

Use sustainability to get a marketplace edge for medical packaging

The medical waste stream is 30% to 50% packaging. The waste issue is so strong that major hospital groups are evaluating sustainable packaging as part of the purchasing process. They expect to see cost saving, better regulatory compliance, and enhanced corporate social responsibility from sustainable packaging. And, they want it done right. Packagers who respond can gain a marketplace advantage. If you want to develop an effective strategy, consider these steps:

Develop a mission statement for sustainable packaging

No matter where you are along the packaging supply chain, make it part of your company environmental policy. Here are key actions to take:

- Get senior management to buy in
- Make it part of standard operating procedures
- Make sure it is a focus in new product development
- Work collaboratively with other functional disciplines to support the strategy across your organization

***A Management
Checklist from the
Intellectual Capital
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Develop a legislative benchmark and compliance strategy

Understand the legislative requirement in all global locations where you sell products and packaging. Set action plans focused on compliance. Work with regulatory bodies and industry groups to develop sound legislative policy and positions. That's especially true for areas where your organization anticipates future requirements.

Engage the voice of your customer

Understand the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities within the challenges of waste management. Do that for your organization, and do it for your customers. Know their waste management processes, trends and challenges. Understand

present and future direction. That gives you the basis for developing effective strategies to better meet these evolving needs. In doing so, you enhance the opportunities to increase revenue, lower cost and provide the basis for good corporate citizenship.

☑ Build objective benchmarks on Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) modeling

Be concerned about the perception of “greenwashing”—non-legitimate labeling and marketing claims. Use Life Cycle Analysis models to support your efforts. They help you focus on:

- source reduction and sustainable package material choices
- identify sustainable manufacturing processes and equipment
- impact to the supply chain

☑ Eliminate or change materials that create environmental deficiencies in the medical waste

Look to replace PVC and plasticizers. Use materials that are inert or non-harmful in common waste management technologies such as landfill, incineration, chemical disinfection, and microwave systems.

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