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Store Automation & Barcode Printing

TOSHIBA TEC sitting pretty in 2005 EU Waste Management Directive 'Monozukuri' fundamentals propel European environment protection campaign fast forward

When Evert van den Berg had his first look at the EU Directive on Waste Management, he was not sure if he would understand all of Directive 2002/96/EC's bureaucratic language. But when the real-life implications on handling of waste of electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) became clear, the Dutch WEEE Project Leader was in for a pleasant surprise.

Japanese companies such as TOSHIBA TEC, as a matter of policy are world leaders in taking pro-active measures to minimise use of harmful and hazardous products. Waste management has indeed become a central issue in our society. To sort out the problem requires joint actions from producers, distribution channels and ultimately, the end-users. "I knew from the start that we were able to take a leadership position," said Evert van den Berg.

'Monozukuri'

The TOSHIBA TEC Group's Management Policy of 'Monozukuri' of 'Five Commitments' is built on a strong belief to create products with pride and passion, keeping the customer in mind "all the time and everywhere". The company's products do enjoy a reputation of legendary long life.

In the 21st century, the quest is for a better quality of life, a society with a high ethical standard and a clean natural environment. Against this background, the TOSHIBA TEC Group continues to challenge the "Creation of Prosperous Values". While contributing to the development of an environmentally-oriented society, the corporation continues to grow in tune with the times.

Environmental information on the production, sales and service sites at TOSHIBA TEC Corporation are gathered to promote the reduction of the environmental impact of each business site. Moreover, this electronics giant conducts environmental protection assessments on suppliers and procured products as part of its commitment to 'green procurement'.

The overriding objective of the WEEE EU Directive is to encourage EEE manufactures to design and produce products that are easier to reuse and to recycle, resulting in less waste. Evert van den Berg, Dutch WEEE Project Leader: "Quite a few business partners are not well-informed about the new legal situation. We are pushing our suppliers to comply. For us, WEEE is a must-do. Period."

"There is a continuous effort at TOSHIBA TEC to develop environmentally conscious products aimed at reducing the impact on Nature throughout the entire product life cycle," says Manabu Niwase, Director Product & Marketing, TOSHIBA TEC Europe. "Reducing the size and weight of products helps improve a product's performance and reduces for example energy consumption."



“At the same time, we have worked hard to eliminate hazardous substances in our products. As from 1 July 2006, lead, mercury, cadmium, 6-chrome, are no longer found in our new products and we will not longer use the restricted RoHS halogenated flame retardants in our polymers as part of our global program to ensure people’s safety and health.”

Pride and Passion in the Netherlands

As WEEE Manager for the Dutch branch of TOSHIBA TEC, the Retail Automation and Barcode Printing specialists, Evert had two advantages from which he could draw support. One, his company has a firm track record of building environmentally-friendly products based on ‘monozukuri’. Two, the EU Commission regarded the Dutch Law on waste



management as their preferred platform to create a mandatory package of rules and commitments in all of the 25 EU member states.

The European Union’s measures to reduce the generation of electrical and electronic waste came into force on February 13 2003. Eighteen months later, the 25 EU Member States were bound through their national legislation to promote reuse, recycling and other forms of recovery in order to reduce the quantity of such waste. The EU is also taking measures to restrict the use of hazardous substances such as lead and mercury in this type of equipment.

Product design

All member States are to encourage manufacturers to design and produce electrical and electronic equipment which facilitate dismantling and recovery, in particular the reuse and recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment.

A clean environment is strongly positioned by TOSHIBA TEC to protect the world’s natural resources. As of May of this year, all TOSHIBA products are compliant with the new WEEE EU Directive – underlining a firm commitment to a greener world.

Separate collection

Member States are to minimise the disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) as unsorted municipal waste and to set up separate collection systems for WEEE. In the case of electrical and electronic waste, the Dutch Ministry for the Environment (VROM) are leaders in Europe overseeing that as from 13 August 2005:

- final holders and distributors can return such waste free of charge;
- distributors of new products ensure that waste of the same type of equipment can be returned to them free of charge on a one-to-one basis;
- producers are allowed to set up and operate individual or collective take-back systems;
- return of contaminated waste presenting a risk to the health and safety of personnel may be refused.

To ensure that all waste electrical and electronic equipment is transported to authorised treatment facilities, VROM is working in close collaboration with Dutch trade organisation ICT Office.

ICT Milieu, part of ICT Office is the first Dutch organisation to manage a collective take back logistical system for all WEEE



compliant ICT equipment based on a mandatory policy to take back and treat ICT products at the end of their lifecycle. The Dutch trade association currently services over 180 ICT firms in The Netherlands. Annetje C. Huizinga, Director Environmental Affairs at ICT Office: “We run an efficient clearinghouse operation, based on actual costs, leveraging extensive economies of scale. Keep it Simple is our motto, and it works fine.”

“The clearinghouse system is well accepted by the Dutch ICT industry. We have been active for over five years now. ICT Milieu has a proven track record with high recycling rates. We are setting a standard in Europe,” according to Dr. Huizinga.

Every electrical and electronic product with a battery and/or an electrical plug is affected by the WEEE legislation. ICT Milieu estimates the total amount of this kind of waste at 80.000 tons per year in The Netherlands.

Annetje Huizinga: “By 31 December 2006, at least 4 kg on average per inhabitant per year of waste electrical and electronic equipment from private households must be achieved. Today, we collect over five kilograms per inhabitant already.”

“The rate of recovery by an average weight per appliance must be at least 75% in the case of IT and telecommunications equipment. We achieve recovery levels of about 90 percent in the Netherlands today.”

WEEE Directive

The WEEE Directive applies to the following categories of electrical and electronic equipment:

- Large and small household appliances
- IT and telecommunications equipment
- Consumer equipment
- Lighting equipment
- Electrical and electronic tools (with the exception of large-scale stationary industrial tools)
- Toys, leisure and sports equipment
- Medical devices (with the exception of implanted and infected products)
- Monitoring and control instruments
- Automatic dispensers.

Treatment

Producers of electrical and electronic equipment are required to apply the best available treatment, recovery and recycling techniques. TOSHIBA TEC in The Netherlands contracted SIMS-Mirec, an international recycling company to dispose of their WEEE. Harrie van Gogh, Business Development Manager SIMS-Mirec Benelux: “We are the only truly global metals recycling company with operations spanning four continents. SIMS Group employs 2.400 staff and generated € 1.6 billion turnover in 2004. We offer a unique set of services to ICT vendors, the distribution channel and end users from re-use up to recycling, part number and shipment registration/checking and (custom) controlled destruction.”

“Every month, we pick up box pallets with WEEE waste at TOSHIBA TEC in Amersfoort and process them at our plant in Eindhoven. The total WEEE waste for TOSHIBA TEC in 2005 is forecast to reach 7,500 kilograms. That is very little – proving TOSHIBA TEC’s strong commitment to protect the environment.”

Financing

For products placed on the market before 13 August 2005 (i.e. 'historical waste'), financing is to be provided by all producers present in the market. They are being asked to contribute proportionately to their share of the market. As of 13 August 2005 however, manufacturers themselves must provide for the financing of the collection, treatment, recovery and environmentally sound disposal of their own waste electrical and electronic equipment.

Evert van den Berg: "TOSHIBA TEC calculated that historical waste cost about 18 Eurocents per kilo. New waste will cost us 47 Eurocent per kilo. That is a big increase but is a matter of striking a balance between advancing the business and exercising our corporate social responsibility."

Information

In May 2005, TOSHIBA TEC started labelling its products to adopt a system of control that promotes compliance with the EU WEEE Directive. The company is ready for the WEEE legislation long before its main competitors. "Japanese firms are truly pioneers in setting the right example for professional waste management," says Annetje Huizinga of ICT Office.

There is an Ancient Proverb saying: "We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors, we borrow it from our Children." As world citizens we must take responsibility for our long-term actions, or we fail in providing welfare and a healthy environment for our Children.

Evert van den Berg and his colleagues at TOSHIBA TEC could not agree more.

About TOSHIBA TEC

TOSHIBA TEC Europe has earned a reputation as a leading manufacturer of retail and industrial information systems through product development that aims to anticipate and uncover potential customer needs, resulting in products that provide real value and benefits to the user.

As a total solution provider, TOSHIBA TEC Europe offers a complete package from consulting and system design to system installation, operation and maintenance of point of sale systems, cash registers, scales, barcode printers, peripherals and software information systems.

TOSHIBA TEC Corporation has a global turnover of 355 billion yen. TOSHIBA TEC's majority shareholder is the TOSHIBA Corporation, which provides TOSHIBA TEC with the support of an unrivalled worldwide organisation with a strong presence in four continents.

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