



PACKAGES OF GREEN

PolyCello is improving an already stellar reputation in the marketplace by developing innovative, sustainable products to add to its lineup.

By Brooke Infusino

PROFILE

PolyCello

www.polycello.com

Employees: 350

Products: Packaging

Stephen Emmerson, president

& CEO: "I sleep well at night knowing that we are driving costs out ... and being good stewards of the environment."

PolyCello has grown an average of 10 to 14 percent annually for the last 15 years.

Becoming one of Canada's 50 Best-Managed Companies of 2008 doesn't happen simply by maintaining best business practices. Instead, it takes a lot of innovation, vision and creative thinking. Just ask the team at PolyCello and Stephen

Emmerson, president and third-generation owner. In the 53 years the company has been in business, Emmerson and a well-rounded team of long-term employees have advanced the company from a modest polyethylene and cellophane packaging converter to one of North America's leading flexographic packaging companies.

Today, Emmerson intends to take PolyCello to the next level of innovation by committing the organization to environmentally sustainable practices, through its internal operations and with its product portfolio.

Based in Amherst, Nova Scotia, PolyCello offers start-to-finish services including extrusion, printing, laminating, graphics, plate-making and converting. In-house capabilities also include marketing support, pre-press and graphics expertise and logistics solutions. Today, it caters to clients in the towel and tissue, lawn and garden and food markets, which include frozen vegetables, fruit, seafood, potatoes and pet food.

PolyCello has grown 10 percent per year since 2006, with an average annual growth of 10 to 14 percent per year for ▶



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PolyCello says it was one of the first companies in its industry to achieve the environmental ISO 14001 certification.

► the past 15 years, Emmerson explains. Today, the packaging manufacturer operates out of a state-of-the-art 200,000-square-foot production and printing facility in Amherst, and a second 75,000-square-foot printing facility in Belleville, Ontario, which it purchased in the fall of 2006 to increase capacity.

INTERNAL INVESTMENTS

Image sells and the quality of flexographic packaging can often make or break a brand's success. At PolyCello, new product development is a crucial part in helping its clients sell product. Increased investment in the company's Innovation and R&D department has been a major boon to business in the past several years, and will continue to be in the future. The department has grown from a one-person operation to an eight-person department, supported by a full lab and technical support to help develop new packaging concepts.

Packaging solutions aren't the only things setting the firm apart from other printers. PolyCello has developed value-added solutions for its clients, such as a

unique Web system where customers can view real-time production data via a Web portal, including inventory tracking and packaging.

PolyCello has wasted little time adjusting to and creating demand for new packaging trends. "There is a demand in the marketplace for greener products and we are trying to meet that demand in one of two ways," Emmerson explains. The first is through more environmentally friendly packaging, such as recyclable gusseted stand-up pouches that use E-beam technology to reduce environmental impact, and degradable or compostable packaging. In addition, PolyCello is becoming more conscious about its manufacturing environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS

As one of the first in the industry to earn ISO-14001 certification, PolyCello has identified itself as a leader in sustainable practices. But the firm's commitment goes beyond environmental management standards. Since 2000, the company has examined various methodologies for waste management. After imple- ►



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▶menting several strategies, the results are impressive. PolyCello has proven its commitment by:

- Implementing recycling and composting programs, reducing its residual solid waste by 81 percent per foot produced;
- Changing to a closed-loop water system, dropping its usage by 79 percent;
- Using natural gas instead of propane, cutting emissions by 54 percent; and
- Reducing VOC emissions by 47 percent.

"We've done this with the help of smart engineering and manufacturing people who are committed to this," Emmerson notes. "We set the bar high. We use department scorecards where everyone is given a base objective, a plan and a stretch objective. We award people financially and personally [for meeting those goals.]"

Some objectives include goals related to reducing its carbon footprint. "I sleep well at night knowing that we are driving costs out of the business and we are being good stewards of the environment," he says. *usbr*

\$44 BILLION DEMAND FOR GREEN PACKAGING IN 2013

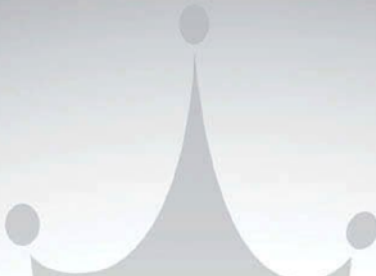
Demand for green packaging – comprised of recycled content, biodegradable and reusable packaging – is projected to increase 3.4 percent annually to \$43.9 billion in 2013, using 59 billion pounds of material, according to a new study from The Freedonia Group Inc., a Cleveland-based industry research firm.

Growth will outpace overall packaging but will remain modest due to the maturity of many products and the fact that recycled content packaging has a large, existing presence in paperboard and metal packaging. The fastest gains are anticipated for biodegradable plastic packaging and plastic recycled content packaging.

Biodegradable plastic packaging is forecast to climb nearly 13 percent per year through 2013, driven by increased price competition with conventional resins, rapidly expanding capacity and lower pricing volatility than petroleum-based plastic packaging materials. Additional stimulants include enhanced performance properties brought about by more sophisticated polymerization and blending techniques; efforts by brand owners to improve the environmental footprint of their packaging; and legislative bans on polystyrene-foam foodservice disposables in some parts of the country.

While recycled content packaging demand is expected to increase in line with the overall green packaging average, robust growth for plastic recycled content packaging will be aided by more concerted efforts to boost collection volume, an increased focus on the development of food-contact approved resin grades, and further sustainability initiatives by plastic processors and brand owners.

Source: The Freedonia Group


**Congratulations
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