

KYOCERA

THIS MANUFACTURER ENCOURAGES DESIGN AND PRODUCTION OF LONG-LASTING PRINTER CARTRIDGES, WITH AS FEW MATERIALS AS POSSIBLE, WRITES GAYLE BRYANT

RECLAIMING THE PLANET

1

Handing over a planet that is in as good a condition, if not better, than how it was found, is the aim of printer cartridge manufacturer, Kyocera.

Established in Japan in 1959 and now with more than 40 plants employing over 65,000 people in 25 countries, the company has a strong commitment to the environment. Its corporate green policies encourage conservation and recycling, along with the development of products and technologies that can minimise the impact on the environment.

In 1991 Kyocera implemented its environmental charter worldwide as an extension of its management rationale: to “contribute to the advancement of society and humankind”. Under this charter Kyocera commits to environmental preservation activities on a daily basis.

Kyocera’s managing director, David Finn, says the core of its Australian business is providing leading-edge laser printer solutions for business, and with this success comes a responsibility to ensure that the products it manufactures create the smallest footprint on the environment as possible.

“Kyocera has undertaken to provide a Complete Take Back service to our customers,” he says. “We recently provided a corporate client with over 2,000 new printers to replace their obsolete hardware, taking back the old equipment for recycling. More than 98 per cent of the obsolete material was recycled.”

Finn says Complete Take Back should be the policy for all manufacturers. “This will encourage manufacturers to use environmentally safer components that consume fewer materials in the production process, design the product to last longer, and not pass the cost of disposal to the government and taxpayer.”

In a further effort to curb the impact of Kyocera’s technology on the environment, the company has removed hazardous materials from its latest products and implemented a lead-free manufacturing process.

“This prevents the contamination of landfill when our products aren’t disposed of responsibly,” Finn says.

The organisation is involved with community events and has been a supporter of Ian Kiernan’s Clean Up Australia program, during which time a team of Kyocera employees helped clean up Brush Farm Park in Eastwood, New South Wales.

EDUCATING BUSINESS

Finn says it is Kyocera’s aim to educate other Australian businesses that caring for the environment is crucial and can

also save on costs – both for businesses and ultimately the consumer. Kyocera urges worldwide equipment suppliers and local manufacturers to follow its lead and tackle the massive problem of e-waste, by redesigning new product ranges with the environment in mind – combining economics and ecology.

In conforming with the European Union’s RoHS (Restriction of use of Hazardous Substances) Directive, Kyocera needed to inspect not only the parts it purchased from manufacturers, but suppliers further upstream, to ensure that no prohibited substances were used in any parts of materials it acquired.

The response from Kyocera’s clients and suppliers about its wish to become more sustainable has been fantastic,

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says Finn. Its environmental credentials attract new business all the time because people are realising that the purchasing decisions they make today, can have far-reaching consequences for the future, he adds.

“A lot of businesses now have to satisfy Green Procurement policies to ensure that their operations are not harming the environment and that the path they are travelling is sustainable.”

Finn says that while in general the corporate sector has made a substantial effort to embed sustainable practices, many companies are still dragging their feet due to the falsehood that it does not make good business sense to “go green”.

“Kyocera has proved that business can be conducted in a sustainable way, and that sustainability is not a philosophy opposed to economic growth,” he says. “Some may argue that not all industries are receptive to sustainability in an economic sense, but I believe if you are serious about making a difference, you will find a way.

“I say again, our aim is to hand over a nation – actually a planet – in a condition at least as good, if not better than the condition in which it was left to us, and we need to find real and lasting solutions to the problems that confront us.”