How to track and report your RECYCLING SUCCESS

And why it matters

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Why do the numbers matter?

While new recycling legislation is the key driving factor for businesses looking to transform their waste and recycling, there are a host of other business benefits to increasing your recycling rate. Sustainability is high on the consumer agenda, but it's not just your customers you'll want to communicate your progress to.

From understanding projected ROI to get stakeholder sign-off before purchase, to demonstrating success internally to motivate your employees and create a culture of sustainability, there are many reasons why tracking and reporting your recycling results is going to be good for business.

How much do your customers care?

1/3 **of UK pub and restaurant goers are prepared to spend more than usual in venues with strong sustainability credentials[1]**

47% **say they want more information about carbon footprints on menus[1]**

The pressure to provide sustainable options in the hospitality and food service sector is real. Consumers are more clued up on what's sustainable and 'greenwashing' simply won't wash. That's why you need numbers to do your talking.

Where are you today?

Before you start your waste and recycling transformation project, you need to understand where you are today. Getting an accurate picture of how much waste you're currently recycling, and how much is going to either landfill or to incineration means you can project return on investment and have some numbers to refer back to when it comes to reporting your success further down the line.

You should be able to get this information from your waste collection contractor – typically a business using a national provider will have access to an online dashboard where you can see the total weight of waste send to landfill or incineration and your recycling rate, alongside costs.

Tip: Benchmarking

If you want to understand how you're performing relative to others in the industry, it can be difficult to get accurate benchmark figures. Often, recycling figures will be reported in CSR or annual reports so take a look at these to get an idea of where you stand.

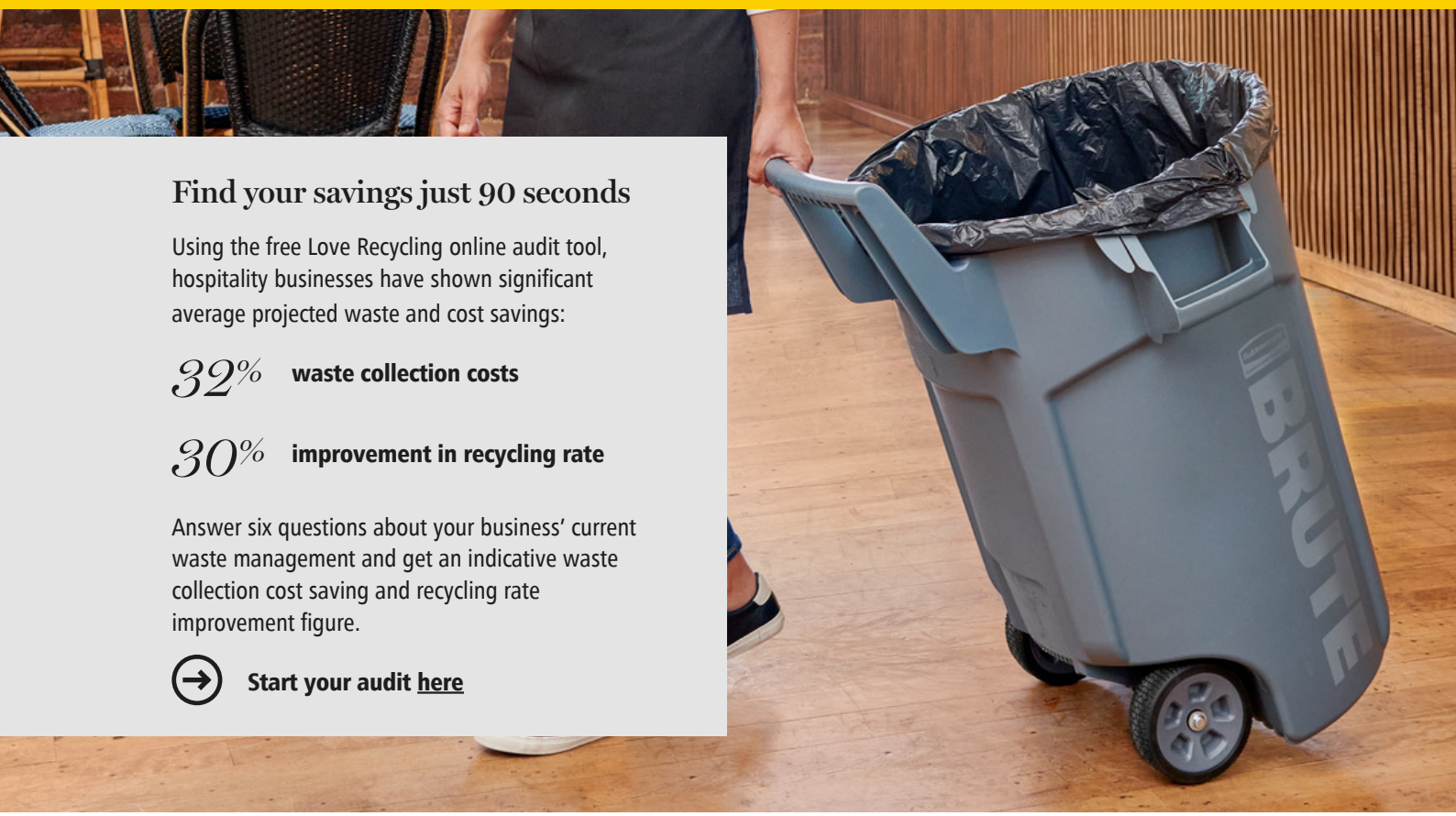
Projecting improvements and cost savings

While changes to upcoming legislation may be forcing your hand when it comes to introducing multi-stream recycling into your venue, there are still decisions to be made about how you get your venue, hotel or restaurant compliant. If you want to have maximum impact on your recycling rates – and optimise your cost savings – getting the right type of bins and those of the right quality is the best long-term strategy.

Remember:

With the 20% increase in landfill tax, recycling more waste is now even better for your bottom line.

While legislation may be the catalyst, the prospect of reducing waste management costs significantly should be one of the driving forces behind your strategy when it comes to implementing the required changes.



Find your savings just 90 seconds

Using the free Love Recycling online audit tool, hospitality businesses have shown significant average projected waste and cost savings:

32% **waste collection costs**

30% **improvement in recycling rate**

Answer six questions about your business' current waste management and get an indicative waste collection cost saving and recycling rate improvement figure.

Start your audit here

"Zero waste to landfill" does not equal 100% recycling

And your customers are wise to it…

As consumers become more savvy about green claims, companies need to be careful how they communicate where their waste goes to avoid accusations of 'greenwashing'. Zero waste to landfill claims are becoming increasingly scrutinised – if a company sends zero waste to landfill but has a recycling target of just 50%, what's happening to the rest?

When remaining waste is burnt at an incineration plant, otherwise known as a waste-to-energy plant, it not only emits greenhouse gases, but around 20% of the waste remains as "bottom ash"[2]. While some processing plants can recover further materials, especially metals, for recycling, a proportion may also find its way to landfill.

Tracking and reporting progress

Keeping track of your cost savings and recycling rate, and communicating these internally and externally, will mean you can demonstrate to your customers and stakeholders the difference your recycling improvements have made to the business.

It is simply expected now that companies will include environmental information in their annual reports and many also choose to report CSR and environmental targets and improvements separately. As it's easy to measure over time, waste and recycling statistics are ideal to demonstrate your business' achievements.

Case study: a *Better Future* for food waste at Travelodge

400+ **tonnes of food waste now disposed of sustainably**

With commercial recycling legislation on the horizon, and with a business-wide focus on reducing and more sustainably disposing of waste, we partnered with Travelodge on a food waste recycling trial.

By tracking the results, we were able to see the tangible impact of separating kitchen food waste at source for recycling at its Bar Café hotels. As reported in Travelodge's 'Better Future' annual sustainability report for 2023, rolling out food waste recycling across its estate saw 36 tonnes of waste disposed of correctly after the first month, with over 400 tonnes projected per year.

Start your journey to better recycling today

Our team of waste and recycling experts are on hand to help you understand the business benefits of better recycling and how to put it into practice.

You can request a callback here.

[1]Nutritics: Sustainability Matters: What consumers want and how brands can win
[2]https://myrecyclingwales.org.uk/materials/incinerator-bottom-ash