

Aggressive Diversion in the Office Supplies Sector

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Company Background

Who is Corporate Express?

- **Supplier of office and computer products, imaging and computer graphic supplies, office furniture, facility supplies, document and print management, desktop software, and promotional products.**
- **2004 sales of approximately \$4.5 billion in North America.**
- **1400 trucks, 28 distribution centers across the US.**
- **North American Headquarters in Broomfield, CO.**

Environmental Sustainability at Corporate Express

- Sustainability program name: Ecooffice



Logo



Catalog icon

- Focus is on 3 major areas:
 - In-House Operations
 - Product Offering
 - Suppliers & Contracts
- Work In Progress

Sustainability Program Goals

- True environmental benefit



- Business case made where possible
- Minimize operational impact
- Measure and reward successes and innovative ideas
- Paradigm shift: this is the way we go to business

Sustainability Initiatives: In-House Operations

- **Fleet**
 - Research / implement alternative fuel vehicles
- **Customers**
 - Implement recycling programs
- **Building Operations**
 - Implement waste reduction and energy-saving measures
 - Purchase recycled products
 - Promote awareness through internal initiatives/competition
 - **Measure, maximize and reward diversion from landfill**

Building Operations – Major Waste Streams

- **Office Wastes:**
 - Mixed Paper
 - Cardboard (OCC)
 - Cafeteria & Breakroom Wastes (Food, Disposable Dishes)
 - Commingled Beverage Containers
- **Distribution Center Wastes:**
 - Mixed Paper
 - Cardboard (OCC)
 - Pallets
 - Stretch Wrap
 - Plastic Banding

Office Buildings Diversion Strategy

- **Divert compostable wastes**
- **Increase paper recyclable items accepted and participation rate**
- **Increase commingled recyclable items accepted and participation rate**
- **Deal with special and/or one-time wastes**
- **Renew contracts with improved rates**

Office Buildings: Waste Diversion

- **Headquarters**
 - Cafeteria serving 400 meals/day, all on styrofoam
 - Over 200 55-gallon bags of trash per from café (not including kitchen)
- **Installed a commercial dishwasher**
 - Purchased reusable dishes
 - Purchased biodegradable disposables; charge a nominal fee for their use
 - Installed dish return racks on all floors
 - Set up explanatory table tents in cafeteria for 2 months

Office Buildings: Waste Diversion

- **Implemented a compostables collection program**
 - Cafeteria, kitchen break rooms
 - All food waste, napkins, plant waste, biodegradable dishes
 - No plastic-coated items / very high standards
 - Eco-Cycle transports to A-1 Organics; they sell finished product to Boulder farmers
 - Over 25,000 pounds diverted in the first 6 months

Office Buildings: Waste Diversion

- **Key Learnings:**
 - **Much research prior to rollout**
 - Containers, liners, dishes, etc.
 - Many associates not familiar with “compostable” concept
 - Fears of bad odors, attracting bugs, etc. are unfounded
 - Nominal charge for disposables was the right thing to do
 - Earth Day compost giveaway tie-in very successful
 - Communicate, communicate, communicate

Distribution Centers: Waste Diversion

- **Initiated duplex copy and print at all DCs (start small)**
- **Then moved to waste stream analyses at all DCs**
 - Found that the #1 waste stream for volume and opportunity is OCC
 - Some DCs generate up to 35 tons per month
- **Negotiated contracts coming up for renewal**
 - Drafted a standard CE / hauler agreement
 - Determined baler vs compactor

Distribution Centers: Waste Diversion

- **Concurrent with contract renewal:**
 - Installing pressure gauges (full loads only)
 - Move the compactor (discourages contamination of recyclables, which are subsequently landfilled)
- **Results**
 - Four facilities completed thus far
 - Annual savings at one DC \$50K with no changes to operations, could go to \$70K with minor operational changes

Distribution Centers: Waste Diversion

- **Key Learnings**

- **Starting small and having HQ pave the way is very important to the field**
- **Many associates unaware of the value of their discards**
- **Increased labor costs associated with balers almost always offset with increased rebates**
- **OCC successes will pave the way for more problematic materials**
- **DCs asking for competition amongst themselves even before implementation**

Corporate Express Sustainability Program

- **In Summary**

- **More operational challenges and opportunities ahead:**

- **Rolling out all “waves”**
- **Quantifying our successes**
- **Rewarding innovation**

- **Ecoffice**

- **Positive environmental benefits / reduced environmental impact**
- **The way we go to business**