

ISO 20121 Case Study

UBM Live achieves certification to ISO 20121

UBM Live, the leading global events organiser and a division of UBM plc, has successfully achieved ISO 20121 certification for five European events with SGS United Kingdom Ltd. Adding to this achievement, the UBM Live office in Amsterdam is also fully ISO 20121 certified.

Every year UBM Live is responsible for organising a number of leading exhibitions, conferences, awards, websites and publications throughout five continents and are an integral part of the marketing plans of companies across twenty industry sectors. Through these events, channels buyers, manufacturers, suppliers and users are able to meet customers, develop new business, launch new products or services and expand their markets.

Certification...

Having previously achieved the British Standard BS 8901, the sustainability management system for events in 2012, it was a natural step for UBM Live to become ISO 20121 certificated.

UBM Live Chief Executive Officer, Simon Foster, stated "I am so proud that we have achieved the renowned ISO 20121 certification. At UBM Live, supporting sustainability is fundamental to our business strategy and philosophy. We acknowledge that sustainability is about how we achieve success through long-term responsible management and stewardship of all aspects of our business. Achieving ISO certification proves that we are succeeding in meeting our commitments."

Sustainability Objectives...

UBM Live recognises the social and environmental impacts of its activities and how ISO 20121 certification can provide help to manage these impacts and meet the sustainability objectives. Being the leading sustainable business in the events industry is a key objective for them.

Allison Ozero, Sustainability Manager at UBM Live in Amsterdam says: "At UBM Live we want to create a sustainable business model that is deliverable in the long term and demonstrates a balanced approach to meeting our responsibilities towards the economy, the environment, and social progress."

The starting point for UBM Live was the in-depth understanding that how it conducted its business, and the realisation that its business would need to undergo a fundamental shift to develop its long term sustainability. This was the key in allowing them to look forward to a more sustainable future.

"UBM Live has demonstrated an unusual understanding of what sustainability is and how to embed it into its organisation, considering all the sustainability pillars in a balanced and holistic way. A truly inspiring example for the events industry! The commitment towards sustainable development starts with the higher management level and reaches down to all employees. The engagement with stakeholders is taken very seriously as well, causing a positive resonance across the industry. The management system has improved immensely since the early days of BS 8901 and I'm looking forward to seeing how UBM Live will take the management system to different levels in the future," says Ana Inacio, SGS Auditor.

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Why ISO 20121...

With investors, stakeholders and customers increasingly looking to organisations to be more environmentally aware, committing to the requirements of ISO 20121 with the assistance of Blackmores, was an extension of UBM Live's pledge for responsible business.

"Companies are being asked to demonstrate the sustainability of their activities; this is an important opportunity for UBM Live to respond to these demands and claim the position as leaders in sustainability, setting the pace for best practices in the industry," says Ms. Ozero.

The Benefits of ISO 20121...

"With the increasing attention to sustainability in the industry, UBM Live is influencing and working with our suppliers and venues to look at cost-effective alternatives to the current norms in event planning. This has given UBM Live direction and a way to work in conjunction with suppliers towards sustainable development. It has improved relationships and understanding between UBM Live and its suppliers, helping define mutual expectations and goals to work towards," says Ms Ozero.

The benefits of working with Blackmores to achieve sustainable results include the potential reduction in costs through energy saving and materials efficiency. This combined with more effective waste and risk management, as well as the focus on developing processes ensure that we are delivering operationally sound, quality events.

Processes and Assessment...

Blackmores assisted with the development of processes to manage risk, create consistency in the planning and delivery of the events, and to focus on key sustainability issues are very important to UBM Live. The methodology which UBM Live has created for its five certificated events, while challenging, is what makes it possible for an organisation to develop processes to work towards goals of sustainable event management.

Ms Ozero says: "The development of our processes for the certification and the assessment process itself, were very positive experiences for us and helped us to see how we needed to improve our overall management system."

The company found the assessment itself to be a rewarding experience, allowing all staff and management to understand and focus on the key points of the system. SGS work thoroughly and continually give positive and constructive advice. UBM Live was able to build on the advice given and improve their processes.

European Compliance Support...

Blackmores were engaged by UBM Live in 2011 and carried out a Gap Analysis and internal audits against BS 8901, before ISO 20121 was published. Now that UBM Live are certified to ISO 20121, Blackmores are continuing to provide support for their Auditing Programme across Europe to help maintain compliance to the ISO standard and retain certification.