



VYCOM[®]

Recycling Program Finds Success at Signage & Graphics Exhibitions

In a circular economy, plastics will be recycled again and again, to eliminate waste and the continual use of resources. Vycom has been committed to stewarding sustainable practices for many years and works with leading recycling and performance plastics companies to ensure materials are collected and repurposed, and do not end up in landfills.

Announced in late 2019 for the signage and graphics market, the Vycom Recycling Program collects rigid PVC, acrylic, and PE products for recycling into high-performance plastics products. Vycom targeted this segment because it saw the growing need in a market that was previously served by third-party material gatherers who would offshore the recycling component. Global economic forces resulted in countries such as China and Malaysia refusing imported shipments, and U.S.-based companies had to find alternatives to answer the perpetual question of “What can I do with my used signage and scrap?” This is a conundrum encountered by not only providers and fabricators but also exhibitors who use these materials during trade shows, as well as the organizers of the events.

Officially launched in 2020, the Vycom Recycling Program representatives worked with print service providers and fabricators as well as plastics distributors – which were considered essential businesses during the pandemic and were busy producing health and safety signage – to collect scrap, trim, and waste from the production process. In the post-pandemic era beginning in 2022, the Vycom Recycling Program was rolled out for on-site collection at trade shows, which are notable users of rigid PVC and acrylic for short-term signage.

At these shows, Vycom placed collection bins in select exhibitors’ booths to collect scrap and trim generated during their demonstrations. The company collaborated with the official show services providers to facilitate the collection of the materials. The program has proven to be a welcome service for exhibitors and show organizers.

MORE THAN 8,000 POUNDS OF MATERIAL COLLECTED

As of October 2023, the current tally of material collected is more than 8,000 pounds from four shows in less than two years. “There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the recycling program, not just from other exhibitors, but from attendees as well,” said Kevin Duffy, Vice President at Vycom. Everyone that visited seemed passionate about sustainability and were pleased to learn about this program’s immediate availability to begin recycling their scrap generated in production and used signage.”

Support from show organizers and show services companies is also positive. “As our industry focuses on sustainable practices, so has ISA International Sign Expo,” said Kyle Craig, Manager, Industry Relations at the International Sign Association. “While we’ve tried other recycling options for the show in the past, Vycom has made this process easy. Seeing what normally would have gone into a landfill adapted as TimberTech decking has been exciting for us and our exhibitors and we look forward to continuing to grow this in the future.”

“Freeman is excited and encouraged about the results of the acrylic and PVC recycling program at the ISA International Sign Expo and is hopeful it will grow next year and be the model for similar programs at other events,” said Lauren Bergloff, Sr. Sustainability Specialist at Freeman. “Not only did we keep waste out of the

landfill, but we also saved resources by reducing the need for virgin materials in future products. We were proud to lead alongside Vycom and ISA using a lot of collaboration, hard work, and dedication to successfully coordinate and run the innovative program.”

“At the ISA International Sign Expo, we spoke to several potential new exhibitor partners who are keenly interested in participating in future programs at future shows,” said Duffy. “Expect to see us collecting more material for recycling and reuse.”

SUPPORT FROM PARTICIPATING EXHIBITORS & INDUSTRY INFLUENCERS

The program is provided at no charge to participating exhibitors and has garnered praise from them. “We really appreciate how the program works at the show, with labeled bins delivered to our booth, and the cleaning crew’s efficient monitoring and collection of the scrap,” said Raum Divarco, General Manager at Cutworx USA. He went on to mention that the company is currently developing a sustainability program and the Vycom Recycling Program will fit well into their overall objective to reduce landfill waste, particularly at signage and graphics exhibitions that are notable users of short-term rigid PVC and acrylic. “We look forward to continuing our partnership in sample production and recycling,” said Divarco.

“At Mimaki, we are committed to developing eco-friendly printing systems and consumables that help our customers meet their environmental goals,” said Vernon Jones, Senior Manager, Marketing & Events at Mimaki USA. “We are proud to have supported Vycom in promoting its PVC Recycling Program at the ISA International Sign Expo 2023 and previous shows, to ensure that rigid PVC material that we use in promoting our Mimaki UV-LED flatbed printers does not end up on a landfill. The Vycom PVC Recycling Program supports our pledge to offer the cleanest and greenest products on the market today. This is an awesome program and Vycom is leading the charge. I wish more partners would participate and follow Vycom’s lead.”

It’s also caught the attention of industry influencers. Cited several times by Richard Romano, Wide-Format & Signage Section Editor at WhatTheyThink, “... sustainability continues to be a concern – not just materials but overall business practices, especially end-of-life issues: how do you sustainably discard/recycle old signage and display graphics? I like to reference the Vycom Recycling Program, which collects display graphics waste and disused signage.”

ABOUT THE VYCOM RECYCLING PROGRAM

The Vycom Recycling Program is designed to take back and recycle printed and unprinted rigid PVC and acrylic sheets, as well as scraps and drops from finishing and fabricating. The program is intended for users of rigid PVC, acrylic, and PE products – in coordination with authorized distributors for drop-off or collection – to recycle used signage and scrap. This material is shipped to recycling facilities in the U.S. and used to manufacture high-performance plastics products, ensuring they do not end up in landfills.

The Vycom Recycling Program is a win-win-win for all – the print service provider/fabricator, the customer, and the environment. With the opportunity to keep tens of millions of pounds of signage and graphics waste out of landfills each year, Vycom is leading the way in revolutionizing the industry to create a more sustainable future.

The Vycom Recycling Program is a win-win-win for all – the print service provider/fabricator, the customer, and the environment. With the opportunity to keep tens of millions of pounds of signage and graphics waste out of landfills each year, Vycom is leading the way in revolutionizing the industry to create a more sustainable future.



“The [Vycom Recycling Program] is an awesome program and Vycom is leading the charge. I wish more partners would participate and follow Vycom’s lead.”