



TR Control Solutions
Education
United Kingdom

Empowering students and reducing the carbon footprint in schools

John Taylor and Robert Battye use information technology to help companies adopt environmentally-responsible behavior and business practices. They recognize that their greatest chance for long-term success is to work with students who will graduate within 10 years.

The two applied their expertise in real-time monitoring and process control technology at TR Control Solutions, a UK-based provider of resource monitoring technology. The company's solution for schools is ecoDriver Schools, which allows administrators, teachers, and students to monitor, manage and report on a school's consumption of water, electricity, natural gas, and other resources. Data reflecting the consumption levels is displayed on a monitor so the whole school can track how changes in behavior will save the school money and reduce its carbon footprint, benefitting a global community.

ecoDriver Schools enabled Walton Oaks Primary School in Walton-On-Thames, in Southeastern England, to reduce its consumption of water and electricity within one week. TR Control's technology enabled the school caretaker to notice that the irrigation system automatically turned on twice each day, despite the region's damp climate. Further, the caretaker noticed electricity consumption on weekends was as much as half of what it was when students and teachers were present. Armed with this information, the school managed to reduce the non-school-day consumption by more than 20 percent within 4 weeks of operation.

ecoDriver Schools also impacts what is taught in the classroom and empowers students. Drawing upon his experience as a teacher, TR Control's Taylor created a curriculum component, so teachers can engage students in various subjects by importing data into Microsoft Office applications. The result is that students can more easily see the relevance of their studies in "real life" scenarios. Practical activities, such as adopting "green" practices on Wednesdays and turning off lights when rooms aren't in use, teach that collective change is only possible through individual decisions. Each student can choose to make a difference or to maintain the status quo.

"The pupils have a real sense of concern about the environment, and they want to effect change by reducing emissions," says Taylor. "Schools have banded together before to form 'eco-schools communities,' but now they have a dedicated technology system to help drive real change in a collaborative way. ecoDriver provides the foundation for sustainable development, and also provides a channel for the enthusiasm of teachers and pupils who want to make a difference."

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