

A man with a beard and long hair, wearing a white shirt and a red apron, smiles warmly at the camera. He is standing in a grocery store aisle with shelves of products in the background.

GUIDE FOR EASY IN-STORE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

Guide for retailers and store managers who want to streamline their waste management, optimize their store's resources, and generate recycling revenue.



EFFICIENT WASTE MANAGEMENT

Depending on the products you sell, your day-to-day work as a retailer or grocer may vary widely from store to store. However, the situation in respect of waste management is the same regardless of the products you stock.

In retail, and in business more generally, corrugated cardboard is the predominant packaging material. The more goods a store sells, the more waste it generates. The most significant side effect of this is that storage space becomes increasingly scarce as goods for stock replenishment are delivered.

Corrugated cardboard and other packaging are bulky, but this is far from the only negative effect that large quantities of waste have for retailers. It also affects workflows, human resources, transport costs and, last but by no means least, the environment.

Proper waste management can optimize all of these resources while enhancing your store's brand by maintaining a distinct sustainability image. We've developed this guide so that store managers can streamline their waste management and turn waste into a resource.



HOW MUCH TIME DO YOUR STAFF SPEND ON WASTE MANAGEMENT?

Unpacking goods is a natural part of day-to-day work for grocery retailers. So natural, in fact, that most people rarely think of all the time spent on packaging waste.

Goods are often delivered at irregular intervals, and a lot in one go. Much of the store staff's working day is spent unpacking these goods that are often packed in both cardboard boxes and plastic wrapping.

To save time, many stores throw everything into one container. Waste is then quickly shifted out of the warehouse and staff can return to the shop floor. From an environmental perspective, this isn't a great option as unsorted material is sent for incineration, which is also expensive for the store. Cartons also take up space, which means that the containers need to be emptied more frequently and their contents taken away more often.

The alternative to throwing cartons away whole is to process them manually; i.e. to cut and fold them so that they take up less space.

But this takes even more time – time that could have been better spent on “real” work with customers on the shop floor.

The time spent by staff in the grocery sector on processing waste manually can be reduced considerably with the right tools.

Compacting the material by machine takes as little time as throwing all the material into one container, is more environmentally friendly, and reduces incineration costs.



IS WASTE EATING UP YOUR STORAGE AREA?

The storage areas in most stores are very limited – often due to the sky-high cost of floor space. This means the shop floor has to be given priority over storage. Add to that the need to process large quantities of bulky waste and you've got a problem on your hands:

- A lack of space for your goods
- A pokey storage area that's difficult for staff to move around freely in
- A poor work environment and poor fire safety

Packaging should therefore be processed as quickly as possible to free up the space. It's easy to think that the simplest thing would be to throw the cartons out whole, but incineration and waste transport are something that the grocery retailer has to pay for, so this is far from an optimal solution.

The problem that arises when waste takes up valuable space can be circumvented by way of a compaction solution.

Although you need to plan the optimal location for the solution, these days there are a wealth of opportunities.

There are now models that have a significantly higher capacity than earlier examples, which also take up less or equivalent floor space. Some compaction equipment can be placed adjacent to the loading area or even outside the store.



HOW OFTEN IS YOUR WASTE EMPTIED?

If staff fail to cut and fold the packaging when the goods are unpacked, the waste container will quickly fill up. Cartons that are not flattened take up more space, resulting in more frequent emptying and transport.

In the long run, this becomes expensive – unnecessarily so, given that what is being taken away consists largely of air. In most cases, despite waste taking up an unnecessarily large amount of space in the containers, stores rarely make calculations of this. The realisation that the containers are being emptied too often is usually borne out of the fact that costs are going through the roof. By that time, the containers may need emptying twice as often because sales are growing, for example.

If, on the other hand, the waste is compacted into bales or briquettes before going into the container, it takes up less space and the container will need to be emptied less frequently, resulting in much lower transport costs.



ARE YOU GETTING PAID FOR YOUR WASTE?

Mixed waste that goes straight for incineration is a pure cost for your store. So this is something that you, as a retail manager, will want to reduce as much as possible. Unsorted waste goes to incineration plants via refuse collection companies that pay for incineration by the ton. These companies charge their customers even more in order to make a profit on the waste.

What many people aren't aware of is that a significant proportion of the waste sent for incineration could in fact be recycled and provide a source of revenue. In other words, you can get paid for plastic and corrugated cardboard that are recycled and thus reduce your waste management costs.

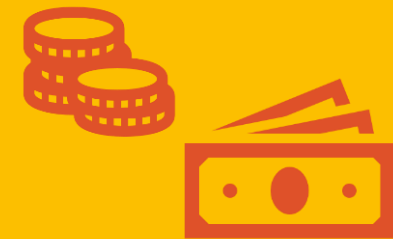
There are many reasons why a store may not choose to sort and recycle its waste. The most common is ignorance – you may not even know that you can get paid for your waste. In other cases, you may not think that the volume of recyclable waste in your business is sufficient for recycling to be worthwhile.

The most common reason, however, is the convenience of being able to throw everything into the same container.

The time it takes to manually process the waste to be recycled does, to some extent, eat into the revenue generated by recycling. In order to circumvent this, manual processing has to be limited. The easiest way to do this is to invest in or rent a compactor, briquette press, or baler so that the staff do not have to cut and fold the waste.

The life span of good quality balers, briquette presses, and compactors is between 15 and 20 years. For those who have only ever processed waste manually, the savings in working hours and waste costs mean that such an investment can be recouped in less than two years. After this time, the savings generated by the compaction solution and recycling payments are pure income.

To find out how to get paid for your plastic and corrugated cardboard waste, contact the refuse collection company that currently takes care of your waste. They can provide you with new containers for plastic and corrugated cardboard and pay you for the material that goes on to be recycled.



HOW GREEN IS YOUR WASTE MANAGEMENT?

Today, having an organic image pretty much goes without saying for a food store. We simply take for granted these days that the stores we shop in take responsibility for sustainable development. The demand for goods and services that are produced under good conditions and which take the environment into account is growing ever more quickly.

Society is also increasing its demands on companies. New laws and regulations necessitate working with sustainability. In addition to cost-effectiveness, larger retail chains are often pressured to achieve specific environmental goals. Many are now ISO certified and the issue of CO₂ emissions, for example, is growing in importance.

Yet far from all stores process their waste in an environmentally sound manner. Unsorted waste is sent directly for incineration, which clearly has a negative impact on the environment.

Of course, it is positive that the retail sector is moving towards a more sustainable way of thinking, but what benefit do these efforts have if they do not permeate the entire business?

If only selected elements of our work are covered by environmental consciousness, there is a risk that the sustainable image we want to convey will be perceived as superficial.

The environmentally sound sorting of waste can be simplified by using various compaction solutions where the waste is distributed in different fractions. In addition, compacted waste does not take up as much space, and the need to empty containers less frequently results in less transport, which results in a smaller environmental footprint. In other words, compacting waste can not only benefit the environment but also enhance your company's sustainable image.



THINKING ABOUT COMPACTING YOUR STORE'S WASTE?

The way in which you choose to process your store's packaging waste often depends on its volume. The greater the volumes, the greater the incentive to invest in a compactor, briquette press, or baler, for example.

The solution you choose should be based on your individual needs, such as your store's waste volumes, available space, etc.

There are solutions that are integrated into the façade of the building that enable you to dispose of whole cartons through a hole in the wall. This saves time in that you don't have to go outdoors, and space because the machine is located outside. It is also possible to choose a product with a practical size, so that it can fit indoors – there's a wide range of sizes to choose from.

As we have said in this guide, compacting waste makes it possible to free up all the resources consumed by waste management:

- It streamlines the management of goods and waste, which ensures order in limited storage areas.
- One machine does the job instead of having staff cut, fold, and process the material.
- Waste then becomes a resource rather than a source of expenditure. The material is turned into a recyclable raw material that you can be paid for.

- The compaction solution becomes a small recycling station, which can sort material into different fractions, which simplifies the division of materials.
- You'll be making an investment in the environment and enhancing your brand by broadening your sustainable image.

SMART AND COST-EFFICIENT WASTE MANAGEMENT!

Orwak provides a variety of balers, briquette presses, and compactors and is well-established in the industry. Our products are manufactured in-house, which means you can always get spare parts quickly and benefit from our expertise in our products.

We take an interest in our customers, so we know how their businesses work in detail. This also gives us a better understanding of the challenges they face in their day-to-day operations. That's why we act not only as a product supplier but also as an advisory partner as you consider your next steps towards less resource-intensive waste management.

Contact us to find out more about how to turn your waste costs into revenue!

ORWAK AB

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Orwak is a world-leading provider of at-source compaction and baling solutions.

We develop solutions for the sorting and compaction of recyclable materials, thereby helping to increase efficiency, look after the environment, and provide a more enjoyable workplace, as well as offering the most economical by-product management possible.

We offer an innovative range of products that enable at-source sorting and make waste management more profitable. We help our customers from the first point of contact, through the sales process and for many years of support from our service department.

Orwak – Turning Waste Into Value