

CommunityMark Survey – Octink

Creative Spaces & Places:

Inputs to this project:

In kind donations of scrap vinyl, banner, and packaging materials. Management costs in meeting facilitator and helping progression of project.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

The aim here is two-fold. Firstly to further recycle 'waste' product and reduce landfill levels, and secondly that the donation of materials is helping to support real art projects for the benefit of local schools, children, and the community as a whole. Our target while not specific is to make available as many waste material resources as are required, and to lend management time and support in helping to engage schools with projects of this type.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

Three primary school projects contributed to in 2008, representing a significant amount of potentially waste material that has been put to good use. "The relationship with Allsigns has allowed me to develop an awareness of recycling on a bigger scale than otherwise might have been possible in terms of building large outdoor structures. It has meant that the children have changed their understanding of sustainability" Linda Jane James – facilitator and artist. http://www.octink.com/blog/creative_spaces_and_places/

The difference the project has made to the business.

Reduction in waste materials / landfill and developing new relationships with local schools and local people - awareness of OCTINK in the community, and further engagement with Hounslow Education Business Partnership.

Way to Work - apprentice scheme

Inputs to this project:

Salary, training costs and mentoring time all invested in our commitment to taking on one full time trainee per year with a day release to college (NVQ). The Way to Work team advertises the opportunity and matches a candidate. The apprentice has monthly an assessor visits to set goals and tasks with our mentor.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

We are trying to recruit good local people to develop and be part of our team, developing a sustainable source of locally resourced employees for the long-term. Our target is to take one Way to Work candidate a year providing a recognized employment destination for local young people.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

Two local people have been recruited under this scheme to date, both of whom have developed through the scheme to become full time employees and valuable members of our team. “It is always a pleasure working with the Allsignsgroup, and their support for young people is very much appreciated. They are an excellent company with great principles, morals, and a supportive corporate culture. Way to Work hopes to build upon this fantastic working partnership for many years to come.” Barri Ghai, Way to Work.

The difference the project has made to the business.

The business case for this is strong as salaries and recruitment costs are very high in our area and the Way to Work scheme offers significant financial support to develop each new candidate, delivering an obvious saving to the business and ultimately providing us with a highly loyal, committed member of staff who wants to work with us. Through the mentoring process candidates are effectively molded around the values of our business and are supported and easy to train - so we get exactly the type of employee we want. Our annual ‘first year’ saving attributed to each candidate is approximately £5000.

Community repaint

Inputs to this project:

In kind donation of part used / unwanted paint providing an outlet for unwanted reusable paint to help local community redecoration or art based projects.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

Proactively using our waste paint for community benefit, reducing the cost and impact of alternative disposal. 25 beneficiaries (12% of 209 visitors to the community vinyl scrap-store in 2007) included Community groups, nurseries, schools, local residents, students, youth and church.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

OCTINK donate Approx 60-80 litres donated annually, representing approximately 2% of the 3098 litres collected in 2007/08.

The difference the project has made to the business.

Financial stock related savings from maintaining a lean in-house paint store / savings made from not over ordering. Also the positive perception of OCTINK by local community groups by receiving the necessary materials to complete their tasks. This is key part of our CSR policy and directly links into our business activities. Annually 60-80 litres of paint now re-circulated and used rather than being disposed of to landfill – this has a market value of approximately £275.00.

Shooting Stars

Inputs to this project:

In-kind support, some company cash donations and employee fundraising currently with event based fundraising planned in 2009.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

We intend to increasingly allocate our charitable support to a single local charity that is supported by our staff. We will continue to supply all there banner and promotional graphic material which along with our cash donations generally equates to a value of £1500 per annum. By doing this we hope to give them a sustainable source of funding with which they can better plan activity and development. We are also looking to participate in one employee based fundraising event likely to be the 3 Peaks Challenge in 2009.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

The value of donations and in kind support from the company and staff fund raising activity has raised £1500 in 2008 with our Christmas company donation (£1000 in 2007) and the proceeds from our Christmas raffle still to come. "It is fantastic to have the support of OCTINK, as a local children's hospice we rely on the support we receive from the community. As a local company OCTINK are the perfect partners who can hopefully promote our work to their contacts and provide vital funds to continue our work. They have also generously provided us with new fundraising materials which of course will save us money on our fundraising costs" Alex Robinson - Corporate Fundraiser.

The difference the project has made to the business.

Focus on a single partner charity has given greater clarity within our organization and amongst employees, and as we get to know them we are seeing an increasing level of loyalty which is not only sustainable but also a benefit to both parties. We have vastly reduced our 'scatter gun' approach to charity giving, and this single focus also enables us to account and measure our impact to greater effect. The 3 Peaks Challenge planned for 2009 is already over-subscribed with employees wanting to take part, a clear demonstration of the growing commitment and solidarity amongst employees. We envisage a team of 10 will actually participate with a fundraising target of £5000.

Green Guardian Brentford School/ Education Business Partnership

Inputs to this project:

Ongoing management time and employee engagement to help facilitate this collaboration with Brentford School for Girls and the Hounslow Education Business Partnership. The project revolves around an environmentally based design competition as part of the Creative & Media Diploma.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

To improve the skills, career aspirations of local students in the borough and to help improve awareness of OCTINK as a local employer and possible career destination. Our target is monitor and review this our first year, with the view to sustaining and possibly growing this project as an annual competition for local schools.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

With the project ongoing at this time, a number of briefing meetings, a site visit by students, participation at and the launch of the project at the Hounslow Partnership Challenge Event, and a school visit have taken place. This has equated to approx 15 man hours of company time, with more anticipated as we near the project's conclusion at the end of January. In addition to the winning design being applied to 2 of our company vehicles, one student will also be offered work experience during the summer 2009 vacation. "Another exciting project with Brentford School and the Business Links Team involves the Allsignsgroup based in Brentford. They have created a brilliant opportunity for the students, and I would like to pass on my thanks to Mike Freely and his colleagues who have helped facilitate this" Garth Buckle – The Business Links Team (Hounslow Education Business Partnership).

The difference the project has made to the business.

We hope to realize the long term benefits of this business to education partnership as students have an opportunity to work with us on work experience opportunities and hopefully permanently in future years. So far just from this project we have received fantastic exposure for the company at the EBP Partnership Event and have also appeared in the Brentford School for Girls Winter Newsletter (which has a print run of 1000 copies). We hope to further publicize the winning designs by inviting the Mayor and the local press to be present at the unveiling in January.

Log Cabin (adventure playground)

Inputs to this project:

In kind donations of branding materials for this local charity organization who provide inclusive adventure playgrounds for children and young people aged 4-15 who have special needs or disabilities or who are in need.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

The aim here is to help make a positive difference to the lives of children who have disabilities or special needs as well as helping to publicise their venue and potential for revenue generation. This was a local cause that was initially brought to our attention by a group of our employees, and provides us with a further outlet to gain positive publicity within the community. We have committed to provide all essential branding and promotional banners to support their main fundraising day (Yellow Umbrella Day) – a 10k fun run which is held annually.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

The main contribution has been the rebrand of their venue / adventure premises, including materials, new logo, signage and publicity material. In addition the support in kind for the Yellow Umbrella Day in 2008 totaled £260. “Everything went very well at Yellow Umbrella Day, and your sign was much in evidence! We'll be using it again and again, I know. Thank you so much”. Vivien Dymock – The Log Cabin

The difference the project has made to the business.

OCTINK is a young company and a lot of our staff also have young children, as such we were very drawn to this cause, as were we to the fact that employees had come to us with this cause as a partnering option. This project helps to increase our profile in the community, as a company that cares. We have a listing on the Log Cabin website.

Partner Causes

Inputs to this project:

OCTINK is often asked to support the charitable causes of some of our customers and get involved in fundraising activity, in kind support and donations.

The sustainable difference you are trying to make in the community.

Our aims here are not totally commercial, as by supporting our client's causes we are in fact engaging with them in their own CSR programmes. We are therefore happy to contribute or help only those customers who currently show a positive commitment to CSR and the impacts they have on local communities. We specifically work closely with 3 main clients, St George Plc, SEGRO, and Crest Nicholson, all of whom have a positive CSR position.

What the project has contributed to the community so far.

OCTINK has contributed £3512.50 towards partner causes this year - including •Property Week Muscular Dystrophy Event - £250 •Cancer Research - £3112.50 •Alzheimer's Society Donation - £150 OCTINK has worked with the Slough Business Community Partnership (SBCP) and SEGRO with their charity ball and provided a banner valued at £500 and 10 hours of our Group Managing Director's time on the SBCP committee.

The difference the project has made to the business.

To help some very worthy local causes with sustainability - without private sector donations these charities and events would not be able to deliver their services. The growth, awareness raising and development of the Slough Business Community Partnership in particular has been key to leveraging a higher profile and awareness of our company within this group and amongst the Slough community, both of which could produce commercial benefit in the future.

How does the company enable employees to contribute to the community?

A: Systems and policies

At OCTINK it is our policy to encourage and allow employees to both engage and volunteer in community based activity, and we have targeted a total of 10 employee days for 2009 to be given over to volunteering. This represents a day's volunteering for approximately 10% of our employees, who can choose to become involved in company based community projects or to recommend their own good cause to support.

When a new employee joins OCTINK as part of their induction programme the company's CSR policy is explained and employees are encouraged to support our CSR activities or to identify their thoughts and ideas on our programme.

The new CSR policy is sent out in our employment packs so potential employees know about our CSR activities.

Recently OCTINK has introduced our CSR policy into staff appraisals to ensure that every employee is aware of the company's activities in this area and how staff can get involved. An employee survey was carried out in early 2008 to identify if staff understood what CSR was and if they were aware of the company's activities - OCTINK has been actively working on improving employee awareness (62% in Feb 2008) and have committed to improving this result by 50% in 2009 as part of our new CSR targets. The staff survey which will now be completed annually will enable us to identify any new ideas staff have for CSR and areas we can improve on.

To date staff have been very involved in our Shooting Stars, Way to Work scheme, volunteering at Brentford School and our Creative Spaces and Places project and Community re-paint scheme.

Staff are also kept informed of CSR activities with our partners in our company newsletter.

B: Ways that employees are engaged

OCTINK has a small responsibility committee chaired by the managing director and this committee identifies and promotes key CSR objectives and KPIs for improvement. It draws from employee input and the select CSR champions in the company. OCTINK has a staff newsletter in which CSR activity is now a key feature so staff can learn about what opportunities to get involved exist and also what results have been achieved. Recently OCTINK won two Green awards and this is in no small part due to the efforts and

results of our staffs input into changing processes which improved our environmental performance so it is important staff share this success and accolades.

Key commitments for the next three years

Increasing the number of staff involved in its CSR activities

Measurement:

Our staff survey in 2008 recorded 62% awareness of our CSR activities we want to increase this by 50% year on year with the goal being 100% staff awareness and increased percentage of staff involved. Our annual staff survey will measure the level of awareness and highlight any new areas of CSR activity staff desire. We also want to encourage staff to fundraise for our chosen charities and the company can help to match-fund. One of our main fundraising activities in 2009 is the Three Peaks Challenge which will engage a team of staff, who will be fund raising for Shooting Stars.

Leveraging suppliers and clients

Measurement:

We want our CSR impact to be increased by supporting our clients CSR activities and encouraging our suppliers to engage in our activities. In partnership we can lever in more support whether that is monetary or in-kind time and resource to have greater benefit for our community partners and programmes. OCTINK currently record information on customers and suppliers on a database - activity with customers or suppliers will be monitored on this and any additional time, money or resource brokered/ leveraged will be recorded.

Sustaining current CSR activity

Measurement:

OCTINK is committed to maintaining and sustaining its current level of activity as much as possible during the forthcoming period of economic crisis. Our community partners are reliant on business support as funding is harder to secure. We feel that maintaining regular communication with our partners will help to ensure that expectations are realistic and that the level of commitment understood. All our activity, including progress on targets, will be publically reported in our annual CSR report and published on our website.



Way to Work - OCTINK will take on one apprentice placement annually

Measurement:

The apprentice is mentored and assessed monthly on progress by Way to Work.