Welcome to this special I.T. issue of My Green Pod Magazine!

The way we use information technology (I.T.) can help to change the way we work and drive down greenhouse gas emissions. Think about it: we use electricity to power all our I.T. and two-thirds of us commute by car to work. Combined, energy and transport create over 40% of the UK's carbon emissions – but four simple steps would reduce our I.T. carbon footprint and help to build a sustainable future.

Read on to find out more!

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Sustainability. It's a topic we are acutely aware of, but what role does it play in I.T.? My latest PhD research indicates the way we work creates so much greenhouse gas (GHG) pollution that a forest the size of Canada and Greenland would be required to clear it.

It's time I.T. changed. Looking beyond current strategies of renewable energy and electric cars, I.T. can support a better way of working that will create a more sustainable future and help slow global warming to +1.5°C.

YOUR I.T.-RELATED FOOTPRINT

To achieve a proposed 50% reduction in I.T.-related emissions, we all need to adopt a new way of working.

In this special edition, academics and international I.T. companies explain how four simple behavioural changes can drive that goal, including:

1. reducing personal computing energy consumption
2. remote working
3. transitioning to green cloud computing
4. more sustainable hardware lifecycle management.

Think these are 'other people's issues'? Think again. Even now, if you are reading this online, you are already involved – through the energy powering your device, the internet, the cloud data centre delivering your content and how you arrived at your physical location.

These choices and actions all add to our I.T.-related carbon footprint.

THE IMPACT OF COLLECTIVE ACTION

What if you were equipped with the information to respond to a sustainable call to action? To choose a laptop that uses 90% less energy, to commute 40% less, to ask your employer what your organisation is doing about sustainable I.T.?

By making these changes a reality, a year from now you could have reduced your IT-related carbon emissions by over 500kg CO_2e.

If you're not sold on the accounting statistic, then perhaps a real-life equivalent will help. That's the equivalent reduction of a car not driving 1,930 miles, or of freeing up the photosynthesis capacity of 0.64 acres of forest to sequester your individual I.T. pollution.

PARTNERSHIPS AT WORK

In the spirit of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, we could all make a real difference if we act in partnership as a nation of sustainable workers.

As an example, the UK's service sector employs over 16 million people. Considering this is over 50% of the UK's workforce, it's very likely that you are one of those employees.

If we all responded to the call to action outlined in this issue, we would abate 8.8m tCO_2e each year. That's equivalent to the pollution caused by 31bn vehicle miles.

Collectively, we would have released over 10.3m acres of forest to clean our air free from other sources of pollution. And contemplating that trees are the lungs of our world, that's not a bad idea.

So, read on and discover not only what I.T. companies are doing to make a difference, but also what you can do personally. If we want to tackle climate change, it's time I.T. changed. ■

''ICT holds significant potential to drive innovation and enable new low-carbon technologies and behaviours, ranging from energy efficiencies in buildings, enabling remote working and optimisation of transport systems, to smart health and smart agriculture applications. Our report for the GSMA last year, *The Enablement Effect*, identified over 2,000 million tonnes CO_2e annual reductions globally that are already enabled by mobile telecommunications technologies, which is almost 10 times greater than the mobile sector's entire emissions.'' BARONESS BROWN OF CAMBRIDGE, chair of the Carbon Trust