

# MATERIALS TOOLKIT CASE STUDY

Bringing Sustainability to Indirect  
Purchasing



## OVERVIEW

Aveda reached out to BWE to help deepen their sustainability program. To complement strong programs across several impact areas, Aveda sought an increased focus on indirect purchasing, primarily improving the sustainability performance of materials, products, and services used in the course of operations. They requested a guide that could be applicable to numerous situations and be used by indirect purchasing staff.

## APPROACH

We developed a toolkit that would incorporate environmental and social criteria for staff decisions on purchasing, designing, and choosing materials, products, components, and equipment. Using a life cycle approach, we designed the toolkit to help buyers, creative directors, and other staff members incorporate sustainability into sourcing non-manufacturing related materials and products for Aveda.

## DELIVERABLES

The Toolkit addressed the needs of several audiences within Aveda and suppliers. The primary audience was users looking for immediate answers to their sourcing questions. For each category of materials covered by the Toolkit, users could access a color-coded scorecard that ranked materials from good to bad (green to red) using environmental and social criteria.

For those who wanted more information, an explanation of the benefits and concerns of the materials could be found in the Issues section. A deeper dive into material origins was available in a section that gave detailed information regarding forestry practices, metals and minerals mining, chemicals production, and shipping and packaging information.

Rounding out the toolkit were web resources, a sample vendor questionnaire, common acronyms, and a glossary of sustainability terms.

## CLIENT SUCCESS

Our consultants helped launch the Toolkit with a training session for Aveda staff. While indirect purchasing staff was the primary users, photoshoot and events colleagues regularly sought materials and products identified as environmentally/socially preferable in the Toolkit. Though not designed to serve the product packaging staff, they used it to understand where future improvements may be possible.

At Aveda's request, we continued to update the Toolkit over the next ten years, incorporating available LCA data into refinements of the scoring algorithms.



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