

MUNICIPALITY OF COGNAC, FRANCE

Background

The Municipality of Cognac has a sustainable procurement policy which requires the inclusion of relevant green and social criteria into tenders. Sustainable procurement also forms part of Cognac's Local Agenda 21 programme. The Municipality is also part of the [Réseau Grand Ouest](#) (RGO) network, a group of public authorities committed to promoting sustainable development through public procurement.

When establishing a new framework contract for print services, Cognac aimed to drive down costs and increase efficiency by consolidating requirements. At the same time, the opportunity to introduce overarching green criteria into the print tender was taken, in order to reduce the Municipality's environmental impact.

Criteria used

Subject matter of the contract: Procurement of printing services in line with sustainable development.

Award Criteria: 50% of points awarded for price and 50% for quality. The points given to quality issues were split as follows:

- 30 points - planning and delivery time
- 20 points - sustainable development criteria, including:
 1. Points awarded for printing companies that use vegetable-based inks, which have a neutral effect on humans and the environment:

A list of all inks which would be used under a specific lot is required. These should be accompanied either by an environmental certification or a technical data sheet detailing the composition of each ink to be used. Regulation (EC) No. 1272/2008 concerning the classification, labelling and packaging of substances and mixtures was referred to, as was the list of substances excluded by [IVP](#) under the [Printing Ink Manufacturer Voluntary Initiative](#). For each ink listed that does not conform to these standards, a point is removed.

2. Points awarded for the supply of recycled paper or paper derived from certified forests:

For the lots covering magazines, monthly internal documents and print for administrative purposes, 100% recycled paper is preferred.	For the lots covering season tickets, flyers, posters, official government documents, higher quality, durable paper is preferred.
Maximum points are awarded for 100% recycled paper. Points will also be given for mixed or non-recycled paper, if it is shown that the forests it was derived from were sustainably managed.	It must be shown that the forests the paper was derived from were sustainably managed.
Holders of certificates from PEFC , FSC , Keurhout , CSA and SFI will automatically be deemed to comply, but the certificate holder number must be provided and are checked on the corresponding websites.	

Results

- There were eight bids in response to the tender, five of which were successful. All have been able to meet Cognac's requirements without loss of quality or delays.
- Centralised price lists for printed materials facilitate cost effective purchasing while reducing time spent on research and administration.
- A 50% reduction in costs was achieved by aggregating demand for all printer documents (flyers, posters, administrative documents, etc). This constitutes 4.4% of Cognac's operating budget, around €120,000.
- Newer technologies are now being exploited as part of this contract. The municipal information magazine can now be produced as one complete document by the newer printer technologies, at almost half the price.
- Consolidation of orders has driven down the need for frequent deliveries. For example, the 60,000 envelopes required each year now arrive as part of one delivery rather than four. Overall deliveries have been cut by around 50%.

Environmental impacts

Detrimental environmental and social impacts including losses in biodiversity, land use change and degradation are avoided by opting for recycled timber products, or those from sustainably managed sources. Creating demand for recycled content in paper products also helps to drive down unnecessary waste generation.

Consolidating purchases can reduce the frequency of deliveries significantly. Less need for road transport vehicles reduces urban congestion and the production of greenhouse gases and other air contaminants, which cause local and global air pollution.

Lessons learned

Centralising print services required by the Municipality had the effect of reducing costs through aggregated spend. Cash flow difficulties associated with making larger payments were mitigated by the fact that overall costs have been reduced by half. Establishing the framework contract also improved efficiency; in terms of collating prices and competencies of different print services, by reducing administration and by halving the frequency of deliveries. The three-year contract had the added benefit for service providers of a more secure turnover for their business.

The tender raised awareness amongst some print companies as to the existence of non-toxic inks and the associated benefits of less harmful options for those working closely with ink.

Knowledge has been gained throughout the tendering procedure on the environmental capacities of the print services market, which will help to gauge what standards should be set for future print service tenders. It became apparent throughout the process that the environmental commitments of smaller, local print service companies had improved since Cognac last tendered for such services six years ago. The Municipality believes that they contributed to this improvement by setting these requirements previously, driving the market by demonstrating their own commitment to sustainable development in this sector.

The sustainable development award criteria were put together during an exchange of ideas at RGO meetings. It was of real benefit to be part of a network of likeminded organisations for this purpose.