

Cohesive Communications

0% APR Energy Efficiency Loans for SMEs in Wales



Cohesive helps technology companies captivate their markets, through engaging marketing and public relations, digitally and offline. To transform their own space, Cohesive planned for new heating and lighting, with the help of a Carbon Trust 0% APR Business Loan.

Technical approach

Cohesive have operated out of an old, yet characterful building in the centre of Chepstow, Monmouthshire, for a number of years. In an effort to bring out the best in their space and inspire their people, a plan for refurbishment began to take form. Cohesive took this opportunity to plan for new heating and lighting to reduce their energy costs, cut carbon emissions and ultimately, keep their office warm and safe.

Their heating system comprised of ancient electric storage heaters, which used an overnight tariff. They had no control over the heat emitted during daylight hours, so the office was either too hot or too cold. They were either opening windows to let out heat they didn't need, or running small convector heaters to top up heat they didn't have. The system was inefficient, and resulted in a stuffy atmosphere, occupying lots of wall space.

The building infrastructure and terms of their lease limited their available options. However, after some pretty extensive research, they opted for infrared electric heating, with full control. A Carbon Trust Accredited Supplier assessed the current energy usage of the existing heating system, and reported the anticipated energy usage of the new infrared system, identifying a potential reduction from 31 275 kWh consumed per year to a predicted 14 625 kWh. The Cohesive Team not only enjoyed the reduced costs, but the instantaneous nature of their infrared system, heating the surfaces in line-of-sight without resulting in a stuffy atmosphere. Further to this, the equipment is compact, controlled from wireless thermostats that have 7/24 timers.

Beyond heating, Cohesive also saw the opportunity to upgrade their lighting. Their old lighting was provided by ceiling-level fluorescent tubes, presenting them with the option to reduce running costs, improve ambience and enhance design. All of their lighting was converted to LED, varying in design, from attractive flat panels to lamps in decorative closures.

“The project has been a catalyst for many progressive changes in our business. It's helped make the office a really comfortable, nurturing space for our creative talent. It's allowed us to live up to our ambitions to be an ethical and sustainable small business. And the money we're saving, we're reinvesting in projects and causes to benefit our community.”

Andy Williams, Cohesive Communications



SAVINGS AT A GLANCE

£3,227

Loan amount

£2,000

Annual cost saving

8 tonnes

Annual CO₂ saving



Business benefits

Cohesive's new heating system is dramatically more efficient. It draws just 20kW, compared to a previous 35kW for the old storage heaters. The Carbon Trust Accredited Supplier calculated that the system will run for five hours per working day, versus six hours for the previous electric storage heaters, halving their power consumption. Their yearly heating bill will fall from around £3,750 to an expected £1,750, and equally as important, they save eight tonnes of carbon a year. Their savings were such that they've been able to easily afford the move to a renewable energy supplier, so both their heating and lighting are now low carbon.

Interest-free loans

Interest free loans are available to small and medium-sized businesses in Wales wanting to reduce their energy bills and carbon footprint by installing more efficient equipment and renewable technologies. Businesses must have fewer than 250 employees to qualify and the size of loan offered is based on the CO₂ savings of the project, which will be assessed by the Carbon Trust. A range of energy efficient building and industrial process technologies are considered, including lighting, heating, refrigeration, air conditioning, pipe insulation motors and biomass. Eligibility criteria and terms and conditions apply.



“As far as I know, the Carbon Trust is the only body offering real financial help to Welsh small businesses that want to operate more sustainably. There's a reasonable amount of paperwork to complete, but the Carbon Trust provides great support and advice. The loan from the Carbon Trust enabled us to choose a well specified heating system with good controls, and defer the majority of the costs into ongoing, very manageable, interest-free payments.”

Andy Williams, Cohesive Communications

You will be required to make repayments on the loan irrespective of whether the reduction in energy cost equals the loan repayments. The Carbon Trust is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for consumer credit. Representative Example: A £12,000 loan over 48 months = monthly repayment of £250. Total repayable £12,000.

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