

STAPLES

Business Advantage®

The Silver and Gold go green.

University of Colorado and Staples Business Advantage®.

If improving sustainability is on your list, Staples Business Advantage is the ideal partner. Many organizations believe that going green and saving money is not a realistic combination. But our customers have proven otherwise. We provide them with a sustainability program that delivers four key wins: reduced facilities costs, products that clean better, lower impact on the environment, and improved health and safety of your learning environment.

Read below to learn how the University of Colorado implemented university-wide facilities best practices, lessening the school's environmental impact, improving procurement efficiencies and introducing consistent janitorial staff training — all while reducing costs.

The Organization

The University of Colorado is a system of three public universities across four campus locations: Boulder, Colorado Springs, Denver and Anschutz Medical Campus in Aurora. The University of Colorado Boulder, founded in 1876, is the system's flagship university with more than 30,000 students. The University of Colorado Colorado Springs is the fastest growing of the schools, with a student population of 11,300. The University of Colorado Denver, including Anschutz Medical Campus, is the largest research university in the state, attracting more than \$420 million in research annually.

“Staples aligns perfectly with our sustainability mission. We have a partnership in place to help further define and enhance our approach to reducing the university's environmental impact, and have improved efficiencies in the process — a huge win.”

Sandy Hicks
Assistant Vice President and Chief Procurement Officer
University of Colorado

The Challenge

The University of Colorado maintains a strong reputation as an environmental leader. As part of its sustainability initiatives, the university wanted to take advantage of environmentally conscious facility solutions, supporting the university's broad cleaning needs, eliminating the reliance on harsh chemicals and streamlining its facilities procurement processes.

“We knew we could be smarter about how we manage our facilities operations and be more green,” said Sandy Hicks, Assistant Vice President and Chief Procurement Officer with the University of Colorado. “The key was to find the right partner with the right competencies to help us build an enterprise-wide program with standardized products and processes.”

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The university issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) with a cross-campus committee evaluating submissions from nine vendors based on several criteria, including program implementation, training, product sustainability and price. Staples Business Advantage received the highest score among the group, moving the company into the final evaluation phase along with three other vendors.

The University of Colorado then conducted a blind cleaning test on the Boulder campus using glass, multipurpose, floor and disinfectant solutions from each of the vendors. Again, Staples was the front-runner in the group.

“We have a long-term partnership with Staples for office supplies, but when it came to facilities solutions, we were a bit skeptical,” said Hicks. “But we were impressed by the complete Staples package, from product quality and environmental certifications to hands-on support for our custodial staff, the results were all top notch.”

Based on Staples’ impressive showing, the University of Colorado awarded Staples Business Advantage a contract for its facilities supplies.

To ensure continuity, the University of Colorado made a decision to utilize the National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA) agreement for janitorial supplies and related custodial equipment. Using the NJPA agreement provided a number of advantages: moving from two contracts with Staples to one NJPA agreement for both office and facilities supplies, continued pricing flexibility for custom core items, and additional variable volume incentives based on net spend.

The Solution

Staples worked with each campus to swap out old products with new, while simultaneously conducting on-site training for all custodial staff. As many of its employees speak English as a second language, Staples provided training materials in a variety of languages — a huge selling point for the university. The end goal was to create and enforce consistent cleaning practices university-wide.

The University of Colorado wanted each campus to be responsible for its own purchasing, but for all orders to be centralized and managed via a single source.

“When looking at product prices, a gallon-by-gallon comparison is not the way to go. We looked at the per-use cost after dilution and the Sustainable Earth by Staples products provided the absolute best value — with prices 23 percent lower than the other vendors.”

Sandy Hicks
Assistant Vice President and Chief Procurement Officer
University of Colorado

Staples Business Advantage integrated with the university’s existing eProcurement platform, M@rketplace, allowing users to easily search for and buy preapproved facilities products. The Staples Business Advantage team worked closely with the University of Colorado Boulder’s distribution center to create ordering best practices, determining each campus’ cleaning needs and recommended inventory.

There are four primary Staples cleaning products being used to clean the University of Colorado facilities: glass cleaner, multipurpose cleaner and washroom cleaner, which are Green Seal Certified and meet the rigorous EPA Design for the Environment cleaning products standard, as well as a disinfectant/sanitizer, which is EPA registered.

The Results

As a result of partnering with Staples Business Advantage, the University of Colorado has extended its sustainability initiatives, rolling out environmentally conscious cleaning practices across all of its locations. By relying on the Sustainable Earth by Staples® line of products, the university is actively promoting a healthy and productive learning environment, while reducing its environmental impact — exactly what the university hoped to achieve.

The university achieved a 23 percent annual cost reduction using the Staples products compared with similar products previously purchased. The university also benefits from Staples’ fast, free delivery, further reducing its carbon footprint by consolidating its facilities and office supply purchases into a single order, resulting in only one Staples truck visiting the campus per day.

For more information, please visit StaplesAdvantage.com.

