



Best of the Best Award and ECR Innovation Award

Swire Coca-Cola HK Bottle Recycling Program



Company Background and Vision

Swire Coca-Cola Hong Kong (SCCHK) is the sole franchised bottler in Hong Kong for a wide variety of products of The Coca-Cola Company, including Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola Lemon, Coke Light, Vanilla Coke, Sprite, Fanta, Schweppes, and Bonaqua mineral water, among others. It produces over 50 million unit cases of beverages for Hong Kong's population, and commands a market share of more than 80% of Hong Kong's carbonated soft drinks market.

Business Challenge and Context

In Hong Kong, and elsewhere, it is a common practice for most soft drink makers to package their products using transparent plastic bottles due to its hygienic features. Consumers can easily re-seal them for consumption at a later date. There is, however, a downside to all these conveniences – post-consumed bottles are bulky to store and the complete degradation under natural conditions takes years to occur.

As a company that cares about the environment, SCCHK always thinks out-of-the-box. Early this year, SCCHK decided to launch the 'Every Bottle Counts' plastic beverage bottle recycling program, which allows consumers to return used SCCHK plastic bottles at specific reverse vending machines to earn Octopus Reward Dollars.

SCCHK is a member company of GS1 Hong Kong and their beverage products are assigned a barcode with a unique product identification number in GS1 System. By scanning the bar code printed on different empty bottles, the reverse vending machine is able to identify if these are SCCHK's post-consumed bottles. The post-consumed bottles recognized will then be accepted by SCCHK's reverse machines and compacted to get ready for recycling.

The program does not only create a more efficient supply chain system for recycling, but also demonstrate innovation that optimizes effective partner promotion. By partnering with Octopus, the scheme offers consumers reward points for every SCCHK bottle consumers return.

When a consumer returns a post-consumed bottle, the consumer's Octopus card will record the bonus reward points, which can be used to redeem attractive goods, premium or services. As such, SCCHK has demonstrated a high level of collaboration with various internal and external parties in launching the 'Every Bottle Counts' program - one of the key assessment criteria for the ECR Hong Kong Awards.

As well as the ECR Innovation Award, the program earns the "Best of the Best" for its outstanding ECR strategy in innovation, operation excellence and partner collaboration.

Results

By encouraging Hong Kong citizens to be more environmentally aware, SCCHK has implemented a convenient and self-operated recycling system. The program is a shining example that shows corporate responsibility by applying effective ECR supply chain strategies.

Today, 12 reverse vending machines have been installed in Ocean Park and various housing estates and centers and over ten thousand pieces of bottles have been recycled since the launch of the program. There are plans to extend the program in other locations to broaden its reach and encourage more participation from the general public.

