

RESPONSIBILITY REPORT 2023-2024



**Rocket
Products**

COMPANY STATEMENT:

At Rocket Products we believe that everyone has a role to play to reduce the impacts of climate change and eradicate environmental and social injustices. Therefore, we strive to design and deliver quality merchandise that has a minimal impact on the planet and helps our clients to achieve their goals. This report has been created to aid us in achieving this. It has been split up between sections of people, planet, product, and prosperity to help us break up the different sections of our business that we need to make change. It also follows our responsibility roadmap which is outlined below. We have referred to responsibility in the title of this report as opposed to sustainability because, as a promotional merchandise company, it would not be possible to be sustainable in all that we do, so this is about making us more responsible in each action we take as a company. As this report encompasses all areas of our business, this report can be accounted for as our Corporate Social Responsibility Policy.

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This last year has seen a real expansion in our sustainable practices. We made huge progress in our first year of implementing initiatives, however these have just got bigger and better this last year! This report will go into this in detail, as well as what we have planned for the future. To expand these changes, we went through and took all the best bits from our first year and have delved into these further, as well as growing our work across wider parts of the business. We have continued our carbon offsetting schemes and have expanded these across the business. We have written further learning materials for clients and staff to improve education and integration on sustainable ways of thinking. Our sales of responsible products have increased from last year and we have

expanded the range of what is available too. We have also changed the packaging of such products to be more responsible, such as bulk packing or using FSC tissue wrapping for delicate products. We are continuing to work our way through stage 3 of our roadmap and have already touched on parts of stage 4. We have also made some changes to the roadmap from last year as we learn more about what works best for our business. This report shares all the details of our success and the exciting plans that we have for 2024 and beyond. It shows the vision we have to become a leader in producing high quality merchandise that has a minimal impact on people and the planet and helps our clients to achieve their goals.

Daniel Lyons



RESPONSIBILITY ROADMAP:

Our roadmap follows a clear path of actions we need to take as a company to become more responsible in our business operations. It begins with quick changes to our website and products, that will enable our clients to make the most sustainable choices for them. It then moves on to internal policies and initiatives which will change the work culture and the way we think at Rocket Products. We then move to carbon counting for our entire supply chain, which is going to be a long process which we are in the midst of planning. This will lead to our carbon reduction initiatives and offsetting schemes. These actions will help to reduce our impact on people and the environment, which we hope will make us a leader in supplying responsible merchandise, enabling us to help our clients achieve their goals without harming people or the planet in the process.

1. WEBSITE AND PRODUCT

- Publish all certifications on website to make it clear to clients what we are doing and our values.
- Expand our range of responsible products.
- Provide eco credentials, alternatives and filter options to help customers choose the most environmentally friendly product option.
- Plastic free packaging.

2. INTERNAL POLICIES AND INITIATIVES

- Ethical.
- Environmental.
- Corporate Social Responsibility.
- Supplier code of conduct.
- Recycling scheme.
- Paperless policy.
- Internal carbon initiatives to lower our footprint - with targets.

3. CARBON COUNTING

- Of scopes 1 and 2 in the office.
- Scope 3 - procurement.
- Carbon footprinting for every product on the website.
- Carbon footprint of freight.
- Look to renewable energy within all scopes of our supply chain.

4. OFFSETTING AND REDUCTION

- Offsetting programme for scopes 1 and 2 of the business.
- Transportation offsetting programme.
- Product offsetting scheme.
- Carbon reduction targets for all 3 of these categories, to reduce what needs to be offset.



OUR PROGRESS SO FAR:



Achieving the Earthly Climate Positive Business Certification – 2 years running

This involved calculating our carbon emissions within scopes 1, 2 and 3 of our business. We now offset 110% of this carbon by investing in nature-based projects that are verified by an independent scientific board.



Supplier code of conduct

We have had a supplier code of conduct for several years, but this year we have updated it to keep in line with the new SA8000 guidelines. This covers all our ethical standards that suppliers must meet for us to work with them. All our existing suppliers have had to complete this, and we now send it out to any new suppliers we may work with.



More responsible packaging

We now encourage customers to have their items bulk packed or for delicate items to come wrapped in FSC tissue paper not plastic bags.



Eco friendly fact sheet

To eliminate any confusion with sustainable terms, we have created an eco-friendly fact sheet which is a glossary for all sustainability related terms that can be found in the promotional merchandise world.



Obtaining the Earthly Climate Positive Transportation Certification – 2 years running

We receive an annual carbon report from DHL each April which gives us the carbon footprint of all our shipments. We have used this data to begin offsetting 110% of the carbon footprint of all our freight sent via DHL.



Rewritten environmental policy

We have rewritten our environmental policy to incorporate the changes we have made.



Switching the products in our office to be made of responsible materials.

We have swapped many of the everyday items that we use in our office and swapped them for more responsible alternatives. Such as those of recycled, biodegradable, or compostable sources.



Responsible sourcing guide

We have developed two responsible sourcing guides. One for our sales teams to help advise clients on how to make their orders more sustainable. And one for clients so that they know what products will work best for them in line with their charity's values. These guides cover all areas of a product's life.



Developing a sustainability team

We have created a sustainability team that is a combination of our senior management team, HR and sales. This enables us to cover a wide range of areas when thinking about how we can become more sustainable, so we can consider people, supply chain management, economics, and the environment.



Guide to alternative materials

As a lot of terms within sustainability can be confusing, we have written a guide to alternative materials, to help clients and employees navigate what would work best for them. It covers what materials products are made of and how they can be disposed of.



More staff attending conferences and accessing sustainability learning materials

We have had members of staff attend the annual Sedex sustainability conference, and many more attend trade shows with a sustainability focus. Staff often use the company made materials for any information they need regarding sustainability, and members of staff have done short online courses provided by the UN on sustainability within SME's.



People

CULTURE

— Change the work culture at Rocket to be sustainability focussed - consider social, environmental, and economic factors under one umbrella in everything we do.

- ✓ Weave this into all our company policies and handbooks.
- ✓ Hold companywide semi-annual responsibility meetings.
- ✓ Send informative emails on sustainability updates internally and to clients.

Our Progress:

- We have rewritten our environmental, ethical and equality, diversity, and inclusion policies to incorporate all the changes we have made over the last year.
- We hold semi-annual responsibility meetings to keep everyone in the company up to date on what we are doing and to bring any new ideas to the table.
- We have created a product sourcing guide to help employees and clients find products that fit their values and goals – this is available on both our websites and a shared folder that all employees can access.

- We are going to send regular employee mailers with updates on our most sustainable suppliers and what products they do, which we can then relay to our clients to help them choose responsible products that meet their budget and values.

— Ensure our company policy on equality, diversity and inclusion is upheld within the company itself and our supply chains.

Ensure our anti-discrimination policy is working to:

1. Encourage equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.
2. Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination; promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all staff are recognised and valued.
3. Take complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation, and discrimination seriously.
4. Make opportunities for training, development, and progress available to all staff.
5. Make decisions concerning staff based on merit.
6. Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness.

These commitments will enable us to ensure our values are upheld within the office space between employees, but also between employees and clients and employees and suppliers.

Our Progress:

- We have developed our anti-discrimination policy to be in line with the 2010 Equality Act to ensure that we are encompassing all areas in which individuals are diverse; this ensures equality and inclusion within our business. We have filtered each of these features into our supplier code of conduct, to ensure our values on equality, diversity and inclusion are shared with our suppliers. This document is available on our website so all clients can see where we stand. We are currently in the process of appointing a diversity team, who are planning to create an anonymous survey to send out to all employees, in early 2024, for their views on equality, diversity, and inclusion at our company. We are also planning on getting an expert to train our staff on equality, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. Based on this training and the surveys, the diversity team will work to improve areas that are flagged within the workplace.

- Create bridge workers in each department to work with the sustainability team and feed our plans through into each team and department.

Our Progress:

- We have appointed these across the business. We hold meetings with these employees to notify them of any changes or progress.

- Ensure supply chain traceability and transparency.

- ✓ Ensure we have audited certifications for all our factories.
- ✓ Work with these factories to ensure all third-party suppliers have these certifications.
- ✓ Develop a supply chain map for all our Pakistan and Far East factories.
- ✓ Ensure all UK factories have the correct certification for products and that their factories are compliant with our standards.
- ✓ Create an information sheet for employees with UK suppliers that meet these standards and the products that they specialise in.

Our Progress:

- All our factories we use outside of the UK are SMETA audited. So, the next stage is to work with them to find out if their suppliers are too. Once we have done this, we will then work to ensure that our supply chains for all our bespoke products are audited. To do this we will create supply chain maps for each of our products, alongside supplier profiles with details of factory audits and third-party suppliers.
- We have begun to do this by sending round supplier questionnaires and when doing our life cycle assessment research. However, this is just the first step and there is much more to do to calculate this.
- After this first stage is complete, we will then begin to work with our UK suppliers to ensure they have certifications for all their responsible products, and that all their suppliers are fully audited. We will then create supplier profiles the same as above for each of our UK suppliers that will be available to all employees, to ensure that we are only working with fully certified and audited UK suppliers.
- Inform our clients and stakeholders on our responsibility progress through semi-annual mailers, blog posts and social media updates.



ACCOUNTABILITY:

— Implement our values into our supply chain as we need to be held accountable for all our operations.

- ✓ Do this through enforcing our supplier code of conduct.
- ✓ Create a supply chain map.
- ✓ Publish this and our certifications on our website.
- ✓ Create a responsible UK supplier guide and ensure all employees follow it.

Our Progress:

- We have ensured all our ethical and environmental values are covered in our supplier code of conduct, which is also in line with the SA8000 standard. We have sent this round to all our existing suppliers and will continue to do so with any new suppliers.

- We are going to begin working on our supply chain maps and supplier guides for employees by following the steps highlighted above, under supply chain traceability and transparency.

— **Create a supplier code of conduct that we must follow to work with our suppliers.**

- ✓ This will incorporate all our ethical and environmental values as well as the standards in the SA8000 – a universal ethical framework that sets a clear standard for ethical manufacturing.

Our Progress:

- We have sent this round to all our existing suppliers and will continue to do so with any new suppliers.

— **Update and publish internal policies and documents:**

- ✓ Ethical Policy
- ✓ Environmental Policy
- ✓ Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- ✓ Responsibility report – which will be treated as our CSR policy.

Our Progress:

- We have updated all these as of Winter 2023. We went through all our existing policies and updated them into a new format to fit what we have done so far and what we plan to do. Our Ethical Policy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are both new, but have had information from various existing company documents compiled together into concise coherent policy documents.



Planet

CARBON

— Calculate our carbon footprint within scopes 1, 2 and 3 of our business – stage 1.

Our Progress:

- This has been done with Earthly through achieving our Climate Positive Business Certification, where we offset 110% of our carbon within the first three scopes of our business by investing in nature-based projects. We renew this annually.

— Calculate our carbon footprint for scopes 3 and 4 of our business – stage 2

Short term:

- ✓ Begin by calculating the carbon emissions from our freight and offsetting this.
- ✓ Conduct a life cycle assessment on one line of our products.

Long Term:

- ✓ Move on to conduct a life cycle assessment for our metal products and offset this.
- ✓ Once this is complete, we will be able to offset the carbon emissions of all our bespoke non-stock products and provide information for all these products on our website.
- ✓ Work with UK suppliers to develop a plan for this.
- ✓ Push our UK products more to reduce the footprint from freight.

Our Progress:

- So far, we have offset 110% of our carbon emissions associated with all freight via UPS and DHL couriers. The next stage is to look into doing a life cycle assessment for our bespoke metal products that we produce in China. We will then move on to our longer-term plan of working with our UK suppliers to develop an offsetting plan for our UK supplied stock products

— Create initiatives to reduce our carbon footprint for each scope and stage.

- ✓ Go through our Earthly report to develop a plan for how we can reduce our carbon.
- ✓ Work with our courier companies to see how we can reduce our footprint.
- ✓ Set clear targets in percentages and time for reducing carbon rates - to be done once research is finished.

Our Progress:

- We have started to investigate this by identifying the highest carbon impact areas in our carbon business report. We then conducted an employee survey to understand which of these areas our staff would like to focus on, considering what was important to them and their clients. We are going to focus on the top 3 areas first:

1. Audits and certification throughout our supply chain
2. Reducing plastic and chemical use in production
3. Procurement of goods and services

We have begun to draw up plans for each of these areas, and how we can reduce the carbon impact of each of them, such as using green service companies and creating products used of natural materials. We have also been in talks with our courier companies on how to reduce our footprint. They have sent over plans and initiatives that they are undertaking for this, such as recycled fuel, electric vehicles, and better sea freight services. Once we complete our carbon counting for this past year, we will put targets in place.

PLASTIC

- Remove plastic packaging from all products.
- ✓ Bulk pack into paper bags where possible.
- ✓ Individually wrap things in tissue paper.

Our Progress:

- We now pack some of our badge orders without plastic, by bulk packing them into paper bags. We also offer to wrap products in tissue paper on all quotes for metal items. All other products are still packed in biodegradable, recycled plastic bags.

ENERGY

- Move to a renewable energy provider once our current plan is up.
- Investigate the types of energy our suppliers use and set a plan and end date for when we will only work with suppliers that use renewable energy.
- ✓ Create a survey for all suppliers on current and future energy use – and what they have available to them.
- ✓ Use this to decide when we will make it mandatory for all suppliers to only use renewable energy.

Our Progress:

- We have sent a survey round to our three biggest suppliers on this. We were surprised to find that they all use a lot of renewable energy such as solar and hydrothermal. We now need to send this round to our other suppliers, and then work with all factories to see if they can use 100% renewable sources for their energy and set a date from which we will only work with suppliers that use 100% renewable energy.

OTHER

— Enforce a paperless and recycling policy to improve office recycling and paper use.

✓ Set a printer limit.

Our Progress:

- We have put recycling rules next to our recycling bins and increased the number of recycling bins around the office. We have begun collecting all packaging sent to the office from suppliers, to be used when we send out new products and samples to clients as opposed to using new packaging.

— Develop an eco-sourcing system on our website so clients can easily filter and chose responsible products.

✓ Create eco and UK made icons.

✓ Have a filter option on the tool bar for responsible products.

✓ Clearly state the components of our responsible products that makes them so.

Our Progress:

- We have started this by adding a 'how can I make this product more sustainable' section on each product, as well as having a link to our ethical sourcing guide for clients. The next stage is to add the icons and filter options.

— Add the 'sustainability credentials' for each product on our website.

Have this spanning across the different stages of a product's life cycle:

- ✓ Where it is made
- ✓ Materials
- ✓ How it is packaged
- ✓ How it is cared for
- ✓ How it is disposed of/life span/durability
- ✓ It's carbon footprint.

Our Progress:

• This will first be done for our bespoke products made in our Pakistan and Chinese factories. We will need to work with our UK suppliers to get this information for all the stock products we hold. We could also work with our catalogue supplier to get this information published in the main catalogue so that it is compulsory for all suppliers to provide. This information will replace the 'how can I make this product more sustainable section' and will be published alongside a link to our responsible merchandise guide.





Product:

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

— These are areas for employees to consider when offering products to clients. These are all included in our responsible merchandise guides for employees and clients. These areas have been chosen to cover all stages of a products life. This information is available on a shared folder available to all employees, is on our website and has recently been sent out as a mailer to all our clients.

Areas to Consider:

- Is the product made of responsible materials?
 - ✓ Recycled materials
 - ✓ Cellulose fibres
 - ✓ Organic fibres
 - ✓ Materials that can be disposed of in a responsible manner

- What is the longevity of the product?
- How is the product packaged?
- How the product can be disposed of:

- ✓ Can it be recycled?
- ✓ Is it biodegradable?
- ✓ Is it compostable?

Our Progress:

• We have created two responsible merchandise guides for employees and clients that highlight the above factors in much more detail. We have created two separate ones as the employee one is designed to help employees understand more about how to make a product responsible, the correct questions to ask suppliers, and how to understand client's needs. The client one has been created to help them determine what they want from a responsible product, and what they should be asking our sales team. We have also created a guide to alternative materials and an eco-friendly fact sheet to help both our employees and clients understand more about how to make a product responsible. Going forwards, it is a topic that should be discussed with all clients when they are looking for a new product, or if they are placing a repeat order to see if they could improve the sustainability of their existing order. We also quote for responsible alternatives alongside any non-responsible products that are enquired about.

MATERIALS:

— Work out what percentage of the products we sell are made from natural, synthetic, or cellulose materials.

- ✓ Use this information to work out how prosperous they are.

Our Progress:

• We have not yet done this, but this is part of our plan for reducing our chemical and plastic use in production. that are enquired about.

- Ensure that if products have an eco-credential, that this is certified.
- ✓ Make sure that this information is on the responsible UK suppliers information sheet for employees – to ensure that we are only selling certified responsible products.
- ✓ Work with suppliers to ensure any products that aren't certified are able to get this to avoid greenwashing.

Our Progress:

- We always ensure that we get certification for our responsible products when clients ask for it. We have started doing this for our bespoke metal products. All the certification for these items is saved in a shared folder for all staff to access. We will continue to work through these products before moving to those supplied in the UK. This information will then be added to our supply chain maps. All this will ensure that we are only selling certified responsible products.
- Work with suppliers on innovation to develop more responsible materials
- ✓ Discuss what responsible products we are looking for with our existing suppliers and if it would be possible for them to develop these.

Our Progress:

- We have increased the range of sustainable badge, medal, and keyring options as we now offer these made from MDF or bamboo. Badge and keyring options are also available in a recycled, biodegradable plastic. We can also offer recycled polyester for our medal ribbons, lanyards, and wristbands. We are going to take this further to remove all plastic packaging from our products by using recyclable paper and bulk packing.
- We are going to go animal product free by July 2024.

Our Progress:

- We have not sold any animal products for the past year. When we sell products that are a vegan leather alternative, we ensure that they have responsible credentials and are not made from virgin plastic.



Prosperity:

VALUE:

- Report what percentage of products sold are responsible.
 - ✓ To work out how much our changes and marketing is influencing purchasing decisions.
- Measure if all spending on sustainability increases equity.
 - ✓ To work out if it is benefitting the company economically as well as socially and environmentally – to encompass all areas of sustainability.

Our Progress:

This is something we will look into reporting in the next financial year, starting April 2024.

INVEST:

— Innovative materials

- ✓ Invest in current suppliers to help them develop new, innovative, and responsible materials.
- ✓ Work with new, more responsible suppliers or try new more responsible products from existing suppliers.
- ✓ To do this we will create a list of the products that we are looking for and contact our suppliers to see if they can do them. If they cannot, we will work to see if it is possible for them to create them. We will research new suppliers that we can begin working with who already create responsible products and share our values. We will also research any new responsible products that our current suppliers produce.
- ✓ We will ensure that all responsible aspects of these products are certified.

Our Progress:

- We have been working with some of our responsible UK suppliers more in the last year. This has been through promoting their products in our marketing but also by adding them onto quotes as a responsible alternative. We have also increased the sales of our recycled lanyards and wristbands and our wooden badges and medals by boosting our marketing on this and adding them on quotes as a responsible alternative when applicable. We have certification that all these products are responsible. We are yet to begin investing in new responsible materials; however, this is something we plan to research as part of reducing plastic and chemical use in production.

— Supply chain

- ✓ This will involve investing time and money into employees throughout our supply chain to achieve our goals as highlighted in our people section.
- ✓ We will also invest in technology if needed to help our current suppliers to create more innovative and responsible products that help people and the planet.

Our Progress:

- We currently have certifications for all our factories, showing that they are SMETA audited, and workers are therefore treated fairly. Our supplier code of conduct also shows this and that our factories are in line with the SA8000. However, we do not do this with our third-party suppliers so this is something we will investigate to develop our supply chain profiles and maps.

— Educate employees so they can promote and pass on what we are doing to clients.

✓ We will do this through running semi-annual sustainability workshops, sending out employee emails with any updates on our sustainability practices, and creating sustainability information packs that are accessible to all employees.

Our Progress:

- We will do this through running semi-annual sustainability workshops, sending out employee emails with any updates on our sustainability practices, and creating sustainability information packs that are accessible to all employees.

COMMITMENT:

- By publishing this report to all staff, clients, and the public, we can now be held accountable to our plans, targets and promises. This will also push us to stand by our commitments, goals, and plans.
- Ensure that even though we are calculating and offsetting our carbon footprints across our business, that we are trying to continuously reduce this.

CONCLUSION:

We know we have committed to doing a lot. However, we believe that these changes are necessary to help reduce our own impacts, those of our entire supply chain, and to push others in our industry to do the same. We aim to be a leader of responsible promotional merchandise so we can achieve our goals and help clients to achieve theirs. Currently, we have completed stages 1 and 2 of our roadmap, and are well underway with stage 3, having already begun offsetting the carbon of our freight and the first 3 scopes of our business. Having recently conducted our employee sustainability questionnaire, we are now going to begin working on the three areas that staff deemed most important: Audits and certification throughout our supply chain, reducing plastic and chemical use in production and the procurement of goods and services. We are also going to begin developing

supplier profiles and supply chain maps to make everything completely transparent for our employees and clients. Given how much we have achieved as a business this year, in both a physical sense but also a mental shift in the way we operate, we are positive that even bigger and better things are coming for this next year. We know that with our business model it is not possible for us to be 100% sustainable, but we know that all our changes are making a difference, and we are excited for the plans we have, to take this even further. This will improve our responsibility as a business but will also enable our clients to make more responsible choices for their merchandise without having to do the heavy research themselves. Our aim is to change so that you (our client) don't have to. So please join us on our journey and chose us to be your responsible merchandise supplier!



Rocket
Products