

Making »Green Publishing« a top-level priority

Implementing individual measures and personalizing responsibility

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With demand for ecological products booming, active environmental protection and sustainability are no longer a distant dream for the publishing industry. For some time now, sector pioneers have – also in response to the demands of climate change and anticipated raw material shortages – been signing up to the »Green Publishing« agenda with a view to making the production and publication of books and magazines more low-impact in ecological terms. There are, in fact, plenty of ways in which publishing can be made a more environmentally sustainable process.

Consciously addressing weak points in the ecological chain

The manufacture of paper creates many environmental problems and devours enormous amounts of energy. Due to increasing worldwide demand, publishers are also financially well advised to focus on sustainability in their procurement

and use of paper. Sales-adjusted print-runs and print-on-demand can significantly reduce the need for paper.

Paper made from primary fibres requires more energy, water and chemicals than recycled paper. This is why the latter is preferable. If the use of virgin fibre paper is unavoidable, it should carry the label of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) because wood used for FSC paper originates from certified, sustainably managed forests.

The printing and distribution of publications are further areas to consider. A printer should be certified to at least ISO and FSC levels. Some are also already using environmentally friendly inks and recycling them a number of times.

The shipping and distribution of publications produces greenhouse gas emissions, with transport operations occurring all along the various stages in the product life-

cycle. To keep these emissions as low as possible, publishers should therefore work with printers, distribution partners and paper suppliers from their own region whenever possible.

Green Office Management

A company's carbon footprint can be reduced further if its employees and management consistently use the train for business travel. It is also well worth making it more attractive for staff to switch to the bus, train or bike for their daily commutes.

Day-to-day life at the office also offers many ways of being environmentally friendly. CO₂ emissions can be reduced significantly through the use of green power and a conscious use of energy resources. The economical use of energy-efficient equipment takes the strain off both the

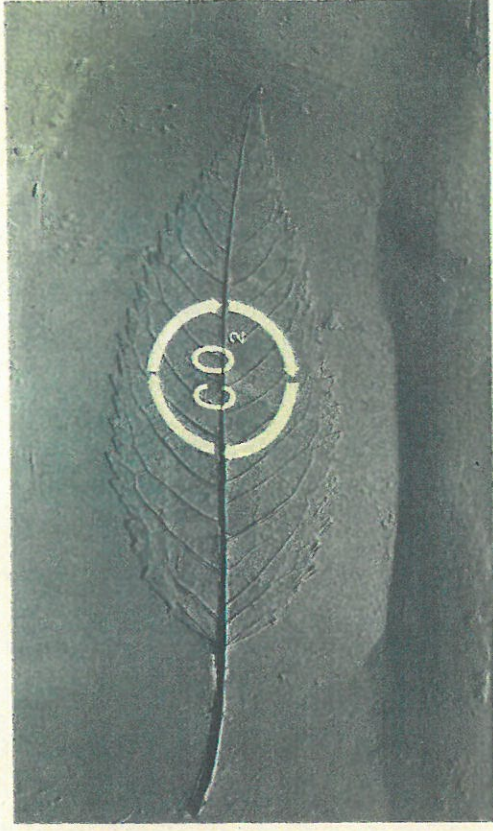


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climate and company budgets. The use of environmentally compatible office materials, waste recycling and employee catering using foods from regional, organic farms are further sources of savings potentials.

Sustainability a top priority

The most important prerequisite for the successful implementation of ecological standards is having a management that is convinced of its importance. Only when the employees see that »those at the top« are prepared to make in-house

sustainability management a high priority will they actively participate. Special information brochures, events and workshops for employees are important, but are not enough on their own. Sustainability management must be firmly anchored within the publishing house culture at the level of both human resources and administration. The company can emphasise the authenticity of its concern by putting in place a dedicated sustainability team reporting direct to company management. In addition, a designated sustainability expert should adapt the ecological standards of the company to

technological innovations and new scientific discoveries on an ongoing basis. He or she should be responsible for their implementation and also encourage the publishers' suppliers and service providers to embrace environmentally friendly measures. This will make it clear that sustainability is a top management priority. ←

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Best green practice examples

Green concepts in the publishing industry improve a company's environmental footprint while also enhancing its image among customers

In his many conversations with the production departments at German book publishers, **Hans-Heinrich Ruta**, professor on the media publishing programme at the Hochschule der Medien Stuttgart, has established that the subject of sustainability is of the utmost importance to them. »These issues are also an integral part of the related lectures in our degree programmes,« says Ruta. »When we take students on excursions to visit publishers or printers, this topic is raised over

for the purpose of defining uniform guidelines, such as CO₂ footprint calculation. On the strength of this, Heidelberg was invited by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety to serve as an industry representative and to play an active role in the dialogue between politicians and business leaders on climate protection in trade and industry. The main priorities of this dialogue are energy efficiency and energy management in

Bookstores, too, can manage their business sustainably. **Heinrich Riethmüller**, head of the Osiandersche Buchhandlung, cites examples from his own company: e.g. using green energy, purchasing a company car powered by natural gas, cooperating with a local secondary school to allow students to deliver shipments within the city by bike. The latter also makes for good publicity and participating students are then sponsored to help them acquire an electric bike.



**Hans-Heinrich
Ruta**

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**Wolfgang Michael
Hanke**

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Stephan Plenz

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**Heinrich
Riethmüller**

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