

PAKMAN AWARDS 2018: INNOVATION IN WASTE MANAGEMENT



CITATION FROM CUPPRINT, Ennis County Clare

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THE INNOVATION

Ennis-based cup manufacturer CupPrint was the first paper cup manufacturer in the world to license the groundbreaking EarthCoating® technology and start producing fully recyclable paper cups under the reCUP™ brand.



reCUP™ is the only paper cup in production in Europe that is fully recyclable within existing recycling infrastructure, features 43% less plastic than traditional paper cups and is manufactured using the same equipment at full line speeds, as standard paper cups.

Using the reCUP™ has the potential to divert thousands of tonnes of paper cups waste from landfill. Many operators in Ireland are already using the reCUP™, responding to customer demands for sustainable alternatives.



Although reCUP™ looks the same and works the same as plastic coated paper cups, it is coated on the inside with EarthCoating®, a mineralised resin barrier lining with less plastic, designed to be processed through standard paper recycling streams and equipment just like uncoated paperboards. reCUP™ fibres can be recycled up to seven times and are therefore a valuable material for recyclers to collect and recycle into new paper.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

CupPrint is the first licensee of the EarthCoating® technology in Europe and demonstrated visionary thinking in working with California-based Smart Planet technologies to bring this technology to cup manufacturing. General Manager Terry Fox anticipated the demand for recyclable and sustainable alternatives to standard paper cups more than two years ago when concerns began to emerge about the quantities of paper cups going to landfill. Terry recognised that cup manufacturing had to change and was determined that it would not impact his business. CupPrint since 2012 had invested 4% of turnover in R&D projects with the clear majority being in new sustainable materials. CupPrint and Smart Planet Technologies formed a partnership in 2016 to bring EarthCoating® technology to the European markets. Although a successful formula of this new recyclable coating was available in the US, it did

not pass the European Food contact regulations. CupPrint worked directly with Smart Planet to make the necessary adjustments to bring this product in line with EU food contact regulations.

Once the technology was tested and trialled in the factory and was proven to work in the downstream supply chain for recyclers and reprocessors, CupPrint needed to plan for increased capacity, anticipating a surge in demand for the reCUP™. This led to significant investment in new technology, new production facilities and a doubling of capacity that came on stream in 2018, as the result of a 10 million Euro investment programme in partnership with Allied Irish Bank. In further development, CupPrint entered into a joint venture with global paper manufacturer Huhtamaki Group in June 2018, opening up global markets and new sectors to the CupPrint proposition.



Minister for Jobs and Enterprise Pat Breen, AIB Bank and CupPrint team turning first sod on extension.

FLAWLESS EXECUTION

CupPrint commenced manufacture of the reCUP™ in October 2017, with initial orders from Applegreen, Butlers and Bewleys. The significance of using EarthCoating® technology is that it works exactly the same on the production run as producing standard paper cups, so CupPrint did not have to change the way it produced the cups. Costs are similar and production times remain the same - all that changes is the resin used for the lining of the paper cup.



L-R Mary Dilger, Sales Manager, CupPrint, Minister Pat Breen, General Manager, Terry Fox



Terry Fox shows Minister Breen the CupPrint production line

Production of the reCUP™ has grown rapidly with one million cups produced in March 2018, three million in June and an impressive 10 million in July. Through the marketing efforts of CupPrint, which has included internal sales briefings, external networking and briefings, social media and a new PR campaign, demand from customers in Ireland and the UK is growing exponentially and CupPrint's European office, based in Stuttgart, is also experiencing growing demand for the reCUP™.

Cup Print reaches million reCUPs milestone

Irish coffee cup manufacturer Cup Print has announced it has produced one million recyclable reCUPs.



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By Waqas Qureshi | 17 August 2018

Recyclable reCUP reaches 10 million milestone

Production of the recyclable reCUP paper cup reached 10 million cups last month by CupPrint.



DELIVERABLE RESULTS



The number of customers using reCUPs has grown significantly over the past 10 months with some major brand names adopting it as their cup of choice.

Leading Irish forecourt retailer Applegreen switched to reCUPs in the summer of 2018.

Conor Lucey, head of operations at Applegreen Plc said: "At Applegreen we are extremely passionate about reducing our impact on the environment and we are delighted to be able to make the switch and play our part in reducing non-recyclable waste."

Ireland's premier chocolate business, Dublin based Butlers, also switched to the reCUP™ for its 20 Butlers Chocolate Cafes. It intends to roll out supply to its international stores as soon as possible.

Michelle McBride, Retail Director at Butlers said: "We're constantly looking at how to reduce our impact on the planet and have every area of our operation under scrutiny. We've been looking at paper cups and trying to find a solution that works for the environment, our customers and our business. We're delighted to find the solution right here in Ireland as our new recyclable paper cups are being made for us by CupPrint in Ennis, County Clare. Switching cups to the 100% recyclable cup fits perfectly with our sustainability strategy and our ethical principles."



Production of the reCUP™ topped 10 million cups in July 2018 and continues to grow as more and more customers and distributors add the reCUP™ to their portfolio.

Leading UK distributor Bunzl Catering Supplies has listed the reCUP™ and sees it as a key element in its offering to customers. Tony Sullivan, Purchasing Director for Bunzl Catering Services said: "Stocking the reCUP™ enables us to offer our customers another choice in the quest to improve coffee cup recycling and reduce plastics. Many of our customers, from hotels and golf clubs to stadia and coffee retailers are currently reviewing their plastic footprint and the reCUP™ offers them a positive alternative to standard paper cups for situations where paper cups are still the best choice."

Bunzl has recently supported the reCUP™ with a blog on its website:

<https://www.bunzl catering.co.uk/innovative-recup-tops-10-million-production/>

SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECT GOING FORWARDS

CupPrint anticipates the demand for reCUP™ to continue to grow exponentially and sees the recent Joint Venture with Huhtamaki HJV opening up new markets and sectors in Europe and beyond. This will fuel the growth of the business and drive its expansion - creating more jobs and leading-edge innovation driven from its Ennis, County Clare headquarters.

The partnership with Huhtamaki has also opened up scope for 'closed loop' recycling of paper cups in Ireland as trials of recycling the reCUP™ at the Huhtamaki reprocessing plant in Lurgan have proved positive and the business is hoping that it will shortly be able to direct customers to this facility where the reCUPS can be efficiently recycled.

Further, Huhtamaki Recycling in Lurgan, which recycles 27,000 tonnes annually of paper waste from Ireland, have qualified the reCUP™ as a genuine source of usable recyclable paper and will accept this product in the normal paper waste stream. To put this in context there is about 3,500 tonnes of paper cup waste, every year from the Irish market. This facility could theoretically handle all of Ireland's paper cup waste and return them to the market as new paper products.

Huhtamaki Lurgan already purchases recyclable material from the likes of Panda Waste and Thorntons who have agreed to collect recap in the normal waste recycling stream.

This facility it must also be noted, is similar to most facilities and does not have any specialist equipment for dealing with the regular PE coated cups.



THE FUTURE

One final development is that technology has now been tested on the fastest cup machines in the world at 300 cups per minute and process just like regular PE cup material. This is hugely significant as it means that this technology could very easily become ubiquitous within the next few years as the production costs associated with this material in mass volume will actually be even slightly less than the current non-recyclable PE cup material. The reason for this is that the coating is 46% calcium carbonate which costs 10 times less than PE.

Bewley's reCup™ going through Lurgan Recycling

CupPrint

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