



‘Sorting waste was not ambitious enough, so we decided to go one step further’

At Volvo and Via Biler, a simple idea for better waste sorting became a sustainability project to eliminate all unnecessary packaging.

Each year, a staggering 700,000 cars leave the Volvo factory. Needless to say, this kind of production requires huge amounts of packaging, as do the spare parts that are shipped to workshops all over the world. At Volvo, it was obvious that new, sustainable solutions had to be found. Together with the Danish car dealership Via Biler, the company sat down to look through the value chain. Head of aftersales at Via Biler, Allan Trynskov, tells the story:

‘The car industry is no different than other industries that use a lot of packaging to protect their products. Consequently, we saw our dumpsters being filled with large quantities of cardboard and plastic, which we tried to sort to the best of our abilities. The SDG Accelerator programme was the starting point for looking at how we could reduce or completely eliminate the use of disposable packaging.’

Since sustainability is at the top of the agenda at Volvo, Via Biler was soon visited by a team of experts from UNDP and Deloitte who helped review the amounts of waste, says Allan Trynskov:

‘In fact, what we did was to take a brand-new Volvo and unpack it exactly like we do when we get it from the factory. Then we evaluated every single piece of packaging: What is needed? What can be left out? What can be replaced with reusable alternatives? It was a rewarding and educational process that generated a plethora of ideas.’

Sustainable Development Goals at play

SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production

Target 12.5: By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.



One idea was to replace the traditional disposable packaging with recyclable plastic boxes that can easily be sent back and forth between the workshop and the factory – a solution that is now implemented in Denmark, says Allan Trynskov:

‘The idea is to make a kind of tray solution, just like the trolleys in canteens or cafeterias. This way, the factory can easily place the new spare parts on trays, and the workshop can easily return them. We have also introduced a label system for the very large cardboard boxes that are still required. If we receive, say, a bumper in a cardboard box, we now return that box to be reused for the same type of bumper. In total, these measures will save about six tonnes of packaging every year just here at Via Biler.’

According to Allan Trynskov, the collaboration between Volvo and Via Biler is a clear example that the most effective innovation is typically happening across the value chain:

‘Had we not worked closely with Volvo in the SDG Accelerator, we would never have come this far. The same goes for logistics. Here, our original carrier was not interested in



transporting the reusable packaging. Consequently, we had to find brand new partners that were willing to consider alternative solutions. You cannot foster sustainable innovation without getting everyone involved.’

In the upcoming time, Via Biler and Volvo will continue to promote the sustainability agenda, Allan Trynskov says:

‘So far, we have accomplished an annual saving of six tonnes of packaging, which is not to be purchased by Volvo nor disposed of by us, so it makes good sense in every way. Meanwhile, sustainability remains at the top of Volvo’s agenda and is equally important for the brand’s customers. As a dealership, we support these initiatives 100 per cent. Finally, and on a personal note, I must say it has been a great experience to learn how much you can do for the environment through the decisions you make at work. Now we just need to take the lessons learned in Denmark and bring them to the worldwide dealership network in order to realise the full global potential.’

This is how Volvo and Via Biler contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals

- Volvo and Via Biler have developed a solution where parts are sent back and forth in reusable trays.
- The solution will save six tonnes of packaging annually.

Facts about Via Biler

- Founded in 1980
- Authorised dealership of several major car brands, including Swedish Volvo
- Via Biler’s 12 dealerships can be found in Jutland and Greater Copenhagen
- Approximately 450 employees



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