

# OPUS™



## Environmental Sustainability Policy

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## Environmental Sustainability Policy

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### Introduction

We believe that everybody is responsible for the preservation of our environment - and that includes us. Of course we want to be successful in our business goals, but we want to do this whilst ensuring we reduce the impact we have on the environment. That's why we are committed to playing our part. We're sure you've read many of these, so we're going to keep it simple.

### What Are We Doing Now?

Well, we're taking steps to ensure that our team can play its part. As we are a telecoms company, we're using the technology we provide to help clients reduce carbon emissions, by enabling them to work effectively from home. We also use conference bridges to enable several people participate in a telephone call, cutting down on the need to travel.

Our efforts don't stop there. We recycle waste in our offices and ensure that we use paper and other resources responsibly to reduce emissions. We dispose of old equipment in line with current legislation. We also invest in our support staff and equipment, and this lets us deal with 90% of all support calls from our offices.

Whilst we're doing everything we can, we still have to travel and run offices, so we calculate our carbon footprint and each year we plant enough trees to ensure we're carbon neutral.

### And in The Future?

We want our environmental policy to evolve. We are committed to changing our working patterns to help us preserve the environment. We will inform new team members about our environmental policy and help them play their part. Educating our team will continue and we will empower them to make their own impact on this policy.

We will be more responsible about our resources, such as company vehicles, ensuring that they are replaced appropriately when due for renewal. We'll also ensure that our offices use recycled or sustainable materials, and will look to our suppliers to do the same. To ensure that the whole OPUS team gets involved, we will appoint an environmental champion in each of our offices, so the ideas to develop this policy keep coming in.

We know that we don't have all the answers, so if you have great ideas to help us do business more responsibly, please contact **HR** at [HR@opustech.co.uk](mailto:HR@opustech.co.uk). We'd love to hear your ideas!

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## **Environmental & Sustainability Policy**

Opus recognises that virtually all the activities of a company, or an individual, have some impact on the environment. Our aim, as a telecoms company, is to reduce the adverse impact of our own business, through a programme of improvement, and by suggesting environmentally beneficial ideas, and sustainable product solutions, to our clients.

Our environmental policy is to:

Monitor the environmental impacts of our business operations, and to set specific targets, wherever appropriate;

- Comply with current legislation and codes of practice and, where possible, seek to meet future legislative requirements ahead of statutory deadlines;
- Integrate environmental objectives into relevant business decisions in a cost-efficient manner;
- Require all colleagues to address environmental responsibilities within the framework of normal operating procedures;
- Minimize waste, both within our company and also to help clients do the same, by advising on the product choices available to them, so as to reduce future waste;
- Influence our clients in the use of products and processes which reduce any harmful impacts of their projects on the environment;
- Use available information on recent advances in renewable energy sources, where possible and if appropriate, advise clients of environmentally beneficial alternatives;
- Enhance awareness of relevant environmental issues among clients, colleagues and others who have an interest in, or interaction with, our business.

Opus is committed to promoting sustainability. Concern for the environment and promoting a broader sustainability agenda are integral to OPUS' professional activities and the management of the organisation. We aim to follow and to promote good sustainability practice, to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of all our activities, and to help our clients to do the same.

We are committed to the following sustainability principles:

- To comply with, and exceed where practicable, all applicable legislation, regulations and codes of practice.
- To integrate sustainability considerations into all our business decisions.
- To ensure that all staff are fully aware of our Environmental & Sustainability Policy and are committed to implementing and improving it.
- To minimise the impact on sustainability of all office and transportation activities.
- To make clients aware of our Policy, and encourage them to choose sound sustainable options.

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To review, annually report, and to continually strive to improve our environmental and sustainability performance.

## Environmental Impact

### Building Energy Efficiency & Management

Opus will, so far as is reasonably practicable, look to reduce the overall energy consumption of its premises and operations, within the constraints of the rental agreement. In particular, we will:

- reduce the energy consumption of office equipment by purchasing energy efficient items;
- lights in offices all on sensor timers;
- turn off computer monitors and other office equipment when not in use
- TVs and Stats boards on timers; and
- purchase fair-trade and/or organic provisions for the office, wherever possible.

### Transport/Travel

Carbon emissions and other pollutants from unnecessary trips can have a significant effect on local pollution, and can also have a global effect. To help reduce this, Opus' will do the following:

- Through investment in technology and staff training, aim to solve the majority (currently 90%) of our clients reported telephony and mobile device problems through remote access from our offices in RH2, avoiding the need to send a field engineer
- avoid travelling physically to meetings where alternatives are available and practical, such as using teleconferencing, video conferencing or web cams, and implement efficient timing of meetings to avoid multiple trips. These options are often more time efficient, while not sacrificing the benefits of regular contact with clients and partners, and they also reduce harmful vehicle emissions and pollution of the environment
- arrange for large telephony hardware items to be delivered direct from supplier factory to end-user premises (rather than via Opus), to reduce the environmental impact as far as possible
- when the company vehicles (currently running on diesel) used to transport field engineers and make deliveries require replacement, we will investigate the feasibility of using vehicles which run on Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), and whether there is adequate availability of LPG locally;
- Opus will seek a 20% mpg (miles per gallon) improvement in replacement vehicles (our fuel efficiency average is currently 62mpg). Vehicles which return less than 50mpg will be ineligible for consideration;

- Our engineers' visits to clients will be carefully programmed to avoid duplicate journeys, and drop-offs will be used to avoid single journeys by individual engineers to client locations which are close to each other. Our aim is to restrict the number of vehicle trips to the minimum possible, and load items into company vehicles and plan routes in a manner which facilitates the most efficient route possible;
- To reduce travel time/ emissions, and to provide a better service to our central London clients, Opus we will make full use of our satellite office opened 9 years ago in hosted premises in the City of London. As this office is within walking distance of MITEL's showrooms, we will take clients there, rather than using other methods which are less favourable from an environmental point of view, to demonstrate product features to clients.

## Energy & Water Usage

Opus recognises the importance of using renewable sources of energy and, where appropriate, will suggest to client's products which are energy-efficient and help them make informed choices, by supplying energy efficiency comparators between similar products, wherever comparators are available.

Within the constraints of a rented office environment, Opus will seek to operate its business processes in the most energy-efficient manner possible, and will work with the landlord to effect further improvements in this regard.

Opus will comply with any client information requirements relating to carbon, energy and associated subjects, and will work with them to quantify and report achievements made in reducing their carbon footprint, through our expert and carefully phased replacement of their telephony systems and/or mobile devices.

We will seek to minimise our use of water.

## Reducing, Re-using & Recycling

To reduce the impact of our company's activities on the environment we will:

- use recycled paper in photocopiers, printers and fax machines, wherever possible;
- use minimal packaging (avoid re-boxing items, wherever possible, and reuse cartons in which goods were delivered), together with careful packing within our company vehicles (which also saves fuel, by reducing the overall weight of the vehicle);
- minimise our use of paper and other office consumables, for example by using
- paper double-sided, and identifying opportunities to reduce waste;
- as far as possible, arrange for the reuse or recycling of office waste, including paper
- we will re-use computer supplies and redundant equipment for training purposes, rent these out to provide a low-cost service to start-up and other budget-constrained businesses, or break them up for use as spare parts

- recycled stock will be sold to companies which purchase such items. The final remaining bits of equipment will be taken either to the local Council recycling facilities, or returned to relevant manufacturers, wherever possible

Telecoms suppliers get opportunities to influence the purchasing decisions of their customers. With this in mind, Opus considers all relevant aspects of how the products it supplies may affect the environment. In particular, we:

- we will routinely advise clients on environmentally-friendly options (such as products made from recycled/ recyclable materials), both in terms of long-term cost savings and benefits, when designing bespoke systems for them
- will ensure that maximum possible use is made of new client's existing legacy telephony infrastructure. Our phasing of the rollout of replacement equipment will be tailored, not only help to reduce the client's own carbon footprint, but also to enable the greatest possible return from existing systems.
- substitute suitable alternatives for items ordered by customers which are out of stock, so as to avoid a future delivery consisting solely of the out of stock item; and,
- discourage use of products with a disproportionately adverse impact on the environment, in favour of more environmentally friendly alternatives.

To further reduce the amount of energy consumption both in our own activities and that of our customers, we will encourage fault reporting via our web portal, by email or by phone, rather than through the post or by fax.

## Waste Disposal

Opus will:

- seek to minimise the generation of waste
- identify all waste that has the potential to be removed from the premises
- establish contracts with appropriate waste disposal companies to ensure that waste is removed from the premises safely
- confirm with the waste disposal companies the specific items which can or cannot be placed in the receptacles provided
- provide suitable waste collection receptacles dependent upon the waste to be disposed and where relevant label or sign the receptacles to easily identify the disposal of waste
- ensure that any chemical waste or unknown substances are stored in their original containers until an authorized waste disposal company can remove them from the company premises
- maintain any copies of waste transfer notes on site for a minimum of two years for future reference
- instruct all employees in the correct disposal of waste and maintain records of instruction and training on file.

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## **Supply Chain & Market Place**

Opus views suppliers as an integral part of our business, and works with them to obtain the very best value from goods and services we order and supply to our customers. We seek to supply products from manufacturers whose design and construction activities are undertaken in a manner compatible with sustainable development.

We give consideration to quality, reliability, logistics, supply chain information and maintenance requirements to offer, as far as possible, a sustainable choice to clients.

Over the last 21 years, Opus has chosen to supply products from only 3 carefully-chosen manufacturers, MITEL, Panasonic and Aastra. In particular, we specialise in MITEL products as, not only are these of the highest quality and technological innovation, they are also the 'greenest' and most energy-efficient available in the industry, as indicated by comparator figures for energy consumption, electricity costs and carbon emissions.

Although headquartered in Canada, MITEL products are assembled in Wales, thus supporting UK employment and technical manufacturing expertise.

Measuring progress towards a more sustainable future using Key Environmental Performance Indicators is important. Where the data is available, Opus considers the amount of Operational Energy, Water use and Waste discharges of production processes, in order to help customers, make informed choices designed to increase sustainability.

To assist customers, understand/reduce their own environmental impact, and/or to assist them in their efforts to secure accreditation such as ISO14001, where requested, Opus will provide information on such relevant data as energy usage pertaining to specified orders and/or time periods.

Our Continuing Professional Development (CPD) supports our efforts to continually seek to improve processes, and measure the progress made in improving sustainability.

Opus will always keep up-to-date with new regulations. In particular, we will follow any relevant Best Practice Code available for our industry, and keep ourselves informed about innovative energy and/or cost-saving initiatives, and implement these, wherever relevant and feasible

When considering product design/ features and advising clients, we understand the need to encourage sustainable use. In particular, we:

- will try to recommend purchase of materials/products whose energy input to longevity ratio means they are more sustainable;
- will take account of sustainability scores, where available, for various products,
- try to advise that any timber and timber products, are recycled or from well-managed, sustainable sources and are Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified.
- assess the whole life environmental performance of all purchases.

Opus will comply with, and wherever possible, exceed any client environmental requirements (such as the Client's Environmental Purchasing Policy), and demonstrate this through their and our monitoring processes, site visits and/or through our Key Performance Indicator reports, which we have maintained since 2003/04 to aid our continual improvement.

Opus will avoid the use of environmentally- harmful products, such as CFCs, non-FSC timber or timber products, unapproved pesticides, asbestos materials, peat, paint with lead or VOC content greater than 5%.

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## **Community Investment & Social Impact**

Opus seeks to be a good corporate citizen within its local community, and aims not only to meet, but to exceed, its corporate social responsibilities. This includes:

- donations to a number of charities (Macmillan, Barnardo's and Alzheimer's to name a few)

Wherever possible, we engage in events relating to local businesses and corporate issues, including those concerning the environment and sustainability.

As a local, independent business itself, Opus will actively support its local shops and economy through our procurement practices, so as provide greater job security for local people.

## **Employment Practices**

Opus believes that every one of our employees has a duty to care for the environment, and we encourage our employees to consider the environmental impacts of their working practices, including travel to/ from work by:

- encouraging employees to walk, cycle and/or use public transport to attend the office, meetings and visits to clients, apart from in circumstances where the alternatives are impractical and/or cost-prohibitive; and,
- supporting employee efforts to use public transport wherever possible;
- we will continue to seek suggestions from employees to improve our employment practices.

## **Monitoring & Reporting**

Opus aims to cause minimal damage to the environment through all of our activities, including sourcing, distribution, use and disposal. We will ensure we have access to up to date legislation and best practice through a number of sources e.g. our retained consultants (), attendance at local events (such as Green Business Network Workshops and Environmental Fairs), and through manufacturer environmental stewardship updates.

While each member of staff within Opus has an annual review, conducted by senior members of the team, to ensure that best practice is being followed, informal assessment of staff performance takes place throughout the year, with constructive feedback given to help employees continuously improve both their own performance, and the service offered to customers, including all relevant environmental and sustainability dimensions.

Our Environmental & Sustainability Policy will be reviewed annually to check if new practices and design techniques can be incorporated. We will also seek to continually improve our sustainability practices, and annually review progress made towards achieving our goals. Findings will be reported to, and followed up by, top-level management.

To further the aims of this policy we will:

- provide adequate environmental training for all staff
- assess the environmental performance of all suppliers
- seek continual improvements in our environmental and sustainability performance, and develop a set of environmental targets and action plans, if required to ensure success in meeting our aspirations.