

➤ Case Study Soar Printing



ASSESSING PERFORMANCE // IMPROVING QUALITY // CREATING CONFIDENCE

Certification gives customers many reasons to prefer Soar Printing

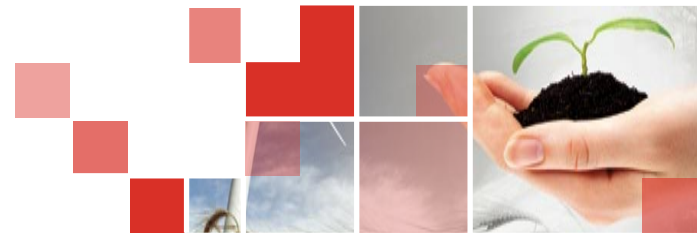
- Soar Printing is using quality (ISO 9001) and environmental certification (ISO 14001) to gain a point of difference in the highly competitive printing market

- As a result of implementing systems and processes to achieve certification, Soar Printing have reduced operational costs, which helps to keep Soar's pricing attractive in a tight market

- Soar Printing aligns naturally with other companies who are green-minded, opening the door to new business and opportunities. Sustainability is becoming a mandate for many companies, so opportunities are increasing

- Currently Soar Printing has achieved ISO 9001, ISO 14001, Enviro-Mark Diamond, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) and carboNZero Certification.

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Background

Soar Printing is an industry leader in the printing sector. In recent years the family business, which dates back to the 1920s, has bravely gone where no other New Zealand printing business was prepared to go.

To date the company has achieved required standards for ISO 9001 (Quality Management), ISO 14001 (Environmental Management), Enviro-Mark NZ Diamond, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC). The latest certification for Soar is carboNZero status.

While achieving the standards has required mind-sets and habits to change significantly at Soar, the significant business benefits of certification are helping the company to stay in good shape through the economic downturn.

“The standards all represent disciplines you need in the business”, says Fred Soar, Managing Director at Soar Printing. “One way to make sure you’re doing things right is to get third party recognition. It’s also important to establish a culture of continuous improvement using KPIs.”

The challenges

Achieving ISO 9001 was Soar’s first challenge. It primarily aims at quality management systems, which are the basis for consistent quality that feeds customer assurance and ongoing customer satisfaction. Soar Printing achieved ISO 9001 in 1994.

With quality systems firmly under control, Fred Soar recognised the opportunity to stand apart from printing companies who “talked green, but couldn’t actually prove it”. A chain of environmentally-linked certifications ensued, culminating with carboNZero.

While senior management at Soar could easily see the business advantages of working towards recognised standards, it took an internal presentation to get buy in from the shop-floor staff. As soon as they understood that taking a responsible approach and identifying opportunities for improvement would help to achieve the company’s certification goals, which would in turn attract new business, they were more than willing to get on board.

The certification process at Soar even changed Soar’s approach to technology purchases. “We looked for energy-efficient machines that supported our goals and the new green philosophy. As it turns out, they became great sales tools as well”, says Fred.

The result

With its raft of certificates, Soar Printing has ample proof that it’s one of the greenest and best-managed companies in New Zealand. When asked if the certifications are helping to win new business, Fred Soar says “definitely”.

“We get clients who are impressed with our environmental credentials, especially when they’re not paying a premium for them. And the ISO 9001 quality credentials are a pre-requisite for many of the tenders we go for, because it provides assurance of consistent quality.”

Soar Printing is also saving around \$150,000 a year in operating costs. Economies have been achieved with initiatives such as:

- Replacing fluorescent lighting with LED fittings, which draw less power
- A purchasing policy that requires new equipment to meet strict criteria related to energy consumption and waste reduction
- Scheduled replacement of dated equipment, so that Soar can benefit from new technology that increases productivity and decreases costs
- Installation of automatic shut off devices for lighting, air-conditioning units and other energy-hungry equipment
- Staff education
- A new car policy that encourages staff into more fuel-efficient motor vehicles
- KPIs that allow the company to monitor its continual improvement programme

To conclude, Fred says: “Having a sound quality management system, reducing your energy consumption and cutting the amount of landfill rubbish while maximizing recycling income is all good business practice. It will more than offset any costs associated with putting new systems in place. I firmly believe that good environmental practice is good business practice.”

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For any questions you may have, please contact our Customer Service Centre on 0800 004 004 or email us admin@telarc.co.nz