



Green Supply Chain Journeys – Conversations with BIC stakeholders

With its Green Book Alliance partners, Book Industry Study Group (BISG) and BookNet Canada, the Book Industry Communication (BIC) is engaged with companies across the book publishing industry about sustainable practices and how different organizations think about green initiatives.

In this series, we'll be interviewing book industry supply chain suppliers who are going green and taking serious steps to reduce their impact on the environment.

For our second journey, we had the pleasure of interviewing Vicky Ellis, Sales Director at Clays. Clays based in Bungay; Suffolk is a printer established over 200 years ago. Clays prides itself on being a major in this fluid evolving world through extensive investment and a determination to react quickly to their customers' fast-moving needs. Driven by their passion to help make the overall supply chain more cost effective and efficient, we are focusing on moving away from the traditional model of 'print then sell' to the more beneficial 'sell then print'.



1. Why green your publishing? What are some of the business reasons that led your company to incorporate environmental sustainability as a goal?

Environmental sustainability has formed a part of our business for many years, as illustrated by our ISO14001 accreditation. Our parent company, Pozzoni, have also had a long-term commitment to environmental sustainability and as such we align with their aspirations to commit to improvements in this area. In more recent times, the importance of sustainability to our publishers has increased thereby reinforcing our dedication.

2. Of the green initiatives you have implemented, which one made the biggest impact?

We moved to a renewable electricity contract for the running of our site, thereby significantly reducing our carbon footprint.

3. What resources or tools have you used to benchmark and keep track of your company's environmental impact, and what protocols and timeline are you working towards? And how do you know when you've been successful with your initiatives?

Our primary tool has been through our ISO14001 accreditation and the actions we take to support it. Through this we monitor all areas of the business and projects to ascertain and improve environmental impact. We also submit annual data via the Bookchain Project Environmental Questionnaire.



We have recently commissioned a Sustainability Consultant to measure our carbon footprint following the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHCP). Going forward we have recruited a Sustainability Advisor and are working towards submitting Science Based Targets (under the Science Based Targets Initiative SBTi) to measure and reduce our carbon emissions.

4. How do you investigate the sustainability of your supply chain partners (publishers, distributors, retailers, printers, shippers, etc.)? Is having supply chain partners that also support environmental sustainability important to you?

We track our supply chain partners closely as part of our ISO14001 procedures. We monitor all key suppliers' environmental accreditation and have an audit programme in place that includes environmental factors. Due to the range and volume of materials we source, the only way we will successfully achieve our carbon emissions targets will be by working closely with our supply chain. This will be an area of increased importance as we work towards achieving our carbon emission targets.

5. What roadblocks do you face within the industry when trying to implement sustainable practices? What broader industry commitments need to be made to make the book industry more environmentally sustainable?

There are many challenges to achieving cross industry results. Many of the solutions carry with them commercial implications which would need wholesale acceptance by the supply chain. There is the added complication that there are inconsistencies in methods of measurement across all aspects of the supply chain.

Until we get to a point where there is an open, joined up initiative from printer to end user the industry will struggle to achieve the significant wins it aspires to. Here are a few illustrations of the challenges we have found:

- It would be possible to improve lorry fill and reduce book miles by collaborating in an open way between publishers, printers and warehouses.
- There is a trade-off to be made by printing little and often or holding stock that may not be used. For example, multiple small printings drive us to send vehicles on the road everyday with fresh air and generates more waste through extra set up copies.
- Packing books differently is a project we have explored, moving away from plastic wrap to paper parcels. However, it would need to be adopted by the entire industry for the solution to be practical.