

Paper waste prevention within your company



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Introduction

Despite the evolution of information technology and the emergence of new digital communication devices, paper remains one of the main means of information dissemination and its worldwide consumption continues to grow.

Industrialized countries, which represent 20% of the world population, consume 87% of writing paper and printing¹. As well as the extremely elevated consumption, they also waste resources, as 30%-40% of solid waste generated in Europe is from paper and cardboard.

Measures are therefore required that contribute to the responsible use of paper and to preventing the generation of paper waste in different areas –at work, in school, at home, etc.

As part of the annual European Week for Waste Reduction, we present the opportunity to implement a specific initiative to reduce paper waste generation in schools, government departments and businesses, in order to use this material more efficiently and more sustainably.

¹ Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of the UN Environmental Programme, (...) VII International Seminar *Cleaner production*, 29-30 April 2002.

Paper waste prevention for companies

The initiative aims to make employees aware of opportunities to reduce paper waste generation during a working day and to optimise the use of new technologies for storing, filing, and sharing information, for sending mail, and for making changes to activities which normally require paper. For the company, the day represents both a challenge and an opportunity to refine environmental policy and economic management.

Paper and cardboard are the two main waste products generated by businesses, especially offices. It is therefore essential that these large-scale paper users take action to discover optimal paper and cardboard use.

The initiative must meet the following objectives:

- Quantify the volume of paper waste produced and raise awareness of how much we currently depend on this material
- Detect problems with selective paper collection
- Redesign the company's paper-use policy in order to reduce waste generation and avoid unnecessary usage and waste
- Reduce costs and improve procedure efficiency
- Improve the company's reputation and image by highlighting its commitment to the environment

To guarantee the success of the event businesses must:

- avoid paper waste generation as far as possible on the event itself
- involve all of the company's employees in organising the event
- involve all personnel so that the challenge may be met by following set directives throughout the event
- create a creative atmosphere so that habitual tasks may be carried out in original ways

The more employees participate, the more successful the event will be. Although it may be difficult to eliminate the generation of paper waste from offices, some modifications can still be made. This is why it is important to choose a day with less, or even no, post to be sent, and to carefully plan the event so that paper waste is only generated when absolutely necessary.

Participation conditions

- The company will only use the European Week for Waste Reduction as part of this event. User right for this logo is limited to this event.
- The company will carry out a **general evaluation** of the volume of paper waste generated in a day's work.
- The company will evaluate (qualitatively and quantitatively) its participation in this event using **indicators** or calculations provided in the information folder. The company will share its results.

1.1 WHAT TO DO AND HOW?

1.1.1 Phase 1. PRELIMINARY ACTIVITIES

1. QUANTIFYING THE PAPER

Description

Before holding the event a general evaluation of the amount of paper waste generated in a single working day must be carried out. The evaluation may take one of three forms:

1. Evaluation using indicators

This pack includes a series of indicators that enable savings entailed as part of this event to be estimated (see point 1.1.3).

2. Monitoring

Some companies have Environmental Management Systems (EMAS or ISO) and monitor the paper produced and consumed over the year. This means that it is easier to estimate the quantity of paper waste produced every day.

3. Basic eco-audit

In order to determine the volume of paper waste generated per day, you must calculate the total weight of the paper in all of the paper baskets in the whole company, including those used for paper towels (in the toilets or washrooms). It is important that only paper be weighed, which must sometimes be removed from containers for general waste.

The evaluation must be carried out during a normal working day in order to maintain impartial data.

The results of this evaluation are important to determine the impact of this event in terms of paper waste production, which should be calculated as accurately as possible.

Human and material resources

- Employees responsible for collecting the paper, and measuring and recording the quantity produced.
- Weighing scales

2. DATA BANK UPDATES

Description

Before celebrating this event, it is important to update the data banks (human resources clients, suppliers, employees, etc.) and to set up data error detection systems.

It is especially important to update email addresses and phone numbers, and to ensure that all data is correct. The data bank will be compiled using a data bank management software programme, in order to facilitate the search and updating of information. To guarantee the confidentiality of data, you are advised to request the data to be updated by telephone.



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Less waste
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Target audience: **Business/industry**



The aim is to be able to use the email addresses and phone numbers of the company's contacts for company communications (phone calls, or written/voice messages) during a working day.

If no data bank exists, you are advised to create one.

Human and material resources

- Computer
- Data bank management software
- Persons responsible for updating the data bank. We estimate around one working day of 8 hours will be required to update a data bank of 100-150 contacts. This estimation varies depending on the initial list and the register of existing data.

3. PREPARING THE NECESSARY TECHNICAL, TECHNOLOGICAL, AND IT RESOURCES

Description

The majority of the actions suggested as part of this event require the use of various technical, technological, and IT resources. It is therefore important in the run-up to the day to make sure that these resources will be available and ready for use on the working day in question.

When it comes to proposing alternatives to the use of paper, it is very important to take into account the environmental impact that they may entail, selecting the option with the smallest impact.

Technical, technological and IT resources

- Computers
- Internet access
- USB memory devices
- Software for making presentations
- Email programmes
- Space for the actions
- Television Screen

Human and material resources

Individual(s) responsible for checking that resources are available and in good working order.



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1.1.2 Phase 2. REDUCING PAPER WASTE

1. TURN OFF PRINTERS AND PHOTOCOPIERS

Description

One of the event's golden rules is to minimise the generation of paper waste. This is why you are invited to turn off any device that produces paper, for the duration of the day:

- photocopiers
- printers
- fax machines

There are other mechanisms for transferring data that include technology, software, and online resources.

When it comes to proposing alternatives to the use of paper, it is very important to take into account the environmental impact that they may entail, selecting the option with the smallest impact.

Technological resources and software

New technologies provide us with infinite possibilities for working and transferring information without needing to print out documents, thus enabling us to speed up our work.

As soon as possible, it is preferable to:

- Use computers, including for taking notes during meetings
- Using USB memory devices to store and share data
- Take advantage of email programme features, such as the diary or task manager
- Use software (possibly available online) that enables you to take notes on your computer in the form of reminders (e.g. Quick notes, Stickies.net, Spaaze.com, etc.)
- Convert documents to electronic formats
- View documents on-screen
- Use e-forms
- Create an online (of offline) document management platform accessible by all employees of those who require one for carrying out their duties. This platform will enable data to be accessed and shared. If the platform is online, you will be able to access data from any location.

Online Resources

The internet is host to a wide range of resources that enable you to work digitally, a large number of which are free and available to all. Most of these resources can also be used to share documents and facilitate information transfer.

Examples of online resources for:

- Publishing and sharing presentations: *Slideshare*
- Creating documents and sharing them online: *Google docs, Prezi, etc.*
- Creating time charts and sharing them online: *Dipity*
- Sending and/or sharing large documents (over 10MB): *Dropbox, Senduit, Yousendit,...*



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Human and material resources

- Turn off the following devices: photocopiers, printers, fax machines, etc.
- Email programmes
- Download or availability of software or online programmes for converting data to electronic format
- Computers with internet access

2. COMMUNICATION WITHOUT PAPER

Description

Sending documents internally and externally uses a large volume of paper, which often ends up becoming waste. During the event, the aim is to not receive paper materials and to not send any of the following:

Internal communications

- letters
- circulars
- brochures
- payslips
- other internal communications (notes, lists, notices, etc.)

External communications:

- advertising materials (catalogues, brochures, etc.)
- letters
- periodical publications (newspapers and magazines, bulletins, etc.)
- invoices and quotes

There are other mechanisms for transferring data internally and externally that include technology, software, and online resources.

Technological resources and software

New technology offers various mechanisms for sharing and viewing information without the need to print it out. In as much as is possible, you should always try to:

- send documents by email
- access documents online
- register to receive or consult online the publications to which we are subscribers

Online Resources

The internet is host to a wide range of resources that enable you to work digitally, a large number of which are free and available to all:

- Programmes for creating and sharing content (Google docs, Slideshare, prezi, etc.)
- Online publications (newspapers, magazines, bulletins)
- Viewing supplier catalogues
- Viewing and downloading data in an electronic format



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Human and material resources

- Email for all employees who send and/or receive data.
- Computers with internet access
- Software for converting documents to electronic formats.

3. USING REUSABLE MATERIALS

Description

In addition to the tasks directly connected to an employee's role, the working day includes other events: breakfast, for example. Some companies therefore provide a catering service or staff canteen where employees can eat meals they have prepared themselves. This may involve the generation of paper waste. During the event the aim is to replace paper items with other reusable materials.

- **paper towels:** during the event, the company must provide cloth towels in the employee toilets.
- **paper napkins:** those who eat lunch at work must bring a cloth napkin.
- **kitchen roll:** kitchen staff or the company must provide cloths for use in the kitchen during the event.
- **paper cups:** employees are invited to bring their own reusable cups or glasses for their cups of tea or coffee. In this case the coffee machine must be previously prepared not to dispense cups.

Human and material resources

- Cloth towels for staff toilets
- Cloth napkins
- Cloth kitchen towels
- Reusable cups (china, glass)
- Person in charge of preparing the coffee machine



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4. TRAINING SESSION ON GOOD PAPER WASTE PREVENTION PRACTICES

Description

With the goal of providing the company's staff with practical information to enable them to reduce paper waste generation, a one or two-hour training session is proposed to offer advice and look at good practices related to the responsible and efficient use of paper in the workplace.

The training session would be led by an expert in this area, whether from the company itself or an external company, and may encompass the following two aspects:

- Introduction to document management: with the goal of providing the tools and know-how to create, receive, send, register, classify and store files or documents in digital format.
- Good paper waste prevention practices: in order to incorporate new habits that enable the optimisation of paper use and that foster paper reuse in daily activity.

Human and material resources

- Person in charge of organising and coordinating the course.
- Available space and resources for the proper organisation of the course (computer, projector, whiteboard...)

5. ADAPTING THE COMPANY'S MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES TO DIGITAL CHANNELS

Description

– The process of computerising the working world is in full swing, and will accelerate and strengthen the efficiency with which a company is managed. However, this does not necessarily entail a significant reduction in paper waste generation, which could be avoided using new technologies. Companies are beginning to adapt their procedures to digital channels through various actions: the range of products and services available to customers via digital channels such as online catalogues; advertising by email or online; placing orders online; converting documents to digital formats; using an Intranet for internal communication; developing online administration, etc.

Businesses can therefore take advantage of this event to identify and analyse their management procedures which are still performed on paper in order to lead the conversion to digital channels, if possible.

This approach updates communication channels in relation to company interests (customers, suppliers, employees, administration, etc.), entails large savings in terms of paper waste generation, and consolidates the efficiency of various procedures. The customers and suppliers can thus reduce and accelerate their dealings with the company while avoiding paper waste generation.



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Human and material resources

- Employee(s) responsible for identifying, analysing, and pinpointing company management procedures that cannot be carried out electronically.

6. SUGGESTION BOX FOR IDEAS ON REDUCING PAPER WASTE GENERATION

Description

The event is also a good opportunity to invite employees to make suggestions for reducing paper waste generation.

Employees are in the best position to know which tasks could be carried out without, or with less, paper or reusing it.

For the event, a forum, open to all employees, will be set up on the Intranet so that all suggestions and actions may be found in one place before they are implemented. If there is no Intranet, an email address can act as a suggestion box to which employees may send their ideas. There should be someone in charge of managing this email address.

Human and material resources

- Creation of an email address or forum on Intranet
- Employee(s) responsible for setting up the forum or email address, and collecting and managing suggestions.



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1.1.3 Phase 3. How much paper waste have we avoided generating as part of the event?

At the end of the event a report must be drafted detailing the actions taken and measures set-up. Measuring the paper waste not produced during the day shows what may be achieved in a single day. These figures may be reached by using various indicators and methods.

The results must also be made public and published online using an evaluation form.

Here are two systems that provide an approximate calculation of the results of a day held within a company in terms of the reducing production of paper waste.

Indicator

The following indicator can make a rough calculation of production of waste paper generated by the centre.

Paper produced:

- The average production of paper waste is estimated to be around **50 g/worker/day**, or 10 DIN-A4/worker/day/. This indicator is based on everyday office activities (not including, for example, file updates).

Source: lavola

Register

Some companies have Environmental Management Systems (EMAS or ISO) and monitor the paper produced and consumed over the year. This allows paper waste production to be estimated more accurately, as well as the establishing a daily average (based on an average of 224 working days)

Calculation of paper produced: volume of paper waste generated per year/working days.

Basic eco-audit

The volume of paper waste generated obtained from the eco-audit must be included on the evaluation form. See preliminary Activities, [sheet 1](#).

1.1.4 Phase 4. How can we save paper waste all year round?

Respecting the environment has become one of the major themes in modern society, especially owing to the deterioration of the planet in recent years.

Many of the procedure and tasks carried out in a business require the use of paper.

Businesses and their employees must be aware of the consequences of poor management of natural resources and the waste produced as part of their business.



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Adopting new habits and applying new procedures that reduce the generation of paper waste as well as improving management play a fundamental role. In order to achieve this, there are various effective practices that guarantee the continuity of the event.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to take into account the environmental impact involved in implementing one measure or another and apply the one with the smaller impact.

TO REDUCE PAPER WASTE GENERATION, WE MUST:

- Analyse the procedures in place within the company in order to minimise the generation of paper and cardboard waste.
- When printing, choose double-sided print-outs with two pages per sheet, etc.
- Revise the templates of different documents (logo size, margins, font size, templates for double-sided printing, removal of blank pages, etc.)
- Revise the weight of the paper used and give preference to lighter weights.
- Reduce the number of print-outs, circulations, and photocopies of documents in line with real demand.
- Make full use of paper when printing.
- Store documents in a digital format rather than making paper copies.
- Make full use of space and print more words per page (smaller font size, narrower margins, etc.)
- Use the print-preview feature before printing a document so as to avoid incorrect print-outs.
- Proofread them and correct documents on your computer;
- Use electronic invoices.
- Regularly update the company's circulation list, deleting contacts that appear several times, are obsolete, or are no longer of interest.
- Reduce the amount of undesired mail sent and received by deleting the distribution lists that are no longer appropriate.
- Pass periodic publications and reports around rather than sending individual copies.
- Eliminate unnecessary forms and procedures, or modify them to use less paper.
- Use both sides of paper.
- Reuse envelopes and use "send/receive" envelopes if possible.
- Make notepads from recycled paper.

CHOOSE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRINTING

- Apply [environmentally friendly printing](#) criteria to design, paper materials, inks, production processes, packaging, and distribution.

PRIORITIZE ENVIRONMENTALLY CERTIFIED PAPER

- Encourage the use of recycled paper.
- Ensure that paper has been manufactured with reduced environmental impact, which is guaranteed by certain certification bodies (Blue Angel, FSC, PEFC, etc.)



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- Avoid using brand new paper and its derivatives, including newspaper, packaging, toilet paper, kitchen roll, office documents, and publications. If you do use it, ensure that it holds forest management certification with sustainability criteria (FSC, PEFC...).
- As much as possible, choose recycled products (envelopes, dividers, sub-dividers, positive paper, packaging paper, special papers, and toilet paper).

BENEFIT FROM AND MAKE RESPONSIBLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

- Create a platform for accessing files from any location.
- Distribute documentation prior to meetings in digital format to all those in attendance.
- Use USB memory or email to transfer documents.
- Use [free online resources](#) to create and share content

INVOLVE SUPPLIERS

- Buy in bulk and demand that the supplier reduces the packaging used as much as possible.
- Use office equipment that enables you to print a photocopy on recycled paper and on both sides.
- Place orders by email whenever possible.
- Set up a cardboard box return system so that your suppliers can reuse the boxes.
- Request electronic invoices from your suppliers.

OPTIMISE THE USE OF PACKAGING

- Eliminate unnecessary packaging.
- Use reusable boxes for sending and receiving products.
- Reuse packaging materials such as boxes.

RAISE EMPLOYEE AWARENESS OF THE ADVANTAGES TO PREVENT PAPER WASTE GENERATION

Tell employees that their efforts to reduce paper waste generation enable them not only to save paper, but also to make savings on postage and storage space.

- Promote the "think before you print" reflection. Employees must be absolutely sure that they need paper copies in order to avoid excess use.
- Send regular notices to reduce the amount of photocopying and printing.
- Include awareness raising messages next to all employees' electronic signature (e.g. "Do you really need to print out this email?")



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Useful links

- Waste Scan
<http://www.ewwr.eu/quiz>
- Promo video
<http://www.ewwr.eu/node/52736>
- Operation “Empty Bin”
<http://www.operationpoubellevide.com/en/ademe>
- Attack of Muckwads
<http://invasion-des-megapoubs.eu/>
- Videos and themes for the European Week for Waste Reduction
<http://www.ewwr.eu/videos/2010>

OTHER EXPERIENCES AND USEFUL INFORMATION

- European Week for Waste Reduction
<http://www.ewwr.eu>
- Recycled paper websites
<http://www.fsc.org/>
<http://www.blauer-engel.de/en/index.php>
<http://www.pefc.org/>
<http://www.eco-label.com/>
- Calculating the advantages of using recycled paper
<http://www.papercalculator.org/>

EXAMPLE OF ONLINE RESOURCES

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Google docs
http://docs.google.com | • Dropbox
www.dropbox.com |
| • Pageflakes
www.pageflakes.com | • Senduit
www.senduit.com |
| • Wikispaces
www.wikispaces.com | • Yousendit
www.yousendit.com |
| • Slideshare
www.slideshare.net | • Prezi
www.prezi.com |
| • Dipity
www.dipity.com | • Spaaze
www.spaaze.com |



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Participation Charter – Common Actions (Optional)

Nature of the Project Developer

The Project Developer submitting a proposal for a EWWR action, which will be validated by a national, regional or local Organiser of the Week, must be classified under one the following categories:

- Administration/public authority
 - Association/NGO
 - Business/industry
 - Educational establishment
 - Other (for example, hospital, retirement home, cultural institution...)
-

Dates of the actions

The EWWR action must take place exclusively during the European Week for Waste Reduction: between the 19th and 27th November 2011 inclusive.

Commitment of the Project Developer

- EWWR actions will be led by Project Developers who can be clearly identified and who are either legal entities or individuals (*individuals may be accepted as official EWWR Project Developers on the condition that their statute is recognised by a municipality, for example: a master composter*);
- Each action must be registered and officially validated by the (national, regional or local) Organiser covering the area where the action will take place. Registration will be made via a form.
- The EWWR action will be carried out in respect of the law and regulations of the country in which the action takes place and will obtain the permission necessary for its correct proceeding;
- The action will seek to promote and encourage positive habits and gestures;
- The action will be carried out in a spirit of openness and cooperation and not in a militant or combative manner;
- The action will not be used to serve a political or religious purpose and will not be in breach of good morals;
- The action will be non-profit and entry will be free;
- Under no circumstances shall the certified EWWR action be focused on a product
- Unless otherwise indicated on the registration form, the validated EWWR action will automatically be entered into the review and selection process for the European Waste Reduction Awards.



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Commitment of the Project Developer – Common Actions

- The Project developer commits to using the European Week for Waste Reduction logo, LIFE logo and adaptable posters only within the framework of this registered EWWR action; the rights of use of the logo being restricted to this single action;
- The Project Developer commits to evaluate his/her EWWR action after it has taken place with the indicators noticed in corresponding common action sheet (For example, for the “Reduce excessive packaging” action, the weight of prevented packaging waste)

Nature of the “Common actions”

Waste management policies in the European member states are more and more influenced by EU laws, based on a hierarchy in which “waste prevention” stand in the first place.

The **Common Actions** aim to obtain **figures** of prevented waste thanks to defined actions. A Project Developer that implements a common action has to evaluate the waste quantities before/after the action. These info should be sent to EWWR Organiser in charge of the event on its territory.

A common action should necessarily address one of following waste flows:

- **Theme 1 - Paper waste reduction**
- **Theme 2 - Food waste reduction**
- **Theme 3 – Repair/Reuse**
- **Theme 4 –Excessive packaging reduction**

Any action addressing another theme that these presented above will be considered as a « classical » action and shall not being accounted as a « common action » (if this action meet EWWR actions requirements)

Date :

Name of the Project Developer

Please send back this participation charter to contact@ewwr.eu



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Example of the "Image use consent" form

The European Week for Waste Reduction is a project supported by the European Commission's LIFE+ Programme. This Week will take place for the third time from 19-27 November 2011. (For more information: www.ewwr.eu)

The European Week for Waste Reduction aims to reach out to the public as much as possible to:

- Promote sustainable waste reduction actions across Europe
- To highlight the work accomplished by various actors through concrete examples of waste reduction
- Raise awareness about waste reduction strategies and about the policies of the European Union and its Member States on this subject

The EWWR is a project which aims to educate people about the steps they can take to prevent waste production. The event is part of this project.

Image use consent - Adults

I give my consent for **(Name of organisation)** to use any images (photographs or films) of my child taken during **common action no. 1 (Paper waste reduction)**, at **(Event location)**, **(Date and time)** for use in the promotion or report for this event, and I relinquish all rights to payment or ownership for any use of these photos.

Name of person photographed:

Date and signature:

.....
.....

Attention:

- ▶ **Those who have not signed this consent form will not be photographed or filmed**



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A3 and A4 promotional poster



A3 size



A4 size



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