

CASE STUDY: EVERY CAN COUNTS

Every Can Counts aims to make it easier to recycle cans outside of the home and is working to increase the number of RotG can collection points in public access areas and workplaces across the UK.



Key facts

- The Every Can Counts (ECC) programme, managed by Alupro, provides organisations with units for can collection and is designed to sit alone or alongside recycling on the go (RotG) schemes already in place.
- ECC provides an all-encompassing communications programme to support organisations in promoting the scheme.
- In 2011, 51 million drinks cans were recycled via the scheme.

Location

The Every Can Counts programme is a partnership between drinks can manufacturers/fillers and the metal packaging recycling industry. It aims to help people recycle drinks cans when they are at work, university or simply when they are out shopping, at the beach, or attending festivals and events.

It aims to bring recycling to the front of the minds of people when they are away from home: for example, at work, university or when they are out shopping, at the beach, or attending festivals and events.

To date, nearly 700 organisations around the UK are registered with the programme. It is operating at over 1,900 individual sites; while the number of ECC branded collection points is approaching 5000.

Rationale

The original focus of the Every Can Counts campaign, developed by the Aluminium Packaging Recycling Organisation Alupro, was to test the barriers and drivers to running successful recycling programmes for drinks cans outside the home in workplaces and university campuses. In 2010, the focus was widened to incorporate promotion of Recycling on the Go.

Alupro develop, manage and implement the ECC programme on behalf of the funding organisations: the Beverage Can Makers Europe (BCME), Can Pack UK, Novelis UK, Tata Steel, the UK Can Makers, and drinks brand Red bull. It is supported the Waste & Resources Action Programme (WRAP).

Scheme overview

The programme, managed by Alupro, provides organisations with containers for can collection and is designed to sit alone or alongside RotG schemes already in place. In addition, the campaign provides an all-encompassing communications and behaviour change programme, including the provision of materials to organisations to help set up and promote the ECC scheme.

The scheme currently operates in a number of RotG locations such as universities, beach locations, events and festivals and shopping centres.

Planning

Once an organisation has contacted Alupro and registered for the ECC scheme, support is provided to help set up the scheme and install the RotG units.

Containers

The ECC scheme can provide an organisation with boxes for the collection of cans (Figure 1). Typically these are more suited to indoor locations while the can compactors (displayed on title page) are suited to outdoor locations, or areas where they are expected to have a high level of use e.g. shopping centres.

Durham University was the first university to sign up to the campaign in 2009 and is continuing to set up more recycling points. Throughout the University premises the ECC recycling boxes and communications materials are displayed prominently by vending machines, in retail areas and communal areas.



Another option is for organisations to simply rebrand existing RotG units with the ECC communications materials, but still benefit from being involved in the campaign.

Case study evidence has been amassed by Alupro to show that the provision of branded can collection schemes heightens the awareness of recycling, and promotes an uplift in the level of all materials collected for recycling (plastic bottles, paper etc).

Figure 1 Every Can Counts workplace can collection box.

Table 1 Details of ECC containers

Number of containers	Unlimited
Type of container	Box or 'Ecopacteur' can compactor
Container capacity (litres)	150-200 cans per box, or 700 compacted cans
Cost per container	ECC starter pack – including 3 boxes, 6 liner bags and communications material £12.50. 150 plastic liners £18.00 Ten recycling boxes with lids £26.95 Ecopacteur can compactor £850–£1000
Waste streams segregated	Drinks cans
Special features	Branded with ECC campaign logo, packs are delivered with posters The Ecopacteur can compactor only accept cans, reducing contamination.

Signage

The can collection boxes feature the Recycle Now branding, as well as the ECC logo.

Collection and storage arrangements

In the majority of schemes, ECC works in partnership with the organisation, event waste contractor or local authority to plan the scheme roll out, and identify servicing requirements of the RotG units.

Alternatively Every Can Counts can assist in making links with local collection partners.

Communication

The ECC campaign is largely driven through the website, offering video case studies, and additional case study material and communications advice and supporting material downloads. At events and festivals ECC is keen to promote the recycling message not only to benefit the event, but so that festival-goers continue to engage in recycling activities when they return home.

Social media (Facebook, Twitter) is recognised as becoming increasingly more important to promote communications and engage a wider audience.

ECC is currently completing an exercise to assess the reach of their communications campaigns, beyond the data that quantifies the number of cans recycled in RotG units.

Performance, contamination and monitoring

Each organisation that joins the ECC scheme is registered onto a central database.

Accurate data collection is considered a real challenge, but Alupro has worked to overcome this with support from WRAP.

A representative sample of registered scheme users are asked to complete an annual survey on volumes of material collected through their scheme. This information is then used to estimate the total volume of material collected.

Some larger ECC schemes, are able to provide accurate tonnage data. Some larger

schemes have been allocated a dedicated account or project manager by Alupro. These account/project managers visit sites to monitor progress of the scheme, and can also identify and assess contamination levels and advise on changes that can be made to the scheme to reduce the contamination levels.

The Ecopacteur can compactors, supported by a targeted communications campaign, have proved to be particularly beneficial in eliminating contamination of recycling bins in hospitals and at beach locations.

Lessons learned

ECC advises that communication is key to engagement, supporting schemes before they are launched, as well as once they are up and running.

Through delivery of the ECC scheme, Alupro has become more aware of the key role that 'Environmental Champions' can have in taking responsibility for developing and maintaining a scheme within an organisation. As the programme has evolved, it has become more focused around supporting environmental champions with the material and information they need at a local level to keep their scheme refreshed and alive.

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**For further information about
Recycle on the Go please visit:
www.wrap.org.uk/RotG**

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