

TRENDING

THE BLOG

For Large Corporations, the Potential for Positive Environmental Impact Is Huge

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**Tom Szaky**   
Founder and CEO, TerraCycle

Recycling and sustainability are becoming increasingly visible as key factors for action at the consumer-level. The need for [environmentally-sound practices](#) has galvanized companies around the world, and it's no coincidence that the world's most admired companies are [sustainability stars](#); consumers around the world report a [willingness to pay more](#) for goods and services from businesses known for commitment to social and environmental value.

At TerraCycle, we have worked with hundreds of brands and consumer packaging goods companies- large and small- to help them reach (and develop new) sustainability goals. Now more than ever, we are seeing some of the [largest companies on the planet](#) shifting toward environmental stewardship as part of their CSR initiatives—and the potential benefit for the environment is huge.

Our partner PepsiCo, while just one example, has created massive impact through [Recycle Rally](#): a K-12 school initiative challenging children to recycle on-campus and engage their communities. Since 2010, thousands of K-12 schools have recycled 59 million bottles and cans and received portions of \$1 million in prizes. In addition to the reward incentives, PepsiCo has invested in developing and sharing a broad array of educational resources and tools and is inspiring students with art projects that utilize used cans and bottles. When recognizable brands like PepsiCo [lead sustainability](#) at this level, environmental stewardship is more likely to resonate with younger generations— and the success of Recycle Rally is a great indicator.

Unilever, makers of everything from food to personal care products, is another large corporation accepting its environmental responsibility. Unilever recently set ambitious reduction targets aiming to slow down the depletion of natural resources, [to success](#). The multi-national consumer goods company decreased waste associated with the disposal of their products by 29% since 2010, and 60% of its agricultural raw material was sustainably sourced by the end of 2015. They have also launched [campaigns that encourage recycling](#) like [#RethinkRecycling](#), which emphasizes the recycling of [bathroom products](#). Unilever has outwardly stressed the importance of [recognizing the impact](#) that businesses have on issues such as global warming and sustainability, and implicates itself as a leader in future-proofing.

But it is not just about targeted environmental action campaigns at the consumer-level: large corporations are collaborating to innovate around sustainability and create far-reaching solutions to global environmental challenges. Companies are realizing that in order to even have a future, they have to create one together- which is why some of the [largest companies in the world](#) have joined The [UN's Sustainable Development Goal 17](#). It is an exciting collaboration between companies to "share their ideas, data, and insights on addressing key global challenges." Through open communication, these industry partners hope to accelerate environmental developments and find the sustainable solutions that we all need. Collaborations like this are necessary in today's interconnected global environment, and the world's largest brands are taking the lead.

Industry leaders can and need to engage their consumers (and industry partners) around sustainability, as their reach and impact across the globe is undeniable. With the resources and collaboration of large corporations like PepsiCo and Unilever, issues like recycling and environmental stewardship can be in the forefront of more minds for dynamic solutions.

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