

Green Telephony helps meet Public Sector targets

The government aims to make energy consumption of their ICT systems carbon neutral by 2012 giving the channel opportunities to deliver innovative and green telephony solutions.

Since the launch of its Green Telephony initiative On-Communications has been benefiting from the Carbon Neutrality® of its call minutes to help it close deals. We can show that we are helping customers reduce their carbon footprint and the initiative looks like being particularly successful within the public sector as it faces increasing pressure to meet government targets.

At the end of 2008, the Government launched its Greening Government ICT: Efficient, Sustainable, Responsible strategy, aimed at reducing the environmental impact of their ICT. The strategy has two objectives: to make energy consumption of their ICT systems carbon neutral by 2012, and to make them carbon neutral across their lifetime (including manufacture and disposal) by 2020. On-Communcation's Green Telephony gives the public sector an immediate opportunity to action to this strategy by providing carbon neutral energy consumption on all telephony traffic.

The Cabinet Office publishes a number of supporting documents aimed at its ICT procurement departments and included in these are recommendations to consider "VoIP as a replacement for desk-top phones" and "to review and reduce energy consumption of PBX equipment" as areas for potential carbon reduction. These present new opportunities for customers to upgrade or swap out existing telephony systems ,and move to SIP Trunking and Hosted IP Telephony solutions. Ours is the only network in the UK to provide a net zero carbon footprint for all calls carried across our network, and hence we are best placed to help customers meet those recommendations set out by the government.

Christian Beaumont, programme manager at the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG), looks after CLG's replacement telephony service programme. "The green agenda is sponsored and supported from the very top of central government," comments Beaumont. "When departments go out to tender for replacement ICT, their procurement strategy will have carbon reduction soaked into it. It's not just value for money it's also what you do with the green agenda itself. In other words, how much power does it save, what

is the reduction in carbon footprint - things like that figure very highly in our thinking. We publish to our suppliers how they will be



assessed so that they understand our relative importance of things like value for money, completeness of tender response, green agenda and sustainability, etc. We have about 9 criteria - our first and highest being value for money. Today our second highest criterion is the green agenda. It's come right to the top and to my knowledge this is the only carrier that directly addresses carbon reduction."

The network carbon footprint is independently assessed by a company called Greenstone Carbon Management who looks at electricity bills and volumes for the amount of energy used in transporting minutes across the network. The CarbonNeutral Company then offset this carbon footprint by purchasing carbon credits, which means that each tonne of CO2 emitted is counter balanced with a tonne of CO2 saved by a validated emission reduction project that has met international standards. This could be, for example, a project to swap coal-fired power stations with solar or hydro.

One example of this in action was the ability to demonstrate to a university that by putting their telephony across our network, they would be offsetting almost 2 tonnes of CO2 every year and this proved to be compelling for them as they had specific carbon reduction objectives to meet.

Many business are keen to be as green as possible as their customers are demanding it; ours was the first and is still the only network carrier in the UK to provide a net zero carbon footprint for all calls carried across our network.

There is no greener way of making calls in the UK and On-Communications customers still get great deal!

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