

Offset Alpine Printing Leads the Way with Environmental Accreditation

Premier Sydney printer Offset Alpine Printing is leading the way towards a more sustainable future as the first major web printer in Australia to achieve ISO 14001 environmental accreditation.

Awarded in February this year, certification under this internationally recognised standard is the latest milestone in a company history characterised by innovation and commitment to continuous improvement.

Over its 70 year history, Offset Alpine Printing has consistently set industry benchmarks by investing early in new technology and practices. Offset Alpine pioneered colour scanning and Computer to Plate (CtP) technology in Australia and became one of the first printers in the country to achieve ISO 9002 Quality Management certification.

Not surprisingly, the company has built an enviable reputation for quality, service, value and reliability as well as an impressive customer base of leading Australian corporations including publication, retail, corporate, agency and government clients.



Offset Alpine's Sales and Client Services Manager, Craig Dunsford with Robert Crowe (Environmental Management Representative) and Michael Kinninmont (General Manager), proudly displaying the Green Ticks.

Environmental accreditation is one achievement that the company hopes will soon be shared by the rest of the printing industry, says General Manager Michael Kinninmont.

“We are committed to the principles of environmental responsibility not only to achieve sustainable development for ourselves, but to contribute to the achievement of a sustainable future for the printing industry as a whole,” he says. “Our aim is to continue to improve our quality and service while having a positive effect on the environment.”

ISO 4001 is an objective system which ensures that environmental management is integrated into Offset Alpine Printing's management systems, long term planning and daily operations. To attain ISO 14001, Offset Alpine needed to demonstrate to a high standard that environmental risks are understood, appropriate controls are in place, performance is constantly checked and there is a genuine commitment to continuous improvement.

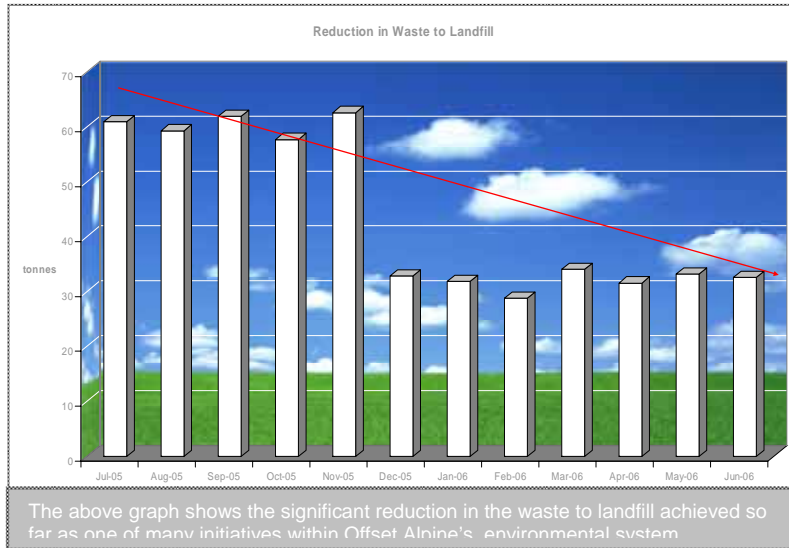
The first step was to assess and analyse all aspects of business from obtaining raw materials from sustainable sources to preventing pollution, conserving energy and resources, and reducing waste. After this careful examination, a comprehensive system was developed incorporating the procedures and training required to implement the necessary change.

The other, more altruistic aspect involved the setting of future plans, objectives and targets by the company's environmental steering committee, to ensure the effectiveness of the system is continually monitored, assessed and improved.



Already, Offset Alpine Printing has achieved impressive results in its key initiatives.

It is well on the way to reaching its target of “0% waste to landfill”, by almost halving these volumes after increasing recycling activities beyond paper. The use of alcohol in the web printing process has been eliminated and the company is



working closely with an expert energy consultant to find ways of reducing power consumption.

Installation has commenced on a series of water tanks to capture run-off from the Lidcombe plant's enormous roof area for use in the manufacturing process and eventually in amenities and other areas.

Suppliers are progressively being put under the microscope to ensure they are accredited to recognised international standards and comply with all relevant regulations. Most notable is the process ensuring that all Offset Alpine's paper is sourced from renewable

resources such as purpose-grown plantations or certified forests, and is produced in environmentally accredited operations.

Robert Crowe is Offset Alpine's Environmental Management Representative and has been managing the initiative for the past 18 months.

“Achieving environmental accreditation must be systematic and process based,” he says. “The key is to develop an inclusive work culture that is open to change and which encourages input and participation throughout the entire organisation.”

Mr Crowe paid tribute to the company's 430 staff whose commitment to achieving the required changes has been critical to achieving accreditation. He points out however that accreditation is not the end but simply the first landmark in an ongoing journey to becoming more sustainable.

“The environmental management system requires constant attention and regular audits to ensure continued compliance and improvement. The culture can only be maintained through consistent effort, training and communication,” he says.

While this accreditation is a significant achievement for Offset Alpine, Michael Kinninmont is quick to point out that the company has not taken the initiative in pursuit of competitive advantage, but rather to contribute to society's achievement of ecological sustainability. He is hopeful that the rest of the industry will follow Offset Alpine Printing's lead.

“Our ideal outcome would be for every business in graphic arts to follow our example and work towards the kind of change that will create a better, more sustainable future for the industry and the community in general,” he says.

Information about Offset Alpine Printing and its commitment to creating sustainable practices for the future can be found on the company website, www.offsetalpine.com.au.

