



Reusables deliver cost savings and improved sanitation for personal care industry

By supplying product in reusable containers to a customer in the personal care industry, TRI-K Industries demonstrated its leadership and increased its business with the customer.

TRI-K Industries specializes in the sourcing, manufacturing, and distribution of quality ingredients and technologies for the global cosmetic and personal care industries. While visiting a customer site, Jack Fallon, Vice President of Operations and Sales, noticed they were using reusable liquid containers on their production line.

"The plant manager said the totes were very sanitary and provided better stacking and storage. That led me to explore the idea of providing our product in a reusable container to another one of our customers. Taking this innovative approach gave TRI-K an edge as a supplier and showed that we are better and smarter in delivering product. The customer liked the reusables so much that they increased their business with us," said Fallon.

MEASURABLE IMPROVEMENTS:

- 10 percent cost savings achieved through greater fill weights and full utilization of truck space
- Reduced return freight costs
- Lower container costs
- Improved sanitation and reduced possibility of microbial contamination
- Sharp reduction in warehouse space requirements
- Better inventory management
- Reduced carbon footprint



Today, TRI-K is sending its surfactants to its customer, a final formulator, in the CHEP Pallecon 315 container. The 315-gallon collapsible liquid container offers the largest weight capacity of any plastic collapsible liquid container (3,307 lbs.) for shipping and storage, combined with best-in-class liquid liners. TRI-K has increased its fill weights by as much as 200 pounds per unit, cutting costs by reducing the number of containers needed to move the same amount of product. The stable interlocking features of the containers also allow TRI-K to stack filled units higher than standard totes.

Most suppliers in the personal care industry send their products to their customers in one-way 55 gallon plastic drums or in rigid one-way totes. Both options present storage and disposal problems. After the contents of the totes or drums are emptied, the plant must store them until someone comes to haul them away. For this particular customer, TRI-K sent its product in one-way totes.

"The customer had complained that using the standard one-way tote created disposal and housekeeping problems at their plant. The empty totes would accumulate and take up a lot of valuable storage space. They can also fall over and create housekeeping issues," said Fallon.

The CHEP container collapses easily and can be stacked securely 15 units high at the customer site. The reduced footprint makes it easier for TRI-K to store collapsed empty totes at its site until they are ready to fill and ship; they can now store five times as many collapsed containers in the same space as one rigid one-way tote. TRI-K has also gained freight

savings on the return trip, and can better manage its inventory of containers because, unlike its one-way totes, each unit is barcoded and scanned upon departure or arrival.

Disposable liners meet sanitation requirements

Re-use of the containers is made possible by their sanitary disposable liners. With the CHEP container, the customer empties the contents supplied in the container by TRI-K, removes the plastic bag, and disposes of it.

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"There is a high level of regulation in the personal care industry. We don't reuse containers because of the possibility of micro contamination. We take great care to ensure product integrity," explained Fallon.

TRI-K and its customer also value the fact that they have reduced their carbon footprints.

"For TRI-K, reusables support the sustainability and waste reduction initiatives of our parent company. And our customer was delighted with the environmental benefits, too. A lot of companies in the personal care industry are talking about waste reduction, but not everyone knows how to go about it.

Now we are presenting this model to other customers. We can show them that reusables have a much smaller carbon footprint, are less expensive, and can meet their product's safety requirements," said Fallon.