



ECO RECYCLING LIMITED,

INDIA'S FIRST AND
LEADING PROFESSIONAL
E-WASTE MANAGEMENT
SOLUTIONS COMPANY

Yashasvi Khushu • The CEO Magazine

E-waste management has been a disputed and unanswered topic for years in developing countries around the world. Increasing at an exponential rate, the pressing need for it to be effectively treated and disposed off has amplified.



Establishing mechanisms and innovative solutions since 2005, pioneering competently to integrate the e-waste industry to the formal sector is Eco Recycling Limited. In the journey of 15 years, the company has played an extraordinary role in setting up several milestones by strongly believing that there is a need for at least 25 fully equipped recycling facilities in the country looking at the current generation level of e-waste and willingness to comply environmental obligations.

Under the wise leadership of B. K. Soni, Chairman & MD, Eco Recycling Limited, right from the beginning has preferred to source the best available technologies from the market versus low-cost machinery, to provide an environment-friendly solution for the disposal of end of life electrical and electronic equipment (EEE). Today, only 'Bulk Consumers and Producers' recognize their responsibilities under the E-Waste Management Rules and environmental compliances, social obligations, the requirement of certification bodies and therefore avail services of fully equipped recycling facilities. But the company is working towards educating and driving MSMEs and individuals to follow the footprints of these large companies and contribute their part of responsibility towards the environment. To assist them, Ecoreco has initiated in the name of 'Book My Junk', a mobile application available on both Android and iOS platforms.

THE VISIONARY

B. K. Soni is also the chief promoter of the group, apart from being the Chairman-Managing Director. Under his stewardship, the company has attained a leadership position as India's foremost e-waste management company with a dominant pan-India market presence. He is responsible for the strategic growth initiatives of the

company and building a professional team of leaders. After delivering market dominance in the B2B segment, he is driving Ecoreco's next phase of growth, building B2C platforms for the smaller generators to play a greater role in building the nation environment friendly.

The present informal workers are extremely efficient in terms of their reach, on the spot evaluation of the waste, transportation & dismantling at the least possible cost but unfortunately, they don't take care of the three major elements which are extremely crucial in anyone's life viz health, safety and environment. Keeping this point in mind, Ecoreco took an extraordinary initiative of the skill development program for the benefit of the informal workers, with the kind support of NSDC. The first Producers' Responsibility Organization (PRO) was started by Ecoreco Group in the year 2011, immediately after the announcement of the E-waste Management Rules, 2011 in the name of WEEEPRO, now known as PROEPR to assist EEE Producers to meet their various obligations under the present E-waste Management Rules.

The CEO Magazine grabbed an opportunity to know more about this interesting brand, rooting for environmental sustainability, in a conversation with the chairman itself, read on to know more about the plans, executions, industry, corporate ethos and more at Ecoreco Group;

TCM: What services does your company provide to ensure meeting the e-waste management ends?

Chairman: Ecoreco Group provides reverse logistics and warehousing support across the nation, ITAD, data sanitization, lamp recycling, e-waste recycling, and assistance in meeting EPR obligation, assistance in CSR plan implementation, and skill

development for waste workers (NSDC affiliated & supported).

TCM: What was the rationale behind a career move of this kind?

Chairman: First & foremost rationale was a clearly visible business opportunity. It was evident that the consumption of computation & communication devices will continue to rise with the change in technology and increasing buying power. The incremental sale of EEE was giving rise to proportionate rise in the generation of WEEE and that was the major driving force to log in to e-waste management business and log out from the other activities. It was a great satisfaction that the formal way of recycling of e-waste is also helping in improving the socio-environmental fabric of the Nation.

TCM: What nature of clients are you associated with currently or looking forward to potentially?

Chairman: Electronic devices are in use in every Business whether large or small and whether engaged in software development, banking & finance, insurance, telecom, automobile, power, education, call centres, all types of manufacturing industries or any other stream of business & services, Ecoreco provides service to all the sectors. Irrespective of quantity, till very recently, maximum e-waste was coming for formal recycling from the bulk generators only but now producers have also started collecting from end consumers through their channels and get it processed through the formal dismantlers/recyclers. To assist Producers & end consumers, we have launched a Mobile App & Web Page to log in and register to get their e-waste collected from their doorstep and also install Eco-Bin at schools, colleges and other educational institutions.



BOOK MY JUNK VEHICLE



LAMP RECYCLING



DISASSEMBLY LINE



ECO-BIN



MOBILE DATA SHREDDER



SHREDDER

TCM: What market strategies have you mapped for the present waste situation?

Chairman: Right from the beginning, Ecoreco has sourced proven technologies from the developed world for processing WEEE in the best interest of environment & social obligations and thus to reach out to those corporate entities who strongly believe in these values. We're proud to share that in the first two years of our services (i.e. 2005 & 2006), we successfully provided services to almost 100 corporate entities including several MNCs. As a listed entity, we follow corporate governance, we strongly believe that e-waste recycling market is large and as I stated above, India certainly needs 25 fully-compliant recycling facilities equipped with environmentally friendly technologies and therefore there is no fear of competition at our end.

Ecoreco is the only company which has been supported by NSDC (National Skill Development Corporation) for skill development of present waste workers as well as the aspirants who are willing to cater in this segment. Irrespective of knowing that the informal workers and new entrepreneurs will compete with us, we do not hesitate to part with our learning and experience. To provide seamless and effortless service to the environment-conscious generator of e-waste, Ecoreco has initiated two services namely, Eco-Bin for depositing e-waste and an online application in the name of **Book My Junk**, these two tools are playing a great role in spreading awareness of e-waste management in an environment-friendly manner.

TCM: What's your take on the untreated landfill regime?

Chairman: I am not a scientist but can safely say that, if you can manufacture something there is no

reason why you can't recycle the same as and when you desire. A landfill is preferred in those cases where the cost of recycling or energy generation from the waste is higher than a virgin source. If the generator of the waste or producers or government bridges this financial gap, in such case nothing will go for landfill because technically there is no challenge in recycling or energy generation from any type of wastes.

TCM: Do you think the competition is growing in this sector?

Chairman: As far as competition is concerned, it was there on day one and will remain forever. E-waste management is not a business of Ecoreco alone and neither Ecoreco can take care of the entire opportunity. In the truest sense, the challenge is not with the competition but the type of competitor!

TCM: If I was a consumer, why would I choose you over others?

Chairman: Ecoreco is an extraordinary company in many senses. We are the first company recognised by the CPCB & MPCB; the only company listed on the BSE in this segment has launched several services & products which are exclusive in nature and has set several benchmark & innovations in the best interest of the industry.

TCM: Do you ever feel irrelevant in the market with the pace of rapidly changing e-waste trends?

Chairman: Personally, yes and almost every day! Because, when I walked into the e-waste market in the year 2005, it was 100% dominated by the informal sector. I entered into the segment with an intention to bring better practices from the developed nations and implement them in India but to the extent of my resources. In the initial 5 years, there

was a great response to my efforts and environment-friendly companies started availing our services but today, hardly a few stakeholders give importance to the best practices as against the monetary gains.

TCM: How effectively does your brand infuse e-waste technology and innovation with business?

Chairman: At Ecoreco, right from the beginning, we preferred tested, trusted and trouble-free technologies and imported them from various parts of the world. We always promote and support innovations but subject to these innovations meet two major objectives of recycling i.e. zero loss of ecology and zero impact on the environment.

TCM: How do you pick your clients?

Chairman: We are very careful while selecting our end customers for our recycled commodities but when it comes to our selection by the bulk consumers / producers / individual generators, we know for sure, is based on the commitment we have for the E-waste Industry in the Country.

TCM: Do you feel the e-waste scenario has transformed over the years, is it more generous now?

Chairman: India is an exceptional country with the strongest reverse logistics network for the movement of commodity-based waste material and also has dedicated domain experts (locally known as Kabadies), who process any kind of dry waste for the best possible recovery to the extent of their understanding but for sure they ignore health, safety and environmental aspects to the greatest extent. We at Ecoreco strongly feel that for the optimum utilization of the above available resources and for the transformation of this industry, there is a need to integrate training of the informal sector, transport network, and technologies.

TCM: What is the government doing for your industry, are you looking for any changes?

Chairman: In my opinion, what the government has done so far versus what the government can do to establish better practices is more important. A strict restriction is needed to be imposed on leaching, incinerating and other un-environment friendly practices prevailing in various pockets of the country. It would be better if the government can bring in a viability gap funding formula in place so that formal e-waste managers can seamlessly implement a model of integration under which the informal workers will limit their activities to the collection & manual dismantling while formal recyclers can process the e-waste with the help of environment-friendly technologies.

TCM: In the next five years, what are you looking to achieve in terms of structuring the e-waste process?

Chairman: There is no other model which may turn out to be result-oriented than the integration of informal domain experts with the formal managers but after inculcating required skill sets into them. With its successful implementation, there will be no injustice to both the operators (formal & informal) which will lead to continuity of their contribution to the GDP. In this scenario, the present infrastructure will be suitably modified to meet the need of the formal collection system and for which necessary support is expected from an institution like 'MUDRA'.

TCM: What core values and compliances are followed by the company to maintain the name across the market?

Chairman: Ecoreco adopted best business practices followed in the developed market even before the

rules came into existence like issuing the certificate of e-waste recycling, certificate of data destruction, certificate of lamp recycling, certificate of appreciation, certificate of green enterprise, etc. We also arrange various discussions with different stakeholders along with prominent media to spread the message of recycling rather than landfill and suggest that data devices must be safely discarded and destroyed in their own best interest.



It may be news for you that the gadget in your hand or on your desk or in your kitchen contains hazardous elements which need to be dealt with expertise. You are therefore requested to kindly prefer environment-friendly disposal of the end of life electrical and electronic gadgets over minor monetary benefits, which will certainly help improve the quality of air, water and soil" B. K. Soni.

TCM: What milestones or/and awards is the company proud of?

Chairman: We are extremely fortunate to have been recognized and awarded for many of our efforts, innovations and practices which have now become milestones for the industry to follow like, data destruction on wheels, lamp and e-waste recycling on wheels, in house technology development for the recovery of precious metals, the first PRO services in India, a mobile portal and web page in the name of Book My Junk, Eco-Bins, and skill development. We are thankful to CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, Lockheed Martin, WRI, NVI, Municipalika,

Sankalp, and other prestigious organizations that have recognized and awarded our efforts wholeheartedly.

TCM: What are the immediate plans for the company?

Chairman: The company has developed refurbishing, dismantling and in-house processing capacity to the extent of 50,000 MTPA and for that have installed machinery imported from EU, USA, Japan and other nations which are fully compliant to WEEE legislation in the respective countries. We are very confident that the time has come for the industry to take off and we are prepared for the same to shoulder the greater responsibility.

TCM: How do you rate yourself on the quality scale of customer services out of 10?

Chairman: We do not leave any stone unturned to provide our best in the interest of client responsible for their brand, compliances, certifications, etc. and therefore believe that they must be getting what they are expecting from us, which is also evident from the renewal of their contracts with us.

TCM: What good is your brand doing for society?

Chairman: We invest a substantial amount on awareness, facilitation to collect e-waste from the doorstep of every generator, recycling in the best manner, impart skill development amongst the waste workers, help student to research on various topics relating to e-waste management, sponsor events, parting entrepreneurial skills to the new entrepreneurs, setup Eco-Bins for collecting e-waste, provide mobile application in the name of Book My Junk are a few initiatives which our company has initiated to spread the message of recycling in the society.