

# 10 Steps to Green IT

**Many business executives recognize the need to act on carbon footprint reduction and green IT. However, a myriad of information exists – some of it contradictory – and it can be difficult to determine where to start.**

Capgemini presents a 10-step guide to formulating a green IT strategy.

- 1. Implement an active Corporate Social Responsibility function.** Your company should have an active Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) function with comprehensive policies that include ethical supply chain management to ensure that the IT procurement strategy is compliant with local legislation and is ecologically robust. This function should have executive sponsorship as, without this, any of the following steps will prove difficult, if not impossible, to achieve.
- 2. Benchmark your company's carbon footprint.** Consider aspects such as lighting, heating, air-conditioning, datacenters, car and truck fleets (mileage and carbon emission), business travel, vending and recycling. Determine a realistic benchmark and then set attainable but aggressive targets (perhaps over five or ten years).
- 3. Benchmark the PUE (Power Usage Effectiveness) of the datacenter.** This is the ratio of power entering the datacenter used to power the IT hardware, and is an established metric for datacenter efficiency. For more information on PUE, see the Green Grid white paper, The Green Grid Data Center Power Efficiency Metrics PUE and DCiE.<sup>1</sup>
- 4. Ensure IT and business work together.** The pursuit of green IT cannot come at the expense of business needs. Instead, a green IT strategy should fit within, and be aligned with, business needs. Business, however, should understand the potential benefits of pursuing green IT, such as cost-efficiency creation and improved workplace practices. A shared approach is necessary to ensure both green IT and business objectives can be pursued simultaneously and for mutual benefit.
- 5. Make achieving targets everyone's responsibility.** Use the company intranet or notice boards to publish regular updates on progress against targets and advise on simple, achievable steps (e.g. recycling, turning off PCs before leaving in the evening).
- 6. Consider the whole product lifecycle when contemplating technology upgrades.** While newer hardware will be more energy efficient, is this enough to outweigh the environmental impact of disposing of old hardware, manufacturing new hardware, and having it transported to your facilities? Any decision will have an environmental impact. Consider all of the factors to make a green decision.
- 7. Work with suppliers to improve your IT carbon footprint.** Talk to your hardware suppliers and, if relevant, your datacenter services supplier. This should be more than a cost-based, procurement conversation. Determine what part they can play in improving your IT carbon footprint. Remember, there are benefits in it for them if they can cite your green credentials as a success story.

1. The Green Grid – The Green Grid Data Center Power Efficiency Metrics PUE and DCiE, July 2008  
[http://www.thegreengrid.org/gg\\_content/TGG\\_Data\\_Center\\_Power\\_Efficiency\\_Metrics\\_PUE\\_and\\_DCiE.pdf](http://www.thegreengrid.org/gg_content/TGG_Data_Center_Power_Efficiency_Metrics_PUE_and_DCiE.pdf)

8. **Understand that more IT does not mean less green.** An increase in IT spending and the IT infrastructure does not necessarily mean a larger carbon footprint or a more negative environmental impact. For example, investing in video-conferencing technology and collaboration-enabling software, such as Google Apps, can help to reduce international travel. In the office, thin-client desktops or PCs enabled with Intel® vPro™ technology can reduce power consumption and noise while control systems can regulate heating, lighting and air-conditioning, thus reducing energy consumption and costs.
9. **Take a position on new technology.** Cloud and utility computing, virtualization, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), Desktop-as-a Service and open source software represent technologies that serve business needs first, yet are also greener than existing technologies. Thin-client desktops and SaaS, for example, reduce the amount of power consumed, and volume of physical hardware and software produced and shipped. From a business point of view, user mobility is increased and data is centrally stored, better controlled and more secure.
10. **Consider enlisting help.** Investigate whether a body dedicated to sustainability already exists in your company's industry sector. It may be able to provide guidance in setting and realizing green goals. In the absence of (or in addition to) industry-specific bodies, there are many organizations that can help:
  - Specialist carbon-benchmarking organizations. In many regions, this may be a service available through national or local government. Otherwise, there is a growing number of companies able to offer specialist services.
  - Business consultants, technology consultants and outsourcers, such as Capgemini, who can provide guidance on appropriate business practice and technology deployment.
  - Governmental bodies such as the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and quasi-governmental bodies like the Carbon Trust in the UK.
  - Utility companies often have energy-conservation advisors who can be engaged to advise on practices, green energy tariffs, etc.
  - Datacenter infrastructure specialists can advise on getting the best out of your datacenter. Sun Microsystems customers can request information on their own datacenter efficiency programs from account managers.



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