



QUALITY

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MINNESOTA



RUNNING A *sustainable* BUSINESS
12 TIPS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED

REDUCE WASTE, LESS PLASTIC



WITH DOMESTIC & GLOBAL MATERIALS



WHY IS SUSTAINABILITY IMPORTANT FOR EVERY BUSINESS?

It's about being responsible, having purpose, and serving your consumers' interests and needs. Global warming is everyone's problem. Plastic pollution is threatening life on earth. Companies with sustainable business practices help combat that by using sustainable and recyclable raw materials, and implementing green-friendly practices and policies.

At Behrens, a business that people have relied on for more than 100 years, we've realized customers are gradually becoming more environmentally conscious. They are questioning retailers who do not have sustainability practices in place and are not carrying products that can make a measurable difference. To avert the worst, every industry and retailer needs to become more sustainable.

For us, sustainability is not a single-product principle. We infuse sustainability as part of our culture and across the company and with every supplier and vendor we work with.

In this whitepaper, we'll look at the benefits of running a sustainable business, explain why steel is a leader in sustainability, and offer insights into how to get started making your businesses more sustainable.

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5 BENEFITS OF RUNNING A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

Why should companies be mindful of sustainability? Saving the planet aside, you'll do well by doing good. For companies, the benefits of sustainability go beyond what's good for the planet. It's also about what's good for the bottom line. Here are five benefits enjoyed by sustainable businesses.

1. INCREASED CUSTOMER DEMAND

Customers are increasingly demanding sustainable products and practices from the businesses they patronize. According to a recent report by the [Retail Industry Leaders Association](#), 93% of consumers worldwide expect the brands they patronize to support social and environmental causes. The same report reveals that in the U.S., 68 million people based purchasing decisions on "their values – personal, social and environmental – and say they will spend up to 20% more on environmentally sound products." Bottom line, your customers want sustainable products and will pay more to get them.

2. RECRUITMENT, HIRING AND RETENTION

Hiring and retention are difficult in any economy, but now, attracting, hiring and retaining the best and the brightest is even more critical to a company's survival. It's about looking deeply into what's important to the biggest segment of the workforce, millennials and Gen Z, and aligning your culture, benefits and values to those priorities. One of the top is sustainability. That's not to say previous generations aren't concerned with it, but here's the difference. Nine out of 10 millennials would take a pay cut to work for a company whose values are similar to their own, according to the LinkedIn [Workplace Culture](#)

Benefits

OF RUNNING A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

- Increases customer demand
- Aids recruitment, hiring and retention
- Saves money in operating costs
- Boosts brand image
- Helps attract investors

[Report](#). It's that important to this new generation. For them, it's not about corporate philanthropy or giving to environmental causes. It's about walking your talk in the workplace as well. A business's culture must reflect sustainability and environmental concern to attract this huge segment of workers today. They want to see your values in action, not simply read them in your mission statement.

3. YOU'LL SAVE MONEY IN OPERATING COSTS

Even simple changes like converting to paperless billing and buying reusable products can boost your bottom line profits. Tax credits for green improvements can make a huge, one-time impact, while more efficient energy use by using those new systems can consistently save you money in the long run. Reducing your operating costs in small and large ways can greatly affect your operating costs both now and over time.

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4. BOOSTS BRAND IMAGE

By using sustainable practices and products, you'll be seen as a good neighbor and corporate citizen. Today, corporate branding is a vital part of doing business. It's not just about what you sell, it's about who your company is. How employees, vendors, suppliers and customers see you. Companies that are good corporate citizens, volunteer in the community's environment-related efforts, sell and use sustainable products, and don't pollute the air or water are viewed more favorably than companies that don't.

5. HELPS YOU ATTRACT INVESTORS

Harvard Business Review recently conducted a study of senior executives at global investing firms, including the world's three largest asset managers. What they found surprised them. In the past, environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues haven't gotten much attention from the investment community. That has changed. The HBR report found ESG was top of mind for these firms. Integrating sustainability into their investment criteria is now a must. It's a signal that companies will be held accountable by their shareholders for sustainability.



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STEEL IS SUSTAINABILITY – PURCHASING THE RIGHT PRODUCTS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Did you know that steel is the very definition of sustainability? It can be recycled and reused infinitely with no damage or downgrading of the steel itself. In other words, you recycle steel and you get the same quality as if it were brand new, virgin material, off the manufacturing line. So, when you purchase an item made of steel, you know that it will never end up in a landfill unless you yourself throw it away. It's about purchasing the right products that make a difference to our planet.

SOME OTHER POINTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT STEEL PRODUCTS:

- Galvanized steel provides decades of maintenance-free performance. It is resistant to rust and corrosion, is not susceptible to pests, and won't pick up odors. It is quite possible, these products could last a lifetime or as long as you want to use it.
- Zinc and steel, the two main components in galvanized steel, are natural and 100% recyclable, making it infinitely renewable.
- Many steel mills use only scraps to produce new steel. It's endlessly recyclable.

**MAKING SMALL
CHANGES TOWARD
SUSTAINABILITY WILL
MAKE A BIG IMPACT ON
THE ENVIRONMENT.**

SUSTAINABILITY IS CIRCULAR. At Behrens, it starts with sourcing quality materials, with which we make our sustainable products, which in turn can be recycled...and it all begins again.



QUALITY MATERIALS

We start with intentional use of materials that can be repurposed, recycled or biodegraded. It cuts down on the need for new virgin materials, reduces energy consumption, and removes certain materials from the waste stream.



CYCLABILITY

Behrens designs and engineers with the end in mind, considering how a product will be recycled at the end of its functional use. The goal: not having our products end up in landfills.



MINIMIZING WASTE

We ensure our waste is removed responsibly and upcycled back into raw material, creating the opportunity for it to be turned into new material repeatedly.



DISASSEMBLY

We design products that can be taken apart, recognizing the value of each component and its cyclability.



GREEN CHEMISTRY

We respect the planet through the careful use and application of chemicals to reduce or eliminate the use of hazardous substances.



Behrens Tenets of Circular Design and Manufacturing



VERSATILITY

Our products easily adapt to style, gender, activity and purpose.



DURABILITY

Products are made of 100% galvanized steel, making them stronger and longer lasting.



PURPOSEFUL PACKAGING

Packaging is designed and made of materials that can be repurposed or recycled or simply biodegrade.



REFURBISHMENT

Many of Behrens products can be maintained via repair or with replacement parts, extending their use and lifecycle.



PARTNERSHIPS

We partner globally and domestically to resource materials from socially responsible suppliers and organizations that educate and teach consumers about the qualities and types of products that can be recycled and upcycled. We steward sustainable practices and join in partnership with global nonprofit organization, Metal Recycles Forever.



REDUCE WASTE, LESS PLASTIC



With Domestic & Global Materials

BEHRENSMFG.COM

12 TIPS FOR RUNNING A SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS

You're convinced of the benefits of instituting sustainable practices and products into your business. Great! But a wholesale revamping of your business model seems unworkable and unwieldy, especially now with all of the other challenges businesses are dealing with. That's not a problem. Rome, as they say, wasn't built in a day. You don't have to convert your business model. It's about making small changes along the way that can make a big impact.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS THAT CAN HELP YOU GET STARTED.

Use galvanized steel instead of plastic. Are your garbage and recycling bins in the lunchroom or your home office made of plastic? Now's the time to get off of that train. Plastic is killing the planet. Galvanized steel is infinitely recyclable and will never end up choking a turtle or endangering sea life.

Integrate sustainability into your business plan and mission. Outline your values on environmentally friendly practices, ensuring your employees and customers know it's a priority.

Go paperless. Not just in customer billing, but in your own business practices, too. This will require you to sit down and assess your daily processes and procedures for ways to cut back on paper. Do client files really need to be printed before meetings, or can you use your laptop to access them instead? Do contracts really need to be printed in triplicate, or at all? Do your job applicants need to fill out paper applications, or can they do it online?

Reduce your energy use. Take a look at your monthly energy bill. Can you make energy-friendly improvements



to lighting, office equipment or HVAC systems? Investing in energy-saving measures like lighting and HVAC can come with hefty tax credits to save you money now and in the long run.

Reduce water usage. Repair leaky pipes, install water-efficient toilets, assess sprinkler use for landscaping, use native plants and use a rain barrel to collect water for landscaping.

Recycle. If you're not already recycling paper, cardboard and plastic in your office, it's high time you start.

Lead by example. Like any company-wide initiative, commitment to sustainability practices should come from the top. When the leaders of your company embrace sustainability and explain why it's important to your company and the community, employees are much more likely to get on the bandwagon.

Behrensmfg.com offers a metal recycling locator so that you can easily dispose of metal and steel products near you.

Organize company-wide volunteer days. Allow employees to choose their own green projects or support and collaborate with community efforts. It's a way to walk your talk about sustainability rather than just incorporating it into your mission statement. Action means more than words.

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Commute smarter. Encourage your employees to carpool or take public transportation to work, and provide incentives for those who do.

Or don't commute at all. Allowing and encouraging your employees to work remotely takes cars off the freeways during rush hour, dramatically reducing your company's carbon footprint.

Stock green. Examine the materials lists on the merchandise you sell for petroleum byproducts, metals and other nonreplenishable materials. Investigate whether similar products made from renewable resources like galvanized steel are available. Take a look at where goods are made, too. If possible, switch to products made closer to your store and in the USA to reduce the environmental costs of transportation.

Cut packaging. Encourage your existing vendors to ship products in less elaborate packaging and consider switching to suppliers that are less wasteful. For the waste you do receive, try to expand your recycling efforts.



By instituting sustainable practices and products, your business will not only be helping the planet, but you'll be serving the needs of your customers, employees and community. The phrase "doing well by doing good" certainly applies to sustainability, because it boosts your bottom line in myriad ways, helps you hire and retain star employees, encourages investment in your company, and increases your brand's reputation by showing you're a company that cares.

At Behrens, we're committed to sustainability in the products we manufacture and sell, and in our business practices. Behrens is one of the few select manufacturers authorized to use the



Metal Recycles Forever mark on our products. We're happy to help spread the word about how sustainability can preserve the environment and help the economy at the same time by creating more profitable businesses.

For a complete catalog of our products that you can use in your business and sell to your customers, [**CLICK HERE.**](#)

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