



## **B&Q - case study**

### **B&Q: putting low carbon growth at the centre of business strategy**

Case study: January 2011

- Growing sales of One Planet Home products now represent 12 per cent of turnover
- Launching new green products and services
- Taking a strategic approach to greening its business

B&Q, the UK's leading home improvement and garden centre retailer, has a long heritage in sustainability, which began more than a decade ago. In 2007 the business took this agenda to a new level by putting sustainability and green growth at the centre of its business strategy, which is now paying dividends with its One Planet Home range of independently accredited sustainable products now accounting for more than 12% of sales.

### **Reducing B&Q's carbon footprint and helping its customers do the same**

Together with sustainability charity, Bioregional, the retailer has been working hard to reduce its own carbon footprint, as well as developing products and services to help homeowners do the same in their homes. They can claim to be having some success having reduced their absolute emissions by more than 16% in the last three years and having been recognised for their efforts winning The Observer's Ethical Business Award and securing a place on the Sunday Times Best Green Companies list.

The business is also committed to making it easier for homeowners to green up their homes and much of the knowledge the retailer is able to pass on within its stores to customers is a result of the progress it has made itself to improving the efficiency of its own operations.

### **Green products and services**

B&Q now has more than 4,000 One Planet Home eco Products available in its stores at no extra premium and customers are now beginning to see the new 'best in class' eco brand, Home Eco – featured on products like sheep's wool insulation.

The retailer is the first in the high street to have introduced a dedicated advisor in store who focuses on helping people understand what they can do to make their home more efficient. These Eco Advisors are being trained to City and Guilds NVQ level 2, which means they are qualified to help people understand how to save energy, water and money in the home. Their aim is to have a qualified Eco Advisor in every store this year. In addition to their in-store offer, B&Q is also successfully trialling two new environmental services with Greater London to help make it easier for people to go green in their homes with a home eco audit and an eco installation service now available. It all adds up to a green growth success story.

### **Taking a holistic approach to low carbon business**

B&Q's environmental success hasn't just been about capitalizing on green business opportunities. It has taken a holistic approach to transform itself into a low carbon business. This has not only boosted sales but made it a more efficient operation. Our involvement with B&Q started in 2008 when they became one of the first 12 organizations to achieve the Carbon Trust Standard. Since then we have also been working with their parent company, Kingfisher, in similar vein.

### **Five things you may not know about B&Q**

1. B&Q has 330 stores in the UK and Ireland employing more than 30,000 national wide a quarter of whom are over the age of 50 years with a similar percentage under the age of 25.
2. B&Q was one of the first 12 UK organisations to receive the Carbon Trust Standard and last year won The Observers Ethical Business Award and was listed on The Sunday Times Best Green Companies list.
3. B&Q has set itself challenging targets with the ultimate ambition of reducing its carbon emissions by 90% by 2023. To date it has achieved a 16% **absolute** reduction in CO2 since 2006/7 in a

growth period. This includes the following percentage reductions in CO2 - 12% electricity; 7% gas; 40% waste to landfill; 22% logistics; 33% business travel and 8% water use.

4.B&Q is the only retailer involved in the Government's Green Deal (Pay As You Save) initiative to help Government understand how to financially incentivise homeowners to green up their homes.

5.B&Q leads the industry with its sustainable timber policy and helped to set up the Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC) to promote the importance of sustainable forestry management.

**Quote from Euan Sutherland, Chief Executive B&Q and Kingfisher UK**

"We've understood for sometime the need to invest in a sustainable future and are moving our business into a position where it is best placed to take advantage of the growth in the green economy. Ours is a two-pronged approach, to get our own house in order and to then use what we've learnt to make it easier for homeowners to do the same.

We're in the early stages of taking the next big step on our journey towards sustainability, having partnered with the Ellen MacArthur Foundation. With The Foundation we're looking at how we can eliminate waste at a product's end of life and instead move towards a more closed loop system. It's not easy and presents many challenges to our existing business model but despite the difficulties, businesses do bear a responsibility and are critical to the success of our being able to secure a sustainable future. That's why I'm happy to support the Carbon Trust's campaign to encourage more companies to demonstrate leadership within this arena."