“What’s going to happen to all of those boxes?”

Rachel Kenyon
Fibre Box Association (FBA)
Every couple of weeks...

“Can you give me the data that shows the spike in box shipments due to e-commerce?”
The Corrugated Industry:

- Experienced its shipment peak in 1999
- Is still recovering from the Great Recession of 2008-2009
- Is growing modestly at 2-3% per year, compared to 15% growth in e-commerce
- Is adjusting to a delivery channel shift from commercial to residential
- Is estimating e-commerce represents less than 10% of total box use in the U.S.
1. Consumers are more aware of packaging

...Are no longer going here.

Boxes going here...
2. **Box sizes are changing**

The supply chain is adjusting to new distribution channels

- A case of 4 bottles headed to retail may become a box of two bottles delivered to a home
- Many boxes still right-sizing for content fit
- Multiple boxes may carry the same amount of goods as a single box in the past
Corrugated is an E-Commerce Superhero

Humble, yet highly effective....

- **PROTECTION** – corrugated cushions and protects products while absorbing shock from transport

- **DISTRIBUTION** – corrugated boxes have a high strength to weight ratio

- **GRAPHIC APPEAL** – corrugated boxes can be printed on all six (twelve) sides to help sell products inside

- **SUSTAINABLE** – corrugated packaging is both renewably-sourced and has the highest recovery rate of any packaging material
What happens to all of those boxes?
History of Corrugated Recovery Efforts

1970
Corrugated Container Corporation “Chasing Arrows”

1993
Corrugated Recycles Symbol introduced

1990’s
Educational Programming

2000’s
Markets for US OCC expand

2017
China National Sword; E-commerce calls begin

1970
The first Earth Day

1993
54% Recovery Rate

Case Studies
Boxing Days
Curbside Programs

2005
Amazon introduced prime

2005
Repulping & Recycling Protocol Introduced
Recycling Corrugated

- Approximately 35 million tons produced
- Over 31 million tons of fiber recovered
- Positive trend for past 20 years
- Hovering near 90% recovery for past seven years

Experienced a drop in 2017 OCC recovery, driven by lower exports of OCC
Of the 31 million tons of fiber recovered...

17 million tons were used to make new containerboard in the U.S.

5 million tons were used to make other packaging products in the U.S.

9 million tons were exported, primarily to Asia
The U.S. corrugated industry is:

- A well-balanced system with both virgin and recycled fibers
  - Virgin fiber from certified forestlands
  - Recovered fiber
- Dependent on a high fiber recovery rate

There are more trees today in the U.S. than 100 years ago.

U.S. forests absorb more than 14% of carbon emissions each year.
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2017
- China National Sword; E-commerce calls begin

2018
- Consumer Recycling Research; Industry Working Group formed
Industry Working Group

Collaborative effort between manufacturers, associations, and waste haulers

- Cascades
- Georgia-Pacific
- International Paper
- Kruger
- Packaging Corporation of America
- Pratt Industries
- WestRock

- American Forest &Paper Association
- AICC – The Independent Packaging Association
- Ameripen
- Fibre Box Association
- Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries
- The Recycling Partnership
- RRS

- Waste Management
How Boxes are Recovered today

95% Recovery Rate

85% Commercial

30-40% Recovery Rate

15% Residential

What happens if that trend changes?

90% Overall Recovery Rate
Industry Working Group

Collaborative effort between manufacturers, associations, and waste haulers

- Use wheeled carts instead of bins
- Match frequency of recycling and trash collection
- Establish clear and harmonized messages and graphics
- Use direct “call-to-action” recycling messages on boxes
- Educate to encourage recycling behaviors and reduce contamination
- Develop better building codes for multi-family dwellings
- Promote successful multi-family and rural recovery programs
It's up to all of us

**Corrugated Industry** – Promote the need for recovered fiber, responsible stewardship and disassembly of boxes

**Local communities** – Promote recycling messages and recovery of corrugated cardboard boxes

**Commercial** – Promote recycling messages on boxes and advertisements
A used corrugated cardboard box is not WASTE, but rather a valuable RESOURCE waiting to be reused
Thank You