

THE BACKGROUND

The GMC, with funding from the Enterprise Connect WIIN (Workshops, Industry Intelligence and Networking) Program conducted a Sustainable Industry Program aimed at increasing the competitive advantage of manufacturing businesses through the adoption of sustainability practices.



Deane Belfield (BEng, M EnvSci./Bus) CEO for ECO₂Sys, with over 20 years assisting business become more sustainable, facilitated the program. He is recognised for his expertise and passion for the subject, having developed diagnostic tools for Sustainable Business

for the South Australian Government and Enterprise Connect's Business Review *Sustainability Diagnostic Tool*.

Increasingly businesses recognise the need to become more sustainable, and this program was designed for the typically resource intensive manufacturing businesses in the Geelong region, and their supply chains; consumers of high levels of energy, water and materials, with the associated waste streams and greenhouse gas emissions.

"The aim of the program was to lead companies to significantly improve their environmental sustainability whilst providing clear commercial advantages."



THE PROGRAM

The program featured a series of 7 interactive and progressive workshops, taking around 20 manufacturing companies on an improvement journey to learn and apply sustainability practices. Beginning with an interactive DVD workshop with Dr Bob Willard, author and speaker on the Sustainability Advantage, the clear message was that as much as 66% can be added to the bottom line of SME businesses by adopting sustainable business practices.

Drawing on inspiration from Ray Anderson, late CEO, Interface Carpets, Ed Mongan, VP Environment and Climate Change, BHP Billiton, Paul Allen, GM Packaging, Australian Paper, and Jason Walker, Ai Group, motivation and determination for change amongst the group was high.

The participants utilised the 5Star Sustainability SME assessment tool and collected data on their current resource and waste efficiency, benchmarking their performance within the group and with best practice. This highlighted specific areas to focus on. Sustainability visions, policies, objectives and action plans were all created during the program and insights into supporting behavioural change provided.



Site visits at Bartlett's Environmental and Godfrey Hirst Australia demonstrated sustainability in action.

THE OUTCOME

The program culminated in a Showcase Event where the Mayor of Geelong, John Mitchell, praised the group for their positive approach, acknowledging the innovative capabilities within the manufacturing sector in finding ways to reduce carbon emissions, improve resource efficiency and build more sustainable supply chains; in keeping with The Future Proofing Geelong Initiative.

Richard Marles MP presented certificates and was impressed by the results already achieved;

"These companies are really leading the way in the adoption of sustainable practices that we all need to get on board with."

Leading sustainable business identity & guest speaker Ralph Plarre, "The Sustainable Baker" gave an engaging and motivating review of the award winning Ferguson Plarre Bakeries Case Study, encouraging participants to continue to



seek improvements to their sustainability outcomes. He congratulated the participants and the GMC for creating in his opinion a vibrant and industry leading sustainability program.

Graduating companies included; Backwell IXL, Bartlett's Environmental, Geelong Galvanizing, Godfrey Hirst Australia, Incitec Pivot, Insulpak, Lyondellbasell, NexTgenWind, Ngtech, Onesteel, Phalanx Resources, Riverside Textiles. Participating companies included; Cray Valley Australia, Ford, Greenline, ICT, Kempe, McElligott Partners and Showerline.

David Peart from the GMC said,

"With an average carbon footprint of 16,748 TCO_{2e} per company, this underscores their reliance on energy and presents a tremendous opportunity for efficiency and carbon improvements. We see this program as an important stepping stone to a longer term project to progress the actions needed to future proof our region."

1. Godfrey Hirst

Participant Robert Lunardelli, Environmental Engineer, invited the group to tour the plant at South Geelong. Godfrey Hirst is Australia's largest carpet manufacturer, with



over 140 years manufacturing experience and are the proud winners of the 2011 Premier's Sustainability Award for introducing sustainability practices into their daily business operations over the last 7 years. In 2010 they invested in a water treatment plant which saves both energy, (5% reduction per year) and water (250 million litres per year). Interestingly, despite their awards and activity in the sustainability area, Godfrey Hirst not only see that they can continue to learn and to make improvements, but they are happy to open their doors so others can learn from them. As Robert says *"We are a good example in many respects, our next challenge is to continue to use the tools and principles learnt to provide justification for activity in needed areas"*

2. Bartlett's Environmental

Bartlett's Environmental has also won their fair share of awards, recently awarded 2011 Business of the Year (Geelong Business Excellence Awards). Rating well when it comes to sustainability; Bartlett's has introduced Mobile Dewatering technology into Australia.



This technology removes water from liquid waste, which can be returned to the source, decreasing transportable waste by up to 95%, significantly reducing carbon emissions.

Despite their strengths in sustainability and innovation Business Development Manager, Glyn Davison said *"The program has highlighted the need to review our*

environmental policy and to focus on internal activities, as well as capturing data to further harness the opportunities open to the business".

3. Insulpak

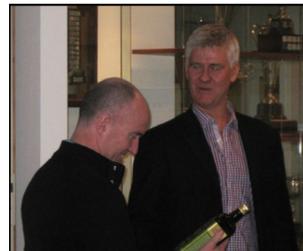
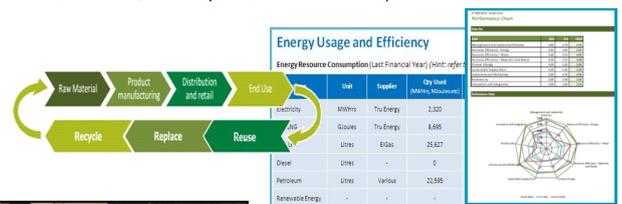
Robert Hegyesi, MD, would be the first to agree that the program opened his eyes to the opportunity that was available to improve both his revenue and his cost line. Manufacturer of HVAC and insulation systems, Robert is not only keen to get the message out to his customers of how his products can save them money, but since the program he has also taken big strides to demonstrate his commitment to sustainable business practices and is walking the talk.

"It makes good business sense; since the program I have invested in solar power, changed my invoicing system to use email to reduce paper, and what I have learned has also had a positive impact on my home life, we all have opportunities to improve sustainable living and save money"

Robert Hegyesi

4. Showerline

Initially skeptical about the benefits he would see out of the program, Phillip Royce soon got to grips with it when he saw what could be achieved. *"Where I saw an opportunity in my business was for us to reduce the weight of our core product. We are researching this and expect to see savings on transport costs, and it is much easier and safer for people to handle. I'm sure every manufacturer in Geelong would get something out of this program to improve their bottom line"*



Deane Belfield (r) presents Australian Paper boss Paul Allen (l) with a bottle of locally produced Olive Oil in thanks of the experience he shared with the group

The Geelong Manufacturing Council would like to thank Deane Belfield and all the guest speakers who contributed to the success of this program, and to offer our congratulations to the participating companies for showing the leadership and stamina required to enhance their competitive advantage to benefit the wider Geelong community.