

Sustainable Business Information Sheet



Energy efficient and sustainable changes implemented by business

Many businesses are recognising the business and environmental advantages that can be achieved from introducing a range of management decisions, technologies and design features that help to reduce their energy consumption and environmental impact.

This information sheet shows how one small business implemented management decisions to reduce their energy usage and environmental impact and how it affected their business.

Design House, a graphic design and website management business wanted to reduce their energy and operational costs, and make environmentally sustainable changes to the business. Management decided the quickest, easiest and most cost effective way to do this was to implement changes to the indoor working environment through adjustments to the airconditioning, lighting and office practices.

What they did...

Airconditioning

Adjusting the temperature settings on the airconditioning was identified as being a low action–high return change that could be easily implemented. Summer settings were lifted from around 22°C to 25°C and winter settings were changed to 19°C. After operating for approximately two years at these new settings the staff noticed no changes to their level of comfort.

In addition to these changes the staff opened windows during cooler weather to take advantage of natural ventilation. The airconditioning was also turned off when after hours and weekends.

One significant change to business operations also allowed savings to be made in operational costs. This small business outsourced their server function to a host server in another location. By doing this they no longer required a second airconditioner dedicated to cooling the server 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Protective window film and blinds for windows

Management recognised that one way to reduce the operating load on the airconditioning was to limit the amount of heat entering the office through windows. Protective film was applied to the windows and standard vertical blinds were installed. As a result, staff noticed a significant reduction in the amount of heat entering the office which, in turn, meant the temperature adjustments to the airconditioning went unnoticed.

Lighting

Another area identified as suitable for inexpensive yet effective change was lighting. Existing lighting was replaced with energy efficient fluorescent and compact bulbs and the quality of light was not compromised in any way for screen-based work. This change also helped to reduce the operational load on the airconditioner by reducing the heat generated in the office.

What savings they made

Initially, with changes only to the temperature of the airconditioning, the business achieved a reduction in energy consumption of approximately 76% and saved \$1000 a year. By making the additional changes outlined above, these savings have grown.

Business contact details

Jeanette Maynes
Phone: 07 4124 0563

Web: www.designhouse.com.au

For more details about Design House's sustainable practices go to...

<http://designhouse.com.au/sustainability/>