



Waste not, want not

The business benefits of implementing a waste reduction initiative



Cutting down on waste not only helps the environment but saves a business money.

Businesses in the Middle East region have joined the whole world in the campaign to help preserve the environment, striking a unified effort in saving and recycling natural resources, reducing wastage, using and patronising only 'green' certified products and equipment, and leaving less of a carbon footprint. All of these have the clear cut message of saving the world we live in for future generations to enjoy.

Across the many initiatives related in the campaign to save the earth, moves to reduce the amount of industry-related waste is vital to today's businesses. Minimising waste, saving water and keying in a reduction in the use of raw materials cannot only help save the environment but help businesses cut down on cost. In fact, environmental experts have highlighted that businesses that have implemented waste minimisation techniques have reaped positive results such as the development of innovative and commercially successful replacement products, a healthier and more conducive workplace, and a boost in employee productivity and efficiencies.

Running a waste reduction program for any business requires a major investment in both time and money, which is later compensated via the savings generated from the initiative. Companies and organisations who have already implemented a waste minimisation scheme have found that running the program is based

on a five-point process: optimising resources; reusing scrap materials; improving on quality control and performing more frequent process monitoring inspections; waste exchange, whereas one company's waste can be another company's raw material; and shipping or delivering raw materials directly to point of use.

Companies should understand the golden rule of running a waste reduction program – waste is a resource that can lead to greater business productivity if managed correctly. Simply put, the move to shift from methods of waste disposal to aiming to reduce the waste can unquestionably produce significant benefits.

The first and most important advantage gained is the amount of money saved by using raw materials and other resources in a more efficient manner. Another benefit is that waste disposal costs are cut down or, in some cases, stricken off the budget. Aside from the large savings earned, the move towards complying with environmental legislation becomes cheaper and at the same time more straightforward.

Lastly, implementing a strategic and successful waste reduction initiative will greatly improve your reputation and earn you the respect of your employees, partners, suppliers and other companies. The success of your campaign demonstrates how serious you are in the efforts to reduce wastage and be a significant player in saving the environment. It should be one of the main activities of any company's social responsibility program.

MEP

Mohamed Karam is Middle East and Africa business development manager for Emerson FZE