

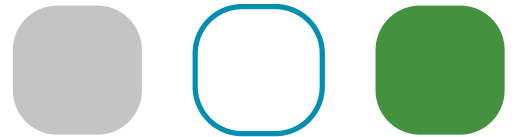
Going

GREEN

An interview with Allan Smith

According to a recent Steelcase Workplace Index Survey conducted by Opinion Research Corporation, 57% of all respondents believe environmental and sustainability issues are a high priority for their company. Yet, only 35% of those

surveyed said their company always takes steps to improve the company's environmental standards. We spoke with Allan Smith, director, communications and environmental strategy, Steelcase Inc., about some of the initiatives Steelcase has undertaken to minimize its environmental impact and help customers make more environmentally responsible choices.



Allan Smith – Director, Communications and Environmental Strategy, Steelcase North America

Appointed to this role in June 2004, Allan is responsible for developing a comprehensive environmental strategy, implementing environmental programs throughout Steelcase North America and aligning the company's business and marketing strategies to achieve aggressive environmental goals.

Since November 2002, Allan has also been responsible for all marketing communications, knowledge and service marketing, advanced marketing and the first phase of product development. In this capacity, he contributed to the launch of the Steelcase Think™ chair, a product conceived, developed and produced for maximum sustainability. He also led the development and implementation of a new program that defined protocols and standards to ensure environmentally preferable printing practices for all Steelcase collateral.

Going Green

The Building and Furnishings Industry accounts for significant levels of energy consumption and waste production, which negatively impact our environment. The truth is that our modern, highly technological civilization, as it currently operates, is not sustainable. What, in your opinion, is the single most important thing a manufacturer in this industry can do to address this problem?

As a member of the building industry, I believe we need to develop a new way of thinking and approach how we design products differently. In the past most industries and manufacturers focussed their environmental efforts primarily on the prevention or minimization of pollution. We need to broaden our focus to every stage of a product's life – from materials extraction – to end-of-use and every stage in between.

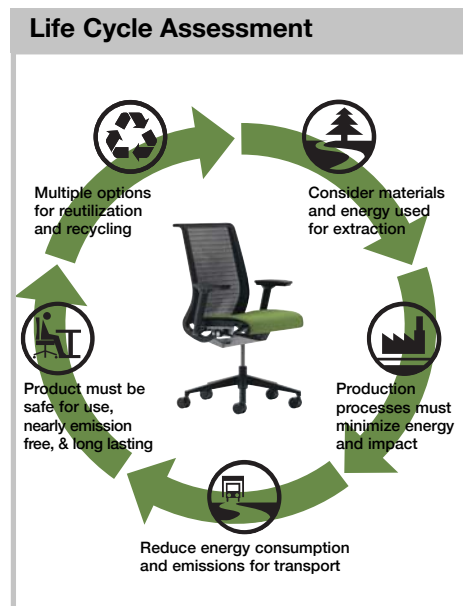
We need to work not only to minimize the impact we have, but strive to make our impacts positive. At Steelcase we believe we can accomplish this through Life Cycle Thinking.

What do you mean by Life Cycle Thinking?

Life Cycle Thinking examines all the stages within a product life cycle, and how you can advance

the sustainability of its design by lowering the environmental impact at every stage. The stages that are examined include the materials that are used, production methods, transportation, use and end-of-use.

To help us with this we have entered into an agreement with McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC) to collaborate on cradle-to-cradle environmental design and strategy. MBDC is world renowned for its sustainable architectural and design principles. We previously worked with MBDC on the development of our new Think™ chair.



Think utilizes MBDC's materials classification protocol and uses only materials deemed by MBDC as safe to the environment. MBDC has also consulted

with Designtex, a Steelcase company, to develop the William McDonough Collection of fabrics.

With their help, we have identified initial goals for our newest collaboration. First, MBDC will conduct a material assessment of the top 10 materials we use in our products. By benchmarking products using MBDC's cradle-to-cradle criteria, we aim to eliminate waste and optimize products and processes so that the materials we use are healthy for humans and the environment. Additionally, we plan to use the new processes to develop products that can be perpetually recovered and reused.

It is our goal to utilize MBDC's technical expertise to enhance our knowledge about materials' characteristics, implement a materials scoring tool to facilitate the selection of optimum materials, and identify innovative product design opportunities.

Steelcase recently announced the introduction of the Environmental Partnership Program. Can you tell us about it.

The Steelcase Environmental Partnership is a corporate-wide environmental program designed to help our customers determine and implement the best strategy for administering

Going Green *continued*

Steelcase furniture at the end of its useful life.

The Steelcase Environmental Partnership program was created to provide organizations with options that support the responsible disposal of office furniture.

The Steelcase Environmental Partnership can help healthcare organizations resell, refurbish, donate or recycle all office products manufactured by Steelcase. For example, Steelcase and its dealers can help hospitals extend the useful life of their furniture by refurbishing the furniture; facilitating its sale or donation to another organization that can still use the furniture; or by helping them recycle the furniture, with the goal of minimizing the amount of waste put in a landfill. To accomplish this, Steelcase has developed a

comprehensive network of recyclers, resellers, non-profit agencies and charitable organizations as part of this program.

Today, many healthcare organizations may not be sure what to do with their furniture when it reaches the end of its useful life to them, or when it no longer suits their needs. Through this program we can help them improve their environmental standards while minimizing the cost associated with making such decisions.

For hospitals that choose to recycle their Steelcase workstations, Steelcase offers a proven, environmentally responsible process for recycling steel into new raw steel that can be used for cars, building products and furniture. Lenscrafters is one of many companies that has utilized and benefited from this offering.

Steelcase can provide an estimate and total tonnage measurement of the amount of steel and aluminum that was recycled into new materials for companies that track and measure the amount of waste recycled. Lenscrafters, for example, was able to keep 50 truckloads of furniture out of the landfill (250 tons).

A lot of organizations today, including healthcare facilities, are pursuing LEED certification. Can Steelcase help create LEED certified buildings?

We have a lot of experience in the creation of LEED certified buildings. Steelcase set an industry precedent when we constructed the world's first manufacturing plant to receive LEED certification. When we began the construction planning process for our new wood

Environmental effects evaluated for Life Cycle Assessment.



Global warming
Is the rising of global temperature due to emissions of greenhouse gas.



Acidification
Is the damage to trees and rivers, as well as accelerated degradation metals, of limestone and concrete.



Eutrophication
is the loss of plants and animals in aquatic ecosystems due to oxygen depletion following blooms of algae, stimulated by high nutrient concentrations.



Photochemical smog
is a type of air pollution caused by emitting volatile organic components.



Abiotic resource depletion
is the depletion of non-renewable resources such as oil, coal and metals.



Waste
is the bulk waste and hazardous waste created during the entire life cycle of a product.



Toxic emissions
are substances which cause harm to the natural environment or human health.

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manufacturing plant in West Michigan back in 2001, LEED criteria had not been interpreted within the unique context of a manufacturing environment. Working closely with the U.S. Green Building Council, we successfully incorporated key criteria into the building design and received a Silver Certification rating, thus setting a standard for others in our industry to follow.

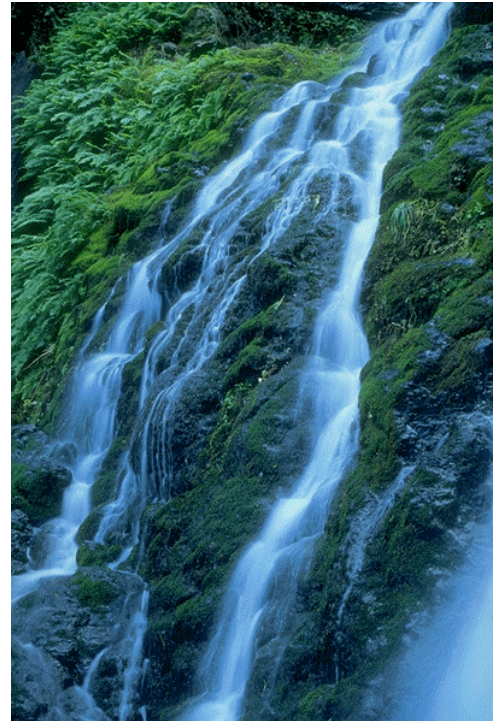
One important extension of our commitment to the environment is our work to support the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Program. Steelcase can work closely with healthcare organizations and their designers on any project where environmental responsibility is a priority. We can help in two ways – through the development of products that can contribute to specific LEED certification criteria and by building LEED-certified buildings through our Workstage venture.

As well, we were recently awarded GREENGUARD Certification™ (the world's only guide to third-party certified low emitting interior products and building materials) for three of our best selling systems and storage products. I'm pleased to

tell you that our Answer®, Kick™ and Avenir® systems products and Universal Storage, 800/900, 200, 730 and 1700 line storage products are all GREENGUARD certified. These products will be monitored by GREENGUARD on a quarterly basis to ensure that they retain their indoor air quality performance testing status. All Steelcase branded seating product lines were awarded GREENGUARD Indoor Air Quality Certification™ this past February. And we anticipate that the systems products Montage and Pathways Technology Wall will receive Certification early 2005.

We were also one of the first companies to pioneer testing for emissions with Air Quality Sciences, the originator of the GREENGUARD Program. Between 1998 and 1999, 27 Steelcase products met the GREENGUARD emissions criteria.

As we move forward with our environmental initiatives, we want to assure our customers that everything we do will be designed and executed so that it has a positive impact on the environment. This is not only a key goal for our company, but it is built into our core values – in fact it's become a passion.



If you'd like to learn more about how you can help make a difference to the environment, Steelcase is offering a CEU accredited course entitled "Designing through Sustainability through Life Cycle Thinking".

Contact your Steelcase Workplace Consultant for more information on where and when this course is available.