



## Green Cartridges Ixion Challenge 09/10 - Finalist

### Background

Now in its second year, the Ixion Challenge has attracted record entries from a wide range of companies including the manufacturing, engineering, medical, service and motor industries, all looking for an opportunity to win a financial and educational award worth £27,000

### The Challenge

Ixion Holdings Ltd aimed to help businesses survive and revive as they progress through and out of the current recession. The Ixion Challenge asked businesses, based in the East of England, to supply information on how they would utilise the award to help their business develop.

### The Finalist

One of the five finalists is Green Cartridges Ltd set up 5 years ago in Braintree, Essex, by ex-city workers Neil and Abbe Coulton, specialising in providing low-carbon, cost-effective office print solutions whilst maintaining exceptional levels of print quality and customer service.

Neil and Abbe understand that just calling your company 'green' doesn't make it environmentally responsible, and so take meticulous care to ensure that at every stage, their remanufacturing processes have as little impact on the environment as possible. Each cartridge can be re-used up to 15 times – and as far as they know, Green Cartridges Ltd is the only company in the UK, and possibly in Europe, to achieve this level of recycling. This gives an estimated 50% reduction in carbon footprint, and means less empty cartridges in landfill sites.

The recession saw more customers turn to Green Cartridges for office solutions, as more people focused on cost reduction. As a result, the directors have had to rethink their route to market, and now sell online and via Amazon in addition to their direct mail operation.

As a result of the rapid growth within the remanufacturing industry, it can be a struggle to find staff with the necessary skills. As Neil says, **“You can't just go to the job centre and ask for people with remanufacturing skills. They're just not available, as there are no formal training courses in this country.”**

Projections suggest that volume of remanufactured cartridges will double in the next three years in the UK, so Neil and Abbe are in the early stages of discussions within the industry and with a Government agency about setting up a Nationwide Cartridge Technician Apprenticeship Scheme.

### The Benefit

Neil and Abbe are determined that their company will not stand still, and believe that winning The Ixion Challenge would allow them to move forward with confidence. Neil sums it up.

**“The remanufacturing industry has an important role in the future low-carbon economy. We make a difference. £20,000 will make a bigger difference.”**