

A Leading Tobacco Manufacturer's Journey to Sustainability

When a prominent manufacturer in the tobacco industry was acquired by a company with ambitious environmental goals, the need for a new, stronger sustainability strategy became apparent. But while this manufacturer set out with the simple intention of improving their environmental footprint, their partnership with Reworld™ proved to create even more value than they had initially expected.

As with many businesses, the challenges that impeded their sustainability goals stemmed from a variety of areas, but there were three concerns that stood out above the rest, which pertained to strategy, costs and byproducts.

Three Inherent Challenges

While the original tobacco company had a number of operational standards in place to ensure the quality of their product, they didn't have any well-established sustainability strategies to account for the waste produced from those operations. At least, they didn't have anything robust enough to satisfy the incremental targets and long-slatted environmental goals put forth by their new parent company.

What's more, is even if they had had a solid plan in place, they weren't sure how they could have made it work from a financial perspective.

The reality was that dealing with multiple vendors to manage their sustainable waste needs and verify their downstream impacts would be very costly and time-consuming. The price for just hauling materials offsite was on the rise too, exacerbated by the distance of their facility from a feasible disposal

option. That said, they weren't entirely certain of what options they even had to begin with.

The process of manufacturing chewing tobacco and dip—two major product lines within their business—produces dust that contains high concentrations of zinc. Zinc, though an essential nutrient, is a type of heavy metal that can be toxic in large quantities and certain forms. It's because of that aspect, that a significant portion of the tobacco manufacturer's waste stream was challenging to manage, and especially limiting under tighter sustainability parameters.

The tobacco manufacturer had a lot to account for without a lot of clear direction.

Sustainability is expensive without the right partner. Using multiple vendors, managing logistics and investigating downstream compliance can be costly.

They needed a sustainability partner that could understand their circumstances and work around them to deliver impactful results.

Partnering Up for Success

After looking around, the manufacturer chose Reworld™ as their waste management partner due to their unique position within the market.

Reworld™ had a long history of experience and expertise within sustainable waste management; they had a large network of facilities, assets and industry relationships; and they had diverse, scalable and end-to-end solutions. It seemed they were the right fit in a lot of ways.

And they demonstrated that they were. After working closely with the manufacturer to understand their unique needs, Reworld™ helped them develop a roadmap with clear, realistic sustainability goals that aligned with their parent company's greater plan. By establishing several key performance indicators (KPIs), the manufacturer could also measure their progress and ensure they stayed the course as they put their strategy into action.

Part of this took the form of tailored invoicing. The Reworld™ customer service team fully adapted their invoicing process to meet the manufacturer's requirements. This involved creating individual invoices, tracking tonnage reports and offering insights into the business's waste streams and waste management processes—services that have since been enhanced through the added features and flexibility of the Reworld Customer Gateway™ that exists today.

On the cost side of matters, particularly as it pertained to vendors and waste transportation, Reworld™ handled that as well.

Though the sustainable solutions provider was able to manage nearly all areas of the manufacturer's waste needs in-house, Reworld™ developed a strong partnership with third-party haulers to move the waste to their nearest facility. Although this collaboration was a complex arrangement, Reworld™ managed it entirely, taking the pressure and paperwork off of the tobacco manufacturer's hands and identifying cost-effective ways to reliably get the job done.

Clear goals and tangible KPIs are essential to ensuring a sustainability strategy is focused, measurable, adaptive and ultimately, effective.



Today, such an undertaking is even more streamlined and transparent because it can be done entirely through Reworld™. ReMove™, the business's logistics solution, is not only backed by an in-house fleet of more than 2,000 fully licensed carriers, it is also supported by dynamic tracking capabilities, thorough licensing management, and diverse reporting and insights on container utilization, hauling efficiencies and other key operations.

But it was the sustainability partner's thermomechanical treatment facilities that solved for the tobacco manufacturer's zinc-rich dust and other post-recycled, unsalvageable materials.

By utilizing the facility's energy recovery technology, the company was able to divert their waste from landfill disposal and generate renewable, carbon-negative energy in the process that could be returned to the grid to power local homes and businesses.

Exceeding Expectations

The partnership between this tobacco manufacturer and Reworld™ yielded significant positive changes across the board.

In terms of environmental performance, the manufacturer exceeded their carbon footprint and waste reduction goals, eventually moving past their initial targets and achieving 100% diversion from landfill.

But this strategic partnership with Reworld™ led to an improved operational performance too. They became more conscious of their resource use and waste generation. They began to think differently, paying closer attention to the gaps in their business

and identifying innovative ways to improve.

Today, they continue to do the same, working closely with the Reworld™ solutions team to innovate and perpetually advance their sustainability goals in more efficient and cost-effective ways. Some current efforts include exploring new solutions, like composting and alternative engineered fuel creation through ReKiln™. Others involve refining existing waste reduction, reuse and recycling strategies.

In any case, this characterization of continuous improvement illustrates the transformative impact the right partnerships can have.

Through their collaboration with Reworld™, this leading tobacco manufacturer has not only met, but exceeded their environmental targets, setting a benchmark for the industry and an ever-elevating standard for themselves. As they continue to innovate and adapt, they also build toward the smarter, more sustainable future many hope to realize.

Sustainability isn't a destination. It's perpetual motion with the intention to do better and be better than yesterday. It's a cycle of continuous improvement.

