ABOUT THE LOWE-MARTIN GROUP

In 2008, the Lowe-Martin Group (LM Group) celebrated its centennial, a success driven by its commitment to superior service, extraordinary performance, and sustainable growth. The company provides progressive print and communications solutions including offset, digital, and security printing; extensive in-house pre-press and bindery services; e-business solutions; as well as warehousing and logistics and builds on the strength of each service by combining them in highly effective client-focused systems.

Through its leadership and innovation, the Lowe-Martin Group re-invents the boundaries of traditional communications to create progressive solutions, and in doing so has built a reputation as one of North America’s premier print producers. It operates full-service production and sales operations in Mississauga and Ottawa, with satellite offices in New York and Ireland. The LM Group serves a variety of industries and has specialized experience dealing with government, financial and professional services, the pharmaceutical industry, healthcare, and design agencies.

LOCATION

ADDRESS: 6006 Kestrel Road, Mississauga, Ontario
PHONE: 905-670-7100
WEBSITE: www.lmgroup.com

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE - SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability has been a cornerstone of Lowe-Martin’s corporate philosophy since 1999. The company actively engages in green initiatives across its business and has integrated sustainable practices across its operations and practices. It prides itself on – and is recognized for – being an early advocate for and adopter of environmental best practices in the commercial print industry.
Believing that environmental sustainability provides a competitive advantage, the LM Group aims to eliminate the gaps between ecological values and environmental performance, while considering the financial growth of the business. The company considers the environmental impact of each and every step of the printing process – from forest to final product – and therefore focuses on environmental issues that are particularly significant to the printing industry.

The Lowe-Martin Group's Environmental Business Strategy is based on the five fundamental elements that have the greatest impact according to the company. These elements are: leadership, resource stewardship, risk management, verification, and regulatory compliance on key environmental issues, including climate change, forestry management, hazardous materials, and energy management.

APPLYING INITIATIVES AT THE LOWE-MARTIN GROUP

Lowe-Martin's overall environmental policy has driven greening initiatives at its 30,000 square foot Mississauga plant, which was built in 1985 and houses 61 employees. Being a leased facility limits the types of changes that can be made there, as does the fact that Lowe-Martin expects to outgrow the space in the next two years. The company’s facility-related improvements and renovations have therefore been focused on its Ottawa location, where there is a greater potential for return on investment from green projects. The 117,000 square foot Ottawa plant, which houses 262 employees, was built in 2005 and has been the focus of the main building-related improvements. There is also a 25,000 square foot warehouse facility in Mississauga housing 6 employees.

PROJECT AND PROCESS DRIVERS

As the company sees it, moving towards environmental sustainability is not only the right thing to do; it also enhances the economic success of Lowe-Martin's operations and increases its ability to meet its stakeholders' needs. In meeting their concerns, Lowe-Martin focuses its efforts on issues of climate change, energy use, resource use, waste/recycling, and community and employee engagement.

The LM Group has encountered many challenges on its way to sustainability. Most significantly, time and financial restrictions have played a big role in choosing projects. Unable to hire a dedicated environmental staffer, the company has relied on the commitments of those on its Sustainability Committee or Green Teams to go above and beyond their regular jobs and work on initiatives. It also faces challenges in reducing its environmental footprint at its leased
Lowe-Martin is very proud of our recognition as the 2008 and 2009 Gold Award winner as Most Environmentally Progressive Printer in Canada (100+ employees). This recognition has instilled a sense of pride, and a thirst for continuous improvement with all of our stakeholders. Our customers, employees, and suppliers want to continue to be associated with one of Canada’s greenest printers and are stepping up with ideas and commitments to greener alternatives. Together, we will make a difference.

Patrick Coyne — Director, Sales & Marketing, The Lowe-Martin Group

Mississauga facility and has therefore purchased 100 per cent green electricity through Bullfrog Power and made conservation efforts to accommodate for its inability to make major structural improvements there.

Another major challenge Lowe-Martin has is dealing with greenwashing among its competitors. To address this issue, the LM Group has taken a bold stance through its “Not Eco” messaging program. This program outlines the four key things that set a green leader apart from a greenwasher. According to Lowe-Martin, the green leader follows environmental certification and regulation; is environmentally certified (e.g., EcologoCM); works to reduce emissions and water effluence; and is recognized as a leader at the industry-level. Lowe-Martin communicates through this program to educate clients so they can make an informed choice.

RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY MANAGEMENT

In August of 2008, Lowe-Martin completed a third-party energy audit that identified practical and cost-effective opportunities for reducing energy consumption through retrofit measures and improvements. The audit identified the following as areas to improve efficiency: increased off-peak hours production, a lighting retrofit, additional air curtains, building automation systems, and variable speed waste disposal vacuum. Based on the audit, the company plans to install solar-powered hot water heating systems at its Ottawa facility by the end of third quarter in 2009 and is working with Natural Resources Canada to obtain financial support to complete a T5 lighting retrofit at its Ottawa location by the end of the year. The lighting retrofit is expected to provide an annual reduction of over 370,000 kiloWatt hours (kWh) and savings > $22,000.00

In 2008, Lowe-Martin also increased the purchase of renewable energy by 600 per cent over 2007, including 100 per cent green power at its Mississauga plant, and became the largest purchaser of renewable energy from Bullfrog Power in the commercial print industry. For 2009, Lowe-Martin is continuing to use 100 per cent renewable electricity at its Mississauga production facility and plans to introduce the use of renewable electricity into their Ottawa production facility.

RESOURCE STEWARSHIP

Recognizing that the environmental footprint of its clients is much greater than that of its own operations, the Lowe-Martin Group takes a consultative approach to helping its clients reduce their impact and considers education to be a significant impact reduction opportunity. In 2008, Lowe-Martin conducted environmental training seminars with its largest customers, which resulted in increased commitments to use Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified papers and post-consumer waste content (PCW). For instance, a session with Nestlé Canada resulted in the migration of 94,000 lbs. of coated paper to FSC certified uncoated paper with 100 per cent PCW produced in Canada using BioGas energy. The environmental impact from this
change equaled an ecological footprint reduction of 799 trees, 23,030 kgs solid waste, 2,178,544 L water, 50,572 kgs air emissions and 3,290 m3 natural gas annually.

That same year, Lowe-Martin increased the overall volume of its FSC jobs by 271 per cent, the tonnes of FSC fibre by 51.7 per cent, and tonnes of PCW fibre by 165.2 per cent over the previous year. It also uses vegetable-based inks throughout its operations and has been doing so for many years. Efforts like these allow Lowe-Martin to make a significant positive impact, even at its leased Mississauga facility.

**RECYCLING AND WASTE**

Lowe-Martin conducted and passed third-party waste audits at all of its production facilities in 2008. To deal with the difficult-to-dispose and toxic solvents used to clean the presses after each print job, the company introduced a Solvent Recovery Program at its Ottawa plant that led to a 70 per cent reduction in the purchase of new solvents. This change not only cut annual costs by $25,000.00 but also allowed the company to lessen the negative impact of its printing process.

**MEASURING PROGRESS**

By the end of 2009, the Lowe-Martin Group intends to complete a transparent greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reporting process based on the GHG Protocol. It is currently in the process of developing a 5-S Environmental Audit Checklist in order to establish performance metrics for its carbon footprint reductions. These two initiatives will no doubt take the company even further on its journey towards sustainability and enable Lowe-Martin to better evaluate and improve upon its processes.

**LEARNING FROM SUCCESS**

The Lowe-Martin Group has learned many new things along the way to sustainability, such as the importance of:

- Training its sales force on the value of the company’s environmental initiatives so that its salespeople are able to translate the values of these initiatives into sales growth for the company.
- Engaging all stakeholders in the process, including the supply chain, employees, and ownership team, and getting their feedback on greening efforts.
- Asking customers if the projects have value to them to find out if those projects can have a positive return on investment and provide a competitive advantage in the marketplace.
By maintaining environmental certifications and continuing to implement initiatives, Lowe-Martin has ensured that environmental awareness is firmly established in its corporate culture. Its efforts have been good for the company’s bottom line and have resulted in major successes – including a reduction in its annual CO2 emissions footprint by 549 tonnes in 2008.

Lowe-Martin’s environmental efforts have increased its business viability by helping the company to stand out from competitors; as proof, company revenues continue to grow despite the down economy and the decline of the commercial print industry. In Mississauga, the company has been able to leverage its environmental efforts on the sales and marketing side and in some cases has been awarded projects based on the company’s environmental strengths. Lowe-Martin’s efforts have also helped other companies reduce their footprints, such as Nestlé Canada.

In recognition of its successful environmental initiatives, the Lowe-Martin Group has received numerous awards, including 2008 and 2009 gold medals for being the “Most Environmentally Progressive Printing Company in Canada” from the Environmental Printing Awards and 2009 gold and bronze medals for “Most Progressive Environmental Printing Project - Electrophotography.” Lowe-Martin was one of the first printing companies to attain EcologoCM Certification under standards established by Environment Canada and is also ISO 9001-2000 and Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified.
Opportunities to gain a competitive advantage through sustainable business practices are more attainable than you think. Partners in Project Green is a growing community of businesses working together to green their bottom line by creating an internationally-recognized eco-business zone around Toronto Pearson.

Through new forms of business-to-business collaboration, Partners in Project Green delivers programming that helps businesses reduce energy and resource costs, uncover new business opportunities, and address everyday operational challenges in a green and cost-effective manner.

PEARSON ECO-BUSINESS ZONE

www.partnersinprojectgreen.com