

From Passive Stage to Proactive Stage and, Ultimately, to Responsible Stage

“Environment-oriented” is a key word that is indispensable for a company wishing to survive and fulfill society’s needs in the 21st century. Looking back at the Ricoh Group’s environmental approaches, the Passive Stage came first, in the observation of laws and regulations as well as in response of customer needs, followed by the Proactive Stage, in the continuous and voluntary reduction in environmental impact as a global citizen. Because companies find it difficult to survive if they neglect economic efficiency in their business activities, the Group endeavors to carry out the highly economically efficient Responsible Stage when shifting its management system to a more environment-oriented one.

Aiming for such environmental management, it is important for manufacturers to develop superior environmentally friendly technologies and to market core products that incorporate these technologies. In fiscal 2000, the Aficio (imaggio Neo) series, which boasts advanced energy conservation technologies, was marketed. The Ricoh Group hopes to slow down the rate of global warming by reducing CO₂ emissions from its products and by getting as many people as possible to use these products might accross the globe.

In fiscal 2000, we made a great leap toward achieving zero waste to landfill worldwide; all our domestic production sites as well as all our plants in France, the United States, and Mexico achieved zero waste to landfill. Even though landfills might be economical means of disposing waste, the Ricoh Group reduced zero waste to landfill under the slogan “Promote Recycling for the Sake of Our Children’s Future.” Thanks to thorough sorting, remarkable improvements in the

environmental management system and in reducing waste disposal costs were achieved.

For the recycling of products and supplies, including toner cartridges, we established a nationwide recycling system in Japan. We also established an environmental impact information system to promote the more efficient environmental management of recycling in fiscal 2001.

To measure the achievements made under environmental management and to promote more effective activities, it is important to establish an environmental accounting system as a managerial tool. As the system gains momentum, it will be applied to the Group’s sales company as well. It is hoped that in the future the system will be used to set goals for environmental action plans and as a corporate management indicator.

As for social contributions in fiscal 2000, the Group took out campaigns stressing the importance of virgin forests and made efforts to preserve and restore them in partnership with NPOs and local communities. Environmental issues attract global concern and help improve awareness and preservation activities on a global scale. The Ichimura School of Nature, in which children grow crops and learn about the natural environment on weekends, is scheduled to open in fiscal 2002, aiming to promote the sound education of Japan’s youth.

On a global scale, Ricoh Group activities can lessen environmental impact only to a certain extent. The Group will continue to contribute to the conservation of the global environment, an issue that should be everyone’s concern, by carrying out environmental management as well as disclosing information and know-how obtained in its environmental activities.



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Major Activities in Fiscal 2000

Environmental Conservation Activities

- Added environmental conservation into divisional evaluations under the Strategic Management by Objectives (SMO) (from fiscal 1999) pp. 15–16
- Completed the establishment of an environmental impact information system pp. 19–20
- Established Eco Balance and LCA of overall corporate activities pp. 21–22
- Achieved zero waste at all plants in Japan, France, the United States, and Mexico pp. 25–28
- Marketed the Aficio (imagio Neo) series, an energy-saving line of copiers p. 36
- Completed the construction of a recycling network in Japan p. 42
- Took measures to turn the environmental accounting system into a management tool pp. 65–68

Social Activities

- Jointly promoted virgin forest conservation activities pp. 51–52
- Started in establishing the Ichimura School of Nature to promote the awareness of environmental issues in young people p. 52
- Continued nurturing environmental volunteer leaders and conducted related activities throughout Japan pp. 53–54

Economic Performance

- Achieved an increase in income for seven consecutive years and an increase in profit for nine consecutive years p. 63
- Secured largest share for black-and-white copiers in the United States* and European countries p. 63
- *Office-use digital copiers
- Recognized as No. 1 for plain-paper copiers and facsimiles in a customer satisfaction survey in Japan p. 63
- Acquired Lanier Worldwide Inc. to reinforce the Group's direct sales channel p. 63