

## Domestic Energy Efficiency Advice Code of Practice Retailer Case Study

Comet, the leading electrical retailer, has worked closely with the Energy Saving Trust over a number of years to promote energy efficiency amongst its staff and customers. This has been supported by training programmes, point of sale literature and partnerships with energy suppliers to offer subsidised energy efficiency products. All the information available in-store is replicated both Comet's website and through its telephone information centre.

Comet first heard about the Code of Practice through its involvement in the White Goods Group of the Energy Efficiency Partnership for Homes<sup>1</sup>, and through its relationship with EST. Initially picked up by the Commercial Team who saw that the Code made good business sense, the work was then handed over to the Social Responsibility Team who took the application process forward.

The Social Responsibility Team acted as an information gatherer, pulling together and confirming responses from all over the company. In this way, the Code acted as an audit for energy efficiency activity which was valuable in itself, enabling Comet to ensure that the same standards were met across its stores and website sales. This audit has provided a benchmark for energy efficiency activity which can be used to measure improvements over future years, and support Comet's commitment to best practice in energy. It also gave the team at Comet an opportunity to look at their practices with a fresh eye, and to appreciate that their energy advice service is already of a good standard.

By going through the application process, the Social Responsibility Team also identified areas where Comet could further improve their energy efficiency advice service. One key development has been the establishment of energy experts at the Comet call centre. These staff will receive additional training to allow more detailed energy efficiency advice to be available to callers at all times. It's an enhancement that wouldn't have happened without the Code.

As the application process was not resource intensive - it took about two days in total to gather all the necessary information across the company - there was no problems in getting senior management approval. Comet's legal team also looked at the Code. The Code will be promoted amongst staff, through internal newsletters, the intranet and forthcoming roadshows.

"Comet is committed to leading the way on environmental issues within electrical retailing," says Debra Moir, who is the main point of contact for the Code within Comet. "Signing up to the Code of Practice further demonstrates our commitment to continuous improvement in the important area of energy efficiency. It enables us to ensure that we are always providing the most up-to-date information to help our customers make the right choice when purchasing new products."

The Code of Practice will be included in Comet's Social Responsibility Report next year as part of their wider commitment to energy efficiency. As the first retailer to be fully compliant, the Code also gives Comet market differentiation, demonstrating to customers that it is a reliable source of energy efficiency advice.



Giving advice in-store

For more information about the Code of Practice, visit [www.goodenergyadvice.org.uk](http://www.goodenergyadvice.org.uk) or call 08700 667 620.

<sup>1</sup> See [www.est.org.uk/partnership](http://www.est.org.uk/partnership)