



Empowering digital workspace

ESG Case Study

Leading independent Managed Service Provider, Espria, embeds sustainability as a competitive differentiator and a source of revenue and profit.



This has been a fantastic opportunity to embed the right values and culture across our Espria family, to support our future expansion and growth plans, and to showcase, through our ESG credentials, our commitment to our clients, our partners and the planet.



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Espria (formerly Mode Solutions), a leading UK independent Print and Comms managed service provider (MSP), backed by investors, BlackRock, acquired eacs in June 2022 to grow its business' service offering. To harmonise the culture and business practices across the organisation, Espria used a comprehensive ESG framework to identify the gap between 'as-is' status and the longer-term sustainability ambitions of the company. With the support of Sustainable Advantage, Espria defined their ambitions using the Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) Value Creation approach. With a sharp focus on ESG levers, 62 topics were analysed to identify opportunities to improve processes and overall ESG performance. Subsequent steps taken by Espria have led to a number of positive outcomes such as the augmentation of a strong company culture, the establishment of a robust ESG strategy, lower debt servicing costs, new clients and revenue generation opportunities.



The Story

Like many companies, Espria understands their role in and the importance of sustainability to help meet global commitments such as Net Zero, whilst also providing a catalyst for growth and risk reduction across the organisation. This, coupled with investors who wanted to see measurable sustainability improvements, informed how core business processes, developing a common culture and integrating ESG into its governance would be manifested.



Strategic ESG Partner

Critical to success was the identification and commissioning of the right independent strategic partner to undertake a thorough analysis and help Espria produce a robust action plan to prepare the business for future growth.

Espria engaged Sustainable Advantage due to their extensive expertise in helping clients with ESG transformation strategies. Sustainable Advantage have a track record of working collaboratively with businesses to identify actionable targets to accelerate their climate and sustainability achievements; this experience was a key factor in the board's decision to partner with them.



Diagnostic phase

Sustainable Advantage were engaged for a six-week diagnostic study of Espria. This involved a comprehensive inside-out and outside-in analysis, engaging with key stakeholders and reviewing core documentation to identify which facets of sustainability were materially important to customers, employees, investors, regulators and other stakeholders.

Collaborative workshops

Through a series of collaborative client workshops, Sustainable Advantage undertook a discovery phase with stakeholders across the business to look at the following core areas:

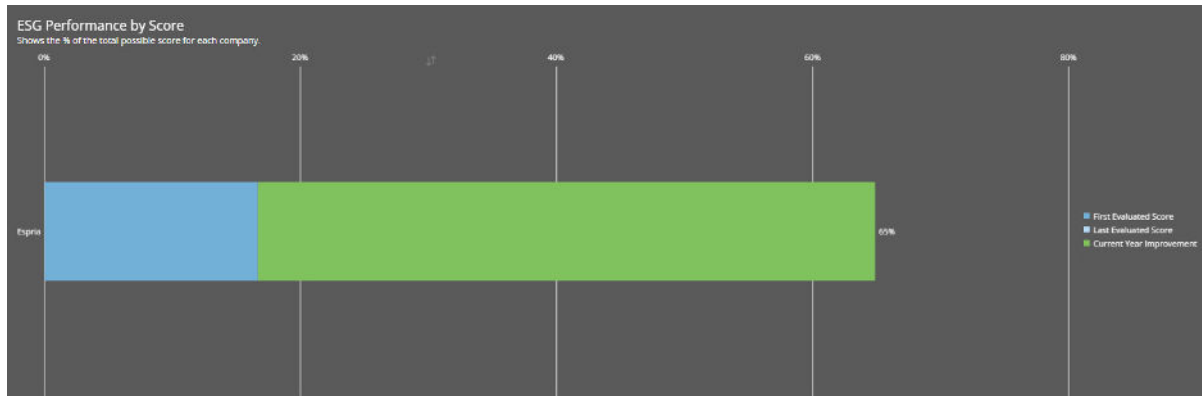


In these workshops specialist analysts took a deep dive into what was in place for each area. Following the workshops, an ESG scorecard was produced with an assessment of current performance, along with a sound understanding of the actions required to build on the foundations already in place.

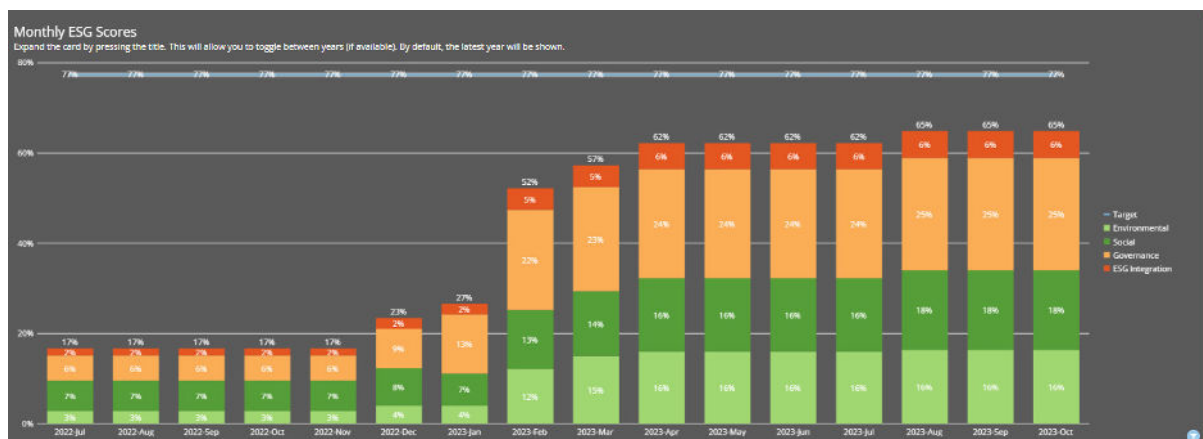
The process determined the current status of each side of the business and benchmarked each area against competitors to highlight where Espria was demonstrating excellent practices, where they matched performance or were perhaps falling behind in certain areas.

As part of the process, Espria also agreed to work collaboratively with Sustainable Advantage to build a client-facing portal that would enable the business to track, monitor and measure ongoing progress.

Bar chart showing the Espria initial ESG (blue bar) and subsequent progress made (green bar) over the last year



This dashboard bar chart illustrates month-on-month ESG scores and tracks progress since the first review in July 2022



Based on the report and recommendations, Espria were able to quickly achieve the following:

Outputs



Understanding of the ESG gaps in the business



Sustainability strategy to support carbon reduction and integration



Carbon assessed, carbon neutral and carbon reduced footprint certification across all sites



Developed and embedded set of ESG policies and procedures

Outcomes



Revenue generation and value creation



Robust and comprehensive ESG strategy to support future growth aspirations



Reduce carbon emissions across the business to achieve Net Zero in longer term



Build right culture and employee behaviour

As well as these initiatives, Espria plan to launch others as the company transforms the way it operates. With stakeholder value being created and maximised, Espria is in a far better position to respond to stakeholder demands from investors, clients and employees, as it creates a resilient business ready for future changes in the regulatory landscape.

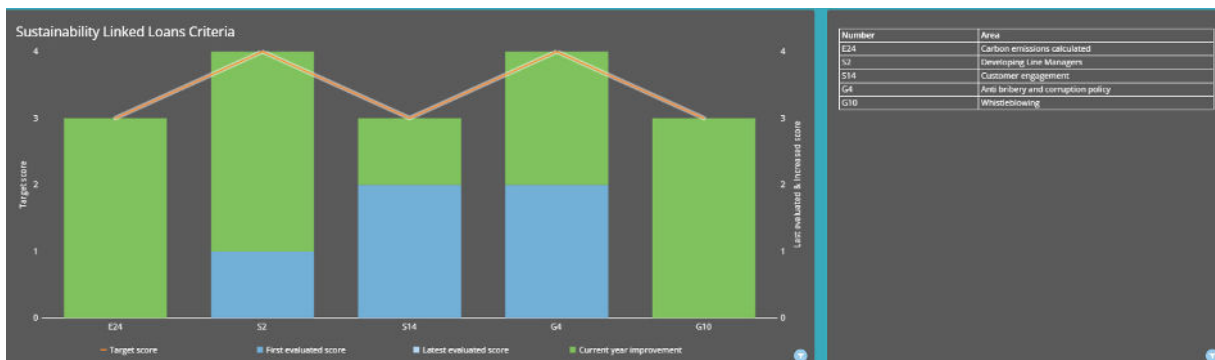
Meeting investor expectations

By working with Sustainable Advantage, Espria was able to increase stakeholder value through ESG performance by creating a bespoke KPI ESG tracker which highlights the top 5 ESG metrics designated by BlackRock.

At every quarter, Espria has taken a snapshot of progress towards achieving these KPIs and by drilling into each Priority Action area, BlackRock is able to ascertain:

- the Espria person responsible for this action,
- what they need to do to reach the target score,
- any progress notes and evidence to support the outcome.

This graph contains the five priority targets for reporting into BlackRock, one of the key investors in Espria



High quality data is crucial to the work that we do at Sustainable Advantage. Through engagement and collaboration with Espria, we have evolved the ESG Performance Tracker to measure and report ESG data and KPIs in real time. This means that our clients can effectively provide their stakeholders with up-to-date sustainability performance, which is unique in the industry.





We are delighted with the progress made to date but fully appreciate we're not there yet. There is still a long road ahead of us but with steady progress we will reach our destination.



Second year scoring

In August 2023, Sustainable Advantage re-engaged with Espria to carry out a second ESG Review. Espria were able to provide evidence of significant progress made including activities, processes and policies implemented since the initial scoring. For this second review, Espria achieved 63% which places the company in the top banding, classifying Espria as 'ESG Excellent'.

Current ESG performance scores and targets:

ESG Area	Assessment August 2023	September 2024 Target
ENVIRONMENTAL	56%	73%
SOCIAL	67%	92%
SUPPLY CHAIN	54%	71%
GOVERNANCE	71%	88%
ESG INTEGRATION	58%	83%
Total Score	63%	83%

Some key highlights noted in the review are below:

- Sites managed by Espria are on **100% renewable energy contracts**
- There is a Green Champion in place and **regular communication** to employees on **reducing energy and waste**
- Espria is a **Carbon Neutral** business
- A **Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Plan** is in place
- A **gender pay gap report** is published quarterly which demonstrates **fair pay** across the business
- A designated **ESG committee** meets every 2 weeks and **ESG training** is conducted with employees
- The company has **excellent Governance** policies in place, including a policy review management system
- **ESG risks** to the business have been identified and a **Business Continuity Plan** has been developed
- **ESG data** is collected, monitored and **targets** have been set against which monthly progress is tracked
- An **ESG Strategy** has been published
- After an excellent engagement period, Espria has now been set a further series of actions to undertake over the next 12 months which align with a new target score of 83%.