



Michael Dell Open Letter to College and University Students

Over the past year at Dell, we've built strong relationships within the environmental community. Through those relationships, we've learned a great deal about stewardship, sustainability and our opportunity to make a positive environmental impact in our global communities. I met with three leaders of the Computer Take Back Campaign (CTBC) – Ted Smith from Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition, Robin Schneider from Texas Campaign for the Environment and David Wood from Grass Roots Recycling Network. I came away from that meeting with a better understanding of the goals of the campaign and I was proud to share some of the progress Dell has made on the journey to environmental sustainability. As a follow-up to that meeting, I've been asked to meet with students involved with the CTBC and I am eager to do so. Dell has always been driven by direct relationships and we've found there's no better way to solve a problem or achieve a goal than to communicate openly, honestly and directly. As we work to organize a meeting with students, I would like to start that conversation through this open letter.

The issue of effectively disposing of electronic waste has Dell's full attention and we're working to address this challenge and meet our responsibilities. In short, we share with the CTBC the goal of keeping electronics out of the waste stream. And through some innovative programs, we're helping fulfill that vision.

Take It Back: Dell offers a service to every customer – from businesses and governments to schools and consumers – of collecting a computer regardless of brand and without a requirement to purchase a new computer. For the consumer market specifically, we offer home pick up and recycling of a used computer for the lowest price in our industry – currently \$5. Of course, we would all prefer that any cost to the consumer go away – and we are determined to get there. Over the past 18 months, we've been able to drop the price steadily from \$50. And we're now testing a "free with purchase" recycling offer and hope to launch that soon.

Make It Clean: Due to the large number of Dell customers, a change in how we produce a product can ripple around the world. The new low power-consumption feature on our Optiplex desktop line can save customers an average of \$175 in energy costs over three years. Multiply that savings by the number of Optiplex computers shipped worldwide and there is a tremendous aggregate power savings, reduction in emissions and benefit for the environment. When we launched this feature on two models in the Optiplex line in May 2003, (EPA) estimates were that if every customer used the power saving feature for one year, we could help save energy equivalent to what is required to power 90,000 U.S. homes in one year.

Dell works every day to ensure that environmentally sensitive substances are not contained in our products. Over the past few years, we've removed ozone depleting substances from the manufacturing process of our products. On the product side, we are well underway toward our goal to comply with the European Union Reduction of Hazardous Substances requirements prior to the July 2006 implementation deadline, and continue to incorporate these changes over our global product lines. Through our integrated Restricted Materials Program, Dell has already prohibited the use of hexavalent chromium, PBB and PBDE flame retardants, and cadmium, and has met public goals to restrict the use of lead, mercury and other non-regulated halogenated flame retardants in our products, all in advance of legal requirements.

Recycle Responsibly: I have watched the Basel Action Network's video on the devastating environmental and human health effects in China from unmanaged recycling operations. It is a sobering portrait of the challenges we face. At Dell, we have stringent policies to help ensure that computers we collect for recycling are not adding to this problem. We closely monitor our recycling partners to help ensure practices that promote environmental and worker safety. We prohibit landfill disposition or export of electronic waste to developing countries. And we audit the waste streams of all our recycling partners to help ensure we have line of sight into how all materials are handled.

Dell is committed to environmental sustainability and I look forward to our continuing partnership and progress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Dell".

Michael Dell