

Post houses can go green

Here at Unit, as with any post house, we use a lot of energy. Our Apple Macs need liquid cooling, we use electricity to power our shared storage arrays, the uninterruptible power supplies, the air con, lighting, heating. We occasionally need to fly. Using this energy is critical to our day-to-day business. But what can we do about reducing or eliminating the environmental impact caused?

One of the benefits of starting a new company is that you can try to get things right the first time. Ever since Unit started last May, we've been Carbon Neutral certified. This is a multi-stage process. First, there's a comprehensive audit of the carbon-emitting potential of your business. Next, you eliminate any excess energy use. Finally, you invest in a scheme offsetting the remainder of the carbon you produce. In our case, that's a project to make wind power viable in Mongolia, helping China overcome its reliance on coal for energy generation.

Because Unit is so heavily reliant on electricity, we source all of it from alternative energy sources - wind, solar, tidal, hydropower - which doesn't emit carbon. This is easily done: most energy suppliers have a green tariff option, which barely costs more than standard rates. We save energy by using low-energy light bulbs, and recycle as much waste as we can. We encourage our clients to turn off air-conditioning and lights when they're not being used. It's all achievable, and it doesn't affect the way we do business.

Of course, we're not perfect. After all of these measures, our carbon footprint is still 13.5 tonnes/year, almost exactly the same as an average family of four. Future projects include beefing up the insulation, and double-glazing our wonderful (but rather ancient) Georgian townhouse. We're also keen to start generating our own electricity. So next time you stop by Unit, take the time to glance up and see if we've got that wind turbine working yet!

Luke Colson, Unit Post