

new ideas
new thinking



A full service provider of toiletries and cosmetics, Hampshire Cosmetics has not escaped the downturn, but it has not allowed this to reduce its work in addressing its environmental impact.

The Waterlooville-based SME manufactures, designs, packages and handles the logistics of products for a wide range of clients that include supermarket chains and high street names.

It takes sustainability seriously and works hard to integrate environmental credentials across the business; best illustrated by the fact that, unusually for a company of its size (180 employees), Hampshire Cosmetics has a full time Environmental and Ethical Manager, Karen Taylor.

Hampshire Cosmetics.

The UK beauty sector has been hit hard by the recession, but it is still a growing market, and with that so is its impact on the environment. According to Euromonitor International the sector grew by 2.5 per cent in 2009 with sales of £9,664.8 million, down on the 3.5 per cent growth it experienced in 2008. In the same year, cosmetics and toiletries created 120.8 billion units of packaging.

As with many sectors, the UK recession has been tough for the toiletries and cosmetics industry, with Karen reporting that several of the company's competitors have gone under and its own clients have reduced their stock holding. Yet Hampshire Cosmetics hasn't taken environmental issues off its list of business priorities. "Business is tough, as it is for most other businesses at this time, but we are actually investing in the sustainability of the company during this quieter period in order to be in a stronger position when the market picks up. We have always tried to be ahead of the game when it comes to our environmental credentials, so that when our customers insist that we have them in place, we already have them up front. This provides our customers with reputation protection and gives us cost savings; allowing us to be more competitive and stable as a business."

Hampshire Cosmetics gained its environmental management system ISO 14001 in 2009, and has installed a bespoke water treatment plant; the company has also just announced a significant solar panel project that it expects will generate up to 25 per cent of its annual electricity requirements. It was part of this drive to be more sustainable that

led Karen in 2010, while investigating a more sustainable approach to product design, to EcoMind's free workshops.

EcoMind, a European, Interreg IV A 2 Seas co-funded project, is the environmental market and innovation development programme for south east SMEs. It helps them take full advantage of the growing market for more environmentally acceptable products by overcoming the barriers in developing and promoting innovative eco-technology products and services.

"I am the chair of the local Sustainable Business Partnership, a forum for local businesses," says Karen. "EcoMind's free workshop on sustainable product design was promoted at that, so I got in touch with the Centre for Sustainable Design, which is EcoMind's delivery partner for this region." Karen says: "We went into the workshop initially wanting to look at how we could potentially develop revenue by developing environmental, niche products, but instead, we came out with a programme that increased the sustainability of the company as a whole, across all sectors."

The Centre for Sustainable Design ran a dedicated EcoMind workshop at Hampshire Cosmetics' offices. "The workshop was a really great way of opening the eyes of everyone, from the technologists and the chemists through to the senior management team, that sustainability



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could be integrated throughout our daily business, without being an extra chore," says Karen. "What has been really good about working with the Centre for Sustainable Design, is that it has been able to pass onto us the knowledge and experience that it has gathered from years of working with multinationals on sustainability."

The Centre for Sustainable Design supported Hampshire Cosmetics to create an environmental checklist that can now be used across all aspects of the business. "Now we have these focal points, when we develop a new product or service that the chemists, designers and managers can check off issues such as 'can we use

a local material?', or 'can we use Forest Stewardship Council board for the carton?' explains Karen. "This gives us a more sustainable business as a whole and we can create more sustainable products for our customers. It has been very inspiring."

Hampshire Cosmetics is also looking at EcoMind funding and support to attend overseas events and trade fairs, and has linked into academia with a visiting student working with the company on sustainable packaging design. In difficult economic times, environmental credentials have been a key benefit to Hampshire Cosmetics, helping to keep costs down but also giving the company an edge over its competitors.

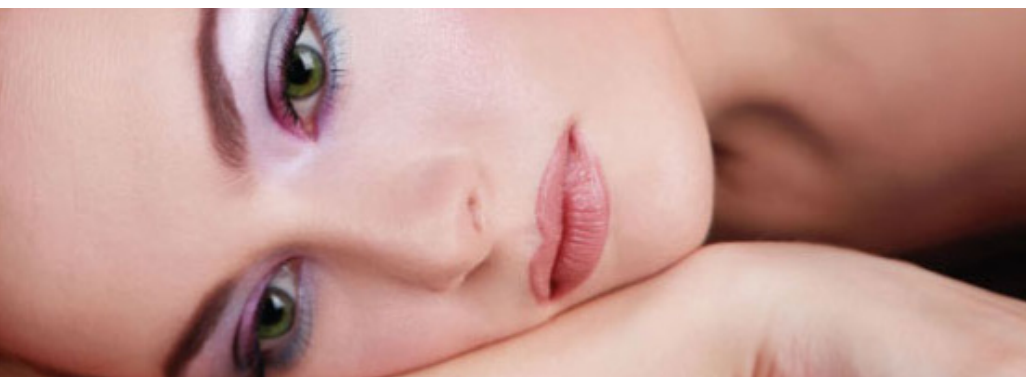
Karen, winner of 'The Environment and Energy Awards', Environmental Manager of the Year 2011, says: "Our sustainable credentials will reduce our carbon footprint and save us money giving us a chance of a better return. Ultimately, by doing this, we will be more competitive all round."



To find more about this company's exciting products and services please visit

www.hants-cosmetics.co.uk

or contact them directly on sales@hants-cosmetics.co.uk



The Centre for Sustainable Design through EcoMind was proud to provide guidance and expertise to Hampshire Cosmetics in their quest to access new markets and increasing visibility of good new environmental solutions from the South East. The internationally recognised Centre for Sustainable Design facilitates eco-design and broader sustainability in product & service development, through EU/UK projects, training, workshops, conferences, research, publications & internet resources.

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