

Alternative Greening

Company Director Mani Norland greens his own home-study business.

Finally the news is full of talk about Climate Change. It is something many have been concerned about for a long time. In fact it would be interesting to know how many people in the UK already feel they are doing something. We made changes in our life styles to help long ago. We stopped travelling abroad, we change light bulbs, we turned heating down, we recycled, we buy locally, we turned things off stand-by and we drive less.

But last year we became owners of our own business when we bought Alternative Training - a small organisation that sells home study courses in alternative medicine. One of the real joys of that was being able to take the company green. Sure, being called Alternative Training and being into alternative medicine makes being green an obvious step. But it is still a choice that every company can make, and how green is up to the directors and staff. Our business wanted to see how far it could go. The business recycles all it can. We ensure paper is recycled or comes from renewable sources, we offset our business and personal carbon emissions by planting trees using 'Moor Trees' in Devon, we leave the heating off or keep it turned low (we

do like jumpers!), we turn off as much of the equipment as we can in the office every night, we try not to drive too much (... we've got bikes and we can walk to work) and we've changed to energy saving light bulbs.



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We found all this relatively easy. In fact we were very surprised at just how easy (and cheap) it was to aim for the goal of Carbon Neutral. We live in a time of speed and convenience and I have to say it was very easy and hassle free. Calculating our Carbon Foot print took minutes at <http://www.nef.org.uk/energyadvice/co2calculator.htm>. Then seeing what could be done to improve things across the business took a one hour brain storming meeting - which was good fun. Then after some investigation and agreement on changes (switching energy suppliers, checking where paper came from) we



recalculated our Carbon Footprint. Finally we got in touch with Moor Trees www.moortrees.org to off set the rest. The whole thing was done in a day! Simple.

For us and many others out there it is wonderful to finally see people waking up to the problem. At last it feels like some action may come. This could be a real test for humanity, and it will be interesting to see how we cope. Lack of action really could mean a planetary disaster of our making. The finger is pointing at us - not nature or some enemy. What will we tell our children? How will humanity cope? Will it become the survival of the fittest, where the wealthy run and hide, or will humanity get together and work as a community to help one another? We know which we would prefer.

Making our products greener, so customers can buy and feel that they are doing their bit is something we are considering. And Alternative Training is a tiny business and our home study courses are not a great source of Carbon. But if everyone does a few small things the change will be huge. What are you doing?

Contact Mani on 0845 2578887 or see www.alternative-training.com.