

Direct Wines is the parent company of Laithwaites Wines, one of the largest wine merchants in the UK. With a head office function in Theale and a distribution centre in Gloucester, the company sells wines from all over the world direct to consumers.

Identifying the Problem

In 2008 Direct Wines identified a need to improve the service received from their waste management provider. They were not getting the best service or achieving best value with their recycling and waste management activities.

Already a member of Valpak's producer responsibility compliance scheme, Direct Wines approached Valpak Recycling (VRL) to assist in taking their recycling programme to the next level.

Direct Wines asked VRL to provide a total waste management service. This involved designing a collection schedule to incorporate card and plastic collections, along with mixed recycling, general waste, wood and glass collections.

Solving the Problem

The first thing VRL did was look at the current process used at Direct Wine's distribution centre and streamline them to maximum efficiency.

"In early 2010, a new baler was installed which enabled the plastic film from site to be baled into mill size bales. This saved on extra vehicle movements and rebaling costs and also ensured that we had maximum weights achieved on a container load. We also worked together to upgrade their plastic film to a

better quality. This was achieved through additional sorting at source, and has further increased revenues", explains Senior Account Manager, Steph Dalton.

Changes to working practices include:

- Card to be exported directly from their site, thus cutting out unnecessary costs in transport and handling
- Modification of their loading bays so that they could accommodate a high cube card container
- A new loading configuration for their card bales to ensure that the maximum payload could be placed into the container

With the above methods in place Direct Wines are now loading 500 tonnes of card directly into shipping containers each year.

In addition to this Valpak Recycling has helped Direct Wines to reduce their packaging waste compliance costs via its Members' Compliance Evidence Policy (MCEP) service. This service allows obligated organisations to offset some of their obligation under the Packaging Waste Regulations using their own recycling activity. This closed loop system has been key to the success of the service provided by Valpak Recycling.

Benefits of the Project

Through switching to Valpak Recycling, Direct Wines have managed to simplify the process of waste management whilst driving down cost and increasing revenues. Regular account management meetings identify the next steps in Direct Wines' objective to reduce landfill waste, and ensure continued satisfaction in the service.

Furthermore, Direct Wines utilise Valpak's expertise in the field of recycling and waste management by forwarding us queries relating to packaging, waste, and recycling. Early in 2010 Direct Wines were looking at ways to reduce the cost of compliance in glass. Valpak Consulting, a subsidiary of Valpak Limited, shared expertise in the field of light weighting, which has kick-started a project to source lighter packaging from suppliers across the supply chain.

Valpak Recycling continue to work in partnership with Direct Wines to reduce the amount of waste which goes directly to landfill through waste auditing and looking at new end markets.