

Joining the Circle Activity

Circular economy models offer opportunities to businesses across all sectors. The models can improve efficiencies, reduce waste, improve product design and strengthen brand.

This activity is designed to help you identify circular opportunities within an existing business, using the 9 strategies discussed.

Read through the business description in cards below. Then, as a group, work your way through the 4 Circular Economy Accelerator worksheets.

Choose 1 member of the group to note down ideas and thoughts, focus on the opportunities and challenges.

As these are fictional businesses, feel free to think creatively. Circular economy is about system changes, be innovative and consider the long-term opportunities and impacts.

Circular Strategies





Craft Kitchen Ltd

Craft Kitchen is a family run design, manufacture and kitchen fitting business based in Melrose. The company has been operating for over 40 years, over the last few years the new managing director has been looking to improve the sustainability credentials of the business.

With more customers asking about material origin and the companies' environmental credentials, management have become increasingly aware that their operations could be improved.

The Melrose base includes the company's main office, workshop, warehouse, and a showroom.

Craft Kitchen employs 40 FTE's across the South of Scotland and are a committed living wage employer.

The company's main market is high end, bespoke kitchens. They take pride in the quality of their products and customer service. Their kitchens are built to last, but they do see repeat custom from individuals looking to update their kitchens (usually after about 13-15 years) although materials would last, if maintained, for up to 50 years.

The company also offer a service to design and fit parts of kitchens (replacing doors, cabinets etc) and each year design a number of kitchens for businesses within the tourism sector.

Craft Kitchen use wood mainly sourced in the EU for worktops and cabinets. They currently manufacture around 40% of cabinets and worktops in the workshop, the rest (where a range of materials have been used in manufacture) are imported fully manufactured.

The wood used by Craft Kitchen is sourced from EU suppliers (mainly in Poland, Ukraine and Croatia). They only purchase wood from sustainable forests, that can evidence well managed replanting programmes. Exotic woods come from suppliers in Central and Western Africa that support replanting schemes and bamboo comes from suppliers in Eastern Asia.

The company has an environmental policy which supports them in choosing the best wood suppliers. They currently do not share where materials are sourced with the customer.

The business offers a large range of solid wood kitchen designs, which is the most sustainable option. They also supply a range of designs made from more complex mixes of materials. The company are aware that Granite and other stone surfaces are finite resources and the plastic composite surfaces are made from oil, but these materials have been part of their offering for decades.

Craft Kitchen's fittings and accessories are sourced from suppliers in China. They aim to offer a large range to the customer, made from an assortment of materials, their suppliers offer them this variety and it is cost effective.

In 2019, the company made the decision to only use high quality water-based paints, which are produced in England and contain minimal volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

The company have a range of waste streams that they would be keen to add value to, including cut offs, materials from kitchen strip outs (which currently get skipped), saw dust and packaging.

Craft Kitchen's workshop and warehouse is heated exclusively by a wood burner, which is often fed offcuts and scraps from workshop.