



The
global
retail
agency

Choose to reuse

Extend the life of your retail
display to support the
circular economy

Introduction

In a society where we have become accustomed to a throw away culture, the mantra of reduce, reuse, recycle has never been more important when it comes to securing the future of our planet. There have been serious campaigns to encourage consumers to avoid single-use plastics with Government's introducing charges on plastic shopping bags. You only have to watch some of the current nature documentaries or keep up with the latest headlines to see just how finely balanced the planet is. Now the government has introduced the Right to Repair Act in recognition that we all need to make appliances last longer and throw away less. When it comes to the retail sector, building sustainability into the design process is relatively simple but does require some additional thought. In a circular economy where we aim to significantly reduce the amount of waste created, brands should be considering how they can maintain and repair items that are used in retail to extend their life and avoid a single use culture. Once these options have been exhausted then brands should be considering the different ways that materials can be re-used.

Reusing a product at the end of the life it was designed for has become commonplace - whether it's using old tyres to make plant pots or simply up-cycling old furniture - there is very often something that you can do to reuse a product effectively. It's no different in retail and while the focus usually falls on the products themselves, little thought is given to the displays behind the products. All too often this part of the sustainability cycle gets forgotten in the rush to take down old displays and replace them with something new and exciting. With our [2019 Insight Report](#) highlighting that only 41% of brands address sustainability at end of life, this report looks at why it's important to design with end of life in mind and how you can consider different ways of reusing materials by either refurbishing, repurposing or regifting.



There are a number of benefits associated with reusing component parts in retail displays

- prolonged life / longevity of display fixtures or parts
- optimise return on investment in initial display / parts
- cost savings and reduction of raw materials in manufacturing process
- saving of energy usage through production - reduced greenhouse gases and impact of; 1) manufacturing and 2) transporting new fixtures to / from stores
- reduction of waste going to recycling, incineration and landfill

Each of these benefits not only enhance a brand's sustainability credentials but also have a considerable positive effect on both the environment and on cost savings. There are three different elements to reusing a product, each one with its own unique benefits. Refurbish, repurpose and regifting are the three areas that we will investigate in a little more depth, showing you examples of what we consider to be 'best in class' as well as some concepts that could have a transformative effect on the retail sector.

Refurbish

What is it:

Taking a display that is already in use and refurbishing the original material so that it looks like new. The refurbish process can be completed while in store or a central hub and involves repairs, testing, updates and cleaning.

Benefits:

Reusing the same materials extends their lifespan and avoids manufacture of new displays reducing environmental impact as well as saving cost. All work is carried out by specialists with minimal disruption to the brand or store. Brands could also use this opportunity to expand their fixture estate to secondary retailers.

Best in class: Veja Store, NY

Taking it further than just a single item, Veja is an example of how to sensitively refurbish a store from initial concept through to the final result. This shows how the refurbish process can be carried out to end up with a store that attracts customers and reflects the brand values. This can actually be taken one step further. During store closures, fixtures and fittings can be removed carefully and repurposed in other stores. This helps to eliminate the waste and is a positive way of treating the situation to the benefit of the retailer.



Photos courtesy of https://www.veja-store.com/en_uk/

Refurbish Case Study – 100% | GoPro

The Challenge

GoPro requested for installation teams to remove gondola fixtures from store due to the age and condition of the displays.

They briefed for the fixtures to be updated with a new lockbox module and repairs to be made before the refurbished units were distributed to new retailers.



The Solution

100%'s trained installers removed the displays from stores across the UK and the fixtures were returned to a central warehouse.

Skilled technicians carried out remedial works including; replacing damaged parts, minor repairs and touch-up's, functionality testing, updates to latest planogram, cleaning and packaging for distribution.



The Results

100% re-distributed the units across the world and GoPro agreed new spaces in stores with retailers in other markets (primarily USA).

The displays were re-installed and the brand continued to support the fixtures with refresh and repair services to prolong their lifespan.

The materials were reused and diverted from waste and the project saved the client money and precious virgin resources by avoiding new manufacturing.



Repurpose

What Is It:

Taking an existing display and making something entirely new from it. This principle can also be applied to the packaging of the item.

Benefits:

Extending the life of display or packaging materials in a different format can reduce costs by creating something fresh and new, from something that has served its primary purpose. All work is handled by experts with minimum in-store disruption. In addition to enhancing the sustainability credentials of the brand, this initiative benefits other communities and reduces waste.

100% Concept: Converting Displays Into School Furniture

Outside of the developed world, school furniture is not a given. One excellent way of repurposing displays is to work with intermediaries who help to find schools in developing countries that are in desperate need of school furniture. Benches and tables can be created with minimal effort from many of the displays you see in store. This approach helps to minimise waste, enhances CSR goals and provides much needed resources for children in developing countries.

Best In Class: Levi's & The Valley Group

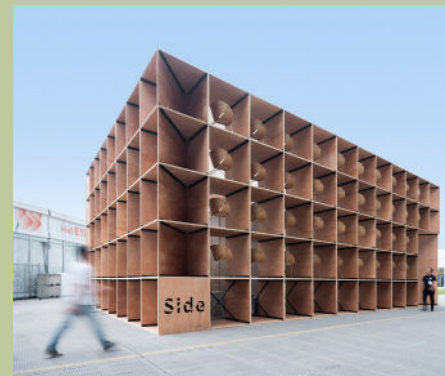
A really good example of this type of principle in retail is with Levi's and its window graphic displays. Levi's partnered with The Valley Group & Nowa on a project that saw them repurpose old window graphics into wallets. This example demonstrates how thinking about the use of a product at the end of the life it was designed for means that it can be successfully repurposed into something entirely new and even sold to reduce the initial cost outlay.



Photos courtesy by The Valley Group & Levi's

Best In Class: Side Furniture

An additional example by Rooi Design and Research for Side Furniture illustrates the principle of designing with the end in mind. They developed an easily dismantled temporary exhibition structure which once the design had fulfilled its purpose, the materials were repurposed into furniture for community spaces in China – a fantastic example of giving a product a new lease of life after its intended purpose.



Photos courtesy Feng Shao and Ming Chen from dezeen.com

Repurpose case study – 100%

The Challenge

Our clients latest Wall Bay fixtures arrived in 39 large wooden crates, approximately 3 tonnes of packaging material.

Rather than just becoming waste material – we wanted a solution that would give the wooden crates a new life and benefit others whilst also saving the client money.



The Solution

The crates have been donated to Emerge / Touch Wood for repurposing.

Emerge are a North west based recycling and up-cycling company that work alongside other charities across education and training.

The charity rescue the wood, reducing the need to cut down virgin forest and help disadvantaged people gain the confidence and skills needed to live a richer life.



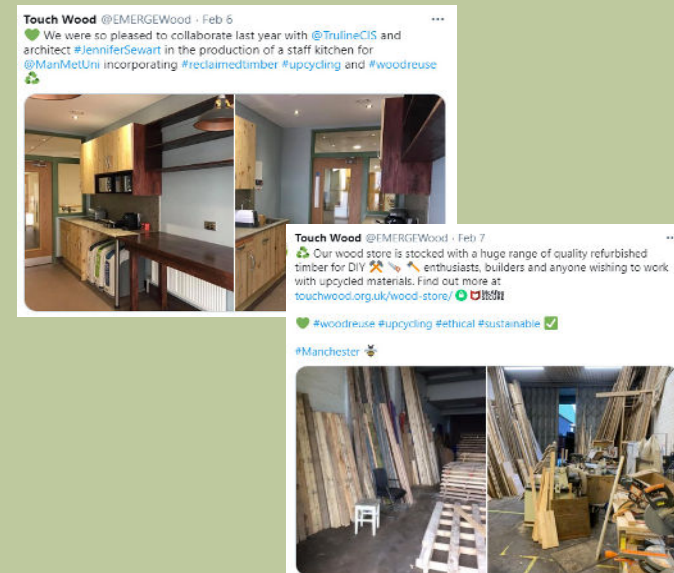
The Results

The crates were diverted from waste and avoided possible incineration or landfill.

The project supported a local Manchester based charity.

The wood will be re-used in local projects and is for sale in Emerge's Wood Store.

The End-Of-Life project saved the client £566 on project and disposal costs.



Regifting

What Is It:

Perhaps the most charitable of the ways to think about re-utilising retail display at the end of its designed for life is to regift. This is about taking demo products, display components or materials, removing logos and other branded elements and then gifting these materials to charities and organisations that need support.

Benefits:

The real beneficiaries of regifting are the end recipients. This could be schools, charities, local community groups and other Not for Profit organisations. For the brands, the benefit here is really being able to put CSR policies into action and ensuring that products that would otherwise be destroyed are regifted to support the wider brand promises. Because 100% can facilitate the regifting process, brands do not need to spend hours finding the right destination for their products. 100% has access to a wide network of charitable organisations and will research the most appropriate recipients whilst considering which charities best align to brand values.

Best In Class: Dixons

Dixons joined forces with Carphone Warehouse to donate tablets to the elderly through Age UK as the global Covid-19 pandemic caused an increase in isolation and loneliness. The technology retailer provided 500 free tablets with mobile network connectivity to some of the most vulnerable older people left isolated by Coronavirus. The charity identified 500 people who would benefit from the products most and Dixons assisted by offering simplified user-guides and ongoing support.



Dixons
Carphone

+

Age UK

Best In Class: Amazon

Amazon set up a programme to enable third party sellers to donate unsold items to charity. The programme will see 100,000s of products donated to charitable organisations rather than being broken up for recycling or going to landfill. This process, facilitated by a new Amazon programme (Fulfilment by Amazon Donations), will eventually see the number of items that are destroyed and sent to landfill reduced to zero.



amazon

+

newlife
THE CHARITY FOR DEMENTIA CARE

THE
SALVATION
ARMY

Believe in
children
Barnardo's

Regifting Tech Concept – 100%

1

Display fixture is removed from store and transported to 100% warehouse in UK or EMEIA



2

100% PM & Sustainability teams review to understand which fixture parts could be re-used, removing branding where needed



3

Consider who could benefit from those parts if salvaged and contact charities /schools/ NPO's



4

Develop and tailor a solution to suit the charity. Seek client approval & agree plan for implementation



5

Source any additional parts and accessories needed. Clean items and prepare kits ready for dispatch



6

Work with the charity to deliver and/or install those items to locations across the UK and EMEIA

Summary

There are many different ways to extend the life of a product beyond the one it has been designed for. The trend for reusing and repurposing has really gained traction in the last year. Brands like [Patagonia](#) and [Barbour](#) have invested in space within their retail environments to demonstrate just how this can be achieved. But just thinking about the actual products you are selling isn't enough – to be truly sustainable a brand should consider the displays they are using in-store and how these can also be reused and repurposed

Retail is often accused of being a disposable sector where all too often items are simply thrown away at the end of their purpose. The principle of designing for disassembly is one which needs to be at the heart of all retail design if the sector is going to continue to grow its sustainability credentials. By making the most of the products that are produced in retail, the industry can have a positive impact on sustainability and also on the communities in which they operate. At 100% we see this as crucial to contributing to the 12th [United Nations Sustainable Development Goal](#) : Responsible Consumption and Production, one of four UN SDG's that we have aligned to when developing our own sustainability strategy"

If you want to learn more about how 100% can make the reuse process simpler for your brand and help you to achieve your sustainability goals then why not give us a call today and discuss refurbishing, repurposing and regifting with our highly experienced team.

References

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