

CASE STUDY: CROWN PAINTS

BACKGROUND

Crown Paints is a familiar household name, known for being one of the largest paint manufacturers in the UK, employing 1,250 people at their two manufacturing sites in Darwen and Hull, and across their network of Crown Decorator Centres. The business has a turnover of £200m+, with its brand family providing products to both DIY and professional markets.

The business has won multiple awards for its commitment to addressing the sustainability and corporate responsibility agenda.

Since becoming a standalone company in 2008, responsibility for sustainability sits within the Research and Development team. The team is made up of nine people covering HSE, Occupational Health and Sustainability. Rachel Demaine is Crown's Sustainability Technology Officer leading on a wide range of issues such as carbon footprinting, production of sustainability reports, energy management, employee engagement, environmental management and liaison with external industry bodies and initiatives.



A significant challenge for Crown Paints in relation to sustainability is supply chain engagement - their carbon footprinting work has shown that ingredients are a significant contributor to their product footprint. Understanding how to best engage the supply chain with a view to reducing this carbon impact is a priority. Affecting behavioural change within an organisation is also an ongoing challenge – a situation that is familiar to businesses regardless of size.

INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

Jim Sweeney, National Construction Manager, first heard about the School through a major construction company who invited him to one of the initial Supplier Days in London 2012. Jim thought the Supplier day was exactly what Crown Paints needed to be associated with as there was a great deal of like-minded organisations in attendance. In 2013 Jim presented Crown Paints credentials at the 1st Anniversary of the School at London Museum. As a result Crown Paints completed their first self-assessment in 2013 and have since attended numerous supplier days.

SELF-ASSESSMENT & ACTION PLAN

The first assessment was completed in 2013 and was undertaken as a group activity so as to ensure a balanced view from across the company. The group consisted of the Sustainability Technology Officer, Health & Safety and Sustainability Manager and various other members of the company sustainability forum which has representation from across the business. Initial impressions were that it was a straightforward tool and very user friendly. The group were pleased to see that the resulting action plan appeared to be accurate, and reassured them about the direction they were taking.

Since initial assessment, the group has completed two more assessments, and plan to re-assess on a regular basis. Some of the most valuable resources recommended through the company action plan have been in relation to sustainable procurement, and have helped Crown Paints in addressing the issue of how best to engage suppliers in this agenda and cascade sustainability considerations through the supply chain.

IMPACT

As a result of engaging in the School, Crown Paints has:

- ✓ **Developed a sustainable procurement strategy and action plan.** One of the first Action Plans referenced the British Standard for Sustainable Procurement, BS 8903. Crown Paints has since conducted an assessment against this standard and identified corresponding actions to ensure their procurement is in line with the recommendations in the standard.
- ✓ **Used the resources available (including the e-learning module on sustainable procurement) through the School to help secure buy in across the procurement teams** on this agenda.
- ✓ **Developed a strong business case for sustainable procurement**, using the School's resource library, case studies and e-learning modules.
- ✓ **Used the School's progress dashboard as a mechanism to monitor progress.**
- ✓ **Been reassured that the work they are doing in relation to sustainability** is in line with industry recommendations.

- ✓ Helped to raise the profile of the painting process in construction and in particular the position of Crown Paints in this sector with the major effort to reduce life cycle costs.

BENEFITS

Access to expert advice and valuable networking opportunities – Crown Paints feel that their engagement in the School has resulted in introductions to senior level procurement and supply chain experts who have been able to provide relevant tailored advice to help the business address some of its challenges around supplier engagement.

Marketing opportunities / reputation – Crown Paints currently have a ‘silver’ badge to reflect their active engagement in the School. They are sharing this achievement with their clients / potential clients to help demonstrate their commitment to continuous improvement in sustainability.

Tool to ‘sense check’ existing activity and monitor progress – Crown Paints recognises the need to address sustainability in the business, and the School provides another mechanism to review existing activity and identify any gaps, as well as monitor progress.

Reduced risk – the work being done in relation to sustainable procurement is helping to minimise the reputational risk in the supply chain.

Access to resources which help build the business case for sustainable procurement – Engaging internal stakeholders is a challenge for all businesses, regardless of business size. Crown Paints have used the wide range of resources available through the School to help build the business case for sustainable procurement, which has in turn helped to inspire behavioural change.



LESSONS LEARNED

There is ‘no one size fits all’ when considering how best to communicate sustainability with a view to affecting change. Find the right language is key and speaking to people in a way that is meaningful for them. Establishing links between employee’s home life and work.

Sustainable procurement is not just about the Procurement function in isolation, rather it involves all departments that have an interface with Procurement and in that respect it helps to make Sustainability part of day to day activities.

Even large businesses who are already dedicating resource to this agenda, and who have been doing so for many years are still able to use the School to benefit their business.

The School has proven to be one of the more successful strategies in helping to highlight key issues and bring about behavioural change.

THE FUTURE

In order for the School to continue to be of benefit to Crown Paints it is important to:

- ✓ Ensure resources continue to be kept up to date and refreshed, and continue to showcase high quality resources rather than being a ‘Google’ for sustainable construction.
- ✓ Provide face to face forums for School members who have a more advanced level of knowledge.