

Carbon neutral, future positive

We only need to open a newspaper or turn on the TV to be reminded that the ecological clock is ticking. But, as Brian Blunden of Managing Carbon explains, companies that act sooner rather than later can reap the benefits.

The onus on businesses to tackle how much carbon they release into the atmosphere, switch to renewable fuels and be energy efficient is increasing and new legislation introduced in November 2008 has made the Government's sense of urgency clear.

Brian is clearly passionate about the need to act fast and act now, and the reasons he gives are compelling. "The bottom line is; oil is running out, our gas supply is politically charged, most of our coal-fired power stations and our nuclear power stations need to shut down over the next few years," he explains. "We all need to change our lifestyles and business practices and time is running out."

All doom and gloom, then? "Not quite", laughs Brian. "There are some real benefits to reducing your carbon emissions, and usually right across the organisation. You can save money on your fuel bills, become energy secure, future-proof your business against uncertain times ahead. And it's likely that more customers and staff will start demanding carbon neutrality. It's already a real differentiator in choosing suppliers. For example, Marks and Spencer's, with their Plan A, want only to work with companies that have a Carbon Management Programme in place."

Whilst most of us would like to do our bit, knowing where to start, what to do and how much it's all going to cost is a key deciding factor.

"Without a clear strategy, it's easy to feel daunted about what you really need to do and how to go about it," Brian agrees. "My advice is; don't panic. I'll provide the best path to take by getting to know your business, talking to the staff and finding out their attitude. I highlight the areas that need immediate attention, and then work with the Managing Director to tackle the longer-term changes needed."

Fees start at less than £500 depending on the size of the organisation and it's entirely up to the M.D. to decide how far along the road to being a carbon-neutral company to go, although Brian emphasises that the laws will become more stringent and the need to change is inevitable. The first step is to assess and benchmark the company's carbon footprint. Then, Brian can conduct a Business Energy Survey, which will show how to save energy, money and switch to renewable resources. **The final stage is to implement the Carbon Management Programme, and this is what many big companies such as M&S are now undertaking.**

Brian's clients can draw upon his sales and marketing background to find out how to best market their new green credentials. He can also provide the role of Energy Officer, through Managing Carbon's Business Support Programme, to be retained when needed, and lift the responsibility of managing energy and related concerns from other members of staff.

Brian reckons that many companies are using the current economic climate to overhaul their operations and make them more efficient. To kick-start your leaner, greener 2009, call Brian and schedule just one hour in your diary to find out:

- how improving your carbon footprint can increase your bottom line
- how to create a new angle for your marketing campaigns
- which grants are available to help with carbon and energy management
- how carbon management will give you the competitive edge
- how to tell a positive story about your business in this difficult market.



If you'd like a free initial assessment, including tips and advice relevant to your business, contact Brian Blunden on:

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