**Determining the Feasibility of Implementing**

**Paper Reduction Systems to Eliminate Paper Waste**

**in West Coast Property Management**

for

Daren Sello

President/Managing Broker

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by

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March 20, 2022

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**Letter of Transmission**

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March , 21, 2022

Daren Sello

President/Managing Broker

West Coast Property Management Ltd.

8333 Eastlake Dr Unit 208, Burnaby, BC V5A 4W2

Dear Mr. Sello:

Below is a copy of my report that we discussed: Determining the Feasibility of Implementing Paper Reduction Systems to Eliminate Paper Waste in West Coast Property Management for your review. I appreciate the opportunity you provided to investigate the paper usage within West Coast Property Management.

In this report, I have given you a brief overview of the problem of paper waste on a global and Canadian scale and reviewed interviews and surveys amongst your colleagues and the general public along with a review of your current processes in order to come to my final conclusions.

I thank you for allowing me to work on this project and would be glad to answer any questions regarding the report. Please call at 778-829-5301 or email at kcolos94@student.ubc.ca if you would like to discuss the report at anytime.

Sincerely,

Ken Colosie

UBC English Student

**Abstract**

This report determines the Feasibility of Implementing Paper Reduction Systems to Eliminate Paper Waste in West Coast Property Management

Paper reduction process can reduce West Coast Property Managements paper usage and waste by approximately 25%. The below report showcases the data obtained from a survey of current employees, other general office workers and data from published articles to support this claim.

This report has three recommendations:

* Implement a paperless financial process.
* Use double-sided paper for annual general meeting mail outs (and financials if recommendation one is not adopted).
* Implementing “no paper” bylaws at strata corporations under 15 units in size.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. Introduction to the problem of paper wastage globally**

Paper wastage is a large scale problem across the western world and continues to grow rapidly. It is estimated that approximately one third of all litter in the world is paper products (source 1). and amounts to one third of total waste in landfills in Canada. (source 2). Additionally, in Canada alone, 6 billion tonnes of paper are used annually and of that, only 25% is recycled. (source 1). Often, when you think of wastage as a general term, you think of household garbage and food waste, but paper wastage is also a major component to overall waste.

**B. Background on paper reduction industry**

The paper reduction and recycling industry in Canada began in the 1980’s with most provinces and territories adopting a recycling program. Out of all materials that are recycled by Canadians, only 9% is actually able to be recycled domestically, 12% is shipped overseas where stats on the percentage recycled are not available and 86% goes to the landfill. (source 3). These stats clearly show how inefficient our current recycling processes are and how importance should be put to paper *reduction* instead of *recycling*.

**C. Statement of the problem**

West Coast Property Management is a new, three-year old company and does not currently have any paper reduction process in place. The company has yet to scale and implement technology in some of their processes. This is leading to wasted paper consumption and redundancies in processes that use printed materials.

**D. Purpose of this report and proposed solution**

The purpose of this report is to explore the paper usage components of West Coast Property Managements processes and suggest implementations to reduce the usage of paper throughout the company. One possible solution to this is to implement a paperless financial process. This would reduce paper usage in the company by about 20%. Another solution is to move to using double-sided paper instead of single-sided paper which will reduce paper consumption by a further 35%.

**E. Description of primary and secondary data sources**

The data in this report comes from a mixture of primary and secondary sources. I conducted interviews with one member from every team within your office, Accounting, Administration, and Property Managers. Further, I conducted a survey of all employees within your office on the current paper practices within the company and their views and believes on paper reduction as an important business function. I also conducted a survey of twenty-two members of the general public who are employed in other offices around the globe. For secondary information, I have consulted multiple websites and articles regarding the history of recycling, paper wastage and information on paper reduction technologies.

**F. Scope of the five inquires under investigation**

To assess the feasibility of reducing paper wastage within our company I plan to pursue five areas of inquiry:

1. What are the highest paper using processes within our office?
2. What is the average amount of single use paper that is consumed by our office?
3. What inefficiencies exist that are redundant and causing multiple print outs of the same documents?
4. What technological investments could be made to reduce paper wastage?
5. How employees feel regarding paper wastage?

**II. DATA SECTION**

**A. Interview with Office Manager**

1. **Reviewing the paper needs of the company**

I was fortunate enough to have a thirty minute conversation with the office manager for West Coast Property Management in which we discussed the current paper requirements of the company. She noted that the highest usage of paper was during the accounting processes. Invoices received by the company are printed and sent to the managers for signature before being scanned into the system and filed electronically. Further, financial statements are compiled and printed for the managers signature and are then filed electronically and in paper copy. I confirmed with the Office Manager that there is no legislative requirement to store a paper copy of the documents. Further, West Coast Property Management sends out a lot of violation letters and requires a paper copy of Annual General Meeting notices to be sent out to the owners in their buildings. These packages range from five to thirty and are all printed on single-sided paper.

1. **Determining redundancies in printing processes**

Together, the office manager and I identified three redundancies in the printing processes for WCPM.

* 1. Financial Statements are being printed monthly for signing and then scanned and saved. These documents do not need to be printed.
	2. Invoices are being printed when they are received by email.
	3. Printing documents in order to sign them and then scan them into the server.
1. **Identifying redundancies in storage processes.**

The office manager further identified two redundancies with the storage process.

* 1. Financial statements are being stored after printing.
	2. Invoices are being stored after printing.

**B. Surveys completed by current employees of WCPM**

A survey of six employees of West Coast Property Management was conducted to discover their feelings towards paper wastage as a problem, their views on the current practices within West Coast Property Management in regards to paper use and their willingness to change processes.

1. **General thoughts on paper wastage**

The staff of West Coast Property Management are generally concerned with paper wastage as a global problem with 83.3% of respondents scoring paper wastage importance as a 7 or higher. (appendix 1) This is clearly a major concern of the staff at WCPM considering that 50% of staff consider themselves a six or less in terms of how eco-conscious they are out of ten. (appendix 2)

1. **Willingness to change**

The employees of West Coast Property management are generally willing to change. Only 43% of employees consider themselves “paper people” (appendix 3) and from that segment, some of them could likely be swayed to paperless processes with enough training. An impressive 75% of employees who answered the survey question say that they would like WCPM to reduce their paper wastage. (appendix 4) Therefore, implementing paper reduction processes within the current team should be easily obtainable.

1. **Current practices**

The employees also commented on current practices within the company. 67% of respondents claim that the current procedures are inefficient (appendix 5) with 50% of respondents saying they often print the same document multiple times (appendix 6) and they are recycling over 80% of the documents that are printed once they have served their purpose. (appendix 7) Further to this, employees document printing more than 10 times per day 67% of the time. (appendix 8)

**C. Survey Data From Non-Employees of WCPM**

I ran a survey of eleven random people that worked in office’s around North America. In the poll, we analyzed the current paper reduction processes in other offices, the inefficiencies of workplace printing policies and any suggestions that others may have for reducing paper usage.

1. **Current Paper Reduction Measures In Other Work Places**

Out of the eleven respondents, 60% say that their current paper reduction processes in their offices are not effective (appendix 9) and 63.6% say they have inefficient printing processes. (appendix 10) 62% of respondents strongly agreed that their companies should make more of an effort to reduce their paper usage. This analysis suggests that West Coast PM has an opportunity to be an industry leader and promote to their clients and potential clients that they are actively engaging in sustainable business practices such as cutting down on wasted paper. This could be a potential selling feature to potential clients that value environmental initiatives.

1. **Redundancies of Paper Usage**

It appears that redundancies in paper usage are a global problem in the workplace. 54.6% sometimes or often print the same document twice (appendix 11) and 54.6% recycle paper after they print it as opposed to filing. (Appendix 12) These numbers are quite high, but are actually lower than those of West Coast PM which shows that there are many inefficiencies occurring within West Coast’s printing procedures.

**D. Data Analysis of WCPM Printing Costs**

I analyzed West Coast Property Managements current printing costs and consumption reports. Due to the sensitive nature of their business, I will not include any of these costs figures in the report. However, WCPM uses on average 4000-5000 pieces of paper per month and charges back to their clients about 40% of this consumption. Thus, 60% of the total consumption is being paid from the company itself and any wastages are eating into bottom line profit as consumable costs increase. Of this usage, 35% of paper usage is due to annual general meeting notices which are required to be mailed out in accordance with the Strata Property Act of B.C which are generally recovered from the clients. 55% of the paper usage is due to the accounting process, printing financial statements and invoices which are then scanned into the system and saved electronically. The remaining 20% is miscellaneous letters that are required to be mailed out or review of documents by employees who prefer to review paper documents.

**E. Statistical Data on Paper Costs for Organizations**

To be completed.

**III. CONCLUSION**

A. Summary of results

B. Future recommendations and additional suggestions

To be completed.

Works Cited:

1. <https://baleforce.com/paper-waste-why-does-it-matter-and-how-to-manage-it/#:~:text=Paper%20Waste%20is%20a%20severe,of%20paper%20in%20a%20year>.
2. <https://sites.ontariotechu.ca/gogreen/initiatives/guide-to-going-green/paper-reduction.php>
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recycling_in_Canada#:~:text=9%20External%20links-,History,for%20a%20recycling%20system%20citywide>.