

Administration

Often, much of your actual business happens behind the scenes. Here are some ideas to make your organization's administration more efficient and sustainable.

Quick Start



Turn the clean side of discarded printed pages into notepads. Why use new paper when your recycling bin is full of single-sided scrap? Better yet, print double-sided whenever possible. Just set the default values on all computers to automatically print double-sided and you're done.

How to Introduce Sustainability to your Office

Case Study: Natural Cycle

[Natural Cycle](#) is a bike-courier company dedicated to human-powered vehicles. As a worker-owned co-operative run by a team of young people in Winnipeg, it offers city-wide courier services with a negligible carbon footprint, benefiting both the local economy and the environment.

Most cities have bike courier companies. Find one near you at the [International Federation of Bike Messenger Associations](#).

Try This!

Discourage your employees from printing unless absolutely necessary—most printing happens out of habit more than anything else. But if you do need to keep paper records, take these steps to reduce your impact and save a little green:

- ◆ Shred sensitive files and recycle.
- ◆ Reuse paper for scrap or reprinting within the office.
- ◆ Reuse file folders for other paper documents.
- ◆ Choose paper with at least 30% recycled, post-consumer content.

Last One Out, Hit the Switch

- ◆ Turn off lights, computers, scanners and printers at night, and set computer monitors to automatically sleep during the day after a period of inactivity—it won't cost a thing. In fact, it will save you money.

FLICK OFF Campaign

FLICK OFF is a movement to reduce the heat-trapping greenhouse gases that cause climate change. It was initiated by Key Gordon, a Toronto advertising agency, to encourage Canadians to decrease energy use through simple steps like flicking off lights and idle computers. The campaign is rooted in the idea that remarkable things can happen when people come together. Check out [FLICK OFF](#) to pick up practical tips as well as your own Action Kit, and get the ball rolling at your office.

The Power of a Bar

Electronic equipment and other appliances continue to draw power even when they are turned off. Rid your office of "vampire" power by plugging equipment into a power bar that can easily be switched off when the equipment is not in use. Choose a bar with surge protection to protect your equipment from power fluctuations.

Reach For the Stars

- ◆ When replacing office equipment, look for [Energy Star](#)-qualified brands and models.

(Scenario) Case Study: River City Music Festival

Desirée keeps the books and manages the office for the River City Music Festival—an annual event and year-round arts organization based in Winnipeg, MB, that draws bluegrass fans from across Canada and the US. One day, she receives an e-mail from a friend that catches her eye. The note is a collection of easy "how to make your office sustainable" tips.

With all the buzz about sustainability, Desirée gives the message a closer look. She likes the idea of streamlining her job, reducing paper waste and shrinking the festival's carbon footprint.

The festival relies heavily on local courier services to send packages and envelopes all over Winnipeg. So Desirée looks up a few bike-messenger companies, and enquires about pricing and services. She discovers that the companies price out about the same as her current vehicle-based courier, and switches over.

Like any business or organization, River City Music Festival generates a great deal of paperwork. E-mails and some other documents are saved electronically but quite disorganized. Desirée feels they can do better, so she researches electronic file management systems and finds one that meets their needs.

Desirée spends a good deal of time manually processing invoices and cutting cheques. Wondering if there is a better way, she researches electronic bill payments for business. She quickly finds a company that offers a software program and service that allows her to pay bills to vendors, suppliers and service providers no matter how small they are. No cheques, no paper, no postage.

Since the festival now pays its suppliers directly, Desirée wonders if it makes sense to offer the same convenience to festival patrons. She works internally with her marketing and management team, and creates an incentive for patrons to purchase tickets and merchandise online. Her colleagues investigate several options, including a discounted admission for those purchasing online or a freebie to redeem at the festival. Consumers soon begin welcoming the convenience of the paperless transaction.

Desirée dramatically reduces the "paper churn" through her office—helping the planet, saving costs and sparing her a few mundane and repetitive tasks.