

INSTYLE Contract Textiles

9 April 2010

INSTYLE Contract Textiles has committed to the journey of becoming a responsible and sustainable business by registering on the Good Business Register.

The Good Business Register has been created to assist businesses of all sizes to communicate their sustainability credentials in the supply chain and to key stakeholders including customers, investors, employees and the community.

Our business values responsible business practices. We care about: contributing to positive and practical improvements in sustainable standards and practices within the commercial interiors and contract textile industries.

About us

INSTYLE has earned an International reputation for innovative textiles designed for airlines, trains, entertainment venues, casinos and convention centres, hospitality and healthcare interiors, commercial offices and education facilities, as well as high-end residential and public spaces. Established by Michael Fitzsimons in 1987 INSTYLE was created with a vision to build an internationally respected textile company.

About my business

Awards & Recognition

Instyle's Sustainability Awards and Achievements -

- 2006 Nomination in the Sustainability Category Banksia Awards

The Banksia Environmental Awards are the most prestigious environmental awards in Australia.

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- 2008 Sustainability Green Globe Awards

Premiers Sustainability Excellence Award
Industry Environmental Sustainability
Small Business Environmental Sustainability

INSTYLE won three separate awards including the overall leading award, the Premiers Sustainability Excellence Award at the NSW Government Sustainability Green Globe Awards 2008.

INSTYLE won for its exceptional, long-term commitment to environmental best practice that has seen sustainability principles integrated into all aspects of its operations as well as driving improvements within the industry.

- INSTYLE wins 2008 United Nations World Environment Day Award.

INSTYLE CONTRACT TEXTILES is honoured to have won the Business Sustainability Award for Environmental Best Practice Program in the 2008 United Nations Association of Australia, World Environment Day Awards.

INSTYLES Integrated Company Approach to Sustainability was recognised by the UNAA for its overall, whole of business" environmental approach and efforts to integrate innovative ideas and standards within its industry.

- INSTYLE was a finalist for the 2009 United Nations World Environment Day Awards.

INSTYLE CONTRACT TEXTILES is proud to be selected again as a finalist for the United Nations World Environment Day Awards 2009 - this time for Best Specific Environmental Initiative for its new EthEco wool sourcing program.

For the past 18 months INSTYLE has been working with its supply chain and in particular wool growers to further improve its wool sourcing specification from eco wool (low pesticide wool) to EthEco wool.

EthEco wool is the optimum in ethical and environmental wool sourcing. It is sourced from non-mulesed sheep that are well cared for on holistically-managed farms - improving animal welfare, human health and care for the environment.

The World Environment Day Awards acknowledge local actions to address global environmental issues. This years theme, Your Planet Needs You - UNite to Combat Climate Change reflects the vital need for nations to work together in combating climate change.

- Instyle won the Business Sustainability Award at the NSW Government Green Globe Awards 2009.

The competition for this years Green Globe Awards was extremely strong with 17 companies nominated in the Business Sustainability Award category.

Deputy Premier and Minister for Climate Change and Environment, Carmel Tebbutt said The calibre of nominations reflects just how far we have come in the 10 years since they began.

This award recognises INSTYLES new EthEco wool sourcing program and the positive difference this has on animal welfare, human health and environmental care.

Principle 1: Financial Sustainability

Roles & Responsibilities

Roles within our organisational are created so that there is clarity as to who will manage the opportunities and challenges defined by our long- and short-term objectives. Within the roles are specific responsibilities so as to ensure that all these opportunities and challenges are adequately covered.

These roles and responsibilities are communicated to the employees via position descriptions (which defines the limits of the roles - see copy) and job descriptions (which defines the responsibilities of the roles - see copy) upon their employment. Other documentation involved includes organisational charts and companywide announcements.

Business Records

All financial and business agreements are adequately and objectively documented so as to satisfy statutory requirements and also rules of evidence.

Our accounts and tax returns are prepared by Deloitte.

Responsible Decision-Making

Instyle is a democratic styled company and this requires that decisions are made in a transparent manner . The decision making process is open to challenge and input from staff and feedback via this process results in better and more creative outcomes.

Because this process is transparent the values of the "whole community" of Instyle are taken into account during the process and these values are based upon the mutual respect for each other and all stakeholders that interact with our business.

With consideration given to the resulting outcomes of the decisions and actions Instyle has been able to promote ethical and responsible practices.

Open communications is encouraged and there is consistency between what is encouraged and what is actually practised. For example, if the employee does not find reasonable satisfaction with his/ her issue with the immediate management are encouraged to take the issue up with senior management.

Principle 1: Financial sustainability

Risk Management

All Instyle managers have the task of "looking over the horizon" for risks that arise or currently posing to the business in their respective jurisdictions and they are reported upwards to the senior management. The Financial Controller however is specifically tasked to manage risk and build contingency plans. (See copy of Financial Controller's responsibilities)

As for ongoing risks, we have regular reviews of our :

- 1) insurance needs

- 2) information technology capabilities, backup capabilities and contingency plans
- 3) legal compliance (which includes occupational health and safety, human resources issues, etc)

Principle 2: Workplace

Workplace Rights

We recognise the dignity of the human being in the workplace - and that recognition is clearly stated in our Corporate Culture Statement which is accepted by every employee upon employment. Our employees are not seen as economic units of production but human beings with needs, family, obligations and inspirations and are entitled to respect and freedom from discrimination and harassment.

Work-Life Balance

We have a policy called Make up time. Employees are allowed to arrive slightly later, have longer lunches or tea breaks, leave slightly earlier and make up the shortfall at other times. We also incorporate greater flexibility in our arrangements to accommodate employees with children or health concerns.

Instyle currently employs five (out of 40) staff on a part time basis. This allows for these individuals to continue to study and or spend time at home with their children.

Incentives have been offered to employees to quit smoking.

Merit & Remuneration

Instyle has a policy of mentoring and promoting from within.

There are excellent examples where staff have joined the company in entry level positions and have been promoted to managerial positions.

The company is proud of the significant number of staff who have been with the company for in excess of 10 years. Instyle has been successful in creating a working environment where staff can professionally grow and be recognised and rewarded for their efforts and contribution to the company.

We also have examples of staff who had left the company to explore other opportunities and have returned to once again be a valuable part of the team.

Remuneration is based upon performance and results.

Training & Development

The induction process begins before the new employee joins our organisation. A significant amount of information such as the business' mission, goals and values, expected start and finish times, personal leave and annual leave entitlements, dress codes, personnel practices (see General Standards) , health and safety rules (see Fire Evacuation Plan & Information to help prevent Back Injuries).

Job requirements are stipulated in the contract of employment. The employee clearly understands that when

he/she agrees to join Instyle, they do so on the understanding that we share the same values, ethics, thinking etc.

On their first day, the new employee is introduced to everyone with a staff list (see copy) and organisational chart (see copy) in hand so that they can put a name to a face. They are then taken through an induction program (see copy) involves them meeting and spending time with each functional manager so that they obtain an understanding of every role in the organisational and where responsibilities lie.

Owing to our unique business, we have designed specific training programs. The various functional manager train our operational staff and we have dedicated Systems Manager (see copy of responsibilities) specially to train Customer Service staff applying a consistent approach thereby ensuring uniformity in the learning.

Our business support our employees through financial support and allowing time off to take up external study opportunities when the studies are relevant to the employee's job or task.

For example the Managing Director has been involved for some 11 years with the TEC (The Executive Coonnection) a CEO organisation dedicated to improving the effectiveness of CEO's.

Several staff have successfully completed tertiary courses whilst working with the company e.g. TAFE and postgraduate courses. We have 2 MBAs and one Master of Design.

Individual training needs are assessed when performance shortfall or skills discrepancy are identified at performance appraisals. Training programs are then sought and assessed for effectiveness in addressing the training needs.

Principle 3: Supply Chain

Supply Chain Impacts

Every manufacturer has completed an indepth questionnaire regarding the environmental performance of the factory. Based on these responses Instyle selected two manufacturers to produce its sustainable textile range. All of Instyle's manufacturers are based in either Australia, New Zealand, USA and Europe and has visited each manufacturing plant. None of these countries are regarded as a high risk area.

Supply Chain Assessment

We approach our manufacturers for information as to their compliance with relevant local legislation for labour, workplace safety and environment.

Product Stewardship

Instyle's website contains comprehensive information on the environmental impacts of different fibre types that can be used in the production of textiles and comparisions between the various textile standards.

Further to this, Instyle includes on each product description information regarding the environmental features of each product where applicable (See copy)

Instyle developed a traceability program called FARM TO FABRIC where the fabric can be traced from the farm that grew the fibre right through to how it is produced into fabric.

Instyle is currently working on developing a carbon or greenhouse footprint for its products.

Transparency & Engagement

Instyle actively encourages suppliers and customers to foster responsible business practices.

Instyle liaises with suppliers with regards to their environmental initiatives and in sourcing more sustainable fibres and yarns.

Instyle publishes an annual Sustainability Report documenting its simple practical initiatives that can be implemented into any organisation.

Instyle is always available to provide advice for other businesses looking to integrate sustainable practices.

Principle 4: Stakeholders and Community

Stakeholders Identification

Our employees, manufactureres and clients are our major stakeholder s. We regard our employees as the number one stakeholder in our business as they are true assets of the business as they continually regenerate the wealth of the business.

Likewise we protect their interests by committing to provision of long-term, stable and a remunerative employment.

Our local trade suppliers (i.e. local mills) are another major stakeholder. With the decline in the manufacturing textile sector in Australia, the number of mills has reduced dramatically. The symbiosis between ourselves and these mills is vital for our continued success.

Our customers - architects, interior designers and furniture manufacturers - are also our key stakeholders. Instyle is a customer-focused organisation and has built an excellent reputation for quality and creative product and high ethical standards in the way we conduct our business with our clients.

Stakeholder Engagement

Information is disclosed to stakeholders in a variety of ways.

Communication and disclosure is conducted through face-to-face meetings, emails, phone and via our web site.

Feedback is encouraged by Instyle and the company receives considerable feedback via our sales representatives.

Instyle's Sustainability Reports includes a contact for feedback and any feedback received is reported back to

management for consideration and appropriate action.

Any feedback received is reported on during sales, design or management meetings as well as informal feedback from clients via customer service.

Community Support

We are regular participants in the following charities :

Jeans for Genes Day

Cancer Council's Pink Ribbon Day

Australia Red Nose Day

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

Instyle at a minimum matches the donations of our employees dollar for dollar.

We are also a participant in our area's Meals on Wheels, freeing two employees to assist at a time. We also give our employees time off to donate blood to the Australian Red Cross.

Our community investment activities are documented and included in our Sustainability Reports.

Worker or Employee Involvement

Instyle staff raise money throughout the year for different community charities.

Instyle has raised money for the Leukemia foundation, Greenpeace and Breast cancer research and in recent years in place of paper Christmas cards the company has donated thousands to charities and environmental organisations.

Instyle staff participate in Movember, Biggest Morning Tea, gives gifts to disadvantaged children at Christmas and Meals on Wheels. Instyle also donates fabric to community reuse centres and other charities.

Apart from those activities listed above Instyle also takes in students for work experience and is regularly called upon to deliver technical talks to student groups from various tertiary education institutions.

Principle 5: Environment

Environmental Impacts

Instyle directly impacts the environment in its use of energy, water, paper and packaging and its waste.

Instyle also impacts the environment through the production, transportation of its products and in the use of its sales teams cars.

Instyle monitors all of the above and where possible limits and is focused upon reducing its impact in these areas

Measure & Monitor

Instyle measures and monitors its environmental performance data and reports on several indicators in its Sustainability Reports (see copy)

Based on these results Instyle sets objectives and targets to further improve its environmental performance.

Performance Improvement

Instyle continuously improves its environmental performance.

Initiatives include energy conservation measures such as switching off lights and equipment when not in use, use of energy saving options, reuse and recycling of paper, cardboard, food and drink containers, electronic equipment, plastic packaging, pallets, toner cartridges, fabric offcuts and waste, batteries etc. Instyle also has an environmental preferable purchasing policy where it purchases eco friendly products.

Instyle also redesigned its plastic packaging to utilise recycled content as well as reducing the amount of material required in it's production.

Instyle also designs and develops sustainable textiles and continues to build on this collection.

Instyle's marketing and communications are also designed with the environment in mind and we have dramatically reduced the amount of paper used in our promotional activities.

Environmental Training

Tips on helping to save the environment (called eco tips) are included in company communications i.e. at end of our email communications.

Incorporating sustainable practices is supported through a culture of sustainability rather than documented procedures. Through employment contracts, new staff members are made aware that they are to assist the company in achieving its environmental goals and obligations. Each staff member has induction training with the Environmental Manager and environmental presentations are given at conferences.

Staff are encouraged to submit ideas on how to further reduce our environmental impact.

More information

Stories from your responsible business journey

The company has been re-energised as a result of its sustainability journey.

The company has formed partnerships right back to the start of the supply chain ie farm gate (wool growers) , which gives the product added integrity and allows Instyle to form relationships with like minded suppliers and work with and reward these suppliers for their efforts in improving the environment.

Instyle is committed to real environmental change, which is positively received by our stakeholders.

Future plans

Instyle will continue to address further areas.

The company is looking into measuring its carbon footprint, becoming carbon neutral, nurturing lifecycle based standards and doing more work with the farms to promote positive environmental change.

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