

CASE STUDY 3

ACO



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ACO is a global leader in the design, development and production of surface water drainage systems. ACO has an extensive portfolio offering high-quality solutions. The group has over 40 years of experience in drainage installations. 5 million meters of ACO products have been installed in the UK - and over 100 million meters worldwide. ACO's goal is to maintain its leadership position in the water drainage market by being innovative and maintaining a high level of product quality and environmental awareness. ACO produces polymer concrete, steel, cast iron and plastic products and is fully aware that caring for the environment can have a significant impact on the company's efficiency and success.

The implementation of ISO 14001 certification has brought significant benefits, both in the context of relationships with suppliers and customers, and has had a positive impact on the company's costs and efficiency.

Richard Hill, managing director of ACO Technologie, emphasizes that the process of learning how to act in a more ecological and friendly way has helped employees discover new efficiency in production and improve existing ways of working.

ISO 14001 had an impact on many areas of the organization's activities:

1) After obtaining ISO 14001 certification, ACO experienced significant improvement in relationships with suppliers, including:

- The introduction of the ISO 14001 standard prompted ACO to precisely define environmental requirements for suppliers. This transparency contributed to a better understanding of expectations and standards, which ultimately improved collaborative processes.
- ISO 14001 certification has become the starting point for a more sustainable approach to relationships with suppliers. Joint environmental protection initiatives promoted by the standard have made it possible to build partnerships based on shared values.
- ISO 14001 requires systematic monitoring of supplier activities for compliance with environmental standards. This approach has contributed to continuous improvement of supplier processes and effectiveness.

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2) An extraordinary aspect of the implementation were also the benefits for the company's clients:

- Guaranteed compliance with standards: ISO 14001 certification proves that ACO products comply with international environmental management standards, which increases customer confidence in the quality of the solutions offered.
- Environmental awareness: Customers are more aware of the environmental benefits of ACO products. Environmental awareness translates into a positive image of the company and influences customer loyalty.
- Long-term partnerships: Environmental certification puts an ACO in a better light in the eyes of customers, who are more willing to establish a long-term relationship with a company whose values include caring for the environment.

3) ISO 14001 certification contributed to reducing ACO's operating costs by:

- Process rationalization: The implementation of the standard prompted the review and improvement of processes, which resulted in more efficient use of resources and reduced operating costs.
- Optimization of raw material consumption: By applying the standard, ACO focused on minimizing the consumption of raw materials, which resulted in direct savings related to the purchase and use of materials.
- Waste management: Focusing on waste minimization allowed us to reduce the costs associated with waste management.

4) Actions taken to improve performance after achieving ISO 14001 certification include:

- Reduction of project implementation time: The introduction of the environmental management system resulted in better planning and coordination of projects, which contributed to shortening their implementation time.
- More efficient use of resources: Monitoring resource consumption in accordance with the ISO 14001 standard allowed for better management of available resources and their more efficient use.

5) The application of the ISO 14001 standard influenced the organizational culture at ACO through:

- Increased employee engagement: Striving to meet environmental standards engaged employees in environmental goals, which resulted in their greater involvement in everyday work.
- Creating environmental awareness: The implementation of the standard contributed to building environmental awareness among employees, which influenced their attitudes both in and outside the workplace.
- Sustainability as a value: ISO 14001 made sustainable development an integral value of the organizational culture, which influenced decision-making in line with the principles of sustainable development.

Case study prepared based on data from:

<https://www.bsigroup.com/en-PH/iso-14001-environmental-management/case-studies-for-iso-14001/>

<https://www.firstgroupplc.com/>

QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

1. Does the company notice an increase in customer trust and loyalty after implementing an environmental management system?
2. Has the company noticed a reduction in project implementation time or more efficient use of resources after implementing an environmental management system?
3. How did certification affect the processes of cooperation and communication with trading partners?