

Blue Box Partners and sustainability:

Interview with
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“Sustainability is more important in sales than fast business.”



What does sustainability mean to Blue Box Partners and its customers?

The images of plastic waste in the ocean – not to mention the Friday for Future demonstrations by school pupils – have changed the public's awareness. Companies are increasingly exposed to critical questions about their business models; therefore – and of course also to ensure complete traceability – they are paying more attention to an ecologically sound supply chain and model their purchasing in a more sustainable manner.

As an alliance, however, we take the concept of sustainability far beyond mere environmental protection. For us, it describes business that is aligned with long-term value creation. As family-run companies, we want to sustainably expand our target client base; however, this requires time, the ability to identify needs and trends, good advice and collective development and innovation. Our customers appreciate this too, and we have already been able to develop many collaborative partnerships in additional target markets or new product areas.

But how does sustainability fit in with the high performance and figure pressures in terms of sales?

As family-run companies, we aren't

exposed to pressure from large investors, and can act in a more long-term manner than corporate groups. At the same time, we are often quicker, more flexible and thus also more customer-focussed; we are able to use the appropriate combination of innovation, expert consulting, market and technological know-how, international presence and local proximity to stand out. This offers our customers clear added value, which in turn ultimately translates into figures.

Which added values are you referring to?

We take trends and new developments on the market and actively integrate them into our service offers and consulting. At the same time, however, we also motivate our customers to re-think and consider things from a completely different point of view. Which products will bring you future success? What M&A activities are you implementing, and what does this mean for your machinery and supply chain? How will retail trade look in five to ten years, and what will this mean for your supply chain? Discussing such questions is often the beginning of fruitful collaboration for both parties.

What future trends do you see in your sector today?

The options for replacing plastic with corrugated cardboard are nowhere near fully exploited. In the area of carrier concepts, for instance, Klingele has shown how this can work with its Wellbag and the shopping box as an attractive alternative to plastic bags. Even packaging that has to guarantee maximum product safety has long been made of corrugated cardboard. But our everyday consumer world offers even more approaches: think about all the plastic inner rolls used to wrap things round. Together with our customers, we create ideas for paper-based substitutes. However, one future trend will doubtless also be the customisation of packaging, which makes offset- and digital-printed packaging attractive alternatives. Our partners Hinojosa and Cart-One are already active in this area – with successful results.

That sounds exciting. How successful has Blue Box Partners been with its concept so far?

We've been very successful in our pan-market consulting and advising for European companies, not to mention sharing innovations across all markets. Our clients confirm this with excellent results in our customer satisfaction surveys. The fact that we are able to impress many companies in the long term is also reflected in the disappearance of many Blue Box Partners competitors from the market. Sustainability is obviously a pretty good model for success!

