



REVERSE LOGISTICS DIGITAL magazine®



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Headquarters
- pg28

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On the Cover



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Site Visit: Gailen Vick Visits ecoATM's San Diego Headquarters

As part of a recent Southern California trip, Reverse Logistics Association President Gailen Vick spent some time at ecoATM's San Diego headquarters where he met with ecoATM CEO Tom Tullie and co-founder/CMO Mark Bowles and received a complete company overview.

Articles



Sustainable Packaging Solution for Reverse Logistics Can Add Millions to Your Bottom Line. by Paul Cannon, Ecospan

Page 12 As the demand for consumer electronic devices continues to explode globally, so too does waste generation! Certainly, there is the electronic waste generated at the end of a device's life but there is also significant waste generated multiple times in the forward and reverse logistics processes for these same devices.recovery.



Reverse Logistics in eCommerce by Craig Smith, Trinity Insight LLC

Page 20 It's no secret that a positive experience delivered to a customer determines whether that customer will come back. Retailers must enhance the user experience prior to pressing the "buy" button but also focus on the post-purchase site experience to keep customer retention metrics at satisfactory levels.

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Time for some reverse logistics software

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RL Magazine will publish 12 issues annually — 12 new digital editions!

Preview



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Reverse Logistics Association is Partnering with CES



The Reverse Logistics Association is exhibiting at CES 2012 to promote its members and the solutions they can offer the consumer electronics industry.

Video



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What is the Reverse Logistics Association? by Reverse Logistics Association

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Message from the Editor

Tis the season for giving, receiving and returning!

For most Americans the busiest shopping day is Black Friday. Every year I participate in this shopping race and it never disappoints. In midst of the madness I end up purchasing something simply because it was a good deal or because the item was in demand. "I'll figure out what to do with this later", I would say.

Undoubtedly, I along with many others, end up with buyers remorse. This creates one of the biggest times of year for returns. Standing in line for returns can be exhausting but stores are doing their best to help the process along. For example, Nordstroms introduced it's hassle-free return policy for online orders, including free shipping. It is estimated that 37% of retailers ease up on return policies during the holiday season, says the National Retail Federation.

Here are a few tips for your holiday returns:

1. Bring everything you have: receipt, original tags and boxing. The receipt is key. If an item's price has dropped, most retailers will provide a full refund in cash or store credit.
2. You'll have to pay restocking fees on electronics, and possibly on large appliances, they usually will.
3. For a gift that was bought online, see if you can take it to a chain's local store rather than having to rebox it and mail it back.
4. Large chains may have return periods of 30 days or more on most items, some deadlines are shorter. For online purchases, check if the return period starts when the gift was mailed to you or when it was ordered. You might get a gift on Christmas and think it has a 14-day return policy. However, the gift giver might have bought it a week earlier. So you really only have seven days.

Don't be shocked if asked to show ID. To discourage fraud, some stores will track and limit how many returns customers may make. I was in line making a return and a person in front of me was at the limit of three hundred dollars in returns for a year. The clerk kindly told her she was a little over her limit so she would let it slide but that was it for returns until the New Year.

Now consumers want more! Some 73% recently surveyed by MarketLive named "free returns" as a top promotion in determining their online purchasing.

Happy Holidays and I hope everyone had a successful shopping season!

Lyndsey Turner, Editor • Editor@RLA.org



OUR MISSION

Our mission is to educate and inform Reverse Logistics professionals around the world. RLA focuses on the reverse logistics processes across all industries. No matter the industry — High Tech, Consumer Electronics, Automotive, Medical/Pharmaceutical, Food and Beverage, Apparel, or other — our goal is to provide RL process knowledge to all industries. We want to educate everyone about the Reverse Logistics processes that are common to all industries and to

be a catalyst for innovation in developing and implementing new RL processes. We have been and will continue to provide our services to the industry at a moderate price.

Managing the latest information in services such as repair, customer service, parts management, end-of-life manufacturing, service logistics, field service, returns processing and order fulfillment (just to name a few) can be a little intimidating, to say

the least. Yet that is exactly what the Reverse Logistics Association provides through our membership services. We serve manufacturers and retailers in a variety of settings while offering ongoing updates on market trends, research, mergers and acquisitions and potential outsourcing opportunities to 3PSPs. We have gained the attention of 3PLs like FedEx, DHL, USPS and UPS. 3PSPs like Teleplan, Foxconn, Flextronics, Canon, Sony and Jabil, along with small- and medium-sized service

providers have found that RLA resources help advertise their services to a regional and global audience. OEMs like Microsoft, HP, RIM, and Sony, along with Retailers like Wal-Mart, Canadian Tire, Tesco and Best Buy all participate at our events. Through RLA Events, RLA Connect services and our publications — RL Magazine and the Weekly News Clippings email — we help OEMs, ODMs, Branded and Retail companies find service partners and solutions providers that were previously unknown to them.

Closing or Moving out of a Reverse Logistics facility?

At this very moment, RL companies are looking for facilities with infrastructure already installed. Let us help take the costly hassle out of having to restore your facility to its original state.

Looking to Expand or Relocate?

Let us help locate facilities with the RL structure already in place. Save the hassle and resources and find it now!

The entire process is secure.
All inquiries are kept confidential.

RLAconnect.com





Message from the Publisher

INNOVATION IS WHAT REALLY COUNTS

This month's cover story highlights ecoATM, a company with a goal to forever alter the current wasteful life-cycle of consumer electronics. Lofty goal, but that is exactly what they are doing. ecoATM inserted their kiosk systems between the consumer and 3rd party service providers which have resulted in increased product being returned, along with new streams of revenue for all. When it comes to the highest environmental standards ecoATM is a real eye opener! I think you

will enjoy the article.

Innovation is the key for improvement in every process; here are a few themes that really count;

The day after Christmas one of our employees purchased a product online, but she decided to pick it up at a Best Buy store in California. Best Buy's efficient department took only 8 minutes to pick up the product and that was with 5 people in front of her! There is no way this process was left open to chance, someone was monitoring the process.

Look at the value that club members find with companies like Costco and major retailers from Tesco in Europe to Walmart & Canadian Tire in North America. The constant innovation of simple process is at the mainstream of these mega companies.

I'm always amazed at a seemingly boring process that can be changed when new innovation is employed. The examples are a delight to remember;

- Fast Food (McDonalds)
- Over-night Package Delivery (FedEx)
- Subscription Services (Apple, Comcast, AT&T)
- Artificial Intrinsic Value of Products that Produce Revenue from Services/Cartridges (HP, Dish NetWork)

I'm sure all of you are getting ready for the volume of returns that will show up at your door steps in the next few days. I look forward to hearing about the best practices and solution that each of you have integrated into your process this past year at our Conference & Expo in Las Vegas on February 7-9th!

Gailen Vick - Executive Director
www.RLA.org



Board of Advisors

A Board of Advisors comprised of industry experts has been set up to monitor and assist the Reverse Logistics Association management team in making informed decisions. Advisors include:



Jack Allen – Scientific Atlanta, a Cisco Systems company

Jack Allen currently serves as Director of Global Supply Chain Processes at Scientific Atlanta. In his role, Jack is responsible for the creation, development and performance of Scientific-Atlanta's supply networks in the United States and internationally. His leadership and commitment to the recent success of several product and distribution center transfers, the development of a cross functional supply chain team and the development of an integrated forecasting/production planning/procurement supply chain planning process resulted in the improvements in Scientific-Atlanta's supply chain and significant annual savings for Scientific-Atlanta.



Christopher Gant – FedEx

Chris Gant is Director for FedEx Supply Chain Sales. He is responsible for all business development strategy and execution for both the FedEx SupplyChain Systems and FedEx Emerging Products Sales teams.

A 20-year veteran of transportation, logistics and electronic commerce, Chris has extensive expertise in the development and delivery of complex supply chain solutions for some of the world's largest corporations inclusive of both Forward and Reverse Logistics. He began his career with FedEx Ground (formerly RPS) in 1989 as an operations coordinator before joining the company's sales team in 1991. He quickly rose through the sales leadership ranks, holding the posts of area sales manager, district sales manager and senior national account manager for FedEx Ground.



Edwin Heslinga – Microsoft

Edwin is currently Director of Reverse Logistics Programs and Policies for Microsoft Devices. In his position Edwin is responsible for development and enforcement of policies surrounding returns and all related costs to the returns and is also involved in the Customer Satisfaction Continuous Improvement Council. Working with

Microsoft Call Center and the Microsoft Manufacturing Operations Edwin is driving the improvement of consumer satisfaction through agent assisted support and on-line support while managing the costs.

Prior to working for Microsoft Edwin worked for Jabil Global Services as the Director of IT Solutions, where he worked with various teams on the proposal and implementation of reversed logistics services for various companies at the Jabil factories around the world.



Charles Johnston – WAL-MART Stores, Inc.

Charles Johnston is Sr. Director of Reverse Logistics at the Bentonville Return Center, WAL-MART Stores, Inc. Chuck has been with WAL-MART for the past 14 years and his responsibilities include Returns, Imports, Exports, Tires and Printing and Mailing Distribution.



Hartmut Liebel – Jabil Global Services

Hartmut Liebel was named President, Jabil Global Services (JGS), in October 2004. He joined Jabil as Executive Vice President in July 2002 and was named Chief Operating Officer in October 2003.



Bernie Schaeffer – Motorola

Bernie Schaeffer is corporate vice president of Post Sales Support for Motorola Mobility. His global organization is responsible for providing both in- and out-of-warranty repair services to both consumers and carriers, provides consumer support services through call center, web access and on-device solutions, is the fulfillment engine for value-added services, manages asset recovery on equipment returns and is the source of information on product field reliability.



Doug Schmitt – Dell

Doug Schmitt serves as VP of Dell's Global Field Delivery organization with international responsibility for global break/fix

field engineers, same day service delivery, spare parts depots, parts planning, service logistics, repair, reverse logistics and Dell's global command centers. In addition to Doug's role as VP Global Field Delivery he has responsibility for Americas Support Services. Previously, Doug held executive and senior management positions in service and finance at Dell, Inc.

Doug came to Dell in 1997 from Sequent Computer Systems where he held various senior level finance positions. Before Sequent, Doug worked in the banking sector.



Tony Sciarrotta – Philips Consumer Electronics

Tony is Senior Manager of Asset Recovery at Philips Consumer Electronics North America. In this position, Tony leads returns reduction and entitlement initiatives for mainstream consumer electronics, and is also currently concerned with further driving the implementation of electronic registration for Philips products at leading retailers. Working with Philips Sales, Service, Marketing, and the Philips Business Excellence Group, Tony is helping drive several teams to improve the consumer experience and subsequently reduce the high rates of products returned with no defect found.



Susan Wackerman – Hewlett-Packard Company

Susan Wackerman is currently a Sr. Operations Manager in the Americas Supply Chain for HP's Imaging and Printing Group. In her position, Susan is responsible for the Recycling Operations for HP Americas and the Returns Operations / Remarketing for HP Americas Imaging and Printing Group. This includes supply chain development, reverse logistics, disposition and processing, refurbishment, resale, channel management. For Recycling Operations her product responsibilities cover all HP product categories including inkjet and laser printing, digital imaging, supplies, scanners, shared printing, PCs, notebooks, desktops, servers.

Complete biographies of Advisory Board Members are available from the RLA site at: www.ReverseLogisticsAssociation.org/company_advisory.php



Reverse Logistics Association Industry Committees



Industry Committees are set up to provide a standing forum for Reverse Logistics Professionals to meet on a regional and global basis and discuss common Reverse Logistics issues at the RLA Conferences & Expos. Industry Committees educate the industry on reverse logistics:

- “Best Practices”
- Consumer Satisfaction Issues
- Regulations on a Worldwide & Regional Basis
- Processes that can Reduce Costs

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-

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- Andrea Newman, Best Buy
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- Javier Villarreal, Ace Wireless
- Joe Walden, University of Kansas



Join today at www.RLA.org

Focus Committees & Regional Focus continued on to page 19

Sustainable Packaging Solution for Reverse Logistics Can Add Millions to Your Bottom Line.



by Paul Cannon, Ecospan

As the demand for consumer electronic devices continues to explode globally, so too does waste generation! Certainly, there is the electronic waste generated at the end of a device's life but there is also significant waste generated multiple times in the forward and reverse logistics processes for these same devices. As branded manufacturers, 3PL's and reverse logistics providers strive to lower costs, improve their bottom lines and answer the call for increased sustainability (that

is being demanded by their constituents), there is a "killer" application that provides benefits on all fronts. This solution is something that you can take advantage of today. In this article, I will be discussing several of the key enablers that exist in most reverse logistics processes today and the benefits to be enjoyed by you and your customers. Single use packaging for reverse logistics is extremely prevalent in most processes today. And, with the multiple

consolidation points, shipment to a repair depot and then ultimately back to the point of purchase or consumer, packaging is changed several times throughout a cycle, producing significant waste. And with some of the paper packaging that is used today, there is further damage being done to devices within this loop, often times increasing the cost of repair or resulting in the disposal of the device.

Bioplastic containers to ship consumer electronic devices

within a closed loop can provide an excellent solution for this application, creates a true "cradle-to-cradle" ecosystem and provide significant benefits including ROI, elimination of waste and dramatically lower carbon footprint. Key elements to delivering the benefits include:

- Bioplastic containers made with petroleum free materials
- Reuse of containers for multiple shipping cycles
- Closed loop process

• Regrind of containers back into raw material

BIOPLASTIC CONTAINERS

Let's start with a definition for bioplastic: a form of plastic derived from renewable biomass sources, such as vegetable oil, corn starch, pea starch, or microbiota, rather than fossil-fuel plastics which are derived from petroleum. There has been significant development over the past couple of years with bioplastics, some of which have enabled their use for durable

goods application. Bioplastic containers for consumer electronic goods will provide a protective shell for the devices and eliminate further damages in shipping. They are also rugged and designed to be reused many times over. Since they are made with bio-based materials, free from petroleum, these containers have zero material carbon footprint and the process to make them yields at least 30% less greenhouse gas emissions. An additional benefit of this is that the reduction in Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions can be

FIGURE 1: CUSTOMER EXAMPLE: \$8.95 MM ROI PLUS . .



Customer Example: \$8.95 MM ROI plus...

- **ROI calculation - annualized**
 - *Scenario A (before)*
 - Paper packaging (\$.75 per) utilized 3 times in a repair instance (\$2.25 per repair instance)
 - Annual units repaired: 5 million (15 million cycles)
 - Annual cost: \$11.25 million (\$2.25 x 5MM)
 - *Scenario B (after)*
 - Reusable bioplastic packaging – modeling 18 reuse cycles
 - Annual units repaired: 10 million (15 million cycles)
 - Annual cost: \$3.3 million (\$0.22 per unit per cycle)
 - Freight savings due to master packing changes: \$1 million
 - Total ROI: \$8.95 MM
 - All done with 0 Material Carbon Footprint !

submitted to your customers to help them with their scope 3 GHG reporting.

REUSE

There are some reverse logistics processes that necessitate the disposal of packaging up to 3 or 4 times in a single repair loop. By reusing bioplastic containers, you will realize a significant return on your packaging investment. While the unit cost of a bioplastic container will be more than the unit cost of paper packaging, most companies are seeing breakeven at some point in

the second shipping cycle. So, in less than 2 turns, they are seeing a return on their investment. With bioplastics, attaining more than 10 cycles is easily achievable. For clarity, an example is provided:

CLOSED LOOP PROCESS

Most reverse logistics processes deploy a closed loop system today! That means that while a device that needs to be repaired or refurbished enters the repair process and stays in that loop until it returns to the

retail outlet. Close integration of the delivery of bioplastic containers into the closed loop reverse logistics process is a critical success factor. Through this integration and operation in a closed loop system, it virtually ensures that all of the reusable containers are tracked and returned to the producer. Here is an illustration of closed loop systems:

There are also logistics processes that have the container with device end up with the consumer. There are also huge benefits to be derived through this type of solution and

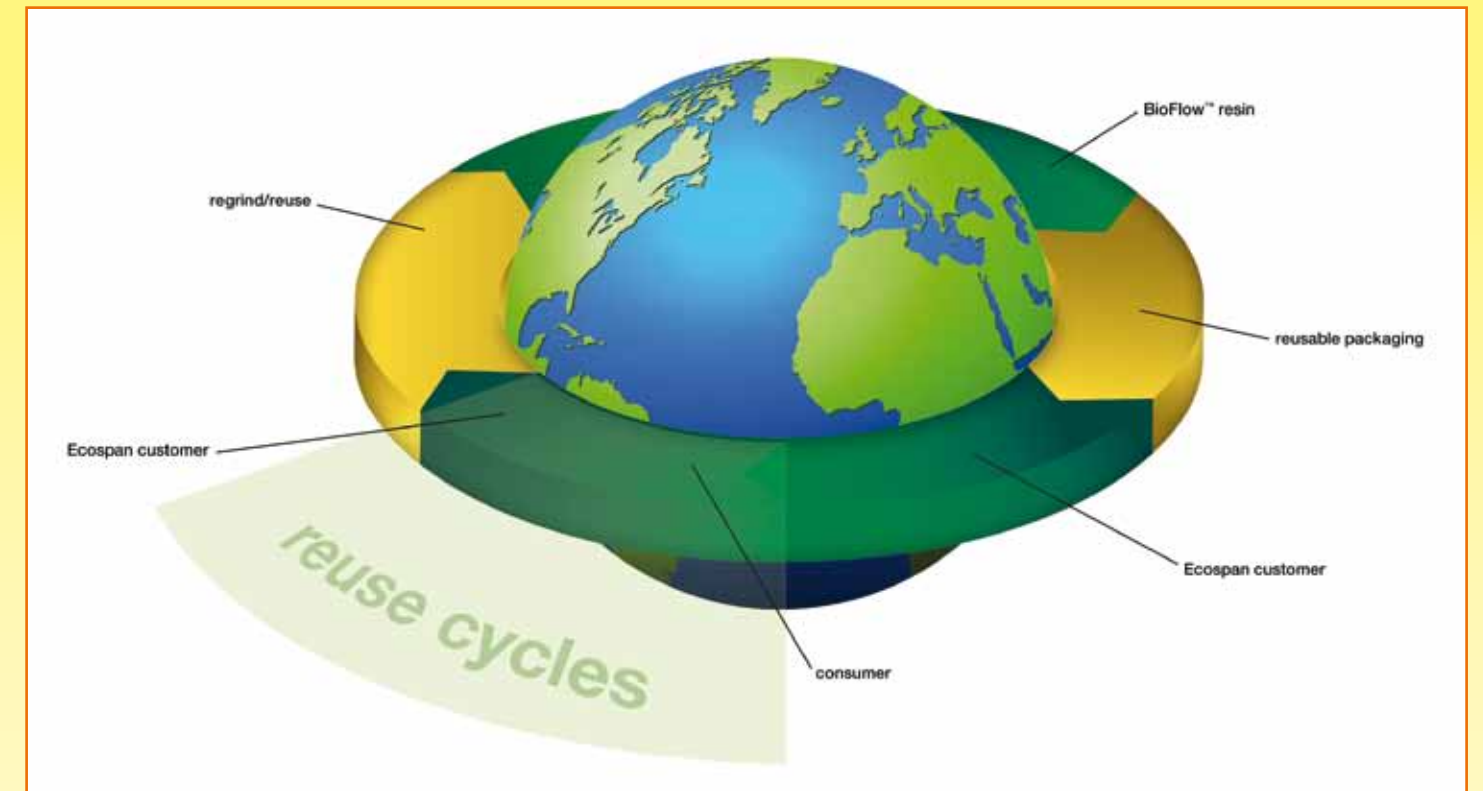


FIGURE 2: CLOSED LOOP SYSTEM

with just two turns, a ROI can be established. Additionally, by using bio-based materials, the eco-system stays in balance and with much shorter time to biodegrade versus petroleum-based plastics, carbon footprint is substantially improved. Companies deploying this today are engaging their marketing teams to make these sustainability messages pop so they can get maximum visibility and benefit.

REGRIND

Once the bioplastic container has reached the end of its

useful life in the closed loop, it gets returned to the producer. The producer will regrind the bioplastic container back into pellets used as raw material to make other products. Testing to date on bio-based plastics shows that the reusability factor of reground material is extremely high. You may have heard the term “cradle-to-cradle” and that is what we are referring to now. The end of life for these bioplastic containers is a regrind process that enables the material to be used in making other products hence, cradle-to-cradle – its end of life is the beginning of life for a new product. This is

the ultimate in sustainability. First, since the original product is made of bio-based material (mostly plants), once the farmers replant their crops (every 6 months), the eco-system stays in balance. And, whereas petroleum-based plastics do not biodegrade and are on the earth in some form forever, bio-based plastics will biodegrade in 1-2 years or less in the proper environment making them the ultimate material for sustainability.

The Sustainable Packaging Coalition is a project of GreenBlue, a non-profit

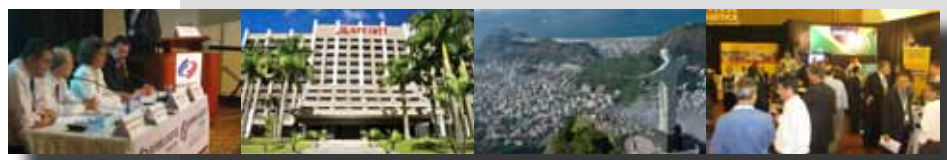
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SÃO PAULO BRAZIL**

**CONFERÊNCIA E EXPOSIÇÃO
SOBRE RLA NO BRASIL**

APRIL 17TH - 19TH, 2012

- Professionals worldwide will attend this event.
- Major OEMs & Retailers are looking for Third Party Service Providers that can manage their Reverse Logistics in this region.
- Be sure not to miss the pre-conference workshops that will be held on the 26th.
- Enjoy the fall season in the Brazilian sun!

- Participação de profissionais de todo o mundo inclusive da mérica do Sul e Central
- Principais OEMs e Varejistas estão procurando por empresas terceirizadas para prover serviços de gerenciamento e administração do processo de Logística Reversa nesta região.
- Não percam os cursos práticos que acontecerão durante a pré-conferência, no dia 26.
- Desfrute do maravilhoso sol Brasileiro de São Paulo em pleno Outono.



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FIGURE 3: CARDBOARD WASTE

organization working with the business world to make products more sustainable. They are an industry working group dedicated to a more robust environmental vision for packaging and has developed a definition of sustainable packaging. It provides a common vision and a framework for understanding activities directed toward improving packaging, and continues to inform the future vision of the coalition and its individual member-companies. This definition has been widely adopted throughout the packaging industry.

SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING:

- Is beneficial, safe & healthy for individuals and

- communities throughout its life cycle;
- Meets market criteria for both performance and cost;
- Is sourced, manufactured, transported, and recycled using renewable energy;
- Optimizes the use of renewable or recycled source materials;
- Is manufactured using clean production technologies and best practices;
- Is made from materials healthy in all probable end of life scenarios;
- Is physically designed to optimize materials and energy;
- Is effectively recovered and utilized in biological and/or industrial closed loop cycles.

©2011 GreenBlue's Sustainable Packaging Coalition
www.sustainablepackaging.org

While this definition is a bit aspirational, taking steps with a solution like reverse logistics with bioplastic containers ostensibly achieves all aspects

of sustainable packaging. As companies look to improve their carbon footprint and be “green”, this application is relatively risk free and delivers significant benefits on all three tenets of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) namely, People, Planet and Profit.

It is clear that companies will not move to be green just for the sake of being green. They will move in that direction if it can provide them with competitive advantage and if they can see a return on investment. The solution highlighted above for a packaging application in reverse logistics for consumer electronics provides significant benefits in sustainability, competitive advantage and return on investment.

RLM



Before joining Ecospan, Paul was Vice President of Marketing for several large corporations including BD Biosciences, IMS

Health and VWR International. Paul led cross-functional marketing teams, helping them “become” their targeted customer community by “spending a day in their life”. This provided an imaginative understanding of their unmet needs and helped build cross-functional understanding of them.

Read the Press

Could a closed-loop system be the solution to reducing waste?

20 December 2011—During my recent visit to India I was appalled by the amount of waste I saw everywhere. Piles and piles of plastic bottles, bags, Styrofoam, packaging material and other household trash can be seen as a permanent fixture. This reminded me of a profound point Paul Hawken has made in his book “The Ecology of Commerce.” “Packaging lasting for four hundred years that is kept on the shelf for two months for a product that we consume in two minutes is senseless.” [CLICK HERE](#)

Brightpoint and RIM Expand Supply Chain Services of BlackBerry Products

Indianapolis—20 December 2011—Brightpoint, Inc., a global leader in providing supply chain solutions to the wireless industry, today announced that its subsidiary Brightpoint Slovakia s.r.o. (“Brightpoint”) and Research In Motion Limited have entered into a preferred distribution agreement to expand the availability of BlackBerry smartphones and software in Bosnia, Albania, Macedonia and Serbia (“BAMS”). [CLICK HERE](#)

Asian Auto Production Fuels 3PL Boom, DHL Says

16 December 2011—Asian demand for new cars and increased sourcing of parts from China are fueling a third-party logistics boom in the continent, but the market is “very fragmented with lots of local players in domestic markets,” said a DHL executive. [CLICK HERE](#)

ROUND2 INC. Announces Agreement to be Acquired by Avnet Inc.

Austin, TX—15 December 2011—ROUND2 INC. and its parent Round2 Technologies, Inc. (“ROUND2”) announced today that it has entered into a definitive agreement to be acquired by Avnet, Inc. ROUND2 INC. is a leading eRecycling service provider offering a wide range of integrated asset disposition and technology recovery solutions at each of its US-based, R2 certified ReDistribution Centers. ROUND2

will become part of Avnet Integrated Resources, which provides reverse logistics and after-market services to the global technology industry. The acquisition has been approved by the Boards of Directors of both companies and is subject to the approval of the shareholders of ROUND2, as well as customary closing conditions. The transaction is expected to close on January 3, 2012. [CLICK HERE](#)

eBuilder Wins Prize in the EuroCloud Finals

15 December 2011—Competing against 27 other European cloud suppliers, eBuilder won the EuroCloud 2011 award for the “Best Cloud Case, Private Sector.” [CLICK HERE](#)

Philips Receives Fourth Consecutive VBDO Responsible Supply Chain Management Award

Amsterdam, The Netherlands—15 December 2011—The Dutch Association of Investors for Sustainable Development (VBDO) has, for the fourth time in six years, recognized Philips’ achievements in the area of Responsible Supply Chain Management. Philips is ranked first among the forty largest publicly-listed Dutch companies benchmarked for this award. [CLICK HERE](#)

HP Appoints New Leader of Enterprise Services, U.S. Public Sector

Palo Alto, CA—15 December 2011—HP today announced it has appointed Marilyn Crouther senior vice president and general manager of HP Enterprise Services, U.S. Public Sector region. [CLICK HERE](#)

On a Global Scale

14 December 2011—Martin Nielson established E-Waste Systems Inc. (EWSI) in late 2010 to acquire reverse logistics and electronics recycling companies with the ultimate goal of consolidating and professionalizing the electronics recycling industry. The London-based company acquired Tech Disposal, Columbus, Ohio, in mid-2011. More recently, EWSI announced two additional acquisitions, which will

expand its workforce by 75 employees and four senior executives, Nielson says. [CLICK HERE](#)

ServiceCentral’s Service Management Software 7.0 Hits the Market

Atlanta, GA—14 December 2011—Today ServiceCentral Technologies announces the launch of version 7.0 Service Management Software Suite. This latest release of ServiceCentral software includes a complete user interface redesign, a new RMA focused consumer facing web portal, and the expansion of ServiceCentral’s robust workflow customization capabilities. The software enhancements add to the level of control that administrators and system users have over system functionality and puts the power of process change firmly in the hands of business stakeholders. [CLICK HERE](#)

Inmar CEO: Finding local tech talent is challenging

14 December 2011—Winston-Salem-based Inmar Inc. announced in October that it plans to hire 120 workers by year’s end. But CEO David Mounts says in an interview that the company is having trouble finding the hires locally. [CLICK HERE](#)

Seagate Named Among “Best Companies To Partner With” By CRN

Cupertino, CA—12 December 2011—Seagate has been named one of the Best Companies to Partner With by CRN. The first annual “Best Companies to Partner With” list was unveiled at UBM Channel’s COMDEXvirtual event. [CLICK HERE](#)

Kewill Flagship Extends Its Leading Global Parcel Carrier Coverage with New Returns Services

14 December 2011—Kewill, a leading provider of solutions that accelerate global trade and logistics, today announced the general availability of Kewill Flagship 5.0, the industry’s leading multi-carrier, global, parcel shipping solution. [CLICK HERE](#)

WHAT IS THE REVERSE LOGISTICS ASSOCIATION?



At this year's RLA Conference & Expo in Las Vegas you may have noticed a television crew roaming around. The crew was there to capture response to the conference and make a video that displayed the essence of the Reverse Logistics Association. They were also filming segments for a new video series in RL Digital magazine called RLA Rewound. As you view it, you may see some familiar faces. A big thank you to everyone who took time out from their busy conference schedule to stop and talk with our reporter. We hope you will share the video with friends and colleagues as you introduce them to the association and explain what we do and how we can support them. Stay tuned, because we may be talking to you for the next series of videos for RLA Rewound.

Reverse Logistics Association Focus Committees



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 - Liz Walker, Image Microsystems

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India

- Chairperson - Sanjeev Kakar, Intarvo Technologies Ltd
- Ian Rusher, Cisco Systems



process is a hassle (Harris Interactive)

- 95% of customers say that they will likely shop with a catalog or internet retailer again if the returns process is convenient (Harris Interactive)

- 40% of shoppers don't buy online due to returns difficulty (Jupiter Research)

Here are some key metrics to support the return optimization business case:

- 85% of customers say they will stop buying from a retailer if the returns

- Customers who have their complaint resolved quickly

Reverse Logistics in eCommerce

by Craig Smith, Trinity Insight LLC

It's no secret that a positive post-purchase site experience delivered to a customer determines whether that customer will come back. Retailers must enhance the user experience prior to pressing the "buy" button but also focus on the post-purchase site experience to keep customer retention metrics at satisfactory levels. This is where many online retailers drop the ball; specifically with the processing and communication management of consumer returns. By incorporating new strategies to optimize this process, retailers can increase customer retention and add new revenue streams to the direct business.

RL Careers

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- Business Development Representative
- PEMCO Inside Sales
- Solutions Development Manager

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Best Buy - Corporate

- Field Services Director - East Coast

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Reverse Logistics Association

- Account Manager
- Accounting & Registration Manager
- Seminars Manager
- Office Manager
- Registration/Office Manager
- RLA Corporate Internship

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have a re-purchase intention rate of 82% (McKinsey)

The increased importance of online returns

Returns are an inevitable fact of online retail. As the depth of online product categories became apparent in the last three years, the importance of online return policies became painfully obvious. Provide a bad returns experience and you undoubtedly reduce the chance of a customer coming back for a repeat purchase.

For example, sectors such as high-end apparel, consumer returns reach levels as high as 20% and an efficient returns process is critical to overall success. Quicker inventory cycles and fluctuating retail prices make it important to not only process the return effectively for the consumer, but also get it in the warehouse quickly for re-sale.

REVERSE LOGISTICS SOLVE FUNDAMENTAL BUSINESS PROBLEMS

Retailers are now being proactive and turning these operational challenges into competitive advantages and incremental revenue streams. By investing in solutions that integrate key platform components and data, online retailers are able to offer self-service return capabilities to consumers.

A typical reverse logistics solution allows the consumer to more easily initiate the return by incorporating a pre-paid postage label within the box. This label



Money Talks



Canaccord Genuity Reiterates a 'Buy' on Brightpoint - Improves 2012 Logistics Visibility [Click Here](#)

Research In Motion Reports Third Quarter Fiscal 2012 [Click Here](#)

Newgistics Drops IPO Plans [Click Here](#)

CH Robinson Worldwide Stock To Go Ex-dividend Tomorrow [Click Here](#)

HDD shortage to affect Intel's revenue [Click Here](#)

Cisco overtakes HP in data center market [Click Here](#)

Pacific Adopts Innovative Methods For Growth [Click Here](#)

Seagate Thailand Invests 1 Billion Baht To Expand Its Operations In Thailand [Click Here](#)

Microsoft Declares Quarterly Dividend [Click Here](#)

can be integrated within the packing slip or it can be a separate stand-alone piece. Because the label generation is initiated by the warehouse management system, the label is able to capture key customer information for tracking purposes, both for CSR's and the end consumer.

The label provides one primary source of value to the customer - convenience. No post office trip is needed and retailers improve overall

customer satisfaction while facilitating the product return to the distribution center.

When consumers initiate returns through this process, retailers typically charge them a "handling fee". This fee is typically 20% higher than the postage charge that was provided by the reverse logistics service provider. This dollar spread, between what is charged to the customer and what has been billed to the retailer

for postage, generates direct and measurable profits for retailers.

IMPROVING COMMUNICATION WITH ONLINE CONSUMERS

A reverse logistics solution can drastically improve customer communication during the return process. Newgistics is a great example of a reverse logistics provider that has customer-centric

communication processes embedded in their overall solution.

After a return package is picked up from a consumer location, it is sent to a Newgistics hub for sorting and re-locating. During this process, there are strategic scanning mechanisms used to facilitate triggered and branded communication emails.

A consumer receives “retailer branded” email notifications when certain milestones are achieved in the return process, such as:

- Return receipt o (Ex. We have received your return and you should get a credit in the following days).

- Return Completion o (Ex. Your return has been processed)

Quick receipt of these emails enhances the confidence level of customers, reduces inbound customer service calls, and provides another value-added feature to boost the eCommerce relationship.

Your company is taking a great risk if it does not provide a great post-

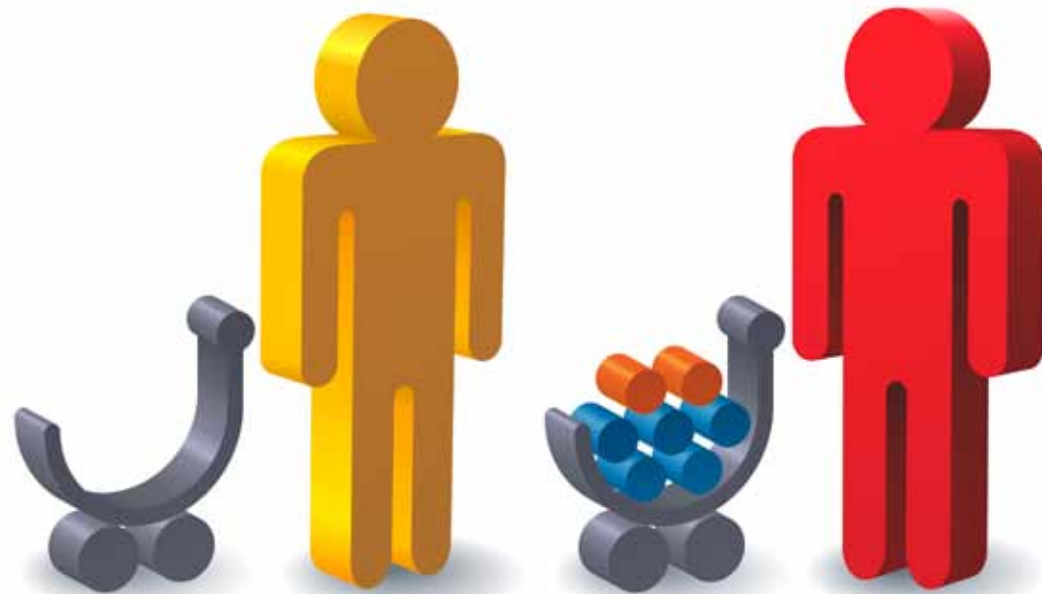
purchase site experience. Feel free to contact Trinity to learn more about this type of initiative and how we can help in discovery, scope, and implementation efforts.

RLM



Craig Smith is the founder and managing director for Trinity. He

oversees all active projects within the firm and his experience in eCommerce dates back over 9 years to when online commerce first gained mainstream adoption. Craig has developed eCommerce deliverables for some of America’s most recognized brands and has created planning documentation for many eCommerce business initiatives, including an in-store pickup project and reverse logistics system implementation.



is partnering with



January 10-13, 2012
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The Reverse Logistics Association is exhibiting at CES 2012 to promote its members and the solutions they can offer the consumer electronics industry. International CES hosts more than 120,000 attendees from around the world and your company can be in front of all of them!

- The Reverse Logistics Association will promote its member companies among the world’s leading electronics manufacturers, retailers and distributors.
- Current RLA Members can help to staff the RLA display to promote their company and the solutions they provide.
- Reverse Logistics Magazine will be distributed at CES 2012.

RLA Members help man the RLA booth #20442 in the Las Vegas Convention Center - South Hall

go to www.RLashows.org to reserve booth time

Jump on this opportunity to be a part of the world’s leading tech event. Contact the Reverse Logistics Association now at membership@RLA.org to advertise in RL Magazine and to ensure that your company’s RLA Membership is current.

RLA Membership



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- Become Involved with Industry Committees
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To Learn how to obtain these plus additional benefits through membership call **1-801-331-8949 x40** or visit www.ReverseLogisticsAssociation.org



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ecoATM's San Diego Headquarters

As part of a recent Southern California trip, Reverse Logistics Association President Gailen Vick spent some time at ecoATM's San Diego headquarters where he met with ecoATM CEO Tom Tullie and co-founder/CMO Mark Bowles and received a complete company overview.

Mr. Gailen and the Reverse Logistics Association are interested in ecoATM

because of the company's early success deploying the world's first fully automated e-cycling stations that pay consumers cash for their old electronics, particularly mobile phones and MP3 players. Mr. Gailen and Mr. Bowles spoke about ecoATM's unique advantages in collecting used devices directly from consumers which constitutes the first step in the reverse logistics chain for used

consumer electronics. (See www.ecoatm.com.)

Based in San Diego, Calif., ecoATM (www.ecoatm.com) is the first and only company to create an automated self-serve kiosk system that uses patented, advanced machine vision, electronic diagnostics, and artificial intelligence to evaluate and buy-back used electronics directly from consumers



ECOATM COLLECTED SCRAP

for cash or store credit. ecoATM's eCycling stations provide a convenient trade-in solution that electronically and/or visually inspect virtually any consumer electronic device, connects consumers in real-time with a broad worldwide secondary market to ensure best pricing, and pays consumers immediately in cash and/or store credit.

ecoATM now supports 36 kiosks located primarily in southern California. With plans for a nationwide rollout in 2012, ecoATM plans to deploy over 500 hundred kiosk in NFL cities beginning Q1 2012. ecoATM operates with an ambitious goal

to forever alter the current wasteful life-cycle of consumer electronics. ecoATM addresses this eWaste challenge through convenience and immediate

ECOATM BOXED SCRAP



incentives to consumers.

According to the Consumer Electronics Association, U.S. consumers collectively buy about 500 million new electronic gadgets each year. Upgrade cycles grow shorter every year as gadget manufacturers tempt consumers with new features. The average U.S. household now owns 26 different consumer electronic devices for a staggering total of nearly 3 billion devices in all, many of which are no longer in use. The majority of these devices are still in good working condition when consumers upgrade and retire them.

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Unfortunately, there are few practical options for consumers to responsibly resell or recycle these devices so that many still enter our landfills as toxic eWaste, the fastest growing segment of our national waste stream. To solve this problem, ecoATM turned to technology itself and has developed the ultimate solution to this vexing problem by providing

ECOATM BENCH CHECK



convenience, immediate financial incentive, and personal data removal for consumers. ecoATM trial locations have already collected tens of thousands of devices over the past year and paid out hundreds of thousands of dollars in return for recycling. About three-fourths of the recycled phones find second homes, and the rest are responsibly recycled.

Solving the eWaste problem on a broad scale requires the collaboration of the OEM's that make the devices, the retailers that sell them, and the consumers that buy and retire them. With \$25B in latent consumer assets available to mine and use as the incentive for all stakeholders in the chain, ecoATM will dramatically alter the current life-cycle of consumer electronics much the way 1970's redemption value laws on bottles and cans dramatically changed their life-cycle.

Given the enormous underserved worldwide demand for used mobile phones and other electronics, and the enormous and perpetually growing cache of these devices cluttering the homes of US consumers,

a rare opportunity exists to build an enterprise which benefits consumers, retailers, OEM's, and the environment alike.

ecoATM is committed to supporting the highest environmental standards in the industry and is actively involved in multiple standards and certifications bodies. ecoATM recently achieved R2 and ISO 14001 certifications and supports the principles of the Basel Convention. ecoATM's Environmental Policy is specifically designed to

preclude issues such as dumping of toxic materials into the developing world by establishing patented advance diagnostic systems, audits of downstream vendors and market coordination to minimize product speculation and to maximize product reuse. Should materials be determined to be only marginally re-useful, we proactively destroy them and reclaim their materials to ensure maximized benefits to the environment and human health.

In its infancy, ecoATM was

supported by EvoNexus, the incubator for early-stage high-tech companies, begun by San Diego's high tech industry group, CommNexus. Since then, ecoATM has been recognized by Popular Science, CONNECT, International Electronics Recycling Conference & Expo (IERCE), Green:Net, CES Innovations, and others.



Industry Events



CES 2012 - Las Vegas
January 10-13, 2012
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RLA Conference & Expo South America
April 17-19, 2012
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RLA Conference & Expo North America
February 7 - 9, 2012
[Click Here](#)

RLA Conference & Expo EMEA
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Technical Trends

Joule Thief

With the new year it is always useful to stop and take a moment to be a little more tactical in our thinking, if not outright strategic. To that end, take a moment and consider what will be the most important macro trends for the next 18-36 months. My short list of three are;

- Energy Harvesting
- True Information
- Broad Spectrum Sensing

These three trends are likely to be the most far reaching we have seen and will not only transform all of reverse logistics and your target markets, but will shape our notions of the intent and role for products we use every day. Let me highlight what these are and then connect the dots as to where these will take us.

Energy Harvesting AKA, Joule Thief: When I first really started to become aware of this was from a simple circuit that hardware hackers were using called a joule thief. The circuit is a very simple way to extract every remaining electron from a battery regardless of the voltage level it is at. It was driven by a desire for economy and a reduction in waste. Then I read a research report in early 2009 about a highway bridge analysis system that was developed with HP. The system was wireless and could be permanently attached or even embedded into the concrete and required no power. All the power it needed came from the vibration of the bridge itself. Now technology has progressed to the point where there is an entire spectrum of energy harvesting methods. These energy harvesting methods include; heat, vibration, solar, magnetics and even blood sugar. If all

of this sounds familiar, it should. Recall the watches that date back to the late 20s that would 'wind themselves' from your motion. That is the same approach, just designed to collect electrical rather than mechanical energy. It is also worth noting that the other side of the technology behind this is the lower and lower power that is required by modern electronics. With each passing day the required power needed for anything continues to be reduced. Not only does this save weight and reduces heat, it also reduces cost. So we have on one side, required power being reduced and on the other side accelerating technology to self generate power. At some point very soon this technology will combine in a widespread manner then begin to accelerate. At first glance you may say that this is no big deal. You exchange a battery for more circuitry. What was really gained? In fact a great deal. Batteries store electronics using physics that are difficult to scale in terms of energy density. In addition when you move to materials that have greater energy density there are other dangers, risks and complications. But, when you move to circuitry that captures energy in a perpetual stream, we then have a technology roadmap that becomes a key technology enabler with market changing outcomes.

True Information: Today we are beleaguered by data. Data arriving at a rate so enormous it's uselessness is virtually assured. By the time you find an acceptable process to analyze the data, the value is gone or diminishing. What we want, demand and need as surely

as fresh air is a method to distill data into true and useful information that is adaptive, consistent and can interface well with humans. The first pass at analytics tools that hint at this future is Siri from Apple. If you think of Siri as a front-end to a machine in the cloud that can be scaled and customized to your needs you start to get a sense of the real power behind these types of tools. Adaptive analytics are being enabled by a combination of new data tools that can distill data with multiple attribute vectors and will take us to what IBM calls, Learning Systems. Not only will the analytics process differing data attributes but also differing data types. For example the analytics for video analysis differs from the analytics to examine geo-code data and that differs from the analytics for business data. What is happening today is that we have information-engine technology that can seamlessly integrate analytics from a wide range of sources and route that refined result to a front end like Siri. The single best example I can provide is this-imagine a Bloomberg terminal that is voice controlled and can learn what you are looking for across a broad range of data sources. These will include open sources you may not even think of as information today; Web Cams, You Tube, Twitter, social media, news, etc... In addition to sources that are 'less open'; web traffic, IP packet routing, query terms, etc... I encourage you to download and read the Research Summary from IBM regarding Learning Systems. This is a great primer to see what tools we have in place today and the direction of developments.



Broad Spectrum Sensing: It is clear that we have quite a few sensing and data pathways integrated into the average wireless device. But have you really consider how much information we can easily collect today. This is my short list of top items and short outline of each;

- **Location:** Mandated by 911 and enabled by GPS. With the differential technology now in place, the accuracy is so great that we use this to land aircraft and make property surveys.
- **Acceleration:** Tells you not only the orientation of the device, but a host of other data including speed, height, location, vibration and impact. Accelerometer data can also do some interesting things related to your health. It can monitor your gait and from that infer your; weight, limb function, surface you are walking on and even an injury.
- **Temperature:** This is on every device today with the main function being to monitor the batteries, but is that all?
- **Light:** This one is big. With the camera you can see color, intensity, identify faces, writing, with pattern matching there are even databases that will tell you your location from a photo. In addition you can monitor IR and UV radiation, scan bar-codes and read medical tests.
- **Radio path loss:** This easy piece of data that can tell us a great deal about the weather conditions.
- **Oxygen and pulse:** At any Walgreens you can purchase a \$40 sensor that clips onto your finger. It will tell you your pulse and oxygen saturation rate in a non-invasive manner. What if that was integrated into your phone (especially since all the components are already there)?
- **Voice:** In addition to voice response, you can also infer stress, pain, emotional state and deception from voice analysis.
- **Interactive data:** A guy I work with was incredulous after learning his daughter sent over 100,000 text messages in one month. Imagine

what information could be extracted from this data? In addition since the data is already in text form, the analysis and conversion to information is almost trivial.

Connecting the Dots: With these technologies in mind what lies ahead? First, the second thought accessory add-on called a Bluetooth headset will move to be the leading product. We will still have handsets but they will have a different value. They will be more appliance and less the main interface device. In the future when you think of a phone you will think of an earpiece or an earpiece integrated into eyewear. We have a host of regulations that will very soon outlaw all eye-based interaction with a cell phone. What will fill that cavity is voice interaction and control of a much smarter personal assistant type of functionality. Functionality that will be able to read the text to you and then just by hearing your ‘sigh’ be able to suggest just the right response. Also, with energy harvesting and no need for charging why would you take your earpiece off? If the earpiece is in all the time your automated and well connected personal assistant can wake you when there is a severe weather warning in your area, of when it hears your child crying out in the next room. Since you really don’t need to ever take your earpiece out, why don’t we go ahead and track you vital signs (temperature, pulse, O2 saturation) and how much you toss and turn at night. The earpiece microphone can even monitor your snoring/breathing and alert you if you have a sleep apnea attack. Of course all of this data will be logged for your physician and insurance carrier to review.

These health focused uses will be of major significance. First because key demographic groups are aging, second is that these technologies will help drive costs down. Consider this, one of the fastest growing segments of personal health care is centered around diabetes control. The monitoring of glucose levels to balance medication is critical to lower costs and overall wellness. But look at the invasive methods we use. There are

already scientists using optical methods to perform this monitoring by measuring metabolism from sites near you eyes and nose. Add the ability to monitor other vital signs over long periods of time and you completely transform a problem that incurred worldwide costs of \$376B /Yr in 2010. This is spending for just one single disease. The value proposition is inescapable.

As you can guess there is much more ahead of us. We have a level of integration and transformation upon us that will change what devices and Customers you target. Also, let me note that IBM released their 5 in 5 list for 2012. This article was noted and prepared before the release of the IBM report. But interesting to note how we are both looking in the same directions.

RLM

Bridge Data Collection: http://claws.clarkson.edu/attachments/005_Self-powered%20v.12%20-%20preprint.pdf

Adaptive Analytics: <http://almaden.ibm.com/colloquium/resources/Future%20of%20Data%20Dietrich.PDF>

MIT Batteryless Energy: <http://web.mit.edu/mitei/research/spotlights/batteryless-energy-harvester.html>

Cost of Diabetes http://www.idf.org/sites/default/files/Economic_impact_of_Diabetes.pdf

Brain Tunnel (also tracks metabolism and glucose levels) <http://www.brainunnelgenix.com/products%20pipeline.html>

IBM 5 in 5 <http://asmarterplanet.com/blog/2011/12/the-next-5-in-5-our-forecast-of-five-innovations-that-will-alter-the-landscape-within-five-years.html>



Underwood is Director, Supply Chain for Elbit Systems of America, a leading provider of high performance products and system solutions focusing on the defense, homeland security, commercial aviation and medical instrumentation markets.

Returning Thoughts

TIME FOR SOME REVERSE LOGISTICS SOFTWARE

Looking for cash? Look at your product returns. Too many companies are still fumbling through reverse logistics processing without adequate software systems to collect data, supply visibility or provide the decision capabilities necessary for the special requirements of processing product returns.

Despite good intentions and a number of good reverse logistics software and IT solutions, the majority of manufacturers and retailers still lack good Reverse Logistics Management Software Systems. Few companies realize a small investment in reverse logistics can yield big cash and profit results by reducing returns, reducing logistics and processing costs, reselling returned goods for higher prices and improving customer service.

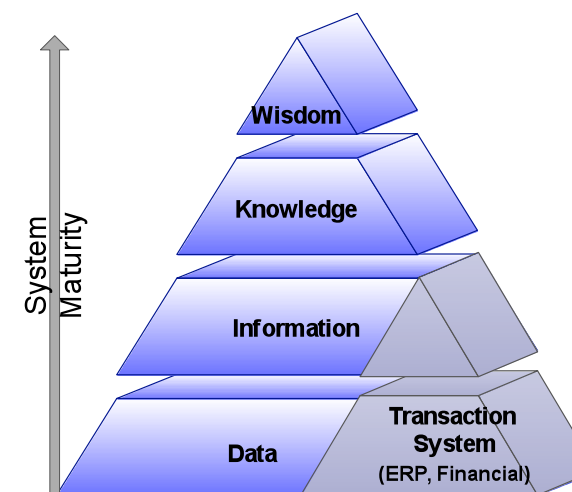
The real question is... can you afford not to have one?

Beyond Data Collection to Information, Knowledge and Wisdom

Reduce returns, resell returned

items for more cash, validate credit requests, reduce logistics and handling... The list of opportunities goes on and on and on. Reverse Logistics is full of low hanging fruit – easy money and significant cash available to companies who use processes and systems to:

- gather Data to document and understand your returns
- generate Information by using the



A Reverse Logistics System vs. a Transaction Based (ERP or financial) System

- data to understand relationships
- collect Knowledge by analyzing and measuring the information
- create Wisdom by asking questions, developing conclusions, determining actions

While most transactional ERP, financial or manual systems can satisfy some of the basic data collection requirements of returns transaction processing, specialized Reverse Logistics Management Software System will enable an organization to gather all the necessary data and then go far beyond data collection by providing the ability to create information, knowledge and wisdom from the transactional data.

ERP vs. Reverse Logistics Systems: Fill the Gaps, Automate and Provide Decision Tools

Many companies start looking at Reverse Logistics Systems to fill the gaps not addressed in the corporate ERP systems. A Reverse Logistics system will cover the gaps, provide tools for visibility, automate processes and make decisions through all the unique steps, processes and activities necessary in the complex life of a returned item, from RMA return request, through receiving, processing and then to final resale and conversion to cash. Some key features of Reverse Logistics software are:

- Data - captured in all processes at all levels for analysis

and decisions such as serial number capture upon receipt or failure analysis. All touches and data entry are time, date and user stamped for further analysis and specific to returns processing.

- Visibility – Visibility should be available internally, as well to partners and customers as required. For example:

- a full history in real time of an item by serial number through each stage of processing.
- Inventory visibility for RMA creation – a customer service rep should have visibility to all refurbished or new replacement inventory available as well as any backorder information or substitution options while on the phone with a customer.
- RMA status – a customer should be able to look up the status of an RMA, such as the defective has been received, but replacement has not yet shipped

Real Time Decision Tools and Rules – rather than relying on manual spreadsheets, or out of date transaction data or day end reports, real time decision tools can streamline production, reduce touches or identify problems. The decision tools or rules are typically configurable to match your business or best practices. For example:

- Receipt Validation - a shop floor receiving process check to ensure a unit is valid for credit by matching all items present. Serial number validation can ensure the unit is in warranty when validated again a warranty database.
- Disposition Automation – a shop floor disposition process closely streamlined into the receiving process will reduce touches

and handling by instructing the receiver where to put the item after it has been scanned into receiving, such as:

- Scan -> decision -> item is obsolete -> put away to scrap;
- Scan -> decision -> too much inventory -> put away to be harvested for parts;
- Scan -> decision -> enter visual defect -> scratched screen -> decision -> defect indicates level 2 repair required -> put away to be shipped to repair partner

Directed Processing – a unit has just been tested and the system indicates to the user the next step or station required based upon the inputs of the test results. The steps can be configured or modified as required by a repair manager based on the special requirements to refurbish or repair each product.

- Time Lines – a full history of turnaround time from rma creation, through the return cycle to final disposition cash collection. Speed can be a critical factor to a higher resale value and needs to be monitored at all stages, not just through the repair cycle.
- Alerts and a Dashboard – real time, configurable alerts and indicators to identify and highlight issues requiring attention. For example: early warning on an excessive number of defects
- Data Sharing – sending and receiving data about the RMA's, Receipts, inspection, disposition, failures, test and repair activities is critical to managing and improving your Reverse Logistics, whether the activities

are performed in house or with a 3rd party service provider.

- Business Intelligence for Reverse Logistics – yes, you likely have lots of BI and reporting tools, but they need to be specific to your Reverse Logistics operations, so you can understand and plan to improve your operations and processing.

Get a Best Practice Reverse Logistics Software System

Reverse Logistics Systems are designed to work within your organization and with your partner organizations by enabling you to centralize all data, decision rules and tools. They are also designed based upon the best practices, experiences and case studies of many companies. Specialty Reverse Logistics systems have matured well beyond the gathering of data for basic return transactions. If you have not done so already, it is time to get educated about the Reverse Logistics software systems available and start recapturing cash for your company. Your CEO will thank you!



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Editor - Reverse Logistics Professional Report

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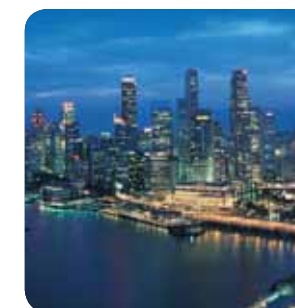
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