



Staffing Companies Go Green, *SI Review*, February 2008

By Julie Gordon

Protecting and preserving the environment is something global staffing giant Adecco takes very seriously. At Adecco's corporate headquarters in New York and in some of its other offices, you'll find recycling bins next to printers and in break rooms. Adecco takes steps to reduce the amount of paper it uses by doing as much as it can electronically. For example, the company sends invoices online instead of putting them in the mail. It encourages potential temporary workers to fill out an application online, and when temps start, they enter their hours online. In fact, Adecco doesn't use paper time cards at all.

Additionally, at Adecco's headquarters, the lights go off at 6 p.m. every day to help save energy. Adecco also uses environmentally friendly cleaning products at its headquarters. "Adecco is a big organization," comments Chris Fiorillo, director of marketing. "It's just logical with an organization of our scale."

Many staffing companies, like Adecco, are "going green." They're reducing their environmental footprint by taking such steps as recycling, using less paper and recycled paper, installing energy efficient lights and turning lights off when they're not needed, encouraging carpooling and allowing telecommuting. For these companies Earth Day isn't just one day in April, it's every day.

Strong Recycling Effort

Some of the many things staffing companies say they recycle include paper, newspaper, printer cartridges, aluminum cans, glass, plastic bottles and cardboard.

Staffing companies also are recycling their used equipment instead of just throwing it away. Corestaff collects old computers at its corporate offices in Houston and gives them to Eagle Electronics, an EPA-certified firm that recycles them, explains Sally Jozwiak, VP of marketing communications.

Strategic Staffing Solutions donates its used computers and printers to the Salvation Army and Goodwill, says CEO Cindy Pasky. "They will take the oldest computer in the world and fix it and put it back to use," she says. "They might use it themselves or give it to another nonprofit. ...What better thing to do with your old equipment?"

Also, when the cell phones that Strategic Staffing Solutions gives its staff need to be replaced, the company donates the old phones to a women's shelter. "Women's shelters are desperate for cell phones that work just so they can be set for emergencies only," comments Pasky.

Using Technology to Reduce Paper

Many staffing companies are taking advantage of technology to reduce the amount of paper they use. At Corestaff, for example, nearly 80% of temporary workers are getting paid with direct deposit or pay cards, and 56% are entering their hours online instead of using a paper time sheet, according to Jozwiak.

Staffing companies have found technology works great for paying internal staff as well: The Nelson Family of Companies, which has offices throughout Northern California, gives staff the option of participating in a paperless direct deposit program through iPay, a program through Automated Data Processing, explains employee relations manager Tony MacNeill. "We are moving more and more from paper as much as we can," he says.

While many direct deposit programs still leave you with a paper record, those enrolled in iPay simply receive an email saying their paycheck has been deposited. They can see an exact copy of their paycheck that shows all federal and state deductions, just as they'd see on a normal paycheck. More than 75% of staff are taking advantage of iPay, according to MacNeill.

Some other things staffing companies are doing to reduce their paper usage include putting training and marketing materials online (which also cuts down on printing costs) and at company meetings projecting information on a screen instead of passing out handouts.

Staffing companies also are using both sides of a sheet of paper when something has to be printed. At

Manpower's headquarters, all printers are configured for double-sided printing, according to senior media relations specialist Paul Holley. "While we have no specific figures, we've found the practice significantly reduces our paper consumption."

The Armada Group, an information technology staffing company in Santa Cruz CA, has reduced paper by using electronic signatures, says Lisa Sullivan, director of business development. The company electronically signs all documents that it can and asks for clients to use electronic signatures whenever possible. "We utilize electronic communication for 99% of our work, including contracts," comments Sullivan.

M Force Staffing in Nashville TN uses an electronic fax called eFax, according to Jeff LaRue, director of business operations. If someone sends the company a fax, the company receives an email instead of a fax and then tries not to print out the email. The service costs just \$16 a month.

Because M Force Staffing is using eFax, the company has never had to buy a fax machine or toner, LaRue points out. "Everything we can do electronically, we do," he says. "To me, it's quicker. It's less hassle. It's easy to track because it's in the system somewhere."

At CareStaf, a Kansas City-based medical staffing company, when a client requests to see a temporary worker's certification - for example, the individual's nursing license or CPR card - the company emails the information instead of photocopying and faxing it, which used to be the standard practice, according to account manager Martha Mick.

The documentation is emailed using a software program called Image Now from Kansas City-based Perceptive Software, which allows CareStaf to make an image of any piece of paper that comes into its office. The image is then stored in the company's hard drive. "We have cut our paper usage in half [by using Image Now]," comments Mick. "We have already gotten rid of 10 filing cabinets."

Buying Recycled Paper

Staffing companies are becoming good stewards of the environment by purchasing recycled material, such as recycled paper. Robert Half International (RHI), for example, uses recycled and mixed-source paper for such things as the company's annual report, according to Matt Meigs, public relations manager. Strategic Staffing's Pasky says her company encourages its printing company to use recycled paper for party invitations.

Replacing Styrofoam Cups with Mugs

Strategic Staffing got rid of styrofoam cups a couple of years ago. Styrofoam can't be recycled and is damaging to the environment. Pasky recalls how staff would use several styrofoam cups each day, but now everyone simply uses a mug instead. Making the switch was easy to do, comments Pasky. "How many staffing companies don't have mugs [that] they give away to customers?"

Using Energy-Efficient Lights

When it comes to lighting, staffing companies are using energy-efficient lights and making sure their lights are turned off when they're not being used. Manpower's new world headquarters in Milwaukee is equipped with fluorescent lighting throughout the building, according to Holley. Manpower makes sure lights are turned off at its headquarters when they're not needed. An automated lighting control system turns off 5,100 interior lights from 7:30 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. Additionally, lights in conference rooms and other interior spaces use occupancy sensors to shut off lights when no one is around, and interior lights next to the windows are automatically dimmed by 50% when the sun shines.

Allowing Staff to Telecommute

Another way staffing companies help the environment is by allowing staff to work from home, which means one less car on the road and therefore less pollution.

Allstates Technical Services allows recruiters and salespeople to work from home one day a week, says Andrea Hopkey, president.

"We find as a company that we're really gaining from it," explains Hopkey. "Sometimes when people work from home, they're even more productive. They get up, get into their home office, sit down and begin working immediately. From a productivity standpoint, we're seeing a lot of benefits from it. It has worked well for us so far. We have seen our folks be very productive working from home. We have found this to be a nice recruiting and retention tool."

The Nelson Family of Companies allows staff to work from home one or two days a week, but it needs to be approved by management and human resources first, explains MacNeill. Anyone who wishes to telecommute needs to demonstrate that they have space to work at home, undergo a home office safety inspection conducted by Nelson's VP of risk management and sign a telecommuting agreement.

Encouraging Environmentally Friendly Transportation

Staffing companies are encouraging their staff to get to and from work in an environmentally friendly way. Manpower has six public bus routes within a quarter of a mile at its new headquarters, according to Holley. The company also offers preferred parking for high-occupancy and hybrid vehicles, motorcycles and bicycles.

At its new corporate office scheduled to open this month, Yoh is going to provide a free shuttle from train and bus stations to encourage staff to use those travel options as much as possible, explains CEO Bill Yoh.

The Nelson Family of Companies offers staff the option of buying vouchers for public transportation, explains MacNeill. For example, staff can buy tickets for BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) at a discounted rate through Nelson, which takes the money directly out of their paycheck. MacNeill says a lot of employees commuting in and out of San Francisco are taking advantage of the program.

Matt Johnston, CEO of Burbank CA-based Workway, says his company encourages staff to use MetroLink, a commuter rail system that links Orange County with surrounding areas, including Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino counties.

Making an Effort to Buy Locally

Robert Caban, president of Caban Resources in Lawndale CA, says his company makes an effort to buy things locally whenever it can because it's better for the environment. "The more local it is, the less transportation damage there is to the environment," he points out.

Passing Out Environmentally Friendly Items at Trade Shows

Another thing staffing companies are doing is making an effort to pass out environmentally friendly souvenirs when they attend trade shows.

Workway has passed out tire pressure gauges at trade shows and also given them to staff, says Johnston. When your tires aren't inflated properly, it causes your car to use more gas, which is bad for the environment and bad for your pocketbook, he points out.

The tire pressure gauges cost \$3 or \$4 each. "Instead of buying a pen, for the same amount of money you can get something that can help the environment," says Johnston. "It's fun. It's unique. It's memorable for us."

Yoh CEO Bill Yoh says his company passes out a lapel pin that comes on 100% recycled paper and contains flower seeds in it. The description on the back encourages recipients to put the seeds in their yard or garden, water it and flowers will grow.

Launching an Environmental Committee

In spring 2007, Adecco launched a "Going Green Committee," says Fiorillo. The group of about 36 people meets monthly and is looking at even more things Adecco can do to help the environment. Something that has been proposed is a park cleanup, explains Fiorillo. "We'd probably get a group of people and do it," he says. The "Going Green Committee" has been well received and is off to a good start, according to Fiorillo. "People are excited about it."

Supporting Environmentally Friendly Organizations

Many staffing companies are supporting environmentally friendly organizations. In November 2003, Adecco became the first major HR services company to participate in the United Nations Global Compact, according to Fiorillo. Adecco supports and reflects in its business operations the Global Compact's 10 principles, which cover protection of the environment, among other things. Regarding the environment, the Global Compact calls for businesses to support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges, undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility, and encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technology.

Tony Bartenetti, senior VP of Nelson Staffing (a division of the Nelson Family of Companies) says he and his account executive have recently gotten involved with the Northern California Green Chamber of Commerce. He wants to take what he learns from the organization and bring it back to Nelson.

"Just by being with people who are knowledgeable about this we're going to learn a lot," says Bartenetti. "This is our first step to really open our eyes to it. Anything I can learn to help the environment would be great."

Yoh's Bill Yoh says his company is active with Habitat for Humanity. Workway is a sponsor of Heal the Bay, an organization that focuses on cleaning up at the Santa Monica Bay, according to Johnston.

The Armada Group supports a number of environmental organizations, including Surfrider, Environment California and the Sierra Club, says Sullivan. Caban Resources Robert Caban says his company also supports Surfrider.

Sending Used Equipment Overseas Rather than to a Landfill

Wilson Staffing Network, a Houston-based medical staffing company, is doing its part to be a good steward of the environment by instituting a program that will send used medical equipment in the United States to clinics and hospitals in the Philippines, says Kathlene Wilson, president. Often when medical facilities in the United States get new equipment, they throw the old equipment away and it winds up in a landfill. Now at least some of it is going somewhere where it will be used.

The Philippines has a lot of nurses but not much equipment, Wilson points out. She says she chose the Philippines because not only does her company recruit nurses from there, but also she lived in the Philippines for four years and her daughter-in-law is Filipino. The goal is to eventually extend the program to other countries, she says.

While many staffing companies out there are being good stewards of the environment, others are unfortunately doing very little, or nothing at all. Why? Perhaps they think that since they're only one company,

whatever they do won't make that much of a difference. The truth is anything you do - even if it's a small change - will have an impact. It will help make the world a better place not only right now but also in the future for your children and your children's children.

Another reason why staffing companies perhaps don't make the environment a priority is because they think it will require too much effort or cost too much. But the truth is, as the staffing companies mentioned have demonstrated, there are very simple things you can do that require little effort and are either free or don't cost a lot of money. In fact, there are some things you can do that will actually save you money.

If your staffing company is taking steps to protect and preserve Mother Earth, congratulations. If it's not, maybe this is the year you can start. You can do your part to make the world a little more green, and perhaps save some green at the same time.

Tips for Going Green

- Recycle as much of the paper you use as possible.
- Turn off your lights and other equipment when they're not in use.
- Install switch plate occupancy sensors to automatically turn your lights off when no one is around, and then back on when people return.
- Replace incandescent light bulbs with ENERGY STAR-qualified compact fluorescent lights wherever appropriate. CFLs cost about 75% less to operate and last about 10 times longer.
- Look for the ENERGY STAR label on office equipment and appliances.
- Print on both sides of a sheet of paper.
- Use recycled paper.
- Distribute documents electronically instead of providing a hard copy.
- Make sure your water heater and pipes are insulated.
- Install an ENERGY STAR-qualified programmable thermostat to automate your heating, ventilating and cooling (HVAC) system to save energy while your business is closed or unoccupied.
- Consider using renewable energy (electricity supplied from energy sources such as wind).
- Make sure your HVAC system gets regular maintenance/tune-ups.

Source: www.energystar.gov/smallbiz

A New "Green" World Headquarters

This past September, the 900 employees of Manpower and its Jefferson Wells subsidiary moved to a new "green" world headquarters building in downtown Milwaukee, says Paul Holley, senior media relations specialist.

The four-story, 280,000-square-foot structure is designed with sustainable features that follow the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) guidelines of the U.S. Green Building Council. Manpower is one of 926 projects nationally that are LEED-certified, according to Holley. Some of the building's environmentally friendly features are:

- Energy costs are reduced by 25% compared to a typical building of the same size.
- Water consumption is reduced by 40% through the use of low-flow fixtures and equipment.
- The building is designed to provide daylight and outside views of 90% of the workspaces.
- Ten percent of the building materials, such as carpeting, are made from recycled products.
- Seventy-five percent of construction waste was recycled.
- The exterior and landscaping are designed to reduce heat absorption and light pollution.
- Indoor air quality is improved through the use of materials containing low volatile organic compounds.
- More than 50% of the wood used on site was harvested from rapidly renewable forests and doesn't contain any formaldehydes.

Recycling Fun Facts

- Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run a TV for three hours.
- An aluminum can that is thrown away will still be a can 500 years from now.
- There is no limit to the amount of times an aluminum can may be recycled.
- Once an aluminum can is recycled, it can be part of a new can within six weeks.
- If all our newspaper was recycled, we could save about 250 million trees a year.
- Twenty-seven percent of the newspapers produced in America are recycled.
- If Americans recycled just one-tenth of their newspapers, we would save about 25 million trees a year.
- Each ton (2,000 pounds) of recycled paper can save 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, three cubic yards of landfill space, 4,000 kilowatts of energy and 7,000 gallons of water. This represents a 64% energy savings, a 58% water savings and 60 pounds less of air pollution.
- The amount of wood and paper we throw away each year is enough to heat 50 million homes for 20 years.
- Americans use 2,500,000 plastic bottles every hour, and many of them are thrown away. Americans throw away 25 million plastic beverage bottles every hour.
- Plastic bags and other plastic garbage thrown into the ocean kill as many as one million sea creatures every year.
- Americans throw away 25 billion styrofoam coffee cups every year.
- Every month we throw out enough glass bottles and jars to fill up a skyscraper. All of these jars could have been recycled.
- The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle can run a 100-watt bulb for four hours. It also causes

20% less air pollution and 50% less water pollution than when a new bottle is made from raw materials.

- A modern glass bottle would take 4,000 years or more to decompose - and even longer if it's in the landfill.
- On average, it costs \$30 per ton to recycle trash, \$50 to send it to the landfill and \$65 to \$75 to incinerate it.
- The United States is the number one trash-producing country in the world, generating 1,609 pounds per person per year. This means that 5% of the world's population generates 40% of the world's waste.

Source: <http://members.aol.com/ramola15/funfacts.html>

Workers Think Their Companies Could Do More

Workers think their companies could do a lot more when it comes to protecting and preserving the environment, an Adecco survey reveals. Fifty-two percent of workers who participated in the survey said they think their company should be more environmentally friendly. Only 22% say their company already does enough or too much, while 26% aren't sure.

In terms of gender, 35% of men said they know their company's environmental policy versus 28% of women. While 69% know that their company has an environmental policy, only one-third know what that policy is.

"We've seen an increase recently in the number of job seekers who want to work for 'green' companies, or companies working in industries that are helpful to the environment," comments Bernadette Kenny, Adecco's chief career officer. "However, when it comes to less compensation for those jobs not everyone is willing to make that leap unless they are younger and just starting out in their careers."

A good way for companies to recruit and retain green-minded employees is to communicate their environmental policies and create an environmentally conscious culture by instituting some simple and basic programs, Kenny points out.