



Helping you and your customers to...

BY MARTYN BILLING

## 'Green Up Your Act'

### PART ONE

# NO CARBON REQUIRED

The process of climate change is now well publicised and is emerging as a major issue and challenge, not only to individuals and governments, but also to business and commerce. We must change our ways, particularly with regard to energy consumption.

Global warming is happening and carbon dioxide is widely thought to be the main contributor, responsible for 80% of emissions from industrialised countries. This gas is principally released by the burning of fossil fuels: oil, petrol, coal and natural gas. To stabilise the atmosphere big reductions in these emissions will be required. Indeed, the UK and other EU countries have committed to a 60% reduction by 2050.

Businesses are currently responsible for approximately half of the UK's carbon emissions. Even a small office can emit three to five tonnes

of carbon dioxide per annum.

Of course, there is a view that if you are going to encourage your customers to go green you need to be environmentally conscious yourself. Those dealers that demonstrate consideration for the environment, and then promote this fact in appropriate marketing and publicity materials, will be those that benefit long term.

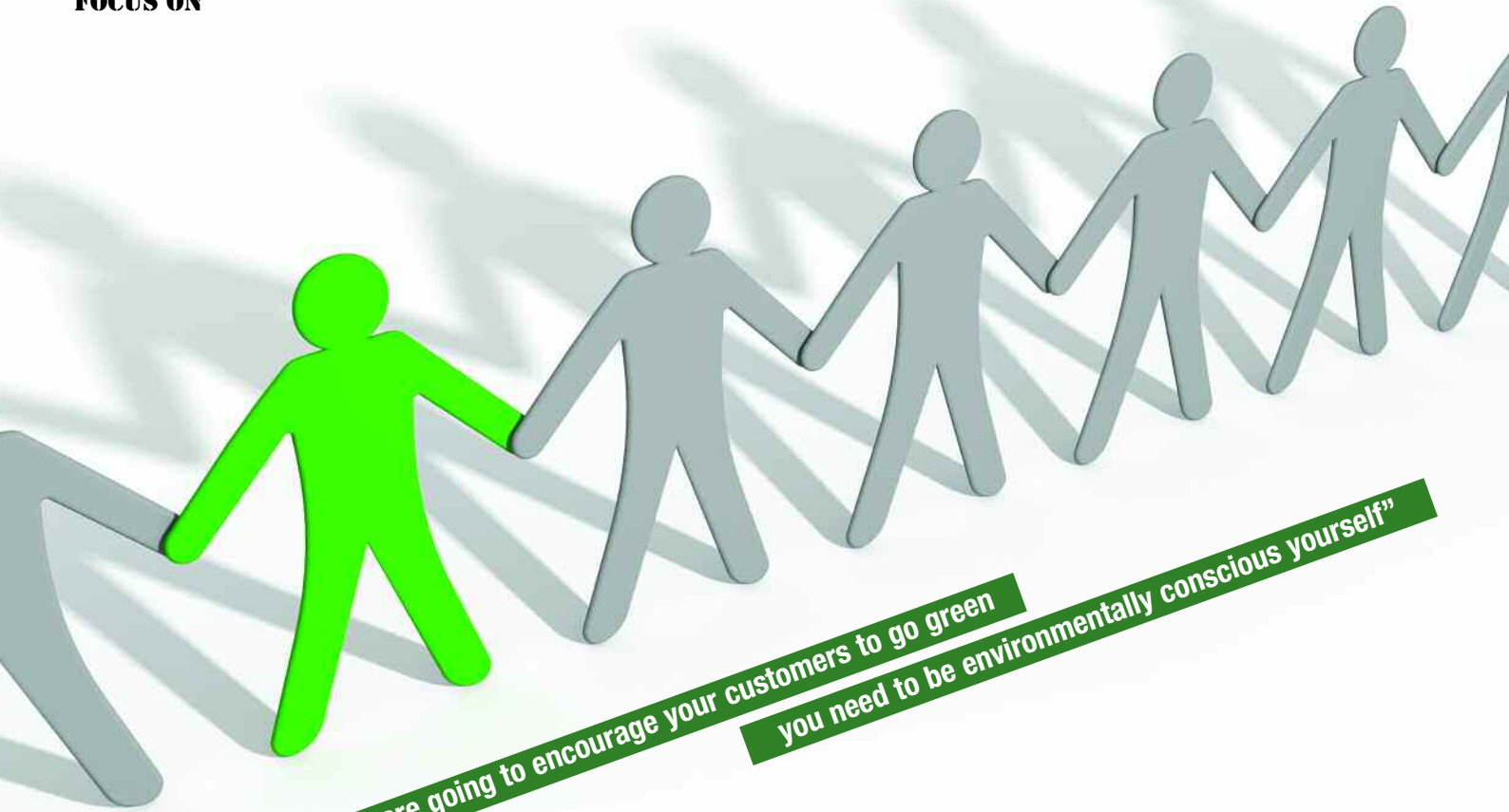
Some examples of initiatives that you can take in your own business, and indeed suggest to your customers, include: switching off equipment such as computers, and business machines when not in use. In particular, many are left on standby overnight. A simple switching device or piece of software can be purchased to automatically shut-down all machines at a certain time, and then power them up the following morning. According to government figures, just switching off a

computer overnight and at weekends can save £63 per annum.

Members of staff should be encouraged to turn off lights when not required. You can even automatically make savings by installing PIRs (Passive Infrared Sensors). These sense when a room is occupied and only turn the lighting on at that time. These are particularly effective in storerooms, lavatories etc.

Positioning desks and workstations to take advantage of natural light is another handy hint. The same is true of ensuring that blinds or curtains are opened, rather than turning on lights when additional light is required.

In a similar way, employees should be encouraged to open windows, instead of turning on air conditioning in the summer and turn down heating and don't open windows, to allow heated >>



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air to escape, when too warm in the winter. Also it is suggested that areas that are not in constant use, such as corridors and storerooms, are not heated to the same extent as offices etc.

Business machines can contribute significantly to the amount of heat generated in modern offices. As a result, in mild and summer conditions, often air conditioning has to be run to reduce the ambient temperature. However the latest equipment not only uses less energy, they also create less heat.

As an example, an LCD screen uses less than half the power of an old CRT monitor, approximately 40 watts compared to 95 watts. Similarly, a combination printer, fax and scanner, uses much less energy, compared to individual peripherals, as there is only one machine on standby rather than three.

The latest generation of electrical and electronic office machines are designed with energy efficiency in mind. Facilities such as quick start up, from rest, combine energy savings with operator convenience.

Tom Wagland, environment manager for Ricoh, commented, “Previously, standby mode on a machine would typically only turn off the display.

Now the power is turned off completely so saving considerably on the electrical supply.” Meanwhile, Canon are using on-demand fusing technology to provide a fast warm-up time and significantly save energy in stand-by mode, sometimes up to a 99% reduction in consumption.

Other examples include photocopiers that will simultaneously scan both sides of a double-sided document, and print them at the same time, to save on power consumption. Also, software can be incorporated into an office network that will automatically route copying and printing to machines that are the most environmentally friendly.

It is estimated that power consumption by business machines accounts for 15% of all electrical usage. This amounts to a spend of over £300m per annum in the UK alone and, worryingly, is the fastest growing segment, with consumption expected to double by 2020 unless steps, such as those mentioned above, are taken to reduce usage.

To push environmentally friendly products, dealers should take steps themselves. A first consideration would be to become accredited

under ISO14001, the Environmental Management Standard. This sets targets for energy saving and compliance with an environmental policy. Ricoh formally encourages its partner resellers to register for this system and assists them with meeting the requirements.

Commented Geoff Slaughter of Canon, “It is the responsibility of manufacturers such as Canon to provide the solutions to support a greener workplace in addition to offering simple advice on energy saving.”

With climate change high on the political agenda it is likely that rules and regulations will be introduced to reduce energy consumption and encourage the use of more efficient equipment. Preparing for these changes now will save money in the future, when they are introduced.

Ultimately, we are all going to have to go green. However, the companies that adopt environmentally friendly policies first and foremost have the opportunity to, not only do the right thing, but also to promote that fact to their current and potential customers. By demonstrating commitment now, you will increase your appeal and attract a wider customer base. ■

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