App ups Effectiveness of Paint Recycling Scheme

A waste management company that won a product stewardship award for developing a tracking and traceability app is taking recycling to the next level. REMONDIS Australia was recognised for *Excellence in Digitalisation* for the bespoke app it created to boost the delivery of its contract for Paintback.

The technology enables REMONDIS Australia to track every collection of paint and packaging from council transfer stations in Queensland and Victoria – as soon as the information is logged on to the system.

"Beyond being able to tell what's coming from where, we get information on local councils contributing to the scheme and which areas have the biggest contamination problems, enabling targeted education to ensure that such problems are reduced," REMONDIS Australia General Manager Nathan Radley said.

"Paintback's specification was to capture data within a certain timeframe of the material that we're collecting, sorting, decanting, and recycling."

Through its app, REMONDIS Australia has been able to identify which collection points are failing to remove out-of-scheme products (which have included 'contaminants' such as pesticides, chemicals and aerosols) before sending them to REMONDIS Australia for recycling.

"I can look on our dashboard right now and tell you exactly what each of our processing sites have processed, what collection point it came from and how much material not accepted by Paintback was in each stillage (designated collection bin)," Mr Radley said.

"Our technology allows them to identify this and get the information in real time.
"Collection points are provided data to help improve managing what goes in the collection bins, but some still slips through."

The app allows Paintback to identify knowledge gaps in the network and tailor an education program to work with sites to minimise the amount of material ending up in stillages that shouldn't be there.
REMONDIS Australia is now working with other product stewardship schemes to determine if its Paintback solution can be replicated.

"Whether it's a scheme to collect batteries, textiles and clothing, plastic or coffee pods — all these schemes require people to put appropriate items into recycling bins — this sort of technology gives us the ability to quickly identify who is and isn't using it correctly and track the volumes collected, all the way back to the original source.
"It gives us data much faster than the industry is used to."

Judges at the Product Stewardship Centre for Excellence awards were impressed with REMONDIS Australia's innovation — something the team is known for throughout the international company.

"Our Australian team is leading the pack with an ability to collect data and use technology, whether it be with the app or other systems to generate data and use it for the waste industry and recycling industry," Mr Radley said.

"Our German parent is keenly watching what we do and is always sharing lessons from one country to the next."
Written for the Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence by Wendy Larter, Ai Group.