

# The Role Of Recycled Plastics In Closing The Loop

An interview on Visy's recycled plastic operations meeting growing demand in sustainable packaging.

**Q. Can you tell us a bit about the Smithfield operation and why it is so special?**

A. The Smithfield facility is where Visy's state of the art plastic recycling business is located in Sydney, NSW. Constructed in 2012, it is currently the only bottle to bottle, food grade plastics recycling facility in Australia - this basically means we are recycling used bottles to make new bottles.

The facility is a world-class recycling site that produces quality plastics.



The output from our Smithfield facility takes the form of recycled resin pellets. We use special decontamination technology that uses a vacuum to 'suck out' any potential contaminants from the 'post-consumer plastic material' - which is simply the sorted material from the plastic you've put in your kerbside recycling bin.

The combination of technologies we use is unique and the process cleans up the plastic resin to food grade quality - this means it is safe for contact with food and beverages.

The resin produced at Smithfield is used by Visy's plastic bottle manufacturing operations to re-manufacture recycled plastic packaging for our customers, as well as by external customers for use in their own packaging and products.

**Q. Demand for recycled content in packaging has never been higher. What is driving this demand?**

A. The demand for greater recycled content is coming from our customers, as well as society as a whole.

Last year the Australian Government introduced export bans, which prohibits the export of specific unprocessed materials collected for recycling. Plastics will be progressively banned for export as a part of this.

And there is a growing collective mindset that, as a society, we need to start taking greater responsibility for our consumption, our packaging, our recycling, our landfill, our waste.

## **Q. What can Visy offer to this collective effort for change?**

A. Visy has been a pioneer in the area of sustainability since its inception and we are continuing to take a strong lead in what we can offer in this dynamic and evolving area. Not only can we supply recycled plastic for bottles, but when the consumer has bought and used the product and put it in their recycling, we'll help turn it back into a new bottle again.

## **Q. So, what next for plastics recycling at Visy?**

A. We love solving challenges and working on developing high quality and sustainable packaging offerings.

We want to continue to use our expertise to lead the push to greater sustainability and a complete closed loop of packaging. Many people are focused just on recycling, say, the bottle – we want to be able to move the industry to a place where we can recycle not just the bottle, but the lid and the label as well, along with coloured plastics, which can be harder to recycle. I think our aspiration for the future could be encapsulated as 'leave no plastic left unrecycled'

