

CASE STUDY

Cup Recovery and Recycling at Reading & Leeds Festivals

Festival
REPUBLIC.



 **SIMPLY
CUPS**

BACKGROUND

Festival Republic is the UK's largest festival and event promoter. With a history going back over 35 years, the company organises major UK and European festivals including Reading and Leeds, Latitude, V Festival, Electric Picnic (in Ireland), Berlin Festival and Lollapalooza Berlin.

The Reading and Leeds Festivals, the company's largest events, take place simultaneously over the August bank holiday weekend, and share the same bill. The Reading Festival, the original and senior of the two, is the world's oldest popular music festival still in existence and has hosted many of most famous global acts over the years, including The Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, Radiohead and Nirvana.



Caitlin Mogridge/Festival Republic

THE CHALLENGE

Festival Republic is enormously proud of its sustainability credentials; pledging to continually improve its waste management, and involve its audiences, by maximising recycling rates and minimising the volume of waste sent to landfill.

With a total of six full days of music, played on eight performance stages at each event, the festivals attract huge crowds with around 95,000 people attending Reading and 80,000 at Leeds. As virtually all the hospitality outlets at the events serve food and drink in single-use packaging, waste is a huge issue and so the organisers recognised that a bespoke solution was needed for each of the key waste streams, including paper cups.

The festivals had already been operating a cup deposit return scheme for a number of years, with a 10p deposit payable on all of paper cups and PET bottles sold at bars and stalls, and so festival goers were already in the habit of returning their used cups.

The next step, therefore, was to find an effective way of recycling these cups which, therefore, required the help of the UK's first and foremost cup recycling scheme.



Festival Republic



Festival Republic

SOLUTION DESIGN

For the last five years, Festival Republic has engaged Closed Loop Environmental Solutions to provide cleaning services at its major UK events. It was during the 2013 Reading Festival, after the cup deposit return system had proved successful, that Closed Loop had the idea of founding a dedicated cup collection and recycling service which, a year later, saw the birth of Simply Cups. That first year, over 5.5 tonnes of used cups were collected and baled on site in just 3 days and the ambition going forward was to, not only increase the overall percentage of used cups, but to also give them a second life.

At the 2017 Reading and Leeds festivals, Simply Cups, working in partnership with Festival Republic, Huhtamaki, a leading cup manufacturer, distributor Pronto Pack, and global drinks giant, Carlsberg, co-funded an innovative scheme to achieve just this.

Festival goers were encouraged to collect used disposable paper cups, from within the arena, and bring them back to one of three dedicated 'Return Points', some of which were manned by representatives of Greenpeace.



Scott Salt/Festival Republic



Caitlin Mogridge/Festival Republic



Scott Salt/Festival Republic



Vikki Chapman/Festival Republic

Over the course of the weekend, almost half a million paper cups were recovered, with 225,000 collected from Reading and 250,000 from Leeds.

THE RESULTS

Once collected, the cups were stacked, bagged and then placed in to skips until each event had closed. The cups were then collected in bulk, by Simply Cups, and taken to its Depot for baling and for onward transport to the recycling facility.

These cups formed 11 recycling bales, each weighing in at 550kg, thus creating a total weight of over 6 tonnes, all of which were diverted from landfill and/or incineration and which will now be turned into new, functional products.

“ We wanted to show that by combining forces, we could not only enhance the cleanliness of the arena during the festival, but also ensure that the collected cups were recycled afterwards. ”

Victoria Chapman,
Sustainability Co-ordinator
at Festival Republic



The collaborative project was a huge success and was made possible through clear communications and the overwhelming support of the festival goers. The activity was broadcast across social media channels and, as the event coincided with Recycle Week, demonstrated the effectiveness of a well-executed closed loop programme.



11:00 AM - 30 Sep 2017

For further information on **Simply Cups**, please do not hesitate to contact us on **0808 168 8787** or **info@simplycups.co.uk**

