

Premier Re-use Solution



Company: Premier Workplace Services
Innovative business model type: Re-use
Sector: Office assets re-use
Company size: SME
Product or service: Take back of IT equipment for repair and resale

Key Facts

- Premier Workplace Services arranges commercial relocation and workplace change services.
- Premier Sustain was set up to manage used assets more sustainably. Their new venture Renew IT was devised to send IT items for re-sale or re-use as opposed to recycling.
- REBus assisted by providing financial modelling, which helped to inform Premier's pricing of their IT offer as part of a wider package.
- REBus also assisted with the development of the proposition, and introduction of the business model process.
- From the initial trial of five tonnes of re-use, there was a carbon benefit of 109 tonnes, a value of £14,000.

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Introduction

Premier Workplace Services is the trading name of Premier Moves Ltd. Premier operate a range of specialist services to support workplace change including a division called Premier Sustain, provides repair, refurbishment and remanufacturing services for office furniture.

Premier Sustain wanted to develop a new service to address an opportunity in the market. It would be based around diverting an increased amount of high-end electrical items, many of which were currently only recycled, back into re-use either through resale or donation.

Objectives

Electrical re-use had always been a goal for the future, but REBus offered Premier Sustain added impetus to explore the genuine potential for a new venture, diverting Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) from landfill to re-use.

The aim was to build a stronger service that intuitively responded to customers' needs. Many WEEE collection and processing firms have been driven out of the market and Premier had identified a gap as there were no service providers pushing re-use in this sector. Since the proposed service was outside the company's existing sphere of knowledge, it lacked confidence to work alone and greatly welcomed the support offered by REBus.

What would success look like?

Premier was aiming for a service that was able to:

- Maximise re-use;
- Demonstrate that it was economically viable;
- Deliver better economic and social value;
- Show a competitive offer on price;
- Fit well with the Premier model. The company is frequently asked to dispose of assets that the client does not want to relocate to its new building; and
- Build a bigger, stronger service package.

Resource efficient business model for WEEE Re-use

The Premier re-use service is designed to slot into existing, integrated Premier business models, but could equally act as a stand alone package. It has its own sub-brand, RenewIT.

Flexibility is the key to success. It gives customers a one-stop offer, and the convenience of using one supplier to manage the entire logistics of relocation. It also gives Premier leverage to convince clients to choose the most sustainable option, re-using items rather than disposing of them.

The benefits to customers include:

- Reduced costs in disposal and removal;
- Improved environmental credentials;
- Social impact gained through donations;
- Saving space, which many clients are liberating, saving money in the process; and
- A comprehensive data eradication service for their items, reducing risk.

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Premier Sustain was keen to trial electrical and electronic equipment re-use – in order to gauge the type and volume of material likely to arise, assess the most effective ways of working, and report on success.

Following Premier Sustain's decision to commit to the new service, the REBus team offered valuable insight into ways of working and the best route to success. Specifically, it helped with:

- Financial modelling;
- Support around outlets and the development of the proposition; and
- Introducing the business model process.

Pilot

The scope of the pilot was to apply the methodology to some of the largest commercial relocations in the country, ideally involving moves of 100-250 staff. Outcomes were compared to previous projects where all equipment was recycled as WEEE. In the pilot, five tonnes of IT equipment was successfully processed and remarketed, saving 109 tonnes of CO₂e.

Supervisors have been briefed on the changes, and going forward, formal training will be developed. This applies specifically to the relevant waste regulations and Data Protection Act, where staff need to be trained to understand the implications of the project.

Key factors

Flexibility is essential but the company appreciates the risk attached to gaining value from each opportunity. In addition, underpinning the service with a wider portfolio of offers helps Premier to be more flexible and dynamic.

Setting up an internal facility and processes for comprehensive data eradication required Premier to recruit and develop new expertise, which it successfully achieved.

"One of the main drivers was increasing our engagement with existing and then new customers, being a one stop shop for their commercial needs and adding to our existing portfolio. The more services of this nature we develop the greater the value we have as a service supplier to our clients, it keeps Premier unique in the market place.

Ann Beavis, Marketing Consultant, Premier Workplace Services

Premier Workplace Services has three Directors allowing for a rapid same day decision making to explore the service. It was clear to all senior decision makers how this business model complimented the existing service and benefited the client. Premier now offer a more holistic service to the client.

"I got the green light to trial the service for this model, on the same day as the Board meeting. This is the beauty of our operating model.

Phil Oram, Director of Operations, Premier Workplace Services

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- Investment has almost always been within the organisation to deliver internally.
- The recruitment required was two FTE apprentices working in the IT asset disposition (ITAD) facility, supported by the Premier apprenticeship scheme and one FTE specialist employee
- Premier has already started to benefit from the sale of assets which would previously have been disposed of.
- The overall service is more robust and sustainable than six months ago.
- More items are being diverted to charity or re-sale, and it is clear that this process can go further still.
- Premier recently won The Queen's Award for Enterprise in Sustainable Development.

Next steps

Premier aims to use the service to win new contracts with clients unsatisfied with the existing market solutions and to build competitive advantage in the market place.

Lessons learned

Premier is clear that the new service gives it a genuine competitive edge. However, data eradication was of particular concern to some customers, which showed that trust was vital.

Staff training has had a significant impact. Team members were already knowledgeable on the value of furniture items, but needed guidance to recognise the value in other assets.

The enthusiasm of the sales team, which aligned achievement with their personal motivation – commission, demonstrated that it is important to consider all channels to success.

Other factors which have had a strong impact on the project included:

- Financial modelling to support business decisions.
- The need for high levels of co-ordination between departments – accounts, operations, documentation, ISO and Systems.
- Investment in appropriate technical expertise.

Advice to others

“Make it easy for the client. Make it competitive, and better than existing solutions. It has to be a client-driven service, not one driven by your capabilities and what you think you need to do.

“Look at the benefits from all angles that the client sees. There may be advantages to models that you don't originally see. Clients may value the speed of a re-use service over the environmental benefits or they may see the social value as a better result than financial savings.

Ann Beavis, Marketing Consultant, Premier Workplace Services



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KTN
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Case studies were generated as a result of pilots carried out for REBus by WRAP or RWS and the named organisations from 2013 to 2016.

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