



Green Supply Chain Journeys – Conversations with BIC stakeholders

With its Green Book Alliance partners, Book Industry Study Group (BISG) and BookNet Canada, the Book Industry Communication (BIC) is engaged with companies across the book publishing industry about sustainable practices and how different organizations think about green initiatives.

In this series, we'll be interviewing book industry supply chain suppliers who are going green and taking serious steps to reduce their impact on the environment.

To continue, we hear from Catherine Hodgson, Sustainability Manager at Taylor & Francis.



1. Why green your publishing? What are some of the business reasons that led your company to incorporate environmental sustainability as a goal?

In 2020 the Informa Group launched [FasterForward](#), a new and comprehensive approach to sustainability. As part of the Informa Group, Taylor & Francis has been certified CarbonNeutral® across our business operations and we are committed to becoming a zero waste and net zero carbon business by 2030. Prior to the introduction of FasterForward, T&F had already made great strides in reducing waste and building a print supply chain that better matches supply with demand. As an academic publisher, we are known for the breadth and depth of our content, often specialising in niche texts that serve smaller audiences. For many years it has been a business priority to develop our print on demand services. This has resulted in a substantial reduction in print volumes, lower physical stock levels, and reducing pulping of excess stock. In 2021 we took our commitment to building a sustainable supply chain a step further and achieved CarbonNeutral® Publication certification for all print books and journals. The journey to obtain this certification has allowed us to gain in-depth insight into our supply chain's carbon emissions at each point in a book or journal's lifecycle. Having this data means that we can target areas where we can continue to reduce waste and reduce our emissions, as well as monitor the efficacy and impact of future developments to our POD system.

2. Of the green initiatives you have implemented, which one made the biggest impact?

Investing in a global Print on Demand system has had a substantial impact on reducing print volumes, physical stock levels, fewer returns, and reduced pulping of excess stock.



3. What resources or tools have you used to benchmark and keep track of your company's environmental impact, and what protocols and timeline are you working towards? And how do you know when you've been successful with your initiatives?

The Informa Group has been measuring and publicly reporting our scope 1 and 2 emissions since 2013 and we have reported on our Scope 3 emissions since 2017. We have a target to reduce our scope 1 and 2 emissions by 55% and our scope 3 emissions by 20% by 2030 from a 2017 baseline. This has been approved by the Science Based Targets Initiative as in line with what the latest climate science deems necessary to limit global warming to below 1.5°C. From January 2020 we have been certified CarbonNeutral® across our business operations, and in October 2021, we gained CarbonNeutral® Publication certification for all print books and journals produced in 2021 – 2022. We aim to be CarbonNeutral® across all digital products by 2022 and are committed to becoming a net zero carbon and zero waste business by 2030. All of our publicly reported data, targets, and sustainability reports are independently audited and verified by external auditors. Yearly targets and KPIs are set that feed into the overarching goal of being net zero carbon and zero waste. Achieving these shorter-term goals helps us achieve our longer-term ambitions. These can range from eliminating plastic packaging and lamination usage in our print journals, to reducing physical stock levels and pulping.

4. How do you investigate the sustainability of your supply chain partners (publishers, distributors, retailers, printers, shippers, etc.)? Is having supply chain partners that also support environmental sustainability important to you?

We maintain close relationships with our printers and distributors, conducting audits once a year. The RFP work we engage in prior to appointing a printer includes the following:

- *We ask for evidence of their use of sustainable materials including paper accreditations, plus their ISO14001 standards.*
- *We discuss their current situation around energy usage and plans for the future.*
- *The RFP work we carry out includes audits for modern slavery, anti-bribery and corruption*
- *We ask whether printers are carbon neutral in their operations and what their approach is to measuring and reducing emissions across their operations*
- *We scorecard our findings and share with auditors*
- *We only use printers that offer FSC, PEFC, SFI or similarly accredited paper stocks for both our books and journals*

5. What roadblocks do you face within the industry when trying to implement sustainable practices? What broader industry commitments need to be made to make the book industry more environmentally sustainable?

Data availability and transparency from printers is often limited, especially from those that are based outside of the UK and US. This could be as simple as supplying us with energy consumption data, or information about packaging materials. We have also encountered reluctance from some printers and distributors to engage in initiatives to remove plastic packaging from journals. A closer working partnership between printers and publishers to help establish best-practice is the only way to deliver timely, impactful change.



BONUS: We all know that achieving these goals is an ongoing process, but what do you think are some quick wins for organizations or even individual employees?

Switching to renewable energy is a quick win that can substantially reduce an organisation's Scope 2 emissions. Informa purchases Energy Attribute Certificates (EACs), allowing us to match our electricity usage with the required amount of renewable electricity. This is an effective way of ensuring that our purchased consumption is verified and traceable.

Another quick win might be providing introductory-level training through BIC on the basics of carbon reporting for individuals whose roles involve sustainability, production, and supply chain management.