

Donate Your Energy in Abbott, Clonmel, Ireland



HIGHLIGHTS

- Energy savings of 63 383 kWh or € 8 726
- Energy saving donations of € 2 000
- 1 600 staff involved.
- Plant wide implementation.
- Some 39 tonnes CO₂ emissions abated.



SUMMARY

The staff at Abbott Vascular began a ground-breaking initiative to raise funds for the Children's Ward in Tipperary General Hospital. During 2008/09 the company ran a plant-wide energy saving campaign under the 'Donate Your Energy' banner and agreed to donate a proportion of the energy savings to the hospital. The Tipperary Energy Agency (TEA) worked successfully with Abbott to implement Donate Your Energy, resulting in energy savings and a financial donation of € 2 000 to the Children's Ward. This is a significant step in the right direction for both TEA and Abbott.

About Donate Your Energy

Donate Your Energy is a scheme to help companies cut their energy bill by providing incentives to staff to save energy. The incentive provided is that the company agrees to donate a proportion of the energy cost savings to a charity selected by the staff. In this way staff feel that they are contributing something to the greater good instead of just saving energy to save the company money.

Background

Abbott Vascular is a premier company in South Tipperary, Ireland, with a workforce of 1 600 people. The facility sits on a 19-acre site containing a new 16 700 square metre state-of-the-art manufacturing plant and an additional 6 500 square metre administration, warehouse and logistics facility. The company manufactures a range of catheters and stents for the treatment of coronary heart disease.

The situation

The project involved TEA working with a number of departments within Abbott on two energy conservation programmes. The departments that had a key role to play in the successful rolling out of Donate Your Energy were the Facilities Department; Environment Department; Health and Safety Department; Information Technology Department and the Production Department.

The solution

The initiative had two components:

1) Switching off PCs/Lights and non-critical equipment

This programme applied to staff switching off outside of normal working hours and made significant savings. The action applied to all unnecessary lighting and to non critical PCs and monitors in general administration areas such as the Office Building and the Manufacturing Building.



The monitoring of this switch-off programme was facilitated by a simple audit counting the number of PCs and VDUs left on per area outside of normal working hours. In this way staff were actively involved.

2) Switching off work equipment

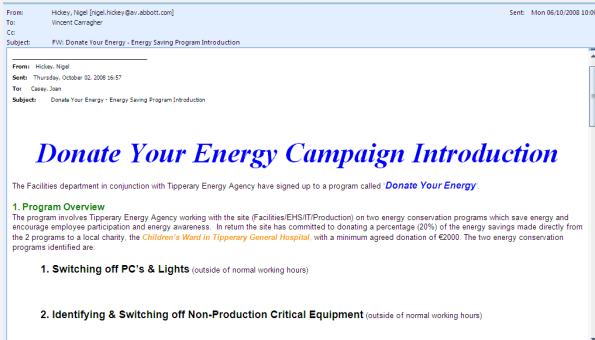
This applied to switching off identified pieces of equipment in 'DES' and Core Products areas. 'Identified equipment' is equipment that can be safely turned off and more importantly then switched back on in a manner that will not impact on production.



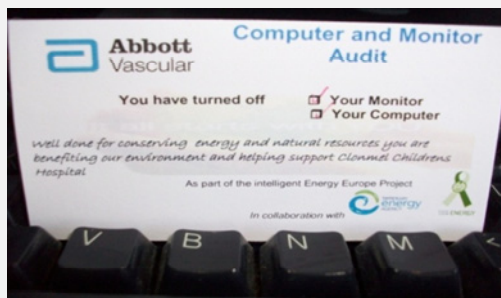
The monitoring for this programme was carried out by the facilities 'Energy Brain System'.

Actions taken

Various communication channels were used to disseminate essential awareness of the programme and its success. For example it was decided to develop 'Did We Switch Off' updates. These were emailed to all employees bi-weekly. Updates provided feedback on savings and highlighted departments/areas that excelled or others that required improvement. Early indications within the programme's monitoring showed improvements were needed.



The company used emails and prompt cards to inform and remind staff of the campaign.



The Energy Brain System was used to monitor results. This is a dedicated building energy management system which monitors energy usage across its buildings and provides energy data related to different areas (office or production) or energy usage of key utilities like Air Handling Units, Compressor, etc. The Energy Brain system allowed particular analysis of various energy usage components. It can monitor plugged-in appliances or lights individually, and allowed staff to measure the improvements achieved as they made changes to equipment operation or work practices.

Results

Numerous consumption samples were taken and the following shows one such table which was circulated to staff by email. It shows a dramatic decrease in PCs and VDUs left on over a 6 month period during the campaign.

Date	PC On	Monitor On
Oct-08	74%	75%
Feb-09	46%	60%
Apr-09	30%	52%

Overall energy savings of 63 383 kWh were achieved resulting in energy cost savings of € 8 726. From these savings, the company decided to donate a total of € 2 000 to the Childrens Ward in Tipperary General Hospital.

Lessons learned

The following drivers have been identified to bring about staff behaviour change relevant to Donate Your Energy in Abbott:

- Reminders using both email and prompt cards.
- Pledges and commitment.
- Messages on the climate change theme.
- Social - donating to improve children's health.
- Normative - demonstrate that others are performing the action.
- Altruistic - Donate Your Energy.
- Information - give information on the desired actions.
- Chain of command - adopt the line of authority linking people at all levels.
- Name and shame strategies*

*Abbott staff felt that the energy saving to February 2009 shown above could be improved upon and consulted TEA who suggested using a prompt card (illustrated on the left) when a PC user had switched off as a form of recognition or reward strategy. Abbott management preferred to place the prompt card on all PCs. This meant that the prompt card would also identify PC users who had not switched off. It is possible that this fashioned a name and shame strategy and diluted the impact of recognition and normative gains. The April 2009 result above shows that the prompt card helped and even greater reductions have been seen since. However in recent research Moser and Bingham advocate caution suggesting that guilt rarely motivates action. In this context solutions must turn to creating a sense of empowerment explaining that we can tackle things together. Establishing collective action can help people feel that their individual actions are part of something bigger, and that this action is supported by consistent policies and regulation at a global level.

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<http://www.energyxchange.eu/en/donate.php>