

## EPD Case Study



### What products or service does Asaleo Care provide? Who are your consumers or clients?

Asaleo Care is a leading personal care and hygiene company. We manufacture, market, distribute and sell essential, everyday consumer products across the feminine care, incontinence care, baby care, consumer tissue and professional hygiene product categories.

At Asaleo Care, we make it easier for hygiene, health and wellbeing to be part of everyday life. Our portfolio of market-leading brands –Sorbent, Handee, Purex, Libra, Treasures, TENA, Tork, Deeko, Viti and Orchid – are used in households and businesses across Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and a number of other countries in the Pacific.

Our diverse customer base includes Coles, Woolworths, Aldi, Metcash, Chemist Warehouse, Progressive Enterprises, Bunzl, OfficeMax, Staples and a number of hospitals and aged care facilities.

### Where are you headquartered and how many staff do you have?

Asaleo Care's head office is located in Box Hill, Melbourne and we currently employ more than 1,000 people.

### What motivated your organisation to develop EPDs?

Our customers have told us that they want to understand how their choices and product selections impact on the environment. We were attracted to EPDs because of the programme's transparency, credibility and ability to speak to the product's entire life cycle rather than one particular aspect (e.g. recyclability or responsible forestry).

EPDs for tissue products are unique in our market and, unlike our competitors, we have both quantified our product's environmental impacts and disclosed this information



publically.

When a customer chooses to buy one of the products featured in our EPDs, they can be assured that it has undergone a thorough, detailed environmental assessment across the full life cycle. They will also know that this study has been verified by an independent third-party against international best practice according to credible international standards.

### **What is the value in them for you?**

We are the first company in Australia and New Zealand to publish an EPD for tissue paper and as such, the EPDs demonstrate our corporate sustainability leadership. Asaleo Care has a long history of commitment to environmental stewardship. Our site in Kawerau, New Zealand, is a leader in sustainable tissue paper manufacturing. The facility produces goods certified under the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) standards and the Environmental Choice New Zealand (ECNZ) license. We limit our greenhouse gas emissions through the use of renewable energy, either through the direct use of geothermal steam or indirectly from New Zealand's low-emissions electricity generation network.

In a crowded market, we need to be able to differentiate our products and brands from our competitors and clearly articulate why we are the best choice for our customers and consumers. Our EPDs are a key differentiator and enable us to set the benchmark for sustainable tissue manufacturing in Australia and New Zealand in a way that is credible, transparent and comparable.

### **How do you intend to use your EPD?**

We will draw upon the EPDs when developing customer and consumer engagement strategies. The EPD enables us to highlight the high total share of renewable energy in our products (69.8-73.2 % for Tork®, Purex and Sorbent toilet tissue and 59.0-78.0% for Tork® hand towels). This includes all energy in our supply chain, all energy in our manufacturing operations, all transport fuels and all energy in waste treatment. In short, we can show our customers we have quantified all energy through the full life cycle of one of our products, from 'cradle to grave'. As we continue our journey, we plan to assess a greater range of products.

For our business customers in particular, the EPDs could help them meet their own responsible procurement objectives, reduce their Scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions or meet the new ISO14001 requirements (i.e. life cycle thinking). Within our business, the EPD model assists us to identify sources of greater environmental stewardship, resource efficiency and financial benefit by pinpointing and analysing "hot spots" in the product life cycle. We plan to use the model to analyse all aspects of the product supply chain in this way, from the raw materials selection, to the manufacturing process and the packaging design. This approach also supports the new life cycle thinking requirements under ISO14001 to which our Kawerau facility is certified.

### **How have you found the process?**

When you are a leader, you find yourself doing something that no one has done before. Our EPD was verified against newly released Product Category Rules (PCRs). As a result, we

underwent higher than normal internal, peer and verification review to ensure the PCRs were being applied properly, which subsequently extended the process. It also required us to work closely with our suppliers to verify data supplied and without our suppliers' support we would never have achieved this outcome.

### **Why did you decide to register your EPDs with the Australasian EPD Programme, rather than another provider?**

Asaleo Care partnered with locally-based life cycle analysis experts from thinkstep and EPD verifier Life Cycle Logic who understood the local context of tissue paper manufacturing. Registering our EPD with the Australasian EPD Programme enables us to connect with other local businesses who are sustainability leaders in their own industries. The opportunity to both learn from these businesses and share our own experience will help Asaleo Care maintain its leadership position in sustainable tissue manufacturing.

### **Do you have any other environmental certifications?**

Asaleo Care operates certified quality and environmental management systems according to ISO9001 and ISO14001. We source responsible, non-controversial pulp from socially and environmentally sustainable forests in line with Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) standards. In addition, we produce goods that meet stringent technical specifications under our Environmental Choice New Zealand (ECNZ) license.

### **How does the EPD relate to those other certifications?**

The new EPDs are a further demonstration of our sustainability leadership and commitment, just like our FSC and ECNZ credentials have been previously. The EPDs are innovative because they tell our product story in a new, holistic way. We have used them to develop tools to improve our performance further and they provide a level of transparency for our customers that is ground-breaking in our market.

### **What advice would you give to other companies thinking of developing an EPD?**

As you would expect from a globally recognised accreditation, it requires significant planning and internal management. At the outset, it's very important to understand your objectives and how the EPD will help you meet them. For example, we have spent additional time setting up our EPD model so that we can assess the impact of potential changes to our manufacturing process and supply chain.

It's also important to map out your data requirements and ensure you can access it on time and in the necessary format. Delays can compound quickly and lead to your EPD being finalised later than expected. Nonetheless, all the effort was worth it as we know our EPDs have set the benchmark for sustainable tissue manufacturing in our market.