Paper waste reduction

Dematerialisation stands for using less or no material to **deliver the same level of functionality to the user**. It includes **improving the use of materials** or **shifting from products to services**. There are several solutions to apply this philosophy to paper waste, including avoiding to print by using dematerialised solutions, to print on both sides of the sheet, etc.

Principle: A printout avoided = paper waste prevented!

Companies and educational establishments use a great deal of paper every year. And yet this volume can easily be reduced: during the EWWR, introduce a few new practices and see your paper consumption – and therefore your waste - fall considerably.

Objectives

▶ To increase awareness among all the participants of the usefulness and ways of using less paper
▶ To reduce paper consumption in the company:
  o identify sources of paper consumption (where, when, how, why)
  o find ways of overcoming this, at least to some extent
▶ To assess the effectiveness of the actions taken as regards paper consumption
▶ To assess the positive impacts that result from such actions (lower costs, more comfort (e.g.: more space), etc.

What you need

Audit tool
▶ What is it? A **calculation sheet** that you can use to **follow your consumption** of (graph or printing) paper, irrespective of the format (A4, A0, roll, etc.).
▶ How is it used? Each consumption statement involves three stages:
  o **determine the main types of paper** that you use and their unit weight in kg
  o **assess your initial consumption**
  o **measure your consumption** after taking steps
▶ What is it for? To **assess the quantity of paper saved**.

Three levels of action may be considered. The tools may vary, depending on the choices made:

1. The individual choices of staff
The individual approach is the least onerous and easiest to implement. It involves increasing awareness and training staff so that they think before acting: double-sided printing, not printing e-mails, reading and following modifications on the screen, reducing the number of pages thanks to the layout, etc.

"Double-sided" poster

▶ What is it? A poster encouraging (reminding) staff to print on both side of the sheet.

▶ How is it used? It should be placed near the printers and photocopiers.

Intranet

▶ What is it? An article on the company intranet encouraging your staff to print on both sides of the sheet and informing about other options to reduce paper waste.

▶ How is it used? Put the article online before the EWWR to announce the initiative and during the EWWR to give daily tips.

2. Organisational and structural choices

This approach requires more effort. For example, the IT team may have to intervene to adapt the computing equipment: printing in economy mode and on both sides of the sheet by default (on computers and printers), virtual filing on optical disk or computer server, etc. It also means adapting the company's working procedures: opting for electronic transactions, an electronic newsletter rather than a paper one, systematically corresponding by e-mail rather than by post (invoices, salary slips, etc.), using the electronic signature, etc.

Personal meter recording paper consumption

▶ What is it? A computer tool that measures, records, and displays paper consumption. This tool provides quantified results for the user, who is consequently better informed of his personal consumption.

▶ How is it used? To be installed on the workstation of each staff member.

3. The purchasing policy

On a centralised basis, this means opting for a photocopier that can make double-sided copies, multifunctional and collective devices (e.g. one machine per floor/division rather than individual printers), suitable software programs, etc.

"Sustainable purchases" guide

▶ What is it? A practical guide that helps to make more environmentally and socially friendly purchases.

▶ How is it used? To be used centrally so as to find the best devices, software programs, etc. for your company that can enable you to optimise your paper consumption.

Preparing the action

1 month before the EWWR

▶ **Increasing awareness**: inform your staff (in person, on your intranet, by e-mail, etc.) about the actions that are to be taken to save paper and increase their awareness of the utility of the project

▶ **Organise a short information meeting** about the action with the participants or with only the heads of unit, depending on the size of your structure

▶ **Choice of tools**: depending on what actions you decide to take after your audit, choose suitable tools and personalise them in line with your consumption habits

▶ **Create the event through social media or an event creator website** (splashthat, myevent, eventbrite or others) so you can control the amount of participants according to the venue

▶ This action can also be organised in the frame of a competition in which participants compete to reduce their paper consumption as much as possible (make sure, in this situation, to have the best way to calculate the consumption of every participant)

▶ **Register your action** with your official EWWR Coordinator

2 weeks before the EWWR

▶ **Measure the quantity of paper correspondence received** from the organisation during a given period (for instance, one month, so that it is sufficiently representative)

▶ **Communicate**: invite journalists to an opening or closing ceremony and/or send out a press release to print and broadcast, display posters to inform the public and advertise via social networks and partners' channels

Implementing the action = day of the action!

During the EWWR

▶ At the beginning of the week, **announce the launch of the project** through the awareness message and using communication tools (posters, stickers, etc.)

▶ **Install the tools** (technical measures) that you have chosen

▶ **Encourage participants to follow the new measures** on a regular basis (every morning, for example)

▶ **Calculate the quantity of paper used** with the calculator or another method at your disposal (more information here in the section 'How much paper waste have we avoided generating as part of the event?')

▶ **Measure participation**

▶ **Take some pictures and videos** of your action

Evaluation and feedback

▶ **Carry out an internal evaluation** of the effectiveness of each action

▶ The difference between the **quantity of paper used measured during the reference week** (before having introduced the steps) minus the **quantity of paper used measured during the EWWR** (after having taken the steps) = the **quantity of paper saved thanks to your action**

▶ **Inform your staff of the results** so as to encourage them to continue with the steps taken.

▶ **Communicate the results**, photos and videos of your action to your official EWWR Coordinator.

More information

▶ Find the electronic version of this factsheet here: www.ewwr.eu/en/support/prevention-thematic-days-2015

▶ Information material
   o Dispose of the throwaway society! (available soon)
   o Dare to be aware (available soon)

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▶ Examples of actions
   o Ticket without waste (PT)
   o A year without waste bins (BE)

▶ EWWR Coordinator's website/contact: www.ewwr.eu/list-organisers

▶ European Week for Waste Reduction: www.ewwr.eu   contact@ewwr.eu
                                        Facebook   Twitter

With the financial support
of the European Commission

▶ Relevant stakeholders
- o Zero Waste Europe
- o WRAP (UK)
- o Amigos de la Tierra (ES)
- o Both Ends (NL)
- o Estratègia Catalana Residu Zero (ES)
- o Humusz (HU)
- o Retorna (IT)
- o Za Zemiata (BG)
- o 0waste (DE)

▶ Interesting links
- o Paper waste prevention within your company - EWWR

▶ Publications
- o Sustainable Development – European Commission
- o Sustainable Consumption and Production - UNEP