



# SIX EASY TIPS TO A GREEN OFFICE

WE KNOW THAT DOING NOTHING IS NO LONGER AN OPTION.

Going green in the office may seem like an arduous and painful undertaking filled with specialized equipment, tree-huggers picketing in your parking lot and endless colored boxes littering the hallways.



Perhaps this may have happened in the early days of environmental awareness when the ozone layer was melting above our heads, unbeknownst to any save for a few pioneering environmentalists and scientists whose pleas for awareness fell on deaf ears.

But we know better now.

We know that doing nothing will mean permanent depletion of natural resources. We know that doing nothing will mean icecaps, winter, and skiing become fixtures in legends and stories about the long-ago past. We know that doing nothing is no longer an option.

As with many other areas of science the green energy technology has advanced at an alarming pace in the last decade and has become so easy and requires so few policy changes that to not use them is to commit the unforgivable crime of unapologetic laziness.

If it helps with the decision, no person or group who has resisted changing social winds or has fought against equalizing policies has ever been remembered kindly by history. To the next generation and increasingly to the current society at large, to not taking steps towards going green is almost as irresponsible and unfathomable as letting people smoke in the office.

## Office Equipment Strategies

At a glance:

1. Understanding MFPs and MPS
2. How to increase your printing security?
3. Digitizing Do's and Don'ts

If you decide by lunchtime today that you want to start pushing your office towards greener practices then there are

some strategies that you can implement before end of day.

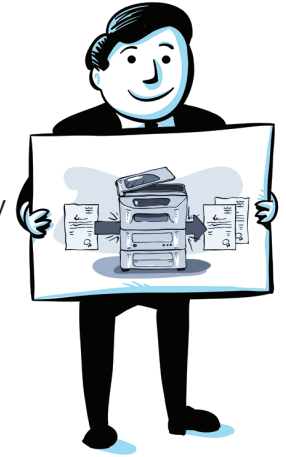
One caveat that should be mentioned before delving into same day quick fixes is that if your office does not yet have a multifunction printer (MFP) then it is crucial that it gets one immediately. It is impossible to talk about green printing without explaining and exploring the world of MFPs.

MFPs may be one of the most valuable pieces of machinery in your office for many reasons that range from security to green printing practices. They offer more digitizing and printing options as well as more printing security and great control of who can print and in what format – i.e. color, black and white, double-sided.

MFPs not only print in black and white and high quality color; they are capable of scanning, collating, stapling, and sorting, they can be remotely accessed and have security features that can limit the volume of copies made. They are also capable of double-sided printing – an ecofriendly feature not usually available on regular printers.

For the vast majority of offices an MFP solution is the right choice.

In any case, with an MFP it is possible to print double sided and digitize documents so they can be emailed rather than printed and reprinted 100 times, they take up less space in the office, reduce paper and toner costs, and lessen the chance that documents will get lost when they are being scanned.



## A New Look at Paper

At a glance:

1. Some facts and numbers
2. How to change your paper choice?
3. Some new recycling ideas

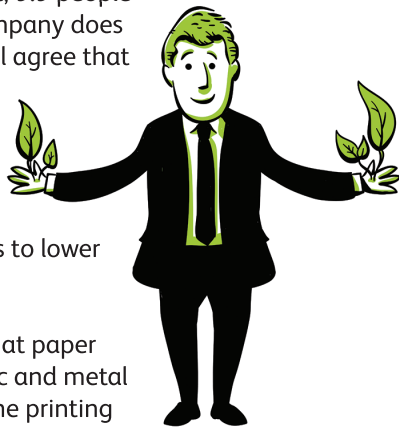
A statistic to put things in perspective from the Sierra Club: "The average U.S. office worker goes through 10,000 sheets of copy paper a year".

Xerox MFPs are one of the machines which are able to print double-sided and help save your office expenditures on printing materials. Admittedly, printing double-sided is not the optimum format for business documents, but



it indicates that your company has an environmental conscience and is making an effort to maximize paper space.

On a similar note, the type of paper your printer (or MFP) uses can have a drastic impact on the environment. The Sierra Club recommends: "Buy chlorine-free paper with a higher percentage of post-consumer recycled content or consider switching to a lighter stock of paper or alternatives made from bamboo, hemp, organic cotton, or kenaf". Start ordering recycled paper for the majority of your print jobs. Save the blinding white sheets for important documents that are being handed out to other companies and simply explain to clients that the majority of your correspondence with them will be on recycled paper to reduce waste. Generally speaking the quality of recycled paper is so high now that you can't even tell the difference between new and recycled pages. In fact, 9.9 people out of the 10 that your company does business with, on paper, will agree that using recycled sheets is the responsible and sensible thing to do and no one will have any issues with the change. Hint: buying recycled paper in bulk helps to lower the cost, so stock up!

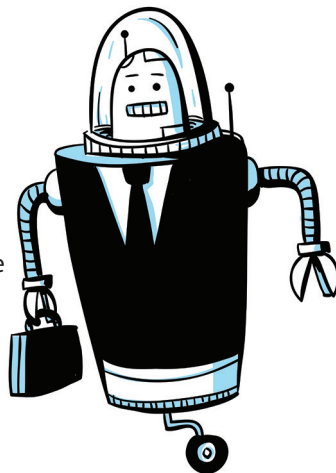


Recycling doesn't just stop at paper either. All electronic, plastic and metal parts that are involved in the printing process can be recycled. Sierra Club advises: "Any electronic waste that can't be refurbished should be disposed of properly. Everything from monitors to scanners to batteries can be given to e-waste disposal and recycling services for little to no cost." If you have a blue box for paper and another specially designated "electronic disposal" box in the print or copy room the recycling process will be much easier and visible to all.

## Welcome to the Digital World

1. How to go paper free
2. What is OCR?

One of the most alluring benefits of an MFP for greening up your office is that they have incredible scanning capabilities that will allow you to make paper a tool of the past. MFPs allow you to scan documents and then give you the option to either spit it back out as yet another paper copy or digitize and email it to either your or someone else's inbox. You can also



put security features on the files to ensure confidentiality and digitizing the files makes them much more portable so they can be sent back and forth for a faster administration experience.

Digital files can be easily searched and easily accessed on a server. A program called Optical Character Recognition (OCR) makes the files fully searchable in the network they are put into, which means that on top of being able to send files to personal contacts (via email); files can also be put into a sort of office-wide "cloud" so they can be accessed by many.

It makes far more sense to have digital directories with files on them that many, many employees can view and work on (at the same time) rather than trying to run around the office tracking down loose papers, disintegrating file folders and binders with rings that won't open or close with their covers falling off. The latter is hardly the stuff of great organization whereas the former is clean, a space-saver and green.

## Print Supply Recycling Programs

1. Think ink
2. How an MFP can save you space

The other green printing tips that can be offered is to recycle your toner cartridges. This will keep new plastics, metals and oil out of landfills and the environment, plus they are more cost effective. One insider tip from the Sierra Club is "download the new Ecofont – a new typeface that incorporates tiny, inkless circles that minimize ink usage by up to 20 percent"



Finally, with an MFP you are able to effectively consolidate many, many machines into one do-all device. This means that by making the switch to an MFP you are not only participating in green printing strategies, but also with green energy strategies. Having one machine that you can effectively maintain so that it stays in top form, one machine instead of ten plugged into the wall, and one machine that has dormant and off-hours energy saving features makes the environment and your energy bill smile.

# Rules-Based Printing Approach

1. How to get the office on board?
2. How can an MFP and an MPS program get you a tax break?

When trying to implement green printing it is as important to effectively manage the machine, as it is the people printing. Keeping your employees or coworkers in the loop is essential to making a successful change to environmental policies. Send out an email or bulletin explaining what you are doing, why and where they will see change. Once people are made aware of how easy it is to be environmentally conscientious and, most importantly, why it matters than they are far more inclined to do it.



Groups also work well towards goals so it may be worth starting up a month by month challenge for the company where employees printing usage is tracked and you set goals to get the numbers lower as time goes on. Incentives or recognition for those who manage to meet the goal are a great way to make going green fun, rather than a painful experience.

Xerox draws this comparison when advising on monitoring printing: “The most successful businesses monitors, inspect and track everything, from company cell phone usage and long distance, to mail/freight/shipping charges and company expenses, all in an effort to maximize productivity and minimize costs. Is your company doing these things? The answer is probably “yes”, except when it comes to printing.”

In addition to tracking printing and office expenses there is one other aspect of green printing that has only been briefly touched on: energy conservation. Consolidating many printers, fax machines, and scanners into one device make the whole process more energy efficient. InkJet printers use a huge amount of energy in comparison to their actual yield. Instead of throwing out the old printers it is recommended that you donate them to recycle centers that will use them for parts – you may even get a tax deduction.

A case has been made for green printing from A to Z and now its time for you to decide your office’s needs and ability to implement some or all of the strategies. Keep in mind that not only does green printing help the environment, but it is actually more cost efficient in the long run and helps your company’s image in the context of the wider social conscious. If the task seems too daunting and

time consuming to handle internally, try outsourcing to a Managed Print Services Provider to take the reins.

# Good for the Environment and Good for Business

For many years the mark of a successful business was determined by how technologically advanced they were. To a certain extent this still holds true, but increasingly the corporate world is being judged by a collective social conscious that is seeking, if not demanding, the companies demonstrate a certain level of environmental awareness. It’s no secret that businesses are very taxing on the environment. From waste to paper and electrical consumption to sometimes-shaky recycling practices any opportunity that comes along that would prove how your company is making an effort to reduce its ecological footprint is invaluable.



Green strategies are highly marketable, usually easy to implement, and, studies have shown, can result in a more stable and durable company. It is also a money saver. Once the initial implementation costs have been swallowed, sit back and see how recycling, going digital and saving energy pays for itself and then some.

In the long term being able to say that your company was one of the first riding the wave of the first green market business model speaks volumes of its foresight and ability to spot lucrative investments. The green model will inevitably change from how it is now, but the sooner your company joins, the less drastic (and expensive) the changes will be. All you will have to do is keep on top of new developments and implement micro changes for maximum impact on the corporate efficiency and reputation.

