Case Study

3fe Coffee

Company & Country

3fe Coffee, Dublin, Ireland

Start Up/SME, Employees

SME with 18 Employees (5 shops)

Category of Industry

Coffee Roasters and wholesalers

Website Address

https://3fe.com/

CSR Strategy

CSR Strategy
Sustainability at 3fe Week 1
Sustainability at 3fe Week 2
Sustainability at 3fe Week 14

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CSR Ready
green, fair & competitive businesses

Colin Harmon is a four-time Irish Barista Champion and owner of Dublin's 3fe Coffee, one of the world's most innovative and progressive speciality coffee shops. His work in coffee has extended to roasting, training and consultancy work, as well as developing coffee equipment for the speciality market and beyond. 3fe has a company-wide project engaging in the circular economy, through inventive solutions to food waste at their cafes and finding new uses for industrial waste at their roastery.

Benefits of CSR

- Reduced their food waste from 8kg per day to 2-3kg per day at their flagship location. Almost 2 tonnes of waste from their roastery can be diverted to other businesses that can use it.
- Saved money on bin charges due and made additional profit margins from re-used food waste.
- It has contributed to changing the broader culture within the company towards sustainability.
- Short- and long-term marketing benefits, through broader increases of awareness of the 3fe brand as a sustainability-driven company.

Our compost bins might not be pretty on the eye but they're pretty important to our sustainability programme.

DESCRIPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY CSR INITIATIVES

3fe has been making a move towards sustainability. It's something that's always been in the back of our minds, and we probably do a lot of it without thinking already, like recycling our waste and using locally sourced suppliers, but we think that making a concerted effort to do it right is better for the environment, our suppliers and us as we move towards being a more progressive business in every way.

The Sustainability Restaurant Award membership has been instrumental in helping us to achieve this. The only other restaurant in Ireland to have this award at the moment is Loam, Galway, a Michelin-star restaurant. I'm sure a lot of you are thinking but they're a Michelin-star restaurant — sure! But we figured why not. We care and we want to be a better business, so this is the next step. In fact, we would argue being a sustainable business is the only way to run a business nowadays.

3fe linked their CSR activities to the 'Towards Responsible Business' - Irelands National Plan on CSR 2017-2020. They identified selected Sustainable Development Goals are linked to their CSR initiatives and then established a 'sustainability team' made up of people from different business sections to exchange ideas and make changes happen across the board.

3fe has a well-thought-out and successful CSR campaign that has already achieved results company-wide. There is ample opportunity to engage their customers in their CSR activities as well as most are based around internal business operations (reducing waste) or partnerships with other groups.

Many coffee shops do 'suspended coffees' where the customer buys an extra cup that is paid for but only used when someone in need requires it. 3fe also offers paid coffee classes, which can easily be offered for free to teenagers or disadvantaged people looking for skills. They also recycle coffee grounds as compost, make foods out of left-over milk such as cheeses and source locally, within a 50-mile radius.

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

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