

US Buyers Commit to Green Procurement

By Allie Anderson

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Purchasers in the US are continuing to "buy green" despite the economic downturn, an annual survey of environmental purchasing reveals.

Of the 580 buyers surveyed, 56 per cent said their procurement standards last year were more sustainable than before. Furthermore, the vast majority - 83 per cent - predict green buying will continue to rise over the next two years.

This was despite most buyers arguing that green products cost more, and also reporting "no discernable difference" in terms of performance between them and their conventional alternatives.

An SM100 poll last month also revealed that purchasers are not getting "significant" savings from sustainable procurement (News, 27 August).

The US survey, by environmental marketing agency TerraChoice, questioned buyers about the effects of the economy on green purchasing. It also explored factors that drive an organisation's general purchasing decisions.

Performance and price were the two most important factors for all organisations, while environmental considerations ranked fourth.

However, 80 per cent of buyers whose organisations have implemented a green procurement policy cited "commitment to sustainability" as the primary motivation.

Scott McDougall, president and CEO of TerraChoice said: "There is a conventional wisdom that green concerns go away in tighter economic times. This year's study proves this false. In fact, greener purchasing continues to accelerate."