

Fostering Green Behaviour through BlueWay

By: Jennifer Salo, Communications and Social Media Manager for Sonepar Canada

As an eco-minded electrical distributor, how do we influence people to think green on a daily basis in the workplace and at home? How do we inspire people and companies to make sustainable choices? Well, we have to engage them through regular dialogue. We need to reach out to people to inform them that we want to have eco-based discussions because we cannot be having them on our own. To make an impact on people, get buy-in and put words into action, it is important to foster green behaviour among a listening audience. To see action taken through discourse, the discourse itself has to be done through a wholesome exchange of words and a sharing of expertise, thoughts and ideas.

Where can these conversations take place?

With everybody accessing the Internet for convenience, it makes sense to have these reciprocal discussions in an online community where people are sharing expert advice, asking questions and providing useful feedback.

Sonepar Canada's **BlueWay** (www.BlueWay.ca) initiative is just that, an online community of interest where Canadians can engage in eco-friendly conversations. BlueWay enables individuals and organizations to make environmental behaviour and the sustainable use of electricity a reality by being a focal point for engagement and action related to the company's four pillars of expertise. These consist of energy conservation, renewable energy, electrical product recycling and green cleaning.

Who does BlueWay talk to? This online community is a hub for the different types of customers and markets in the sustainable electrical market. It is a focal point for online knowledge sharing among Sonepar Canada's vendors, customers (builders, contractors, architects, designers, engineers, and electricians), and markets such as industrial, commercial, residential, government and associations.



To gain acceptance and trust from the people who are coming to the community, Sonepar Canada feels

it is important to enable environmental discussions by harnessing and delivering exper-

tise through topics that the company lives and practices on a daily basis. There is no empty talk within Sonepar Canada, with our **Energy Saving Week** (www.energysavingweek.ca), Operating Company BlueWay certification program at the branch level, our internal green practices and the BlueWay community. These contributions



add up to lasting and meaningful change towards awareness and behaviour change.

As a leader in the electrical industry, we realize that the choices we make have an impact on our state of well-being, in association to the planet. Our goal is inspire others to take control of their energy consumption and environmental impact.

Have A Voice

The BlueWay website is set-up in a way where comments are always welcome. Articles posted within the four pillars are set-up in a blog format inviting visitors to comment after reading the articles and throughout the entire website. With content playing a bigger function in the core of a successful online community, BlueWay information is versatile to appeal to Sonepar Canada's many target audiences. We don't want to exclude anyone and we want everyone to share BlueWay content among the people they know. BlueWay information is meant to be educational, inspirational and entertaining. A variety of content for different audiences that fit into these three categories will most likely be shared more among a broader audience.

Another crucial step in creating a sharing-like atmosphere is by having a blog where many people are contributing to an exchange of thoughts and words. The latest addition to the BlueWay website is the Experts Exchange blog. This blog is an opportunity for partners to position themselves as a thought leader on a topic related to the four BlueWay pillars, and grow awareness of an organization's or person's expertise, services and brand. Contributions to the Experts Exchange can come from various knowledgeable sources and in any form (audio, video, pictorial and written). This allows Sonepar Canada partners to connect with new audiences, share unique insights and work samples and to link it all back to their personal or company initiatives and digital presence. All this leads to creating an extension of BlueWay and growing the community, thus, creating a bigger reach and more awareness among target audiences.

How do you drive people to these online discussions? How do you let them know that you exist and why? You do so by trying to connect with them through their own Internet social communities. Once you connect with them in their own environment and get their attention, you can then lead them to

an online destination of choice. In this case, that destination is BlueWay.

Sonepar Canada is connecting with audiences through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr and LinkedIn. BlueWay content is pushed through these social media channels to drive traffic back to the website. Related conversations taking place through these outlets between audiences are being captured and then responded to appropriately all keeping within BlueWay's pillars. Sonepar Canada has made it easy for its online following to keep on top of BlueWay conversations through the **Media Arcade** (www.soneparcanadaarcade.com). Providing a bird's eye view of all online discussions related to BlueWay sustainability and eco energy matters. By providing access to BlueWay social media outlets all in one area, it is easier and less time consuming for audiences to listen-in on and contribute to BlueWay discussions.

Building Partnerships

What's next for BlueWay? The evolution of the website is infinite. With the help of our partners, many new features will be brought into the site in the next coming months as we consult with vendors, customers and our online following. Through current partnerships and with new ones on the horizon, the Experts Exchange and the "Tools and Training" area will be enhanced, and new website sections will be created. Social media accounts and BlueWay related events will also be further developed for a more engaging experience with our audiences. We believe that it is through these partnerships that we will reach our BlueWay goal of engaging with Canadians on all levels and fostering environmentalism and responsible energy management.

To learn more about BlueWay and partnership opportunities visit www.BlueWay.ca.

Become part of the BlueWay Experts Exchange today by emailing Jennifer.salo@sonepardis.ca. ☺

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