

## **Case Study - Manchild Brewing**

### **Making simple switches to reduce single-use plastics**

In north east Tasmania, Manchild Brewery is taking meaningful steps to reduce their use of single-use plastics. Reaching customers through local retailers and festivals around Tasmania, Manchild Brewery's commitment to reducing single-use plastic waste has shaped their day-to-day operations. From utilising reusable pack-teks to offering only compostable cups at events, their approach is to reduce and reuse as much as they can.

Owner, Joe Harrison, discusses the motivation behind these choices and the challenges they've faced along the way. For Manchild Brewery, it's not just about brewing great beer - it's about making mindful, sustainable decisions that resonate with their customers and community.

This case study explores how Manchild Brewery's sustainability ethos has led to them avoiding single-use plastic as much as possible, proving that small-scale breweries can make a big difference.

#### ***Who is Manchild Brewing?***

"We're a small brewery located on the east coast of Tasmania in St Helens. We started off brewing 150L batches for festivals and small events, but demand outstripped supply pretty quickly so we moved to Gypsy Brewing, which is where you can brew your beer on larger breweries equipment. We've been doing that now for a couple of years and over that period we've slowly been building up a stock of second-hand brewery equipment and we've just purchased the property to build our dream brewery.

We will be able to produce 500-1000 L of beer per day out of the new production facility. That is probably about two years away most likely, but we are just slowly carving out a little niche for ourselves here on the east coast."

***Tell us about the reusable and compostable foodware items you're using.***

“Four packs of beer cans come with little plastic snap-on caps that allow customers to carry four cans at once, which are called pack-teks. We’ve made it a bit of a mission to collect these pack-teks from three or four local venues. We painstakingly peel off all the barcodes and labels and we reuse them. Some of them get reused six to eight times before they start to break down or become non-usable. It’s one really easy opportunity we saw to reduce single-use plastic. We now use around 90% reused pack-teks for our packaged products.

We’re also in the process of moving away from printed labels. We currently have printed labels that get stuck onto our cans and we’re moving to printing directly onto the can in the next six months. The labels have a plastic laminate, so direct printing will eliminate that source of single-use plastic.

We exclusively use compostable cups for events. We always collect and sort the cups and take them to a commercial composting facility at the end of the event to prevent them from going to landfill.”

***What made you transition away from single-use plastics?***

“I didn’t actually make a switch away, I made it my normal from the beginning. There wasn’t a point where I thought “I’m doing the wrong thing, I need to start doing the right thing.” From the outset of my business I wanted to make it as sustainable as I can.

My philosophy on everything is to try to reuse. All of my brewery equipment is second hand, all of my tools that I use to build some of the stuff in the brewery are second hand, I guess I just came into it with a mindset of prioritising reusables from the beginning. It’s just a nice feeling to do things that way.”

***What are some of the challenges you've faced?***

“Reusing pack-teks requires us to hand pack our beers ourselves, which does take time and requires manual labour. It is more challenging than using new ones and incorporating that process into the canning line.

A big challenge is that we often need to find our own way to get compostable cups to a composting facility in locations where there isn’t a composting waste stream available. We will compost regardless, we’re solutions focused, we don’t want it all to go to landfill.”

***What are some of the positive outcomes of avoiding single-use plastics?***

“For us, there have been real positives in how we work with our event venues. The venues we work with also have a strong sustainability ethos.

One in particular was already collecting pack-teks to reuse, so we work together on that now. It’s really built a connection with those venues. Shared philosophies and understandings about what is the right thing to do is where we’ve seen the most benefit. Just talking to people and building those relationships based on that. We’re making things better together.”

***What would you say to other breweries and events who are considering moving away from single-use plastics?***

“From an events perspective it’s almost impossible to throw an event now using single-use plastic. The product itself is as expensive if not more expensive than compostable cups, the regulations and even public pressure makes it nearly impossible not to do.

My advice would be to keep putting pressure on governing bodies to give you pathways to do better. For us we say “if we’re going to do it, you guys need to come to the party



with this". Festival managers can make their events better by asking their governing bodies to support them.

You also need to be willing to go the extra mile and do some of the things yourself."