

Warren Board Sales - Packing Environmental Management with Common Sense



Key facts

Name: Warren Board Sales Ltd	Year of ISO 14001 certification: 2009
Sector: Packaging	Period to implement EMS: 13 months
Number of employees: 28	
Turnover: £17m	
Location: Leicestershire	

Key successes

- Improvements to fuel efficiency and business travel
- 41%¹ reduction in packaging material weight
- 59%¹ reduction in landfill waste
- Annual energy savings of over 36,000 kWh (>3,000 kWh per £m turnover) - a 47%¹ saving

Warren Board Sales Ltd (Warren Board) is the UK's leading independent supplier of carton board and offers a wide range of packaging, graphical and point of sale boards to UK and European customers, including carton converters, paper merchants, printers and point of sale or display specialists. The company has been in business for over 30 years and operates from a single site in Glenfield, Leicestershire.

Applying commercial common sense:

Having decided to implement an ISO 14001 certified environmental management system (EMS) to demonstrate the company's commitment to the environment, the Warren Board management team recognised that the EMS had to take a common sense approach and deliver both environmental and commercial benefits. The company's previous experience with quality management had been of a bureaucratic, document-heavy system that produced little or no practical value for an already well administered company. Lessons were learnt from this and the EMS was designed to avoid unnecessary paperwork and bureaucracy from the outset. To help with EMS implementation, specialist consultancy support was used, with Business Link match funding helping to improve affordability.

Commitment from the top down:

To gain staff commitment, the EMS was introduced to the workforce by Operations Director, David Whitaker who told them: "If you consider yourself a green environmentalist, you're going to love this. On the other hand, if your priority is the bottom line, then you're going to love this!" Warren Board successfully attained ISO 14001 certification after an implementation period of just over a year. Looking back,

David stated: "the EMS certification process proved to be a surprisingly positive experience for the company and ISO 14001 is one of the very few externally certified standards that the company would not hesitate to recommend to other organisations".

The key elements of the company's existing culture, which helped to make the EMS successful, were the high levels of staff engagement and a strong team approach with few if any barriers between staff and senior management. The EMS engaged Warren Board's staff such that they took ownership of it contributing a range of ideas that led to environmental and cost savings. This was helped by a sound understanding



**David Whitaker,
Operations
Director**
"For us, the EMS was an extension of the sound commercial practices that we've adopted over many years, and ISO 14001 certification was simply a way of demonstrating this publicly."

Warren Board Sales - Packing Environmental Management with Common Sense



of the environmental policy and targets developed through staff awareness training.

To ensure a performance-based approach, a robust monitoring system was established which focused on the company's significant environmental aspects - namely: electricity use, business travel efficiency, forklift efficiency, third party haulage, secondary packaging and office consumables. This allowed Warren Board to set targets and track improvement on a year-by-year basis.

More efficient driving:

A key environmental aspect for Warren Board is business travel and associated fuel use. By switching to more fuel efficient vehicles in a 3 year company car replacement programme, delivering eco-driver training and challenging company car drivers to drive more efficiently, significant savings have been achieved. Average fuel economy has risen from 40.7 mpg to 47.4 mpg in three years – a 16% improvement.

A new EMS target was also introduced focusing on the number of miles driven per customer visit. By improving journey planning for customer visits, Warren Board made, over two years, a 6% reduction in the miles travelled per customer visit from 48.2 miles to 45.8.

Improving fork lift efficiency:

The company has also begun a 5 year forklift replacement programme, switching from LPG to electric trucks, which is delivering significant results. Average fork lift energy consumption per hour has reduced from 35 kW to 25.6 kW in the first year - a 27% improvement - with the newer electric trucks consuming as little as 4.0 kW per hour each.

Shrinking packaging levels:

The weight of customer packaging has been reduced by redesigned labelling and the introduction of lower density shrink wrap, with annual savings of 41%¹ made in the weight of shrink wrap polythene used over two years. This also helps to reduce waste for Warren Board's customers.



Improving waste management:

Warren Board has focused heavily on waste management and by increasing recycling has delivered a reduction of 59%¹ in annual waste landfilled over the first two years of the EMS. Current waste levels equate to a single 1.1m³ Eurobin of waste sent to landfill every fortnight from 100,000 square feet of warehouse and office space.

Energy savings:

The EMS also led Warren Board to focus on energy efficiency, reducing electricity consumption through improved controls, increased staff awareness and the introduction of more energy efficient equipment. In just two years, the company achieved annual energy savings of 3,119 kWh per £m turnover – a 47%¹ reduction. Energy savings improved by a further 11% in real terms in the third year.

The Operations Director pointed out that: "whilst it is not always possible to consume less, it is often possible to consume in a smarter, more efficient manner", highlighting the company's common sense approach to environmental management. The EMS has been a 'win-win' for Warren Board with environmental impact reduced across a number of areas and some strong savings achieved as a result.

¹ % saving normalised against turnover – 2010 vs 2008.