

The Ricoh Group contributes to the development of a sustainable society based on the Comet Circle concept.

The Comet Circle represents a sustainable society, the kind of society we pursue. It was formulated in 1994. Circles in the diagram indicate partners we work together with to achieve a sustainable society. The upper routes represent arteries of the system, and the lower routes veins of the system. Resources taken from the natural environment by materials suppliers shown at the upper right are processed into products, moving from right to left along the upper route, and are finally delivered to users (customers). The end-of-life products move from left to right along the lower route. The Ricoh Group contributes to the development of a sustainable society by focusing on the following five activities to make the Comet Circle work effectively.

(1) Identifying and Reducing Environmental Impact at All Stages

All parties involved, i.e., the Ricoh Group, suppliers, customers, and recycling companies, identify the degree of environmental impact at all stages, including the transportation stage, by using a sustainable environmental management information system and strive to reduce overall impact by promoting the development of environmental technologies as well as recycling and recovering products.

(2) Putting Priority on Inner Loop Recycling

Resources have the highest economic value when they are manufactured into products and used by customers. The Ricoh Group puts priority on reusing and recycling products on the inner loops of the Comet Circle with an aim to minimize the resources, cost, and energy needed to return used products to the state of highest economic value.

(3) Promoting a Multitiered Recycling System

Repeated recycling to the greatest extent possible (i.e., multitiered recycling) reduces the consumption of new resources and the generation of waste. The Ricoh Group is promoting the effective use of resources by establishing a system in which products recovered from the market are supplied to the market again.

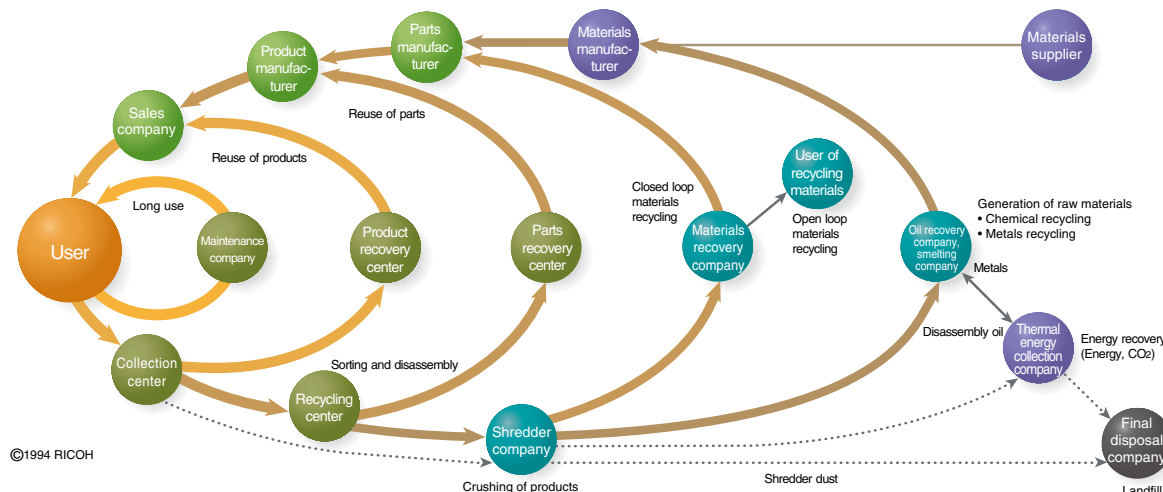
(4) More Economically Rational Recycling

A sustainable society must also establish a recycling system in which products and money flow in opposite directions in both post-product-use stages and original production and marketing stages. The Ricoh Group, making use of an upgraded design, is promoting a more economically rational recycling system in partnership with recycling companies. At the same time, it is important to establish a social system that helps people to be aware of environmentally-friendly business activities and buy products with less environmental impact.

(5) Establishing a Partnership at Every Stage

The Ricoh Group strives to reduce environmental impact in all of its business areas in an economically rational way through partnerships with parties at all stages. The initiatives include the reduction of environmentally-sensitive substances in cooperation with materials and parts manufacturers, improved efficiency in transportation, green marketing, and a reduction in recycling costs and the environmental impact generated by recycling. By disclosing information and know-how garnered through these activities and working with local communities, the Ricoh Group helps reduce the environmental impact of society as a whole.

Concept of a Sustainable Society: The Comet Circle™



For more information, please visit <http://www.ricoh.com/environment/management/concept.html>