



# Sustainability... our approach... so far:

## GRENVILLE MAIN

**F**or us it's not about being earnest - it's about being effective. It's about being clear on what Green is, what Sustainable is, and rather thinking about what we and our clients should be seen to be doing - its more about what we can do that is most important to concentrate on - and its about focusing on the things that will actually have the greatest effect.

### **First let's look back:**

Sorry to do this, but as a design based organisation we lived through the 80's and the 90's. Interesting times, and in the 80's initially recycling became a big issue and a positioning imperative for many companies. We used recycled stocks initially - but being the 80's it was more about image than reality - so most of the time to save costs our clients asked that we scanned and printed the 'texture' of recycled paper to make it look like the real stock!

Today - integrity is a bit more of an issue.

### **So where are we at:**

At DNA, we are now getting an increasing number of our clients asking us to help them plan for and communicate their own Green/Sustainable initiatives which is both about how we deliver (eco stocks, low quantities etc.) and how we get strong and compelling messages out ("what's really important",

"how it effects you" and stuff like "pass this on please"). Our thinking is that if we keep tapping in to the insights we have and will continue to mine - we'll be better placed to know just how staff and customers really place importance on these issues, and most importantly what things will actually make them respond and act appropriately.

### **What do we really need to look at:**

Initially the philosophy seems simple really - its about doing less that effects more - so that means any or all our thinking and design output is to be kept, read, shared, connected with and acted on more than ever before.

But more importantly - what we need to do past that point to get companies and consumers to find ways of working differently and really getting past the obligatory lipstick on the gorilla - is the real issue.

That is the real opportunity for us too, and with a couple of clients we are just to starting to explore this fully. It's about which channels, which processes, what messages sure - but also about what thinking and approaches will resonate most strongly going forward. So, rather than just responding or using this as a positioning tool as many Companies are doing right now, we need to find meaningful and actionable ideas for change.

We will be measuring our recommendations' by the things we unlock, such as buy in and behavioral change in companies and consumers. We'll be working to get engagement and ownership - and looking for further feedback such as; "Ill take this idea from work and use it at home", "I'll tell my friends about this as I buy in to the way its easy and its actionable", "it will change the way I see what is and can be more sustainable", "this will change the way we do business", "this changes the business we are in"...etc.



Sustainability is as much about the value it creates, as it is about what it costs to produce - it's about whole of business performance. Going forward we know we'll need to measure against and rationalise our recommendations and our actions by what they achieve - which must outweigh the cost to produce to the power of 10! (well, some big and growing number no doubt).

We do need to be aware that there is a lot of the green wash out there and be clear as to the distinction between the hype, the expected, and the stuff that will really do big and valuable things. Our clients want more from us, more certainty and better results for sure - so our approach needs to be about what will:

Get people to listen, get them to think, get them to act, get them to share, etc. To design and build for stronger results, we'll need to challenge, generate or inform the programmes, progress and approach as much as responding with environmentally responsible answers to client briefs.

Very soon there will be a time when every office has flexible hours and an electric scooter, where the employees that don't work from home will all

bus or walk to work, turn lights off and rarely print anything and all that other good stuff. Soon after that almost every product will be green in its design and sustainable as it's taken to market and nice and easy on the earth long after it and we are dead. But you do have to wonder - will this end when we are all travelling only on the internet and never in a plane? Is this something that will need more and more real action and never be something we can just move on from to the next current issue? We don't know, but are working on the things we can control and be certain about right now. The first step toward Sustainable design is surely Sensible design.

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