



# Systems: An Environmental Success Story



Evolve Systems, a division of Global Contract Inc., was launched in November 2000 to U.S. and international markets. Not only was it an instant success with customers, it represented an environmental breakthrough in the materials used in its manufacturing process.

In May 1999, Global Group initiated a project to develop an office system for Global Industries to compete in the mid-market range. The system was to be uncomplicated, functional, visually adequate, and modestly priced. It also had to accommodate a change in the marketplace from monolithic panel system to tile system.

The project team developed an idea to use recycled material in the manufacturing processes. The team took their idea to another Global Group company, RT Technology, which uses wood waste and recycled plastic to make component products for sister companies. There was no panel system using recycled material in the manufacture of interconnecting office systems, but RT Technology helped the team make it work.

The entire Evolve panel system and the processes to manufacture it were designed to save and protect the environment. Some of the environmental features include:

- Using **wood and plastic waste** from other Global divisions in the manufacture of the Evolve system

- Making vertical sides out of **recycled wood and recycled polypropylene** (50% wood and 50% polypropylene) from RT Technology
- Using 100% **extruded recycled plastic** to make horizontal supports
- Making the inner portion of the panel module from honeycomb made of recycled kraft paper covered on either side with acoustic mineral board, derived from 50% slag (inert steel by product) combined with volcanic and other organic material
- Using only water-based adhesives in the manufacturing process
- Offering fabric options made of 100% recycled fibre

In addition, the product can be recycled at the end of its use, beginning the process of recycled material again.

Based on its resounding success in U.S. and international marketplaces, Evolve was launched in the Canadian marketplace in March 2002.



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# environmentalreport

## Global Group Environmental Logo



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Global Total Office has adopted an environmental logo to represent our on-going environmental achievements and initiatives. Our logo depicts the Global Total Office corporate logo surrounded by a bird. We designed this image to represent the symbiotic relationship between our company, the global environment and our commitment to keep the environment clean.

qualityvalueservice

THE GLOBAL GROUP

## Embracing Global Change

*At Global we believe that it is our responsibility to protect the environment for future generations. The growing importance of energy and environmental concerns continues to challenge us in this ever-changing marketplace.*

*As an industry leader, The Global Group continues to take proactive steps towards reducing the negative impacts on the environment. We are building "healthier" offices; investing in R&D and new technologies; reducing waste and the consumption of energy; and improving the quality of the air we breathe, all which can have a significant impact on our quality of life.*

*In August 2001, samples of Global chairs were sent to Air Quality Sciences (AQS), an independent test facility in Atlanta Georgia, for testing to stringent off-gassing test protocols in an environmental chamber. The net result of these tests was that on 12 November 2001, AQS listed a total of 114 chair series from Global Upholstery in their GREENGUARD™ Product Guide. (GREENGUARD™ Provides the world's only guide to certified low emitting interior products and building material).*

Other significant environmental initiatives include:

- In February 2002, Global Contract was registered to ISO 14001
- In 2002, Global Care began operating the first automated water-based glue line
- Global Contract Seating reduced Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) emissions to air by 14%, the waste sent to land fill by 60%, and the consumption of energy by 50%
- Evolve Systems is the first Canadian panel system to use recycled wood and plastic in its manufacturing processes
- Global's seating line is listed on a U.S.-based web site for environmentally preferred products ([www.greenguard.org](http://www.greenguard.org))

*Protecting the next generations' environment is of paramount concern to Global. Through the guidance of the Global Group Environmental Management Committee, we continue to operate with the environment in mind, making wise business decisions that help protect Mother Earth and its precious natural resources.*

Saul Feldberg

Chairman



## RT Technology

RT Technology was started in 1989 as a way for Global to reduce the wood & plastic waste sent to landfill by turning them into new parts for Global Chairs. RT Technology has continually expanded its product line and increased production levels.

The facility currently accepts over 544 metric tons of wood waste and 1224 metric tons of recycled plastic per year. This is waste that would have gone to landfill. This waste is recycled into usable chair products throughout Global. Any scrap generated on site is also reground and used again. This facility is a great example of Global's environmental stewardship.

RT technology facility is environmentally friendly and it makes good business sense.



GLOBALContract

## WATER-BASED GLUE PROCESS NOW IN USE AT GLOBAL

Three years ago, Global Group initiated a project to find an effective, one-step, solvent-free glue to replace the current solvent-based adhesive used in Global's manufacturing processes.

Through a lot of dedicated work and trial and error, a new process was approved. In January 2002, Global Care became the first Global Group production unit to operate with a water-based glue line.

The process used to bond fabric to foam with water-based glue has superior bonding capabilities, which helps to improve the overall quality of Global products. As well, water-based glue dramatically reduces the chemicals used during the manufacturing process.

Water-based glue is cleaner for the environment, provides better working conditions for employees, and is more cost-effective than a solvent-based system.

Where applicable, the water-based glue process will be systematically implemented at all Global Group production units.



## CHAIR TESTING PROGRAM ANSWERS CUSTOMER CONCERNS

In response to customers' concerns about indoor office air quality, Global recently completed a major testing program of our chairs to ensure that they meet or exceed industry guidelines for indoor air quality.

The chairs that were selected for testing were representative of the entire Global Group seating line, including Global Contract.

The test program involved placing chairs in an environmental chamber that passed air over the surface of the product. The air was then evaluated to determine the levels of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and Formaldehyde emitted from the product.

All of the Global Group chairs that were tested exceeded the industry requirements for indoor air quality which means that all of our seating lines can be recognized (advertised) as low emitters of Formaldehyde and VOC's.

Global Group seating products are now listed on a U.S.-based web site for environmentally preferred products. This site, which contains a link to Global Group's own web site, can be found at [www.greenguard.org](http://www.greenguard.org).

As new chairs are designed and developed, we will ensure that they too can be added to this list.



## REWARDING ISO 14001 RESULTS FOR GLOBAL CONTRACT

Global Contract was registered to ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System) in February 2002. The results of the program, to date, are rewarding.

For example, the installation of waste compactors should result in an annual saving of 50% of the cost of waste haulage. As well, the recycling program diverted the following from landfill the first year:

- 275 metric tons aluminum
- 70 metric tons cardboard
- 28 metric tons plastic
- 35 metric tons fine paper and bottles
- 200 metric tons wood



A new Paint Line was installed, which provides increased efficiency of powder paint usage by re-circulating paint overspray. Additionally, all paint line wash cycles are monitored to ensure that the wastewater is as clean as it was before entering the paint wash system.

Global Contract's new offices also contribute to their reduction in usage of natural resources. Their new building is equipped with timers for the light and heating systems, helping to conserve energy during non-working hours.

Implementation of Global Contract's ISO 14001 registration began at the start of 2001. A Steering Committee was appointed, made up of employees from Senior Management, Health and Safety, Quality Assurance, Design, Marketing, Purchasing, and Production. The principal targets for improvement were:

- Reduction of waste going to landfill

- Reduction of natural resource consumption
- Increase of Paint Line efficiency

All employees at Global Contract should be commended for their effort in implementing this program on behalf of the environment.



## Global Contract Seating's Environmental Program Nets Positive Results

Global Contract Seating's Environmental Program has produced important results for the environment – and the company.



The Environmental Program was designed to reduce the negative impacts on the environment caused by manufacturing. In its first year, Global Contract Seating reduced Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) emissions to air by 14% and reduced waste sent to landfill by 60%. Global Contract Seating also reduced the consumption of hydro-electricity by 50%.

Waste reduction was the result of a recycling program, which included plastic, wood, cardboard, foam, leather, aluminum, steel, office paper, and printer cartridges.

These reductions in waste also offer significant cost savings for the company. That means that not only is the program good for the environment, it's a great example of how working to better the environment can make Global Contract Seating more profitable.

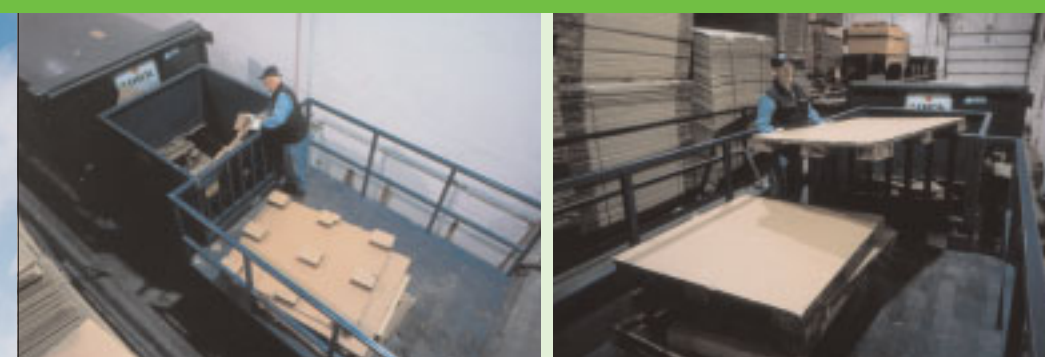
Currently, Global Contract Seating is working to further reduce its amount of waste going to landfill and to ensure a more efficient use of natural resources, including hydro-electricity and natural gas.

Global Contract Seating was registered to ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System) in November 1999. It was the first Global Seating Plant to accomplish this goal.



## GLOBAL WOOD GROUP

The Global Wood Group was registered to ISO 14001 by KPMG Quality registrar on November 22, 1999.



The aspects focused on in our program are the 100% diversion of cardboard, wood waste and wood dust from landfill to recycling programs. Global Wood Group has also invested heavily in fire protection and explosion prevention, as this is a major risk in an operation such as ours.

Future programs will focus on reducing or recycling other types of waste and on the efficient use of energy.