

Environmentally Friendly Design and Assembly

by Nancy Knowlton

Certain design guidelines are legislated. Others are voluntary. When it comes to designing products that are purchased and consumed around the world, both enforced and voluntary design protocols must be top of mind. At SMART, we meet all global environmental legislation and set our own, higher standards for our design and assembly operations, so our customers can be confident that we consistently do the responsible thing.

We are unrelenting in our desire to reduce emissions and eliminate waste in all aspects of our assembly processes. This desire extends to our full operation, including our offices – as well as to those companies that provide components and materials to us.



Employee Commitment

Environmental responsibility is a mindset, one that SMART carefully cultivates throughout the entire organization. We encourage every employee to suggest ways SMART can reduce its impact on the environment. Our environmental group acts on those ideas that we can implement immediately and over the long term.

Reducing Packaging Waste

Considerable effort has gone into designing reusable packaging pieces and parts used in our assembly processes. Suppliers ship their components to us in these containers, eliminating the need for one-time packaging that must be thrown away. The custom-designed packaging carefully protects the components in transit, so fewer components must be returned to suppliers for rework.

Recyclable Pallets

We ship our SMART Board interactive whiteboards on durable, lightweight cardboard pallets. When they reach their destination, these pallets can be easily recycled.

Power Usage

All SMART Board 600 series interactive whiteboards draw their power through the USB cable that attaches to the computer. They require no separate power from a wall

plug. When the connected computer is off, the SMART Board interactive whiteboard draws no power. This means that outside of class hours – on the weekend and during summer vacation – no additional power is consumed.

When the board is on, it draws a very modest 1.3 volts, substantially lower than any interactive whiteboard that requires its own power supply.

Turning Off Interactive Response Systems

At the end of the day, the teacher can turn off all of the clickers with the touch of a single button. This means that a single set of batteries in the individual units will last at least a full school year – whether or not the students remember to turn off the devices.

Recycling

We recycle everything that we can of the total measurable waste from our plant, actively working to reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfill. Similarly, in our offices we recycle as much as possible.

Conferencing Option

At the same time that we created the world's first interactive whiteboard, we also created the world's first Windows® conferencing application. That application has morphed through the years into an easy-to-use application that connects multiple people and locations. Instead of always jumping on a plane or driving a car to meet a prospective customer, we can immediately address an opportunity or problem without being forced to travel.

Good for the Environment

Moving education into the digital realm is good for the environment. It means that children can review materials on the Internet instead of printing them. Students can also take tests using interactive response systems, again reducing paper consumption. Yes, there are additional power costs associated with going digital, but PCs are becoming more efficient each year.

Paying attention to our environmental impact is a commitment, not a one-time effort. We are relentless in our efforts to reduce our environmental footprint in all aspects of our business.

Nancy Knowlton is the co-founder and CEO of SMART Technologies, the world's leading supplier of interactive whiteboards. Nancy's husband and SMART co-founder, David Martin, is the inventor of the interactive whiteboard product category. Together they have built a company that is focused on delivering easy-to-use, yet feature-rich collaboration tools, including the SMART Board interactive whiteboard. Nancy can be reached at CEO@smarttech.com.