOLD/ GEOFF SCOTT

From the left: Stephen Pugh, president of MPH Graphics; Michael O'Connor, vice president of marketing and business development, St. Joseph Communications; Ron Harris, co-chief executive officer, Jones Packaging; Glen Warren, co-owner, Warren Waterless Printing

