

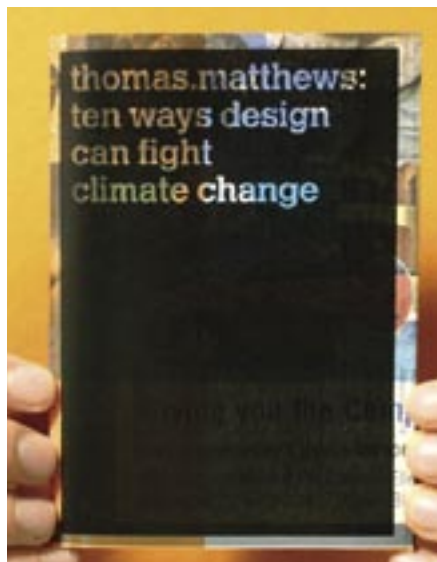
ten ways design can fight climate change

At thomas.matthews we believe in the power of print. There is something about the tactile, human quality of a beautiful printed piece that is quite literally hard to ignore. This is an important point, because when it comes to being as sustainable as possible, purely online communication might seem a given. Websites and other screen-based media are powerful tools and their flexibility, adaptability, and accessibility can't be denied. So if you are going to create a piece of print, it needs to be smart, beautiful and effective – something to keep. And of course produced with the environment in mind.

A sampling of our sustainable working methods for Ten Ways:

- + We used waste 'make-ready sheets'. (1)
Make-ready is the paper that a printer puts through their printing press while they adjust it – i.e. 'make-it-ready' for printing a job. They run the same sheets through again and again, then eventually recycle them. We find these pieces of 'waste' graphically beautiful, so we asked the printer to save a few days' worth rather than recycle them. Our publication could then be printed on the reverse (plain) side. The design still allows a peek at the make-ready side.
- + We kept it compact in size.
- + We stayed local.
The printer Calverts are just over the river from our studio. Shorter distances mean less energy spent transporting proofs and the finished print.
- + We used vegetable-based inks. (2)
Most printers still use inks heavy in solvents which end up in our waste stream.
- + We supported local business and fair, ethical practice.
Calverts are a genuine co-op.
- + We were cost-effective.
All of our printers need to show they are competitively priced, especially when working with recycled papers, which we use almost exclusively.

We also seek out printers and suppliers who are happy to work together with us to find ways to reduce energy and waste. For example we discuss our projects with printers early in the design process, so that we maximise what we can get out of every paper sheet, minimising offcut waste.



(1)



(2)

ten ways...

And while we're on the subject:

- + Recycled vs. post-consumer papers. (3)
Using recycled papers rather than 'virgin fibre' is certainly better for the planet. However, a paper claiming to be 'recycled' could contain just a small portion of waste, or simply offcuts from the paper manufacturer themselves. Recycled papers should contain as much post-consumer waste as possible, ideally 80 to 100%. 'Post-consumer' means that a product has reached the consumer, been used, and then recycled rather than going to landfill. We keep a close eye on our paper ingredients.
- + The FSC seal: what it really means (4)
The FSC-approved seal looks good, but it still usually means fresh trees were cut down for your brochure. FSC (the Forest Stewardship Council) confirms that your paper was sourced from a sustainable and well-managed forest. But recycled paper containing 100% post-consumer waste still makes for a sounder choice. We ask our paper reps and printers for the low-down on sustainable papers: what they're made of and how far they've come.
- + Tempting as they are, we avoid foil-blocking and metallic inks, which cannot be easily recycled.

Not quite a paperless office, but...

Here at the thomas.matthews studio we are always looking for ways to reduce our environmental impact.

- + We use recycled paper and the office recycles paper, glass, plastic and aluminium
- + Our office policy is to specify recycled materials and products wherever possible, to source materials locally, and to print with vegetable-based inks. This carries through not just our print work but also our exhibition designs, sign systems, consultation schemes and many other kinds of projects.
- + We aim to go 'carbon positive' during 2007. Carbon positive is the next step after becoming 'carbon neutral'. Not only counteracting the carbon dioxide that you create but also informing and encouraging a change in the habits of others to combat climate change.



(3)



(4)

