



The Bread Workshop

The Bread Workshop is a 16-year-old artisanal bakery in Berkeley. In 2005 it relocated to a 3,500-square-foot space and grew its business. Now, in addition to baking breads for high-end restaurants and distribution to a few local retail outlets, the 33 employees at the new location serve breakfast, lunch and dinner, and sell baked goods in their café.

Facts-at-a-Glance

Challenges

- Minimizing the environmental impact of building renovation
- Operating with zero-waste principles
- Finding green building alternatives
- Contaminated recycling bins

Solutions

- Ongoing employee training
- Signage to keep recycling bins free from contamination
- Research into green building alternatives
- Mini-grant funding

Benefits

- Reduces waste by over 95%
- Improves customer relationships
- Reduces environmental impact

The Story

When the Bread Workshop expanded into a new location, it contacted StopWaste to tap into the free resources that help make business sustainable. Although StopWaste usually works with large companies, it was drawn to the Bread Workshop's mission to make its new location as sustainable as possible. The Bread Workshop staff was driven by a commitment to the environment and a hunch that an environmentally conscious company would attract more customers from its Berkeley neighborhood. They had the right idea: In a recent Cone/Roper corporate citizenship study, 84 percent of consumers said they would likely switch brands to one associated with a good cause if price and quality were similar.

Challenges

The new location required extensive renovations. In keeping with its goal to be environmentally conscious, the Bread Workshop sought to use green building materials, but realized it's not always easy to find cost-effective green alternatives to conventional building materials. And once open at its new location, the business wanted to operate without throwing away resources.

In addition, the Bread Workshop's compost and recycling bins were often contaminated; the company needed to find a way to encourage the busy kitchen staff as well as customers to sort waste. And finally, as with most small businesses, the bakery did not have a lot of extra capital available, so its environmental programs had to be cost-effective.



The Bread Workshop composts over 70% of its waste.



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Solutions

Used green building materials during renovation, aggressive composting and recycling programs, and ongoing employee training.

“One of the keys to our success: Diligence. Once you start a project like this it is important to revisit it on a regular basis. Teamwork is also essential; if everyone understands why we are doing this, then we are all a little more dedicated to it.”

WILLIAM BRISCOE
Owner

Composting & Recycling

The Bread Workshop now composts and recycles over 95 percent of its waste. A StopWaste mini-grant helped purchase the infrastructure that makes this possible. Wheeled bins can be rolled to different workstations in the food prep area. In the café, an attractive multi-compartment bin gives customers a chance to compost and recycle. Keeping the bins free from contamination is an ongoing challenge, even with continuous employee training.

Purchasing

Waste reduction starts with good purchasing practices. The Bread Workshop buys only recyclable beverage and condiment containers, which helps keep non-recyclable waste to a minimum. To-go containers are compostable: Clamshells are made from sugarcane slash, the residue left over from harvesting sugar cane, and soup cups from waxed paper. The café serves shade-grown and fair-trade coffee, free-range chicken, and produce from organic and transitional farms.



Car hoods are used to form a decorative ceiling over the front counter.

Green Building

More than 85 percent of the renovations were designed with the environment in mind. The ceiling above the counter is made from brightly painted car hoods salvaged from a local junkyard. Modified second-hand glass doors form an interior partition wall that lets customers in the café watch the action in the bakery. Interior walls were built with steel studs, which contain recycled content and are 100% recyclable. Countertops are made from bamboo, tables and chairs were purchased used, and the ceiling tile contains 75 percent recycled content.



The StopWaste Partnership

The StopWaste Partnership is a free technical assistance service dedicated to improving the environmental performance and reducing costs of Alameda County businesses and public agencies. The program provides expert support and funding to prevent waste, conserve water and energy, and use all resources more efficiently.

Helping Make Business Sustainable



The bottom line:

- Composts and recycles over 95% of waste
- More than 85% of renovations featured green materials
- Improves customer relationships
- Unique café atmosphere

Visit www.StopWaste.Org/Partnership or call 1-877-STOPWASTE.