



Serendipity Ice Cream, Sydney

Serendipity Ice Cream has reduced consumption across the board without sacrificing their bottom line. Within 2 years of implementing waste reduction initiatives, the company reduced its overall waste by 29% while still achieving double-digit growth.

Recycling & Green Initiatives

Vision

Serendipity may have started with the aim of making the world's greatest ice cream, but the company's journey towards sustainability has also made its staff and customers happier too. One step at a time, Serendipity evolved to take on a wide range of eco-friendly actions, from renewable sources of electricity to a no plastic bags policy. However it is reducing, reusing and recycling that has provided the greatest rewards with minimal effort.

"Reducing waste and increasing recycling is something of a no-brainer. It takes very little effort to do, very little training, and actually saves us money." – Sarah Mandelson, CEO, Director

Planning

Marrickville Council's Environmental Sustainability Team approached the company to help them calculate volumes of waste, water and CO2 used before and after the waste reduction and recycling program was implemented. The council also connected Serendipity with other local businesses and experts for advice and ideas.

As Serendipity is a medium-sized business employing 25 staff, everyone is involved in implementing waste reduction initiatives, which mostly run on their own with occasional refreshers. New ideas are discussed with any affected staff, then developed and implemented with their input.

Implementation

To raise awareness amongst customers, a large sign drew attention to the no plastic bag policy – every bag that customers requested incurred a small donation to



Greenpeace. Gradually, most customers started using pre-loved newspaper to wrap their ice cream, supplied for free by Serendipity.

Serendipity has implemented a wide range of sustainability initiatives:

- ♻️ 100% accredited Green Power is purchased.
- ♻️ Waste is sorted and recycled to reduce waste disposal costs.
- ♻️ Re-useable and/or recycled office stationery and office supplies are used.
- ♻️ Product packaging is reused for lining bins instead of purchasing new garbage bags.



- △ Ice cream is only wrapped in pre-loved newspaper. There is a no plastic bag policy in the factory shop.
- △ Cooling water from the machinery in the ice cream factory is used for rinsing factory equipment prior to cleaning.
- △ All non-emergency lighting is turned off at the end of each day.
- △ Staff are encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport to work.
- △ Staff are encouraged to use re-usable coffee cups.
- △ Serendipity packaging is 100% recyclable, with some packaging including a recycled component.
- △ Used toners and mobile phones are recycled through 'Cartridges 4 Planet Ark' and Mobile Muster collection points.

Results and Benefits

In addition to reducing company waste and the costs of disposal, the recycling program has also improved staff morale and garnered positive feedback from customers. Serendipity was formally recognised in the 2012 Marrickville Small Business Environment Awards, and by Earth Hour in 2011 and 2012.

Challenges & the Future

Attempting to communicate the benefits of some environmental initiatives has occasionally stoked some cynicism amongst some of Serendipity's customers, however the majority of feedback has been positive.

The other main challenge has been identifying the practices that will deliver significant environmental benefits for the least cost. However the principles of reducing, reusing and recycling have so far continued to deliver tangible benefits while also reducing costs.

At the time of writing, Serendipity was collecting data on fuel used by their delivery vehicles, as well as calculating the CO2 generated by other business activities. These are part of a strategy to reduce CO2 generation where possible, and to offset carbon produced. Their ultimate aim is to be carbon neutral in the next year.



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Make recycling at work easy! Visit BusinessRecycling.com.au to check out reuse and recycling options for around 90 different materials, find out how to choose the right recycler, download signage to help with recycling, and learn what other workplaces are doing to manage waste and improve sustainability.



Planet Ark's BusinessRecycling.com.au is a partnership program that has been funded by the NSW Environment Protection Authority, and the Victorian Government.



The information included here has been provided to Planet Ark by the named business for the purpose of encouraging other businesses to recycle and 'green' their workplaces. Although we strongly applaud the actions outlined, Planet Ark does not necessarily endorse them or the specific business.