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Promotional Products

Marketing Magazine



What The Promotional
Products Industry Can Do
To Be More Sustainable

appa AUSTRALASIAN PROMOTIONAL
PRODUCTS ASSOCIATION

Sustainable Fashion is the New Black

Paul Semmel & Imbi Semenov, C-3 Apparel

Consumers' expectations of a commitment to enhanced sustainability and transparency in the supply chain are only becoming more prevalent. There are ever increasing desires to be affiliated with brands that take their environmental and social responsibilities seriously.

Paul Semmel and Imbi Semenov from C-3 Apparel, a valued APPA supplier member, are two of our industry's finest examples of individuals who have risen to the challenge, providing numerous fashion labels who are expressly committed to ethically produced apparel.

C-3 Apparel have been leading the way with sustainable products for many years. When did you first see that consumer expectations were going to evolve and how did you start to implement your CSR initiatives?

About 10 years ago, we noticed globally an increase in brands like Patagonia who in 2010 helped found the Sustainable Apparel Coalition, an alliance of 30 major companies from the clothing and footwear industries. We knew it was time to seek out like-minded sustainable and socially responsible apparel companies that specialised in supplying to our unique industry so different to traditional retail.

Four of your most prominent brands are James & Nicholson, HALFAR®, Recover Brands and US Blanks. All of which are well known for being sustainable. What specifically appealed to you about each of them?

Their genuine commitment to be leaders in this field. Demonstrated not merely by marketing hype but factual certifications, memberships, tangible CSR initiatives and sustainable projects.

James & Nicholson and Myrtle Beach – Apparel and Headwear. The product diversity touches every area of this industry, plus their commitment to their social and ecological responsibility for employees, customers and the environment includes the following:

OCS – Organic Content Standard Certified. (Select Range) Verifying and tracking the exact content of organically grown materials in a final product. Sustainably grown cotton without genetically modified fibres.

BSCI/Business Social Compliance Initiative. Code of conduct for working conditions.

OEKO-TEX Standard 100. Product components are tested for harmful substances.

ILO – International Labour Organisation. Safety and Social Compliance.

HALFAR® – The Bag Expert. The innovation and commitment to a sustainable future is at the forefront of this company.

GOTS – Global Organic Cotton Standard Certified. (Select Range) Verifying and tracking the exact content of organically grown materials in a final product. Sustainably grown cotton without genetically modified fibres.

BSCI – Business Social Compliance Initiative. Code of conduct for working conditions.

OEKO-TEX Standard 100. Product components are tested for harmful substances.

ISO 14001 Certified. Environmental Management Systems

ILO – International Labour Organisation. Safety and Social Compliance.

100% CO2 Neutral Warehouse and Head Office. Photovoltaic and pellet heating systems.

PSI Sustainability Awards (European) for Social and Environmental achievements. (Multiple Award Winner)

Recover Brands – Apparel. Their mission to create the best, most environmentally friendly and socially responsible products possible and to educate and inspire those around us to live and work for a sustainable tomorrow. Recover Brands have apparel made from recycled plastic bottles and recycled cotton: they pre-sort both the plastic bottles and recycled cotton by colour, which saves us from dyeing the fabric during the manufacturing process.

1% for the Planet member. Donating 1% of total sales to not for profits. Recover created the "Protect Our Parks" Campaign and many other social initiatives.

US Blanks – Apparel. US Blanks produce high-quality apparel made ethically in various fabrics including organic, recycled and other sustainable fabrics in their Los Angeles-based factory. Fabric production is at their LA textile mill.

PROJECT US is a non-profit initiative created by US Blanks, working for people, for the planet, and for animals.

HALFAR® won three awards at the PSI Sustainability Awards. What categories were they successful in?

HALFAR® won the 2019 PSI Sustainability Award (the leading European tradeshow of the promotional product industry) in the category Social Excellence. They ranked second and third in the categories Social Initiative and Economic Excellence, respectively.



	Organic fibres	Organic fibres
Raw materials	Organic fibres	Organic fibres
Chain of Custody tracking system	Transaction certificates	Transaction certificates
Environmental issues addressed in processing	None	Chemical use Water treatment Environmental policy
Social issues addressed in processing	None	Based on ILO norms
Label claims allowed	'Contains X% organically grown cotton'	'Organic' or 'Contains X% organic materials'

In 2018, HALFAR® was honoured with the PSI Sustainability Award in Social Excellence category.

In the same year, they were also awarded the 2018 CSR Prize OWL for entrepreneurial engagement (East-Westphalia is a *region* in the German state of North Rhine-*Westphalia known as OWL*). It confirmed that HALFAR® was a trustworthy brand that committed to sustainable products, fair working conditions and good mutual dealings with one another for a sustainable future!

The purpose of the award is to raise awareness regarding the industry's social commitment, both at its location and beyond, in addition to promoting continued dedication.

In 2017, HALFAR® was honoured with the PSI Sustainability Awards in the categories Social Excellence and Environment Initiative.

Recover Brands has apparel made from recycled plastic bottles. How is this process done?

All Recover garments begin at the source – recycled plastic bottles (polyester) and recycled cotton.

Here's the breakdown: First, post-consumer plastic bottles are collected and sorted, stripping them of all labels and caps. Next, cotton is salvaged from discarded industry scraps, which are also sorted by colour and blended with the recycled plastic bottles (polyester).

The reclaimed fibre is then spun into yarn and knitted into fabric, which is ultimately cut and sewn into a garment. With this proprietary process, fibres are made that are "first quality," which makes them look and feel great.

Both plastic bottles and recycled cotton is pre-sorted by colour, which saves from dyeing the fabric during the manufacturing process. This eco-friendly process results in:

- 35% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- 66% reduction in energy consumption
- 55% reduction in water consumption
- 8 plastic bottles = 1 shirt!

Since 2010, Recover has diverted 7.8 million plastic bottles from landfill, saved 29.2 million kilowatts of energy, saved 11.8 million pounds of carbon emissions, and saved 2 billion gallons of water.

What changes would you like to see our industry make to become more sustainable?

- In Europe and the USA, a growing number of apparel suppliers are either focusing all their styles or increasing the mix of styles to meet sustainable product objectives, on one hand, and CSR initiatives, on the other.
- Most local ANZ apparel suppliers lack vision and are ignoring their responsibility to source styles derived from fabrics of organic, recycled and alternative biodegradable natural fibres and blends.
- These same suppliers are also so focused on price rather than sourcing from accredited factories that meet internationally recognised safety and social compliance.
- Factories or brands with internationally recognised certifications in most cases will cost more than non-audited and accredited factories and brands. There needs to be a big change in mentality here to step up, embrace and promote a better world standard by only using these accredited factories and brands or the ones that can at least demonstrate/document transparent and tangible CSR initiatives.

What does the future hold for sustainable apparel?

We believe on a textile level that the two most popular traditional fibres, cotton (water and land intensive) and polyester (oil intensive), will continue to dominate. New alternatives like organic cotton, recycled cotton and recycled polyester will rightfully assume more market share over time, as the massive growth in recent years has already shown. Examples of some future alternatives are natural fibres like hemp, bamboo, (flax) linen and, generally speaking, grow fast and use minimal water, pesticides and land mass. They are produced in much smaller quantities, and the processing into consumer-friendly fibres and yarns / finished fabrics is still not at a commercial level to challenge cotton or polyester domination but the shift in technology to facilitate change has begun.

Most importantly in the short term, as textile technology matures, we can immediately contribute to CSR – Corporate Social Responsibility – promoting the brands that are already certified at so many great international levels when compared to the ones that are not! It's critical we all embrace and promote alternatives to the price-point mentality and adopt a green and socially responsible future for the sake of our people and planet. We all can make a GREEN difference if we try!!! Further information can be found at C-3apparel.com.au

We think about **quality** in a holistic way!

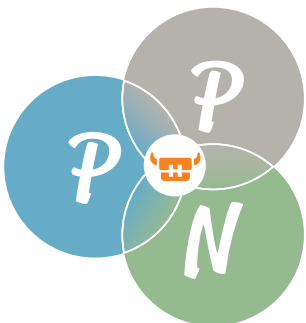
People

social criteria



Halfar System is a family-run company at heart. Perhaps this is because interactions with each other take special priority here – and not just in our Bielefeld location, but also with all the people we come into contact with during our daily work, from our customers via our partners and right up to our suppliers.

This is **SUSTAIN**ability!



You won't just find evidence of sustainability at Halfar in our products – for example in our bags made from organic cotton. Sustainability is above all to be found in our actions, in our processes and our convictions. Our initiatives in this field are wide-ranging. We are involved in environmental and climate protection, in people and in expedient processes – i.e. a balance between ecology, economy and social matters.

The company, the **environment** and people!

Product economical criteria



We observe high ecological criteria and for this reason all our products are tested by independent institutes in order to prove and attest that all materials used in our bags are harmless. We also have a 3-year guarantee in case of deficient materials or processing. Because we always want to be better for our customers, we work in accordance with the quality standard DIN ISO 9001:2015.



Nature ecological criteria

We are very aware that everything which we do as a company has an influence on the environment and the climate. Therefore, we commit ourselves to making our products and processes increasingly sustainable. For this reason, i.e. our work has been 100% CO₂-neutral since 2017; we also subsidise the use of public transportation, ensure a sustainable supply chain in accordance with the GOTS Standard for our organic cotton products, and work according to the Environmental Management Standard DIN ISO 14001:2015.



C-3 APPAREL
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

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www.c-3apparel.com.au

SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

Small Washable Kraft Paper Bag with Cotton Handle

This bag is not an ordinary paper bag; it may look like a paper bag, but it is manufactured from trendy washable Kraft paper.

This material has become very popular, and it is extremely durable and resistant to tearing.

This reusable and washable bag offers the perfect replacement to single-use material bags and is an ideal promotional gift that will promote your company wherever you and your customers go.



Reusable Bamboo Coffee Cup with Screw Lid

This reusable coffee cup has a 350ml capacity with a heat-resistant silicon band and a clip-on lid. It is manufactured from tough BPA-free, food-grade and dishwasher-safe material. The cup's wall can be fully printed with any logos, and the silicon colour can be customised. It comes with a standard Opp bag, and you can choose the optional standard paper package or customised package at extra cost.



Customized Bamboo Fibre Tableware

Custom Bamboo Fibre Tableware is a compact and environmentally friendly item. It is a great promotional giveaway as it can be fully customised into any shape, print or size you like. The food-grade bamboo fibre is safe for use and great for use as a promotional giveaway for kids. It is an inexpensive but effective way of getting your message across to a large audience. The set includes a plate, bowl and cup, as well as two utensils. The packaging can also be customised.



Organic Cotton Mesh Bag

This unbleached cotton mesh produce bag can be washed and reused many times so we can reduce single-use plastic bags as they contribute a lot to the plastic pollution on our planet. This cotton mesh produce bag has a drawstring closure, it features a compostable and biodegradable material and you can choose to add a cotton patch for branding.

It can be customised with your corporate logo and makes an ideal promotional gift bag. This environmentally friendly produce bag is an ideal value gift which will promote your company wherever you go.



C-3 Apparel

Halfar Backpack FLOW and Halfar Sport Travel Retro Bag

Halfar takes its responsibilities as a company seriously – whether towards their customers, suppliers, employees or towards the environment.

The bag expert meets strict compliances and has a clear sustainability strategy, which is supported by several certifications, awards and their annual sustainability report. Pictured: FLOW Backpack/Rucksack, and Sport Travel Retro Bag, both available in a wide array of colours.



Recover Brands Apparel

Recover Brands specialise in apparel made from recycled plastic bottles and recycled cotton or 100% recycled plastic bottles.

Recover Brands donate 1% of total sales to non-for-profits and have created the "Protect Our Parks" campaign, amongst their many social initiatives.



US Blanks Apparel

US Blanks produce high-quality apparel made ethically in various fabrics including organic, recycled and other sustainable fabrics in our Los Angeles-based factory. Fabric production takes place at our LA textile mill and in-house garment cut and sew. PROJECT US is a non-profit initiative created by US Blanks, working for people, for planet and for animals.



James & Nicholson and Myrtle Beach Apparel & Headwear

James & Nicholson and Myrtle Beach Apparel & Headwear have released a range of products that are proudly OCS – Organic Content Standard Certified. To attain this certification, sustainably grown cotton without genetically modified fibres is used to manufacture the clothes, product components are tested for harmful substances, and the manufacturer adheres to a strict code of conduct for working conditions.



Seed Creations

ECO GROW KITS Peat Pot Garden Pots

Gardening with peat pots is fun and easy, guaranteeing perfect results every time – just add soil, seed and water. Little plants can grow and be relocated to another spot without root disturbance. They are kid-friendly and ideal for big kids too who haven't had a lot of experience sowing, growing and moving plants. The plantable pot is inexpensive and makes a low-cost custom grow kit option.



Jutebags

Natural Bag

Help your customers make a bold statement and stand out with our natural and colourful jutebags – great for the environment and your customer's brand. Pictured: Natural Bag, available in lime, orange, black, red and blue colours.



Nottage International

Nash Recycled PET Ballpoint Pen

The Recycled PET Nash Ballpoint has a barrel made from 48% post-consumer recycled material of the barrel. Chrome accents. Click action mechanism. Black ink cartridge. Available in 6 colours.

Eco Carry Cup

This 350ml reusable coffee cup boasts a practical design and comes with a heat-resistant ribbed silicone band with a flat section for decoration. Made from 50% bamboo and 50% polypropylene. Your choice of 8 different band colours.



Plastic & Wheat Straw Lunch Box



Pack your food in style with the plastic and wheat straw lunch box. This item features a tray to keep your food separated and a locking lid with handles for carrying. Made of 30% wheat straw + 70% polypropylene.

dishwasher and microwave-safe.

Recycled 5oz Cotton Twill Tote

This recycled cotton twill tote is great for any convention and helps promote corporate social responsibility. Manufactured from pre-consumer waste generated by factories during the fabric cutting process. Approximately 70%-80% recycled cotton.

