

Case Study: Smarter Purchasing - Electronic Products Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)

Kaiser Permanente

The Problem

Computers have enabled Kaiser Permanente to provide members, patients, and physicians with real-time, secure access to electronic medical information, which has expedited and simplified delivery of care. But the manufacture, use, and disposal of computers and their electronic accessories have a global adverse impact on human and environmental health. Recognizing the benefits and problems with electronics, Kaiser Permanente was looking for a way to identify more environmentally responsible computer systems. The contract with a new computer system supplier in early 2006 included language specifying strong and definite preference for energy-efficient and environmentally responsible computers.

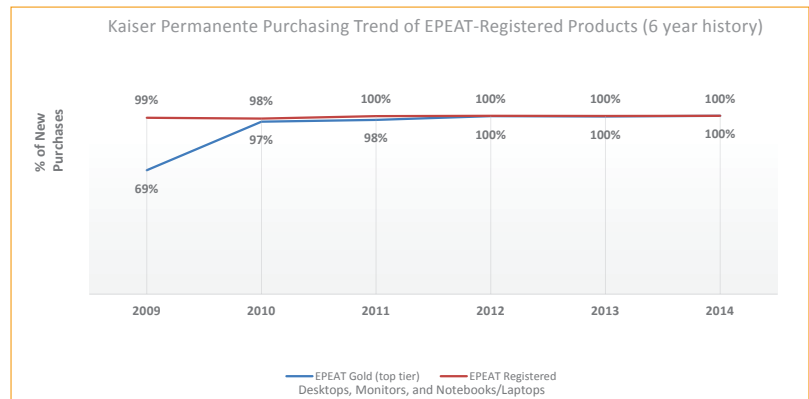
Summary

Kaiser Permanente is strongly committed to the health and safety of its patients and staff.

The organization honors that dedication by purchasing 100 percent EPEAT laptops, desktops, and monitors, and striving to replicate this for other electronic devices.

The business cost of purchasing the computer systems was cost neutral, with an added energy savings of \$5 million per year.

Progress from 2009



The Strategy Selected

- To procure CPUs, monitors, laptops, printers, tablets, and other devices manufactured with the least toxic materials, designed for easy recycling, use minimal energy for operation, and are packaged with minimal materials.
- To reduce energy consumption and costs, and create a healthy, safe environment.

Implementation Process

- In 2006, Kaiser Permanente launched the EPEAT criteria and registry system to enable easy comparison of the environmental performance of computer systems.
- Prior to EPEAT, Kaiser Permanente used the ENERGY STAR rating system as a minimum requirement for new computer systems. Kaiser Permanente's IT sourcing team quickly adopted EPEAT due to its comprehensive focus on environmental issues, which includes energy performance.

About Kaiser Permanente

Founded in 1945, Kaiser Permanente has a mission to provide high-quality, affordable health care services and to improve the health of its members and the communities it serves. It currently serves 9.6 million members in eight states and the District of Columbia.

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The Team

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- Expectations were set with the incumbent supplier that as new products meeting higher registry tiers became available, Kaiser Permanente would swiftly adopt those models that met their purchasing standards.
- Kaiser Permanente made a strong commitment to the EPEAT standards with 100 percent of desktops, monitors, and laptops adhering to EPEAT standards. The organization is also buying more EPEAT printers, tablets, and other devices.

Overall Successes



Product	% of New Purchases		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Desktops			100%
Monitors			100%
Notebooks/Laptops			100%
iPods			100%
iPads			100%
MacBooks			100%
Printers	6%	93%	
Multi-functional Devices	5%	94%	

Based on supplier provided units shipped data for 2014

Benefits

- Environmental and human health impact: Vast reduction in use of energy and toxic materials (lead, cadmium, and mercury); increased use of recycled resins, recycled content packaging, and reusable packaging.
- Business impact: Upfront purchase of computer systems was cost neutral, with an added energy-cost savings of \$5 million per year.
- Kaiser Permanente now uses 100 percent EPEAT laptop, monitors, and desktops.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

- With a large organization, it is difficult to change product lines and it takes time and patience, but it can be done.
- The use of a reputable and verifiable third-party certification tool can simplify the purchasing of environmentally preferable products.
- A certification system, like EPEAT, that compares performance in a transparent and balanced fashion can help prevent price mark-ups and “green washing” (disingenuous promotion or advertising of products’ environmental attributes.)
- Continue to educate the staff on the importance of such changes and EPEAT. Many are unaware of the effects and benefits of the tool.