



IMPACT REPORT

2021/22



ABOUT US

We are the only merchandise distributor committed to delivering exclusively items with eco-friendly credentials.

Sustainability sits at the core of our business.

Founded on the belief that merchandise shouldn't cost the Earth, we help brands reduce the environmental impact of their campaigns by taking the guess work out of conscious purchasing.

We've hung our hats on the notion of sustainability as standard.

In fact, Project Merchandise is the only distributor committed to delivering exclusively items with eco-friendly credentials.

At times that may mean losing out, but from day one we have strived to make positive and sustainable decisions for our business and the environment, not to 'go the extra mile,' but because we believe this should be the norm.

Given the market climate when we launched in 2020, our business model came with plenty of challenges, so we're proud to have achieved some great things while staying true to that cause.

This is thanks, in no small part, to our incredible customers, suppliers and growing team.



OUR PILLARS

- **Building Brands,
Sustainably**
- **Driving & Inspiring
Positive Change**
- **Doing More
Than Just Business**

Our aim is to provide the finest promotional merchandise, allowing our customers to make more meaningful connections. In working towards this aim, we mustn't neglect our socio-environmental responsibilities. As a business, we believe we can deliver sustainable products and a fantastic service while doing the right thing for the planet and its inhabitants.

A never-ending project, we aim to embrace and push for more sustainable promotional product and practices. This includes educating and working with our customers and suppliers to make these more accessible, affordable and desirable.

We believe that business should be a force for good, so we're committing a portion of our profits to global reforestation efforts to help combat the effects of climate change, as well as donating our time to local environmental causes.

SUSTAINABILITY

What it means to us...



Sustainable development means meeting present needs, without compromising future generations from meeting their own.

We drew up nine product values to identify 'more sustainable' merchandise, enabling our customers to easily make more conscious purchasing decisions.

These have become our core product selection criteria, with all products conforming to one or more value. It's our way of minimizing our footprint.



NATURAL MATERIALS



Promotional merchandise has long been synonymous with single use, plastic, and polyester items of low value to recipients. We don't see why things need to be this way. By using natural alternatives such as bamboo and wheat straw, we can reduce the impact of brand promotions.

MADE IN UK



We work with several manufacturers who make and brand their products right here in the UK. Sourcing locally supports British jobs, while reducing the number of miles a product travels and therefore its carbon footprint.

PLASTIC FREE



Plastic waste persists in our environment for many years. Transitioning towards plastic-free alternatives can greatly reduce our impact on the planet. Our latest value relates to both product and packaging, meaning these products contain no plastic whatsoever.

VEGAN



Veganism is recognised as the single biggest way we can reduce our environmental impact as individuals. That, alongside the wellbeing of animals is reason enough for us to offer a range of products with zero ingredients of animal origin. In fact, the only leather we use is reconstituted from the waste from other manufacturing processes.

RECYCLED MATERIALS



When reuse is no longer an option, recycling is the best way to keep useful resources in circulation - and out of landfill or worse. Recycled materials like PET require as much as 59% less energy to manufacture while emitting 32% less CO2, meaning that they're less harmful to the environment as well as the atmosphere.

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION



We work with a range of suppliers to provide products that go the extra mile to support good causes, with monetary contributions donated to projects such as access to education and employment, or water access programs. And that's on top of our own Climate Commitment.

REUSABLE



From water bottles to shopping bags to straws, the war on single use plastic is well underway. And let's be honest, these are items we can all live without. Championing a more responsible attitude to the waste we create, we've curated a wide selection of reusable alternatives, designed for a long and useful life.

ORGANIC



Employing more conscious farming practices avoids putting the delicate balance of nature at risk, and it's of huge importance to people too. By doing away with pesticides, herbicides and chemicals, we reduce the likelihood of potentially grave health implications for farmers and local communities, where direct contact and water contamination are documented problems.

BIODEGRADABLE



Should an item find itself disposed of incorrectly, by selecting products crafted from biodegradable materials we can reduce its chances of harming the environment. Making use of natural elements or modern additives to attract microbes, these items will break down faster than more commonly used materials, leaving little or no trace behind.

OUR PEOPLE

As a young business, we understand that we haven't got all the answers. But what we do know is that a happy team is a great foundation for success.



We want to be a rewarding company to work for,

and so we have committed to a number of policies aimed at supporting our people and making their working lives more fulfilling.

In our brand new handbook, we've included some great perks such as unlimited holiday, flexible working and training allowances. Furthermore, we're constantly considering new ways to keep our team fresh, happy and challenged.

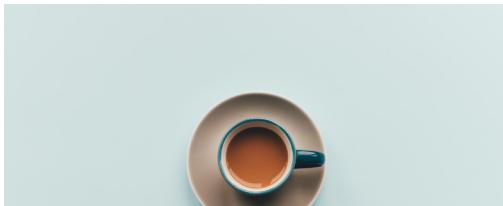
And as we recognise that great ideas can come from all levels, we're always sure to consult with our team on future policy changes.

Our first company survey recently found that our team is highly likely to recommend Project Merchandise as a place to work, describing the business as friendly, motivating and rewarding.

The last few years have taught us all that companies can 'survive' without physical offices, but **for a growing team, regular face-to-face contact is invaluable for building a strong culture.**

After consulting with our team, and to keep them as thick as thieves, we work together weekly at a co-working space that shares our values and ethics.

CO-WORKING



VOLUNTEERING



We're still a small team, but as we grow, we're focused on staying connected to our purpose and vision. **That's why we encourage our people to undertake up to 24 hours of volunteering time** (or three days of working hours) per employee per year.

PLANT SEEDS OF CHANGE

We've partnered with Ecologi to give our customers a sure root to more sustainable promotions.

As part of our efforts to reduce the impact of our operations, we've made an industry-leading Climate Commitment to offset our footprint, both now, and in the future.

For every £500 you spend with us, we will plant 25 trees and offset 0.5 tonnes of CO₂e.

Choose Project Merchandise to support global reforestation projects that benefit the earth and local communities by planting trees that help combat the effects of climate change.



And thanks to our clients' belief in more sustainable merchandise, **we've now reached an incredible 50,000 trees planted.**

However, with these juvenile trees taking years to reach maximum carbon sucking potential, we're also **offsetting the carbon footprint of our merchandise** through verified carbon offsets, to avoid greenhouse gases from entering the atmosphere at all.

Since launching the programme on our 1st birthday, we've already sequestered 966t of carbon, enough to offset 741 long-haul flights.

SUPPLY CHAIN

Project Merchandise is proud to work with UK suppliers, with **16% of our product portfolio manufactured in the UK.**

And we don't just mean printed here.



While our focus is to develop our local offering, **we also have a trusted network of suppliers in the EU** and farther afield. This means we can leverage our EU suppliers to fulfil EU orders, reducing the mileage and carbon emissions of our orders.

A low impact signature that lasts.

We believe merchandise is as much about the branding as the item itself.

For this reason, we've worked with our suppliers to offer **sustainable branding methods** such as water-based printing and laser engraving. These last the life of the product, without impacting our options at the end of its life.



WHAT WE'VE DONE TO DATE

With no area of the business ignored, we've taken various steps to help reduce the impact of brand promotions over the last year.

GIFTING HUBS



In our service offering, we've implemented Gifting Hubs, our online solution that allows recipients to choose their own gifts and enter their own delivery info. They're the easier way to gift items that people really want, cutting down admin for our customers while eliminating the waste of excess production.

PLASTIC FREE



In our product offering we've undertaken an audit of our suppliers packaging, allowing us to better understand and control the overall impact of our products. The subsequent reduction in plastic packaging has allowed us to add to our product values a new 'Plastic Free' value.

OUR PRODUCTS



With more sustainable options always arriving, we continue to audit our product selection to remove those that we no longer reflect the most environmentally conscious products available. We have removed or replaced over 300 products to date.

We've also decided as a business never to print a catalogue, choosing digital promotion as our sole method of outreach.

THE NEXT 12 MONTHS

We're by no means a finished product, and we've got plenty up our sleeves to improve the sustainability of our business over the next twelve months.

2022/23

PACKAGING AUDIT ●

Building on our packaging audit, we're working closely with our suppliers to further reduce plastic use. Wherever possible, we're switching out plastics for bio alternatives or tissue paper.

EUROPE



We're expanding into Europe, and we'll be leveraging our continental supplier network to help reduce the environmental impact of our international shipments.

END OF LIFE ●

This represents a key area of focus in the coming year. Alongside our suppliers, we aim to extend the life of products in their original form or through repurposing or recycling.



THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION

P.Project
MERCHANDISE