



Category sponsor

Imperial College London Highly commended – Green ICT “Imperial ICT steps up sustainability”

Summary

The ICT Department of Imperial College assembled a comprehensive Green IT Policy underlining our commitment to follow current best practice in providing sustainable IT. This resulted in ICT actively leading a number of initiatives across the sustainability spectrum as part of the College-wide “Step Change” campaign resulting in significant carbon and monetary savings.

Project partners

- The Data Centre Build and CO₂ based cooling solution:
- Modus Group (<http://www.modusgroup.com/>)
- TROX AITCS (<http://www.troxuk.co.uk/uk/>)
- HurleyPalmerFlatt (<http://www.hurleypalmerflatt.com/>)
- Central Printing Solution:
- SafeCom (<http://www.safecom.eu/>)

The problem

Imperial College has committed to reducing Carbon emissions by 20% until 2014. IT related activities account for 17% of all carbon emissions, therefore ICT need to pull its weight. Windows desktop PCs remained to be the highest consumer of ICT electricity in the College at 37% of all IT related power consumption. Although we had introduced Windows Power Saving as a College policy in 2006, this has not achieved the level of savings expected due to shortcomings with the out-of-the-box solution. We also identified other areas where ICT can support sustainability initiatives across the spectrum: the Data Centres, avoiding paper wastage and reducing its use, and promoting remote working.

The approach

We looked at all elements making up the problem environment: customer requirements and impact on them, winning the hearts-and-minds of the people who will make it happen and infrastructure components. We then adopted a step-by-step approach addressing one issue at a time and then measuring how much impact it made, which allowed us to agree on the best next step. By consistently taking action in each of these areas identified, the impact has progressively grown over the years.

Our goals

- Reduce carbon emissions caused by IT related activities
- Minimise impact on College business to ensure any initiative introduced will not adversely affect user confidence
- Ensure solutions are simple for maximum adoptability and use by our customers
- Ensure our customers have a good understanding of our objectives so that they can apply it more extensively to their lives

Obstacles and solutions

Obstacle/challenges	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of understanding of the problem among our customers • Technical diversity of equipment making it more difficult to introduce generic solutions • Need to produce a simple solution which can be understood and used by all our customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the manual sleep button and “step-change” campaign • Remote wake-up solution, auto-sleep application, power league between departments • CO₂ based efficient cooling system in teh Data Centre • Central printing system and business applications aiming to reduce use / waste of paper • Remote working / meeting solutions to reduce travel

Profile

- Consistently rated amongst the world's best universities, Imperial College London is a science-based institution with a reputation for excellence in teaching and research.
- Founded 1907
- 13,964 full-time students (10-11)
- 12:1.1 student/staff ratio (10-11)
- Students from 126 countries
- 242 taught courses
- 29.7 average A level score on entry

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Green Gown Awards case study



Performance and results

We now produce equivalent of 4,400 tonnes less CO2 per annum on average and save £700K per annum compared to when we started as a result of the sustainability improvements we have made in IT related activities. We hope to improve this by a further 1,600 tonnes CO2 per annum in 2012 translating into a total annual saving of £1m.

Lessons learned

It has been vital to win the hearts and minds of the users to be able to turn solutions into results. Reviewing every solution design again and again proved to be very useful. We have seen that removing even one extra step from a solution increased the chances of the solution to be used by our customers significantly. We have also seen that putting measures and follow-up procedures in place are critical to achieve the maximum benefit.

Further information

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