



**PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- Worked to verify the recyclability of product packaging in WM's material management infrastructure.
- Provided market and consumer behavior analysis regarding the target product.
- Offered advice on metrics commonly used to measure sustainability in packaging.

## Packaging Recyclability Analysis

An increased consumer demand for sustainable goods and services, advances in material technology and in some cases legislation continue to drive the sustainable packaging industry, which is predicted to be a \$244 billion market by 2018, according to report by Smithers Pira.

An increasing number of manufacturing firms are seeking to create product packaging that optimizes the use of renewable and recycled source materials. Manufacturers are beginning to realize that in order to successfully create sustainable product packaging, they must take a holistic approach to the design and fully understand how their packaging will be recovered or redeployed at its end of use.

### Customer Challenge

With these principles in mind, Ecologic Brands, a manufacturer of environmentally benign packaging for products in food and retail, approached Waste Management's Sustainability Services to test how its packaging products behave in typical collection and diversion infrastructures. Ecologic's goal was product packing design comprised of mostly recyclable and compostable materials. The goal of this study was to assess the recyclability and recoverability of its product packaging. In addition, Ecologic wanted assistance in gathering data on consumer response and interaction with their packaging products.

### Waste Management Sustainability Plan

Waste Management's Sustainability Services team of consultants worked with Ecologic to analyze the recyclability and recoverability of their product packaging through a two-step process. Consultants coordinated efforts with Ecologic and local Waste Management material recovery facilities (MRFs) to conduct a full performance assessment on how the product packaging sub-components behaved under typical material collection and recovery processes. First, consultants conducted compaction testing in WM waste collection trucks. The packaging was then tested in local MRFs to get an understanding as to how the materials would separate and if they would be reclaimed for recycling. Additionally, Waste Management consultants researched material reclamation markets to evaluate whether the sub-components of the packaging product would be readily accepted for reuse in the secondary markets.

For the second phase of the assessment, Waste Management consultants employed a consumer survey to forecast how consumers would use and discard the packaging.

### The Green Outcome

The resulting analysis provided Ecologic with valuable insight on the recyclability of their packaging for products as well as public perception of the packaging's recyclability. In addition, the survey results provided marketing executives with valuable insight into how their target customers reacted to their product line. Waste Management's Sustainability Services team of consultants continues to work with Ecologic on their product life-cycle analysis, a key component of sustainable manufacturing.

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