

COLLABORATE

LOW CARBON LIVING - CAN WE REALLY DO IT?

In November Australia finally ratified the Paris Agreement which formalises our agreement to keep carbon emissions “well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.” But what does this really mean for us day to day and how much do people really care?

The biggest carbon emitters are the manufacturing industry and electricity producers. Finding ways of being more efficient in industry is getting easier but local households can do their part. Using energy saving light globes and appliances, turning off lights we aren't using plus turning down the temperature settings on heating and cooling, along with installing solar heating and electricity panels, as well as using renewable energy from your grid provider.

As developers, if we want to help, then solar options are a good start, along with building orientation, the use of energy efficient heating and cooling systems, and trialling things such as the Tesla Powerwall. But despite the push in many countries to make citizens aware of the effect they have on the environment, sustainable behaviours have decreased in Canada, China, Germany, Japan and the USA since 2012. By contrast the same study revealed that people were embracing local and organic foods with an increased awareness that our environmental food footprint can be reduced if we promote and purchase food produced by more sustainable methods. More alarmingly though, the Sheldon Group study found that those



aged 18-24, while being more aware of the impact of environmental practices on our planet, were also the one group more likely to choose personal comfort and convenience over the environment. The study also found that those who paid household

energy bills, were more likely to care about reducing the cost of it and therefore the impact on the environment.

The Federal Government has funded a Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Low Carbon-Living, to help us meet the Paris Agreement targets. Its mission is to "work towards lowering carbon emissions in the built environment while driving competitive advantage for Australian industry. More information on them can be found at www.lowcarbonlivingcrc.com.au.

HOW “HEALTHY” IS YOUR OFFICE?

In years gone by, office spaces were selected more for location or price than for the effect it had on the employees who would work in it. But the advent of the GooglePlex and the amenities it provided for Google's staff, paved the way for what employers can do to ensure the wellbeing of its staff. Over the years, studies have shown that the workspace and environment provided in offices has a huge effect on staff engagement, which ultimately increases your bottom line. Engaged employees are 87% more likely to stay in an organisation, so it makes sense to take stock of your surroundings. There are 3 major areas you can look at.

Physical - These aspects can include the amount of natural light, or if that's not possible, having well lit areas to ensure that fatigue does not occur from poor lighting. Colour can be used to create separate spaces to do break out work, and the ability to move around through indoor and outdoor spaces is also important.

Cognitive - All white environments can produce glare and can cause eye stress as there is nowhere for the eyes to rest. Depending on the type of work your business does, certain coloured walls or areas can promote problem solving, reduce stress and stimulate new ideas.



Behavioural and psychological - If your brand has corporate colours, you can use these to foster brand loyalty, as well as use colour in areas to stimulate conversation and collaboration between employees. For example, orange is a colour that is great in breakfast rooms as it encourages conversations between groups of people.

By taking the time to provide a stimulating and interesting workspace for your people, that enhances their well being and allows a smooth work flow and interaction, your business will benefit enormously. How healthy is the current environment for your employees?



THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by Dean Gavrilovic

Happy New Year and welcome to 2017 and our first newsletter for the year! I trust that you enjoyed the Christmas break and are now back into the swing of things. At Signature PM, we are gearing up for a great year and planning for what wasn't completed before Christmas, is being done now to get us off to a good start. The beginning of the year is always a great time to reflect on the previous 12 months - what worked and what didn't and what needs changing for 2017. One thing that is always a challenge I think, is keeping staff in a sustainable and profitable work space and our article on workplace design might give you a few good tips to consider. Until next month, stay cool in this heat and enjoy the start of a new year.

ARE DRONES REVOLUTIONISING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY?

Recent advances in technology have allowed for significant costs savings to projects. But up until now, most of these have been in either software and communication advances to manage a project or in improvements to the actual construction methods themselves. In the last 12 - 18 months, the costs of Drone technology has decreased so significantly that it makes it an almost must have on any decent sized project. Five years ago a drone cost upwards of \$80,000 and you can get a good one now for around \$3,000. If you had a drone for your construction project what would you use it for?

Surveying - One of the most significant cost savings for your project would be in the area of surveying the site prior to construction, which requires less human involvement and no heavy machinery and it can be done in half the time, saving costs right up front.

Monitoring Job Sites - Having a drone on each site, allows you to check on building works and progress data without even being there. Real time data allows drones to send video footage and photos to your laptop wherever you are. This can allow you to see any potential problems that may arise before they happen simply by being able to use the drone technology onsite.

Inspecting Structures - The beauty of a drone means you can inspect roofs, skyscrapers and every stage of the build in between without having to climb a ladder, stand on a roof or get into a cherry picker to do so. All images captured can be kept and it then also gives you a reference point at various stages of a project to see how progress is being made.



Communication and Management - Drone images allow you to report to a client who may not live locally but it also allows the onsite staff to ask questions and obtain feedback from you immediately, even when you can't make it to site urgently. Drones allow for instant connection with the site that will see decreases in construction delays and result in more profitable projects.

Improvements in Security - Drones can be used not only to monitor sites at nights and on weekends but also help with ensuring that your employees are safe at work as well. Drone images allow Managers to view and review practices without having to be onsite constantly to ensure daily targets are being met within the guidelines of your OH&S procedures.

LATEST NEWS

2017 INDUSTRY PREDICTIONS

Market analysis has predicted that the Civil Construction industry will be the biggest winner in 2017. The sector is predicted to grow by more than 27%. Bridge and road construction and oil and gas exploration are where the most growth will be seen. After several years of strong growth the multi unit apartment and townhouse construction sector is set to fall by \$19.3 billion, down 26%.



months," says IBISWorld senior industry analyst Nathan Cloutman. "Investment in apartment construction has been the strongest performer of the national building market over the past five years," he says.

"A long-term shift in Australian housing preferences has enhanced this trend, as consumers have moved away from traditional low-density detached houses and towards higher-density apartments."

"Many of the industries likely to disappoint this year have performed strongly in recent years, but research suggests boom times for these industries are over, at least for the next 12

The completion of several major developments, along with oversupply conditions emerging, will see demand deteriorate sharply during this year.