TGI Office Automation

Bringing Green Solutions to its Marketplace and its Culture

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER
TGI Office Automation is a Brooklyn-based office technology dealership with offices throughout New York City, Long Island, New Jersey and South Florida. Seeing the changes in the industry and the increased demand for deeper document solutions from the marketplace, TGI has transformed itself over the past several years from a standard copier dealer to a solutions-oriented company offering applications and services that meet the unique document needs of its customers.

Today, TGI Office Automation is known as a comprehensive office technology provider offering scalable solutions for its customers’ complex business issues. TGI is proud to offer unparalleled, innovative technology like Ricoh’s Lanier line, making it possible to provide its customers both cost effective and reliable multifunctional copiers, printers and fax machines. In addition to hardware solutions, TGI provides leading edge document management solutions structured to help create, capture, store, access and secure documents more effectively and efficiently. When transitioning from a copier dealer to a solutions-oriented company that revolves around applications and services, TGI’s management developed a value proposition that focused on five different strategic areas: security; a managed services offering called Green Print & Save; mailing; an environmental sustainability offering called Thinking Green Ideas; and enterprise content management.

CHALLENGE
“We identified a couple of years ago that we had a good opportunity to invest in our company’s growth and also do something that was socially and environmentally responsible,” said the CEO of TGI. “Focusing on what we believed to be the key areas of interest and concern for our end users was important to us. We selected those five value points as the way we would approach our customers when trying to educate and ultimately sell to them. Internally we put those best practices in place as well, so not only do we talk the talk, we also walk the walk. We sincerely believe that every company, including ours, should take a triple bottom-line approach to business, looking at the environmental impact of their processes, the social impact, and also the price or total cost of ownership when it comes to their investments in solutions.”

SOLUTION
- Transform to a solution-oriented company
- Begin with an internal sustainability audit

RESULTS
- A business with the ability to help customers become more environmentally friendly
- A life-cycle approach that informs every aspect of business and contributes positively to a sustainable environment

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For TGI internally, that commitment started with placing solar panels on the roof of its showroom and developing a policy document identifying green best practices that included end-of-life recycling and reuse directives for used equipment components.

TGI also shreds and reuses product packaging as packing materials. Security also plays into the end-of-life programs, so TGI incorporated practices for wiping hard drive information and disposing of hard drives in an environmentally sensitive way. “It really comes down to doing an internal audit of all practices. We have a monthly forum on environmental initiatives and we have a person assigned to focus on it, who we call the ‘Green Cop’, “ said the CEO.

The CEO found that one of the challenges was education. TGI took the time to internally educate its staff on the best practices out in the marketplace, discerning for its own business which initiatives would truly make an impact for its customer and which would not.

Externally, TGI has also placed a strong emphasis on customer education. “Aside from our larger government and higher education business, we talk to mostly smaller local businesses in our marketplace,” the customer explained. “So we put a website together called ThinkingGreenIdeas.com, which contains educational information about the environmental aspects of the products and services we offer. And we also have Lunch & Learn seminars, where we invite customers to come in, offer a tour to show our visitors what we are doing, and just have open discussions and share best practices on sustainability.”

SOLUTION
TGI has found the Lanier products to be the ideal partner to support its efforts. In educating customers, TGI follows Ricoh’s recommendations for configuring devices for automatic depleting and lock-print to require card swipes for print confirmation at the multifunction printer to avoid excess or unintended printing. Working with customers as part of its Thinking Green Ideas solution, TGI uses tools such as @Remote as well as walk-through assessments to capture information and create reports on environmental metrics that include actual paper and electricity consumption, optimum paper and electricity consumption, and process improvements. “Using this consultative approach, we can not only talk about a product’s features, we can give our customers a picture of the total cost of ownership, which involves the hardware, the energy usage of that piece of equipment and then the end-of-life aftermarket,” said the customer.

RESULTS
The power of its commitment to a true environmental management approach to its business has enabled TGI to differentiate from its competition and capture and retain customers that other, less committed suppliers, have lost. Working with Ricoh and having the Lanier products in its lineup, TGI is able to offer its customers a true cradle-to-grave life-cycle approach to their print environment, encompassing the entire spectrum from the choice of devices, to the transportation, usage, paper handling and ultimate disposal and recycling of units. “We are pleased to have Ricoh as a partner because they get it. Ricoh has been there with us every step of the way,” said the customer. “Their parallel commitment to ours when it comes to sustainability makes it possible for us to bring products and solutions to the market that are right for our customers and right for the environment, and that has helped us to fulfill our company mission statement, ‘I’m thinking green ideas.’”

TGI clearly understands that the power of having an environmental management system can be summed up in business won or lost — and it is an ongoing process. There are cost-savings benefits from the customer’s perspective from these initiatives that include energy conservation, paper handling and consumption.

“The way that the customer workflow has improved and the productivity, satisfaction and the retention of those customers are really what it is all about. It’s the whole concept of managing the spectrum of the life cycle, from the right purchase decision to the ultimate disposal of the unit in the aftermarket. It all lends itself to the fact that green sells, and in understanding that, we know we have a competitive advantage.”