

SUSTAINABLE TIMES



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Packaging
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FLEXIBLE PACKAGING ENHANCING THE IDENTIFICATION AND SORTING

Consumers often ask why flexible packaging cannot be put into their curbside bin even if the package is properly designed for recycling. There are many reasons, but the primary fact is that most recycling facilities do not have the proper equipment necessary to sort the flexible materials from the various streams including paper, cardboard, rigid plastics, and glass. These flexible materials end up in either

the wrong material stream causing contamination or jam up equipment resulting in downtime needed to remove the material. Fortunately, there have been a few pilot demonstration projects that have proven that investments in the proper equipment makes it possible to separate flexibles from the rest of the recycle stream.

In Europe, a collaborative has been conducting experiments with a unique

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scanner technology on the recycling conveyor. This scanner is programmed to read digital watermarks on the packaging as a means of identifying different packaging materials.

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FLEXIBLE PACKAGING

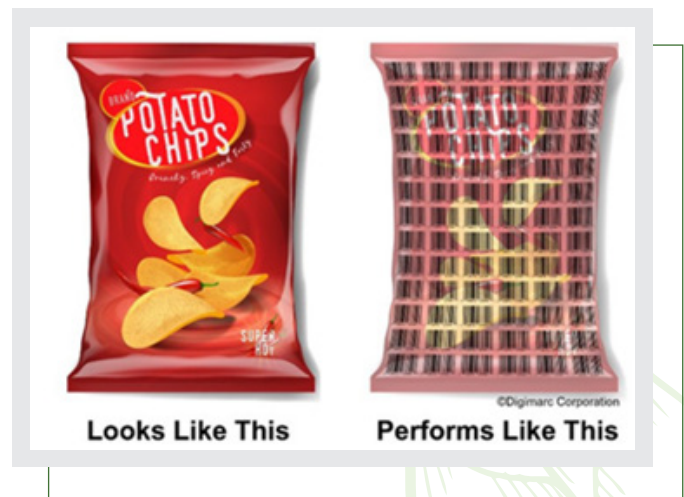
ENHANCING THE IDENTIFICATION AND SORTING CONT.

WHAT IS DIGITAL WATERMARKING?

Digital watermarking is a unique technology where a hidden watermark is printed on the package during the traditional printing process. This watermark is unique as it is printed approximately every square inch around the graphic image roughly the size of a postage stamp. This watermark provides enhanced functionality where a camera or scanner can be used to interact with the package at almost any angle. It can offer the functionality of a QR code to take the user to a website, provide a coupon, play a video clip, as well as numerous additional options. It can also be used by the scanner at checkout of a retail store instead of the traditional UPC code.

In Europe, this technology is being used in a demonstration project to identify and separate different streams of material in a project called

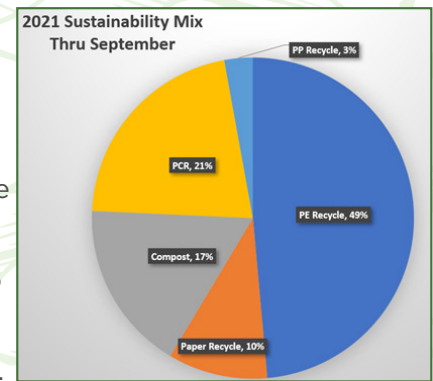
Holy Grail 2.0. Because the watermark is repeated every square inch of the package, a scanner in the recycling conveyor can identify and separate the materials with greater accuracy. Over the next several months a pilot will be conducted in the City of Copenhagen. If successful, the digital watermark program could be introduced to stores shelves in Denmark, France, and Germany by the first half of 2022 for industrial scale-trials.



SUSTAINABLE PROJECT ACTIVITY

Many brands have targeted 2025 as the year where all packaging will be redesigned to be recyclable, reusable, or compostable and time is quickly passing. Do you ever wonder what sustainable activities are being pursued by others? Recently, APC conducted a review of current sustainable packaging activity through September and the results were interesting. Although recyclable packaging continues to be the most popular strategy, we are seeing year over year shifts in the types of projects our customers are pursuing. In particular, post-

consumer recycled (PCR) content packaging and design for compost are both seeing heightened activity. The rationale for this shift is not yet clearly understood but there are numerous market factors that may be driving some of this activity as the pressure is on to develop sustainable packaging solutions.





SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING LAUNCH WITH POST-CONSUMER RECYCLED (PCR)

BEACHBODY SHAKEOLOGY® POUCH



In a recent product launch, Beachbody debuted this cookies & creamy stand-up pouch to the market. The launch of a stand-up pouch isn't new for Beachbody, but this pouch is novel as post-consumer recycled content (PCR) has been included in the

materials used to manufacture the pouch.

For those of you unfamiliar with PCR, the source of these materials are products which have served their useful life including products such as soda / water bottles, milk jugs, and detergent bottles. These materials are collected, sorted, cleaned, and

transformed into pellets which are introduced into the film manufacturing process reducing the need for virgin feedstocks. The addition of PCR content offers numerous benefits such as lower carbon emissions and energy consumption.

This pouch is a flexographically printed, multi-material lamination of PET, MetPET, and LLDPE produced at APC's Story City, IA facility. This pouch is unique in that it incorporates post-consumer recycled content in all three of the film layers totaling up to 45% overall certified through SCS Global. The addition of PCR content results in a 23.5% reduction in carbon emissions and 39.8% less energy as compared to the virgin laminate. Based upon the annual production quantities of this product, the savings is equivalent to a carbon reduction equivalent to 80,000 passenger vehicle miles and energy consumption reduction of 211 barrels of oil.

UPCOMING WEBINAR

APC will be sponsoring a webinar with Packaging World on Thursday, October 28 from 10-11AM CT and invites you to join. A description of the topic is as follows:

There are numerous ways to enhance the sustainability of your packaging, but the rules continue to change. When considering new sustainable packaging developments, are there many safe bets that put your brand in a good position to ensure there are no potential concerns for litigation or consumer mistrust? Source reduction, design for recycle, inclusion of post-

consumer recycled content or bio content, or design for compost are all potential options that can be considered, but in this environment is there a preferred option? This webinar will provide a deeper dive on post-consumer recycled content as a sustainable option to consider and help illustrate why this may prove to be a safe bet as you consider a strategy. Register via the following link:

<https://www.packworld.com/home/webinar/21734839/getting-it-right-the-first-time-pcr-content-packaging>