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# Product Stewardship:

Lessons Learned in Implementing  
a WEEE Compliance Program

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# Presentation Covers:

- What are WEEE & RoHS?
- Pertinent Facts about the Case Study
- Project Goal
- 12 Steps for Establishing a WEEE Compliance Program
- Applicability to Product Stewardship
- Opportunity for Q & A

# What is WEEE?

- *Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment Directive* (2002/96/EC)
- Adopted by the European Union (EU) in 2003
- Required member states (EU countries) to promulgate laws to reduce electronic waste by requiring “take-back” of waste electrical & electronic equipment

# What is RoHS?

- *Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical & Electronic Equipment* (2002/95/EC)
- Also adopted by the EU in 2003 – effective 1 July 2006
- Restricts (i.e. bans) use of certain substances in electrical & electronic equipment sold in EU countries

# WEEE vs. RoHS

- WEEE – member states given flexibility; RoHS – directive specific about what was required
- Different effective dates
- Different exemptions / exclusions

# Four WEEE Requirements

1. **Labeling** – All covered products required to be labeled with WEEE label (as described in EN 5019)
2. **Registration** – “Producers” required to register in individual countries
3. **Take-Back** – Arrangements must be put in place for the collection, disassembly and proper disposal of equipment at “end-of-life”
4. **Reporting** – Periodic reports must be submitted to government agencies on take-back efforts

# Case Study Background

- “Manufacturer” of Biomedical Devices

Actually an “assembler/reseller of E&E equipment made by other companies used to perform medical diagnostic tests”

- Headquartered in United States

- Selling and/or Renting Products in Several EU Countries

- Limited EHS Staff – none with responsibility outside US

# Project Goal

“Ensure verifiable compliance with WEEE & RoHS requirements with minimal business impacts utilizing established business processes to the extent feasible”

# Step 1 –

## Determine Compliance Obligations

- Company got a very late start in developing a compliance program – initially thought –

“It doesn’t apply to us.”

**Lesson Learned** – You can’t rely solely on trade press articles or an understanding of US requirements - need an “early-warning system” to catch new “product” requirements.

# Issues

1. Needed to understand the intended use/status of each product

**Lesson Learned** – You can't presume applicability / non-applicability – need to evaluate it carefully for each product being “distributed in the marketplace”.

# Issues

2. Needed to understand how each product was “sold” (direct sale or rental or indirect sale through a “business partner”)

**Lesson Learned** – Existing business contracts did not address WEEE compliance – needed to get those responsible for negotiating sales agreements involved in the process.

# Issues

3. Needed to know where products were being sold / imported – what countries

**Lesson Learned** – Needed to know requirements in each country – it is extremely difficult to understand the actual requirements without local expertise.

## Step 2 – Establish a Compliance Program

- Needed to set up a cross-functional team with a mechanism to keep everyone informed and specific due dates for accomplishing tasks

**Lesson Learned** – Compliance programs aren't static – need to adjust as business decisions and product changes are made.

## Step 3 – Evaluate Each Product

- Needed to identify the WEEE/RoHS requirements for each product

**Lesson Learned** – What was required changed by both product and sales location.

## Step 4 – Change Product Labeling

- Needed to add the WEEE label to product labeling



**Lesson Learned** – Even an apparently “simple” requirement may not be simple to implement.

# Issues

1. What product needs to be labeled?
2. Where should the label be put?
3. How big should it be?
4. Who is going to do it? How?  
When?
5. Who is going to pay for it?
6. What about changes to product specifications?

## Step 5 –

### Investigation “Take-back” Options

- Needed to identify requirements and mechanisms for taking back, disassembling and disposing of products.

**Lesson Learned** – Needed additional input/information from the supply chain – disassembly instructions, already established take-back mechanisms and sourcing restrictions

## Step 6 – Implement “Take-back” Processes

- Needed to actually select and implement “take-back” processes

**Lesson Learned** – The same procedure didn’t make sense in every country or for every type of equipment.

# Issues

1. Legal requirements in a particular country
2. Maturity of existing take-back programs
3. Sale vs. Rental
4. Amount of sales in a country
5. Who had the actual take-back responsibility
6. Profitability – cost vs. sales

## Step 7 – Communicate New Processes

- Needed to communicate new processes both internally and externally

**Lesson Learned** – Changes needed to be incorporated into existing product documentation (e.g. sales literature, customer-service processes and procedures, customer and supply chain contracts, SOPs, product inserts and manuals)

## Step 8 – Create Compliance Files by Product

- Needed to document the compliance determinations made, information relied on and what steps were taken

**Lesson Learned** – Use of a standard checklist makes assembling and reviewing the information easier.

# WEEE / RoHS Checklist

## WEEE / ROHS COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST

PRODUCT INFORMATION	
Company Code #:	_____
Name / Description:	_____
Any WEEE Accessories?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No. If yes, Describe _____
_____	
_____	
MANUFACTURER INFORMATION	
Manufacturer Name:	_____
Contact Info:	_____
Product Name:	_____ MNFG Code: _____
WEEE / ROHS STATUS	
WEEE Labeling Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Complies <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Compliant
If exempt, describe:	_____
_____	
ROHS Status:	<input type="checkbox"/> Exempt <input type="checkbox"/> Complies <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Compliant
If exempt, describe:	_____
_____	
ROHS Certificate of Compliance issued?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
WEEE COMPLIANCE	
WEEE Label in Company Product Specification?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [Doc #: _____]
WEEE Label on Product?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Location of Label:	_____
WEEE Info in User Manual?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [Doc #: _____]
WEEE Weight (in Kg):	_____
Disassembly Instructions	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No [Doc #: _____]
Countries in Which Product is Included in Registration:	_____
_____	
_____	

Completed/Revised by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 9 – WEEE Registration

- Needed to accomplish WEEE registration in each country where it was required.

**Lesson Learned** – Needed top management support to encourage compliance.

## Step 10 – On-going WEEE Compliance

- Needed to integrate on-going WEEE compliance into existing business processes – including “management of change”
- **Lesson Learned** – Needed to have “approval authority” for a broad range of SOPs if they were subsequently modified (so WEEE compliance processes were not eliminated).

# Issues

1. Changes made to products – including new sourcing of components
2. Input into business expansion decisions – it didn't make sense to sell in some countries
3. Needed to prevent certain orders from being taken / or product shipped (e.g. US computers vs. EU computers)

# Step 11 – Periodic WEEE Reporting

- Needed to establish mechanisms for accomplishing the periodic WEEE reporting when and where it was required

**Lesson Learned** – Needed to modify existing sales databases to facilitate WEEE reporting.

## Step 12 – Evaluation of WEEE Compliance

- Needed to establish a means for periodically evaluating WEEE compliance (i.e. audit)

**Lesson Learned** – If you don't monitor processes, they will degrade over time.

# Applicability to Other Product Stewardship Programs

## Common Elements:

- Really understand requirements
- Determine who needs to be involved
- Use/modify existing processes
- Remember the documentation
- Establish "management of change"
- Audit compliance periodically or processes will degrade

ANY QUESTIONS?

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