

MINTED'S GUIDE TO

sustainable packaging for small businesses

This high level guide is to serve as a starting point for any small business that is considering an evaluation of their own sustainability and packaging efforts. We plan to come out with further information and resources later this year.

What has Minted learned already?

There were a few interesting things we have learned in our early research that is worth noting for other businesses:

The shift to working from home for many people during the pandemic has decreased office waste output, which is a positive. That also, however, decreased the supply for PCW (post consumer waste) materials and packaging materials, in general.

Switching packaging materials sometimes also requires that we, or our suppliers, purchase new equipment. The commitment is a partnership with the help of our suppliers.

Minted is not the first to tread this path, but we are on the early side of what we hope will become a much larger movement. As more businesses come together to demand sustainable packaging, the market will shift and costs will come down. This benefits everyone.

For this first initiative, we are using some interesting and surprising materials: recycled coffee bags, recycled water bottles, corn and potato-based materials, and some papers whose production was powered by 100% wind or solar energy.

minted.

What cost impacts can I expect?

Pricing varies greatly depending on the component being replaced. Recycled paper & corrugated components are generally similar in cost to their virgin alternatives and widely available. Replacing plastic can be challenging, but materials made from PLA (a vegetable-based plastic material) and corn are becoming more widely available.

Many corrugated & paper components already use a high percentage of recycled or post consumer waste material, making the switch to fully recycled either equal to, or less than, the cost of current components requiring virgin material. Minted found the cost increases for these items to be minimal.

In full transparency, Minted will invest approximately \$150,000 this year to meet this goal. On an ongoing basis, we expect to invest \$100,000 annually on this first initiative, alone.

Minted will invest approximately \$150,000 this year as we invest in not only new packaging materials, but also the tooling at various factories to enable the use of these new substrates. On an ongoing basis, Minted's packaging costs will increase by approximately \$100,000 annually with the use of the new materials. This is not to say another small business will incur those same higher costs, as there are many inputs and tradeoffs to consider, but this is where we ourselves landed. It is a cost we believe is worthwhile.



Will I need to find new suppliers?

Materials suppliers understand the need for green options and are expanding their offering to match. Minted was able to maintain over 70% of the existing vendors in the supply chain network when making the switch. There are, however, companies who specialize in sustainable packaging and are great resources to consider depending on your material requirements.

Will my brand's quality standards still be met?

Minted found that many of its paper products already consist of some percentage of recycled material. In general, quality impacts were not a significant issue during this process.



How can my business get started?

Establish a goal

Are you addressing material sourcing (where it comes from, recycled/PCW, non-plastic), material disposal (where it ends up- recycle bin, compostable, etc.) or a mix of both?

Establish a "gold standard"

What is your primary sourcing preference? For Minted this was post consumer waste. Next, establish a next best alternative if primary sourcing is not available (recycled, plant-based, certified, then at least recyclable in some format).

Reach out to suppliers

Ask existing partners about availability and look for companies specializing in sustainable options. Minted has found great partners for this transition and is sharing this list to help you get started:

Mohawk
French Paper
Great Northern
Landsberg
Mackay Mitchell
Burt Box

IDL Packaging
EcoEnclose
Clearbags.com
LabelWorks
ATS