

Lauterbach Group – Waste Materials Recycling

Challenge

Lauterbach Group, located in Sussex WI, is a flexographic printer that produces labels and tags serving the industries of direct-response mail marketing, packaged goods, and brand authentication/security.

Lauterbach Group has minimized operational and waste costs by reducing raw materials use, reusing waste materials, and recycling. Lauterbach Group looked to minimize raw material usage through process efficiencies, generating less solid waste and by finding alternative options for the disposal of waste papers and films.

Strategy

Early in 2010, Lauterbach Group upgraded its environmental recycling program to reduce the amount of solid waste materials sent to landfills. They started working with their clients, suppliers and alternative waste solution experts to reduce waste and generate alternative recycling strategies that are directly aligned with the Lauterbach Productivity System.

Lauterbach Group selected Channeled Resources Group based on corporate policies and beliefs consistent with the Lauterbach Productivity System consistent with environmentally friendly and sustainable solutions. The two companies are partnering for environmentally friendly waste management alternatives. Initially Lauterbach Group's recycling efforts focused on standard recycling efforts, i.e., office paper, magazines, aluminum, plastic drinking bottles, wooden pallets and corrugated boxes. Working together, the two companies have examined and reviewed the waste stream from the volume level impact with the plan to reduce,



Recycling sorting bins at Lauterbach Group

reuse, or recycle the high volume waste and work to eliminate all waste. The idea is to direct landfill waste into consumable goods. For example, Lauterbach Group's metallic foils waste is purchased by Channeled Resources and resold to countries in the Middle East where metallic foils are woven into fabric, further creating ornamental and decorative looks used to make jewelry and hair accessories. Countries in Asia buy liner waste to apply pressure sensitive materials directly for reuse. Greenwood Fuels obtains the adhesive back paper waste creating commercial heating pellets. The adhesive back paper contains petroleum-based materials aiding the pellets to deliver 11,000 Btu/lb on average that carries a thermal capacity

similar to that of coal. Channeled Resources works directly with Greenwood Fuels to reduce the Lauterbach Group's landfill waste by 30-40%. Additionally, plate making wastes add-value to the fuels-blending process and reduces Lauterbach Group's plating process to a zero landfill waste. This reduced landfill waste by an additional 3-5%.

Lauterbach Group works with various clients, suppliers, and manufactures to reclaim packaging materials for cost effective reuse and reclaim solutions. Wood pallets, specialty boxes, packaging materials and plastic cores plugs (used to maintain the integrity of the cores during shipment) are reclaimed for reuse, reducing cost and creating revenue. Lauterbach Group receives credit back for reclaimed wooded pallets from a primary paper supplier, no costs are associated with freight as reclaiming occurs via back haul to the source. Internal reuse, reclaimed pallets, and recycling efforts for broken or non-usable pallets generated a zero landfill waste. That equates to 100% of reused, reclaimed, and/or recycled wood pallets. Lauterbach Group even addressed quality concerns with reusing of critical packaging materials by recognizing that critical packaging materials have a limited life span (time of intended use) and established methods to control reuse prior to recycling.

Results

The Lauterbach Group has made significant headway toward its eventual goal of zero landfill waste. The current amount of waste being recycled is 70%, compared to the fourth quarter of 2009 when it was 13%. Partnering with Channeled Resources has proven to be effective to the Lauterbach Group's initiatives towards zero landfill waste, while reducing, reusing, and recycling has actually created revenue and reduced the costs associated with removal of solid waste.

Waste management makes sense for the Lauterbach Group. They save money sending adhesive backed waste through Channeled Resources receiving \$40 to \$50/ton compared to sending it to landfill and paying \$80/ton. The Lauterbach Group's zero landfill goal has actually created revenue through reclaiming, reusing, and redirecting or selling waste. This is a 40% reduction in costs associated with waste management

Pat Nienhaus, Director of Operations, says that a number of factors contribute to the Group's recycling success. First, it was a matter of asking all the right questions. The solution is out there somewhere, it just may not be apparent during the day-to-day standard operations. Second, the company has made great efforts to raise awareness and provide training among employees. With everybody involved, Lauterbach Group has been able to streamline processes and achieve continual improvement. Recycling efforts have had direct cost benefits to the company, not to mention the global benefits of reducing waste sent to landfill.

Dolores Corcoran, Productivity Systems Manager, Lauterbach Group: dcorcoran@LauterbachGroup.com

Pat Nienhaus, Director of Operations, Lauterbach Group: pnienhaus@LauterbachGroup.com

Channeled Resources Group: <http://www.channeledresources.com>

Greenwood Fuels: <http://greenwoodfuels.com>

Tom Eggert, *Executive Director*
975 University Ave, Madison, WI 53706

608.267.2761
sustain@bus.wisc.edu

