

Green wheels

Power Docs & Freight

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This member is setting an environmental benchmark for the transport industry, and becoming more profitable as a result.

I'm speaking with Mark Power over a mobile phone. His voice bristles with enthusiasm – perhaps fuelled by the background hum of engines. Mark fronts Power Docs & Freight (PD&F), a family-owned company that delivers documents and freight in Sydney, and when required, around Australia. Established in 1975 by Mark's father, Noel, the company had settled into a reliable, trustworthy business. Then in 2007, Mark decided to steer the company down the road of sustainability.

industry has to find its own way to sustainability," says Mark.

PD&F found its way in 2008, becoming the first transport company in Sydney to receive a NOCO2 neutral certificate from the Carbon Reduction Institute.

Accreditation consisted of an audit, with the Institute calculating annual emissions of green house gases at 134 tonnes. In order to earn certification, the company made a commitment to reduce these emissions and offset the remainder.

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"While I understand how difficult it is for the transport industry to make a green commitment, we know that 30 per cent of global energy use can be attributed to transport."

"Because we're dealing with a relatively new phenomenon, each

Carbon calculator

PD&F developed software to track the mileage of all vehicles and carbon expenditure. For clients who take their carbon footprint seriously, PD&F can generate emission reports and sell carbon offsets. And with NOCO2



accreditation to guarantee best practice, the company has become a preferred supplier to a growing number of larger companies in metropolitan Sydney. Operations and Logistics Manager, Sean Flannery, is seeing the marketing benefits of going green: "Our business has increased by 60 per cent as a result of this environmental commitment".

"Accreditation is another fee, but more of our clients are seeking green suppliers, so it definitely provides a competitive edge."

The software is a 'template for travel', says Mark, offering other transport businesses with a precedent. It also helped earn PD&F the 2009 Mercury Award for Best Green Initiative. The Mercury Awards are designed to enable supply chain management and logistics teams to reap the rewards of innovation.

"We continue to produce CO2, but we're continually looking at ways to reduce that emission while simultaneously being smart about our business."

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Consolidation of runs

Another feature of the business involves the consolidation of transport runs, whether the items include documents, shoes or electronics. Multiple trips to an area are grouped into one run, thereby lowering carbon usage and costs. Thanks to Google Maps, only the best routes are used. Mark describes this practise as a win-win situation. "We actually get jobs done faster. Vehicle availability is optimised, enabling us to guarantee a timeframe for clients. And the bonus is offered by the reduced cost margin, which is appreciated by operator and client alike."

Other green initiatives

The company is aiming for a paper-free office through e-commerce, including online transactions and

invoicing. Common sense also plays a part, from recycling waste to energy-efficient lighting.

On the road, drivers are subject to education and best practice, such as cutting the engine when leaving a vehicle to process a job.

Currently, these initiatives fall short of offsetting the entire footprint. To neutralise emissions, PD&F purchases energy efficiency carbon credits from the HELP project in New Zealand. This project drives the installation of energy saving lights throughout New Zealand households.

But what of the future? "I'm excited by the potential of hybrid and electric vehicles," says Mark. "We're looking to expand and replace our fleet. I really think our customers will go 'wow'".