



3

Public Education Materials and Strategies

Insights from research on BC residents' recycling attitudes and behaviours.

Unaccounted-for beverage container study.

Review of advertising and marketing activities conducted to increase recovery rates.

Overview of community-based programs and initiatives to further encourage beverage container recycling.

Customer experience, including customer relations team and brand registry database.

3.1 Strategic Marketing Plan

Every year, Encorp invests in developing targeted consumer awareness and education plans. These efforts are supported by an annual multi-million dollar budget dedicated to the development and implementation of a comprehensive marketing plan, which is closely monitored and evaluated. Success is measured against recovery rate goals, awareness objectives and the performance targets outlined in the stewardship plan.

Encorp's annual marketing strategy is developed through a systematic five-step process:

1. **Audience Identification:** Target audience(s) are defined through annual benchmark studies and segmentation analysis conducted by independent third parties.
2. **Opportunity Assessment:** We assess opportunities based on specific beverage container data, consumer habits and the diverse demographics of the segment groups, including persons with disabilities, multicultural groups and First Nations communities.
3. **Objective Setting:** Objectives are established to achieve goals for each target audience, type of container, time of year and area of the province.
4. **Tactical Development:** Strategic tactics, budget allocations and implementation timelines are developed to meet the set objectives.
5. **Performance Measurement:** Key performance indicators (KPIs) are established to measure success, with built-in flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions.



3.2 Research and Segmentation










Since 1999, Encorp has conducted an annual benchmark study to evaluate program knowledge, assess consumer behaviour, and measure levels of brand awareness for Encorp and Return-It across British Columbia. This study plays a crucial role in shaping the marketing strategies and initiatives to effectively reach and engage with consumers across the province.

The methodology for the benchmark study is carefully designed to ensure an accurate representation of key regions and demographics:

- Regional Quotas:** Quotas are placed by region to ensure a sufficient sample in key regions and cities, including the City of Vancouver, the rest of the Lower Mainland, Okanagan, Northern BC and the Kootenays.
- Specific Sub-Samples:** Additional samples of at least 200 per group are undertaken to allow for analysis of results among specific sub-samples of interest, such as those with a mobility disability, First Nations and those who speak languages other than English.
- Census Representation:** The most recent Statistics Canada Census data is used to ensure accurate representation, with weighting undertaken for all samples based on age, gender and region.










These research results are used to track changes over time and provide information required by the provincial government. One of the most critical pieces of understanding for Encorp is to determine how to continue reducing the level of throw-away behaviour. Currently, approximately 20% of beverage containers are known to not be recovered in BC. An online survey was undertaken in September 2023 among adults 18+ in BC with a sample size of 1,201 BC residents, and quotas were set to ensure samples were taken from all regions of BC. There was also an additional sample of 327 18-to-24-year-olds in Metro Vancouver to ensure sufficient sample size to analyze the results among this demographic.

When asked about whether the various types of beverage containers can be returned for the deposit refund in BC, results showed that awareness has remained steady or increased. As with previous years, there continues to be an overall 99% level of awareness for all container types.


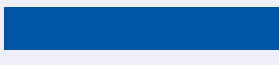







	2023 (n=1,201)	2022 (n=1,252)	2021 (n=1,221)	2020 (n=1,261)
Any Type (NET)	99%	100%	99%	99%
Non-Alcohol (NET)	98%	99%	97%	97%
Aluminum cans 	98%	99%	97%	97%
Plastic bottles 	94%	93%	88%	91%
Glass bottles 	90%	90%	86%	88%
Drink boxes 	76%	78%	64%	72%
Cartons 	75%	74%	54%	63%
Bi-metal cans 	74%	71%	68%	71%
Bag-in-a-box 	52% 	46%	40%	40%
Drink pouches 	43%	44%	33%	39%

3.2 Research and Segmentation

In 2022, milk and plant-based beverages were incorporated into the Return-It system, allowing them to be returned for a deposit refund at Return-It sites across the province. Survey results indicate that awareness of this change has reached 82% for milk and 62% for plant-based beverages.

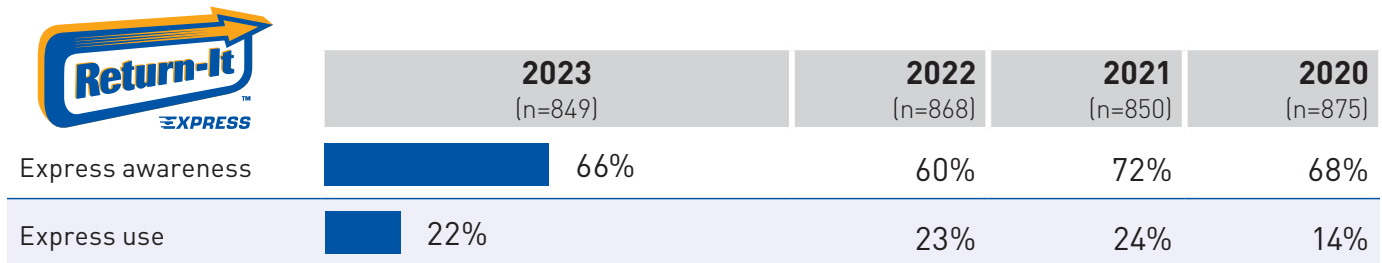
	2023 (n=1,201)	2022 (n=1,252)	2021 (n=1,221)	2020 (n=1,261)
Any Type (NET)	 99%	99%	99%	99%
Non-Alcohol (NET)	 98%	99%	97%	97%
Pop/soft drinks	 95%	97%	95%	95%
Water	 90%	88%	83%	87%
Juice	 85%	85%	80%	85%
Sport/health/energy	 78% 	83%	82%	81%
Milk	 82%	81%	23%	N/A
Plant-based beverages	 62%	62%	29%	N/A

Each year Encorp asks survey participants what their preferred methods are for recycling their drink containers for a deposit refund. This information allows Encorp to study changes in recycling behaviour over time by comparing data across years.

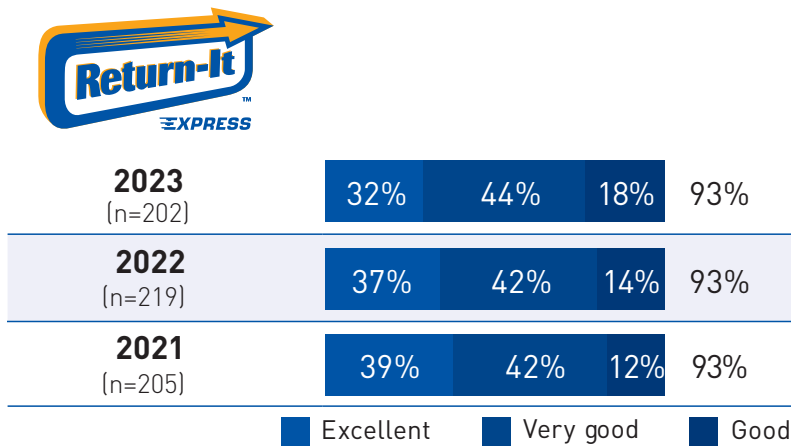
	2023 (n=1,201)	2022 (n=1,252)	2021 (n=1,221)	2020 (n=1,261)
Return-It/ Bottle Depot 	 80%	81%	80%	72%
Retailer (Net) 	 24% 	20%	24%	27%
Grocery Store 	 15%	15%	15%	19%
Liquor Store 	 16%	13%	18%	19%

3.2 Research and Segmentation

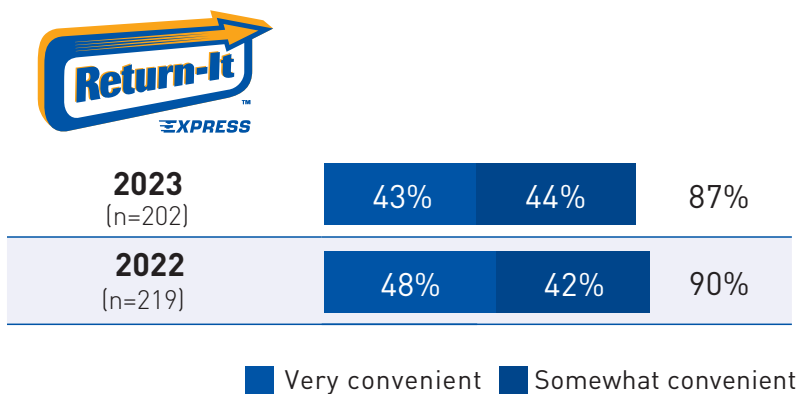
In 2023, the Return-It Express system hit a significant milestone of 300,000 registered users and continues to grow with an average of a 1,000 new registrations a week. As Encorp continues with the expansion of the Express system, specifically into new markets that have not had access to the system in the past, it's important to measure awareness levels, understand how the system has impacted consumer behaviour and consumer satisfaction levels of the service. Awareness and satisfaction remain relatively consistent with previous years.



When respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the Express service, 93% rated the service as excellent/good.



87% of Express users stated that returning beverage containers for the deposit refund is convenient.



3.2 Research and Segmentation

This segmentation analysis is based on the 2023 research results and includes behavioural and attitudinal variables.

The five segments identified are the same as previous years: Regular Returners, Depot Fans, Convenience Trashers, On-the-Go Discarders and Uninformed Urbans.

Each segment was analyzed through the following criteria:

Segment sizing: comparing percentage of people in the segment, containers produced and containers thrown away.

Key demographics: age, gender, lifestyle, occupation and income along with other demographics.

Depot use: motivations/barriers for visiting a depot, and visit frequency.

Express: awareness of the service, current use and future use potential.

Why they discard: reasons why this segment of the population does not recycle their beverage containers.

Since the segmentation approach started in 2020, the five population segments have remained the same; however, the

size and other key stats have changed year-to-year. Some notable findings:

- Uninformed Urbans grew in segment size from 11% (in 2022) to 16% (in 2023). Not surprisingly, their share of containers discarded also increased from 12% (in 2022) to 25% (in 2023), though at a much higher order of magnitude than the growth in segment size.
- Convenience Trashers continue to represent the largest portion of containers discarded as a group (52%), but this number has declined in comparison with 2022 (65%). They are also producing fewer containers, as they only produced 13% (in 2023) as compared with 18% (in 2022).

These findings as well as other insights gleaned from the segmentation analysis help to inform specific marketing messages and tactics used to reach these audiences and change behaviour.



	Regular Returners	Depot Fans	Convenience Trashers	On-the-Go Discarders	Uninformed Urbans
Segment sizing	44% people 19% containers produced 4% containers discarded	20% people 45% containers produced 4% containers discarded	6% people 13% containers produced 52% containers discarded	14% people 18% containers produced 15% containers discarded	16% people 5% containers produced 25% containers discarded
Key demographics	Average age 53 Equally male and female	Average age 50 Equally male and female	Average age 43 61% male	Average age 45 Almost equally male and female	Both young and old Equally male and female
Depot use	Just below average use Curbside/building recycling seen as a good alternative to depots	Depots are preferred, frequently used	Average depot use Lack consistency in returning containers	Above-average use Average motivations for using depots	Below-average use of depots, no real change to motivations for use Only use depots when convenient
Express	Below-average awareness, current use and future interest	Strong in awareness, use and future interest, but no growth in past several years	Below-average awareness, use or future interest	Average use, above-average awareness and above-average future interest	Below-average awareness and current use, above-average future interest
Why they discard	Rarely discard, least discarding of all segments	Rarely discard, second-least discarding of all segments	Hassle and inconvenience are key reasons	Can't find a place to return it while they are "on the go"	Lack of interest in the return system

3.3 Unaccounted-For Beverage Container Study

Encorp is taking proactive steps to increase British Columbia’s used beverage container recycling rate through various projects and collaborative efforts. Regional district landfill audits and supporting shoreline cleanup activities are just a few projects that provide insight into the pathways taken by unaccounted-for beverage containers that cause them to fall outside Encorp’s collection network infrastructure. The efforts outlined below highlight the actions taken by Encorp to further increase the recovery rate of all beverage containers included in the Return-It system.

The reporting in the 2023 Annual Report concludes the work undertaken by Encorp on unaccounted-for beverage containers. Any initiatives or programs that resulted from the study have now been adopted within regular Encorp operations and will be reported on through the appropriate section of the Annual Report.

Shoreline Cleanup Activities

Shoreline cleanups play an important role in combatting marine pollution. With a shared goal of keeping our oceans and waterways healthy and pollutant-free, Encorp continues to work closely with various shoreline cleanup initiatives around BC.

Streetscape Collection System

Convenience, specifically for those who are on the go around the city, in parks or at festivals and events has been proven to be the primary driver for the recycling of empty beverage containers. Encorp will continue to invest in dedicated bins placed in strategic locations to provide the convenience that consumers desire while on the go. See total number of bins on page 22.

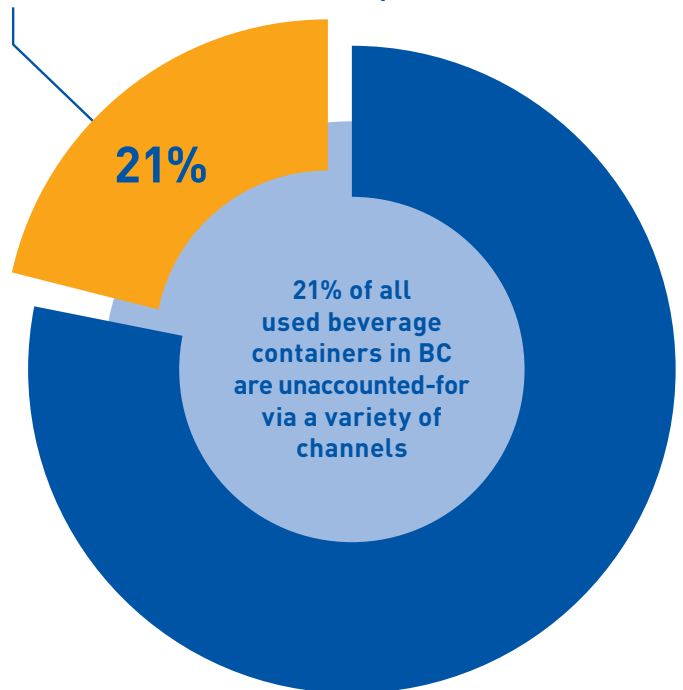
IC&I Waste Stream Study

As a result of the IC&I Waste Stream Study, through a partnership with IC&I waste haulers, a strict statistical sampling protocol has been developed to measure the number of used beverage containers being recycled through this stream. Through these sampling efforts, it was determined that a large number of deposit-bearing containers were being already recovered and recycled through this stream yet not counted, and this led to an increase in recovery volume through this channel from 0.5% in 2022 to 2.9% in 2023. With these sampling protocols now in place, used beverage containers being recycled through this stream can now be accounted for in Encorp’s overall recovery rate. Encorp will expand the IC&I sampling program in 2024 to ensure all material collected for recycling in the province is properly accounted for.

SABC Landfill Audits

The Stewardship Agencies of BC (SABC) is an informal organization through which provincial EPR programs work together on common areas of interest. One of the initiatives includes conducting annual extended producer responsibility studies on the waste composition of EPR material found in regional district landfills. SABC engages with an independent third party to conduct the waste composition audits. Encorp will continue to work with SABC in conducting annual landfill audits, refining data collected to ensure increased diversion rates are achieved.

- Loss to the environment
- Loss to landfills
- Private institutional, commercial and industrial (IC&I) recycling streams
- Containers redeemed outside provincial boundaries



3.4 Public Education

Encorp is committed to educating the public about the importance of recycling and the benefits of the beverage container recycling program.

Through targeted messages, Encorp aims to inform consumers about specific aspects of the program, including:

1. Specific beverage containers included under the regulation and accepted in the program.
2. Harmonized 10-cent deposit paid and deposit refunded at the time of return.
3. Where to take beverage containers for the deposit refund and recycling.
4. What happens to the materials collected and the benefits of recycling.
5. Container recycling fees (CRF).
6. How the deposits and CRFs are established and used.

A comprehensive plan was implemented to keep recycling of beverage containers top of mind, utilizing TV, YouTube, radio, Spotify, social media, Google ads and other media platforms. By leveraging diverse media channels and engaging ad content, we effectively reached BC residents.

Television



Television continues to be a key part of the communication and public education strategy, reaching a wide audience while conveying messaging in a quick, effective way. The television campaigns helped Encorp raise awareness, promote recycling programs and educate consumers. During the TV campaign, a combination of existing and new ads targeted towards youth “Don’t trash it, return it” and “Outside Oh-No’s” were aired.

A youth campaign was created to target and remind young adults aged 18 to 24 that they should save their beverage containers for recycling or returning later rather than discard them when out and about. The “Outside Oh-No’s” ad was aired to remind BC residents that while there may be certain unsavoury things we do in public, it’s important to develop good habits and be responsible, such as returning or recycling one’s beverage containers.

Return-It.ca and Return-It Blog



Encorp’s website and blog provide British Columbians with a quick and convenient place to find any important information they might be looking for, such as depot locations, information on accepted container types, any recent changes or updates to services, and recycling tips and tricks. Visit return-it.ca/blog to read recent posts and learn more about beverage container recycling developments and projects.

Radio/Spotify



Radio and Spotify audio streaming remained key mediums for Encorp to stream ads and reach target audiences in 2023. Since consumer media habits are always changing, a regular review and evaluation is completed to ensure the target audience is being reached each year. As a result, Encorp partnered

with local radio stations such as CFOX, MOVE and Virgin Radio to promote Express and reach key demographics across the province, such as young adults aged 18 to 34. You can listen to the latest radio and Spotify ads on [YouTube@EncorpPacific](https://www.youtube.com/@EncorpPacific).

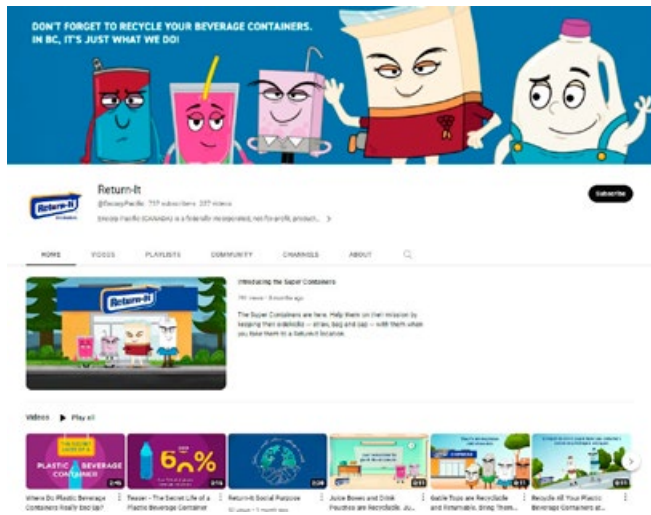
3.4 Public Education

Annual Report



Encorp’s comprehensive Annual Report can be found on the [Return-It.ca](https://www.return-it.ca) website. Visitors can choose to view the Annual Report on the website or by downloading a PDF file of the report.

Corporate Videos



Encorp’s corporate videos offer an engaging and educational glimpse into the recycling process and the importance of recycling all the various beverage container types. These videos are frequently promoted on social media channels, where they have garnered significant attention and can be found on the Encorp YouTube channel. The videos serve as an entertaining and informative tool to educate consumers about what happens to their drink containers after they are collected for recycling.

Social Media



Social media is an essential part of Encorp’s educational initiatives as it’s an excellent tool for providing system updates, educating customers and raising awareness about the importance of recycling beverage containers. Through the Encorp corporate and Return-It Gang social media channels, tailored posts were created to engage with audiences and amplify key messages that resonated with them.

In 2023, Encorp continued to use the Return-It Gang characters on their own dedicated Return-It Gang social media channels, providing a creative voice that helps to connect with audiences in a more fun and engaging way. By adopting a lighthearted and slightly cheeky tone, the Return-It Gang is able to communicate messages in a more irreverent yet informative way.

Additionally, Encorp’s corporate channels serve as a platform to share formal announcements and other important updates and news, such as new partnerships, depot openings, or updates to services and programs. By leveraging the power of social media, we’re able to reach a large and broad audience.

Google Ads

Google provides a grant to non-profit organizations that can be used towards running text-based search advertising. Encorp applies for and continuously uses this grant to display search ads to audiences while they searched for beverage recycling-related queries.

Caps On and Straws In Campaign

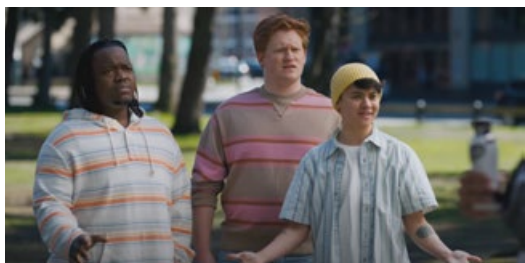


Encorp implemented a “Caps On and Straws In” campaign to educate BC residents on the importance of pushing their straws in on their drink boxes and pouches as well as keeping their caps on bottles and gable top cartons so that all items can be recycled together. The goal was to remind consumers that caps and straws are part of their beverage container and should be recycled together.

3.4 Public Education

This campaign consisted largely of social media posts that were shared through the Return-It Gang channels during the year.

18 to 24 Youth Campaign



In 2023, Encorp launched a new campaign aimed at 18-to-24-year-olds, a demographic that research shows significantly contributes to the improper disposal of beverage containers. The campaign is designed to leverage peer influence to encourage young adults in BC to improve their recycling habits, particularly when they are away from home.

Using humour and relatable scenarios, the campaign highlighted questionable decisions people make in various scenarios. Each scenario concludes by emphasizing the message that disposing of beverage containers in the trash may be a question, but is never the answer or solution.

To develop this campaign, Encorp considered all the various touchpoints and platforms available to effectively reach the 18-to-24-year-old demographic. This included utilizing connected TV, pre-roll, YouTube and streaming audio advertisements. Additionally, the campaign utilized social media ads across platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Tinder and Twitch, recognizing these platforms as key channels to engage with and influence this age group. Visit the Encorp YouTube channel to watch the ad, showcasing how humour and relatability can drive positive behaviour change. <https://www.youtube.com/@EncorpPacific/videos>.

New Residents



Encorp helps welcome new residents to BC and introduces them to the beverage container deposit

system. In 2023, several social media and digital ads were created with the key message “In BC, we recycle!”.

These ads outlined important information for newcomers to be aware of, including messaging on the 10-cent deposit refund available on eligible beverage containers when they are brought back to a return facility and what kind of beverage containers are part of the Return-It system.

Additionally, in partnership with Moving2Canada, Encorp published a detailed article on their website outlining how to recycle used beverage containers in BC. This website was the perfect platform for Encorp to explain its services and more about how beverage container recycling works in BC, as countless new residents use Moving2Canada as their one-stop source for information.

Surrey Residents



With the city of Surrey being the second largest in BC in terms of population and the continual growth happening in the region, it was important for Encorp to ensure extra focus was placed on reminding residents about recycling used beverage containers. As a result, Encorp implemented a geotargeted campaign in Surrey that consisted of transit shelter ads (TSAs);

social media; digital ads and posters in public areas such as malls, movie theatres, restaurants and office buildings; and a mail drop.

Two versions of the TSA were created. The first featured a general message emphasizing all the container types that are part of the Return-It system and the deposit refund. The second version focused on milk and plant-based beverage containers and their inclusion within the deposit return system.

For the mail drop, a three-panel beverage brochure was sent out in English and Punjabi to capture the two main languages spoken in the city.

This campaign went live over the summer and gathered hundreds of thousands of impressions.

3.4 Public Education

Milk Recovery



On February 1, 2022, milk and plant-based beverages were included in the regulation and became part of the Return-It system making them acceptable to return for the deposit refund at Return-It sites across the province.

With milk and plant-based beverages still being a relatively new addition to the Return-It system in 2023, Encorp focused on continuing to communicate this change with a detailed consumer awareness plan. This involved several mediums including TV, radio, connected TV, YouTube pre-roll, digital display ads and social media ads. Encorp also updated Google search terms to continue to divert BC residents to the correct web pages and services.

These campaigns ran throughout the year and during the lead up to the holidays when British Columbians purchase and drink dairy-based beverages such as eggnog and other holiday favourites.

The website and print assets such as brochures alongside paid marketing continue to remind British Columbians on milk inclusions in the system.

Reaching & Engaging Multicultural Communities



Strategic ethnic communication initiatives were designed and implemented to raise awareness and understanding of the beverage container recycling program with

multicultural audiences that might not be familiar with a deposit return system.

To effectively reach multicultural audiences, extensive research was conducted to better understand the types of beverage containers being consumed by this audience and the best media channels for reaching them. Consequently, a mix of print, online video, WeChat and social media platforms were chosen.

The outcome proved successful. The campaigns generated millions of impressions and earned great engagement, particularly in response to recycling tips and reminders and increasing recovery rates in communities.

Using in-language communication will continue to be part of Encorp's efforts to educate all consumers about recycling used beverage containers in BC.

Multi-Language Consumer Brochures

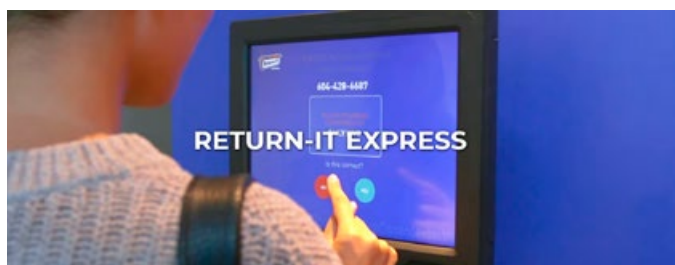


Encorp produces and shares Beverage and Express brochures on the website to reduce the amount of paper used to print brochures. As with the year prior, Encorp translated the brochures into Korean, Punjabi, Simplified Chinese and Traditional Chinese. These brochures can be found on the website at return-it.ca/beverage/recycling/brochures/.

3.5 Recycling Programs and Initiatives

Our ongoing efforts to increase the recovery and recycling of beverage containers continue to be reflected in the implementation of numerous initiatives and annual specialty programs. Our focus remains on increasing awareness and participation through Return-It Express, raising brand and system awareness, and boosting the recovery of beverage containers through partnerships and the placement of dedicated beverage recycling bins.

Return-It Express



The core focus of the Express campaign in 2023 was to enhance awareness regarding the simplicity and convenience of Return-It Express. Using multiple media channels, the key benefits of Express were communicated – no sorting, no lineups and no dealing with cash. In 2023, alongside traditional media advertising, targeted strategies were employed, including ambassador team activations at key community events, social media engagement and mail drops. By the conclusion of 2023, a significant milestone of over 300,000 registered Express users was achieved.

Social media played a large role in reaching specific communities and neighbourhoods as well as remote locations. For each new Express location, Encorp leveraged a 5-kilometre radius (on average) to target potential Express customers through tailored social media posts. The Daily Hive and radio hosts from CFOX, Vancouver's MOVE and Virgin Radio also played a crucial role in amplifying the campaign.

Express Direct Mail



As Encorp continues its expansion of the Express program across the province, an annual mail drop of over 1 million Express brochures and 48,000 Express & GO brochures were sent to all residences within a 3-kilometre radius of an Express location throughout the year. The campaign helped contribute to increased registration and greater use of the Express system.

Express Plush Promotion



The Return-It Gang promotion, which was originally launched in 2019, has proven to be an enormous success. The promotion encourages customers to return used beverage containers to accumulate points, which can then be used to redeem a plush Return-It Gang character. Because of its popularity, the promotion has been reintroduced multiple times since its inception. In 2023, the promotion was renewed with new rules aimed at increasing recovery rates of lesser-performing container types and raising awareness of all container types accepted in the system. The promotion ended on July 10th with 4,551 plush Return-It Gang characters redeemed by Express users.

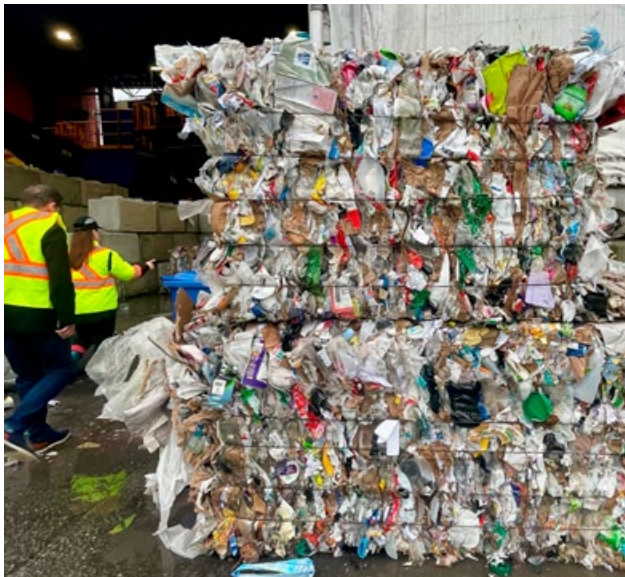
Express & GO



To promote the grand opening of each new Express & GO location, a marketing plan was implemented, which included a brochure mail drop, press release, blog post and social media promotion. Additionally, an ambassador team activation assisted customers with their first use of Express & GO. This personalized approach helps to create a positive customer experience and encourages repeated use of the Express & GO service.

3.5 Recycling Programs and Initiatives

FNRI and IZWTAG Partnership



Recognizing that traditional, depot-style coverage in hard-to-service remote and rural areas of the province is not always economically viable, Encorp continues to work collaboratively with other stewardship programs to improve accessibility and convenience. The First Nations Recycling Initiative (FNRI) is a program initiated by nine product stewardship agencies, including Encorp, specifically created to support and collaborate with Indigenous communities on recycling challenges.

Participating stewardship agencies work together on projects to remove and recycle EPR products, as well as gather information to inform and update agencies on Indigenous community interest in starting a recycling program as well as the status of existing recycling programs in these communities.

FNRI also collaborates with existing groups with common goals of bridging recycling accessibility gaps for Indigenous communities in BC. These groups included the Indigenous Zero Waste Technical Advisory Group (IZWTAG), an independent society assisting First Nations to implement zero-waste programs, and Indigenous Services Canada's (ISC) First Nations Waste Management Initiative.

In support of this initiative, Encorp provides financial contributions and helps develop collaborative solutions. The FNRI has engaged a Field Services Specialist and Special Projects Manager who actively work with

Indigenous communities as increased interest in the program resulted in a rise of community cleanup events and number of in-person community visits in 2023. In addition, the FNRI invests its time into maintaining ongoing relationships with First Nations communities and local, regional and federal governments.

The reach of FNRI's event initiatives expanded in 2023, as it provided cleanup services to 18 communities. The FNRI also engaged directly with 8 regional districts to identify opportunities to support local First Nations communities.

Return-It School Program



Since 2000, the Return-It School program has been providing elementary and high schools across BC with the opportunity to promote recycling and environmental stewardship via the program. As part of the program, schools get free beverage container recycling bins, access to online tools and recycling tips, and get to share their recycling stories in a contest format in the hopes of winning the grand prize of \$5,000 or the second-place prize of \$2,500. Learning resources such as activity books and the Return-It Man presentation contain educational sorting games, colouring activities and trivia on how recycling works in BC. Schools can request a virtual Return-It Man presentation and their choice of physical or virtual activity books. Read the stories from our 2023 contest winners at returnitschool.ca/schoolnews/article-38/.

3.5 Recycling Programs and Initiatives

Ambassador Team



The Recycling 101 Ambassadors constitute a team of knowledgeable “recycling scientists” who leverage their expertise to educate BC residents on the fundamentals of beverage container recycling.

In 2023, the ambassador team attended a total of 23 events over 50 event days, had 16,791 interactions and distributed 1,352 educational brochures.

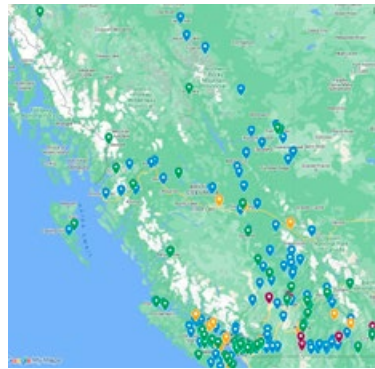
To teach all ages about the “101” of beverage container recycling, the ambassador team distributed brochures to adults and educational activity books for children. The ambassadors also displayed interactive boards that showcased how beverage containers get recycled. Additionally, they led the popular contactless Return-It Express game, which challenges visitors to sort beverage containers by putting their hands on top of the sensors of each container type column as fast as they can. These setups allow Encorp to not only entice more visitors to participate, but also give ambassadors a chance to chat with consumers about the importance of recycling and answer any questions they may have.

Outdoor Spaces/BC Parks/IC&I Bins




Focus remains on provincial parks, protected areas and recreational sites that draw substantial crowds throughout the year. Collaborating closely with BC Parks and municipalities, Encorp ensured the strategic placement of outdoor bins dedicated to beverage recycling in frequently visited spots.

By year’s end, 70 new bins were installed across parks and municipalities. Among these, 20 new bear-proof bins were provided to BC Parks, while 19 bear-proof bins were sent to various municipalities around British Columbia. Residents and tourists can now enjoy access to beverage container recycling bins in more provincial parks, bustling urban zones and rural areas. To view all the current bin locations, visit the map: <https://bit.ly/3JZGHTX>.



Another area of focus for Encorp is the Industrial, Commercial and Institutional (IC&I) sector, recognizing it as a huge opportunity where beverages are consumed in large quantities. By partnering with prominent venues

such as Nat Bailey Stadium, Rogers Arena, BC Place and UBC, Encorp supported their existing beverage recycling initiatives. Within the institutional sector, Encorp also provided collection bins and services at four major hospitals: Vancouver General Hospital, Lions Gate Hospital, Richmond Hospital and St. Paul’s Hospital among others, further solidifying the commitment to sustainable waste management practices.

 From the inception of the program in 2009 to the end of 2023, Encorp has installed 28,188 bins.

Bins

711	Park Bins
669	Municipality & Streetscape Bins
6,175	Commercial Venue Bins
2,324	Collapsible Bins for Residential Buildings
18,309	School Bins

3.5 Recycling Programs and Initiatives

Stewardship Agencies of BC (SABC)



Encorp is a pivotal member of the Stewardship Agencies of BC (SABC), a coalition of extended producer responsibility (EPR) organizations from across British Columbia working together to promote and manage responsible “end-of-life” programs for obligated products. Through active participation and leadership in various committees, Encorp contributes significantly to the development of public education and awareness initiatives for joint stewardship projects.

Stewardship agencies like Encorp are not-for-profit organizations mandated by BC’s producers and brand owners to comply with the BC Recycling Regulation. These agencies play a crucial role in collecting, recycling and diverting end-of-life consumer products and packaging from landfills.

As a part of the collaborative effort within the SABC, Encorp is committed to enhancing British Columbia’s standing as a pioneer in extended producer responsibility (EPR) and the effective management of obligated products.

Today, British Columbia’s EPR “results-based” regulations are the most comprehensive and effective framework in North America. Collectively, SABC members divert over 450 million kilograms of end-of-life products from landfills, responsibly manage residuals into new products where possible, and generate \$500 million in economic activity that creates jobs and over \$40 million in taxes for local, provincial and federal governments. Those who are looking to recycle additional materials outside of beverage containers are encouraged to visit bcrecycles.ca.

Sports Team Partnerships



Encorp continued collaborations with the Vancouver Canucks and the Vancouver Whitecaps and revamped its charitable initiatives. Teaming up with the Canucks, Encorp worked on the Pass the Puck program aimed to give back to the Canucks for Kids Fund. Simultaneously, Encorp supported the Bottles for Boots campaign through the Vancouver Whitecaps, which is an initiative created to support KidSport BC.

Embracing the rise of esports, Encorp also expanded its partnerships with professional esports teams to reach a broader demographic. Encorp teamed up with the Vancouver Titans, a professional Overwatch esports team based in Vancouver, BC, and The Gaming Stadium, Canada’s popular esports arena.

These collaborations yield multiple benefits, from ensuring effective beverage recycling practices at each venue to expanding the outreach to new audiences and fostering deeper connections with customers and communities.

A blue rectangular advertisement with white and yellow text. It reads: "Donate to the Canucks for Kids Fund with Express". Below this, it says "Use #855-437-3863 (85-KIDS-FUND) at the kiosk". There is a yellow button with the text "SIGN UP TODAY" and a right-pointing arrow. At the bottom, there are logos for "Return-It EXPRESS" and "CANUCKS KIDS FUND".

3.5 Recycling Programs and Initiatives

PNE Partnership



Encorp partnered with the PNE and Playland to promote beverage container recycling throughout 2023. Expanding on the successful partnership with the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) and Playland, Encorp provided recycling training for PNE seasonal staff, updated educational recycling signage across the fairgrounds, and instituted a branded Return-It-themed midway fair game to teach children and adults about beverage container recycling. This branded game is the first-of-its-kind collaboration with the PNE. The Return-It branded "Roll-a-Ball" game challenged guests to race their favourite Return-It Gang character to the depot. The winner of each race earned their very own plush Return-It character, recognizable from the Return-It commercials. This was a unique opportunity to win your own Return-It character outside of the Return-It Express system. Encorp messaging was able to reach a captive audience of young adults, as Playland and the PNE have long been a destination for thrill-seekers. The PNE attracts over 380,000 visitors annually. In 2023, 40% of the visitors were aged 12-34, making it the perfect venue

to inspire responsible recycling practices in youth and young adults. As part of the enhanced partnership, Encorp refreshed and updated signage for the 220 dedicated on-site beverage container recycling bins throughout the park, making it easier for guests to conveniently recycle their empty beverage containers.

Alongside these initiatives, the PNE also aired promotional messaging over their loudspeakers at regular intervals throughout the Playland season. Additionally, the Return-It ambassador team was on-site during the PNE Fair and Playland at the PNE, which garnered 2,000 in-person interactions and over 13,000 impressions.

You can read about this partnership in detail here: <https://www.return-it.ca/programs/return-it-and-pne/>.

Overall, this partnership was an excellent way for fair visitors to learn more about Return-It and the importance of recycling beverage containers in an engaging and fun way.



3.5 Recycling Programs and Initiatives

Major Media Partnerships

Encorp partnered again this year with Corus Entertainment to expand the reach and awareness of its recycling messaging and services. Corus is renowned for their strong news programming across British Columbia and province-wide reach.

Collaboration with Kristi Gordon



For this collaboration, Encorp filmed a video segment between Global News personality Senior Meteorologist Kristi Gordon and Encorp President and CEO Cindy Coutts having a discussion highlighting the importance of holding onto your beverage containers when you're on the go until they can be recycled properly. This video featured plastic beverage containers that are commonly purchased or used when on the go, such as pop, water, milk and juice containers of various sizes. This segment aired for several weeks during April, June and August.

Waste Reduction Week

Waste Reduction Week (WRW) was promoted from October 16th through 20th. Educational messaging during the week included



the use of a variety of mediums including TV, connected TV, pre-roll, YouTube, digital and geofenced ads, streaming audio/radio and social media.

For TV, Encorp leveraged the media partnership with Corus as well as aired the “Secret Life of Plastics”, “Plastic Oh-No’s”, “It’s Just What We Do”, and “Better with Express” videos. These videos were also featured on connected TV.

Additionally, ads featuring out-of-home drink boxes and pouches were used to emphasize the importance of

recycling these container types. The airing of this video aligned with back-to-school season when drink boxes and pouches are commonly consumed by school-aged children.

On social media, several posts were used to align with the micro-theme for each day during Waste Reduction Week, such as “Circular Economy Monday” and “Plastics Thursday”. These posts can be found on the Encorp corporate Facebook and Instagram profiles.

Cup Program Expansion



The City of Vancouver’s research shows that millions of coffee cups have been disposed of in the City of Vancouver at industrial, commercial and institutional (IC&I) locations and public spaces. To help address this challenge, Encorp and Metro Vancouver worked alongside the project’s partners to

develop and launch a pilot to help recycle coffee cups in commercial and public places.

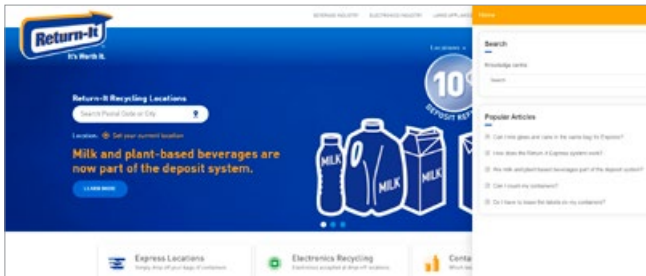
Encorp collaborated with Tim Hortons, Starbucks, A&W Canada, the City of Vancouver, Metro Vancouver and Merlin Plastics to reduce the number of single-use cups ending up in landfills. This initiative provided consumers with convenient recycling options at commercial and on-street locations. Alongside efforts to recycle single-use cups for hot and cold beverages, the program also introduced a reusable cup initiative. Participants can sign up to use reusable cups, which are washed and returned to participating retail locations. Originally launched as a six-month pilot, the program was renewed in 2022 and expanded in 2023.

Encorp continues to work on enhancing and improving the program, with an eye towards potential expansion into new areas. As of the end of 2023, the program had grown, with the installation of eight new outdoor bins in bustling areas along the Broadway and Main Street corridor in the city.


In total, there are now 27 cup program bins, including indoor and outdoor locations. To see the cup program bin locations and learn more, visit the program webpage: <https://www.return-it.ca/cups/>.

3.6 Customer Experience

Customer Relations



Encorp knows a positive customer experience is key to customers returning their used beverage containers. When customers face any confusion or difficulties using the Express system, Encorp’s highly trained customer relations team is there to help resolve issues quickly.

 In 2023, the customer relations team assisted over 27,500 customers while maintaining an overall customer satisfaction rating of over 80%.

Throughout the year, the customer relations team focused on self-serve solutions and ways to improve the customer experience. Some key innovations and developments from 2023 include:

- **Chatbot:** First launched in 2022, the customer relations team continues to review its functionality and content to improve the experience for the customer. In 2023, the team implemented guided conversations that prompt customers to give the bot information and guide the customer through common issues.
- **Education campaign:** Because the customer relations team works directly with customers, they can identify emerging issues with customers. One of those issues was the introduction of a new security measure added to the Express & GO system requiring a one-time PIN to access the door. An education campaign utilizing email and new signage was deployed to help with the rollout of the new security feature.
- **Point-of-Return (POR) button improvements:** Through feedback received from both depot operators and customers, more specific names and details were added to the POR buttons, allowing depot operators to provide more meaningful feedback to customers when non-accepted material was being included in Express bags.

Brand Registry for Customers



Encorp’s Registered Brands Database is a comprehensive searchable database that lists all the beverage brands that are part of the Return-It system. Customers can easily search the database to find out whether their beverage container is registered as part of the Return-It system and eligible for refund. The registered brands database can be found at return-it.ca/registeredbrands.

Brand Registry for Depots

All beverage brands wanting to participate in the Return-It system must register, but sometimes a new beverage brand will begin selling their products in BC without registering with Encorp. Depot operators play a crucial role in keeping the brand database for beverage containers up to date by submitting brand registry additions and reporting missing containers. Depot operators can submit a brand registry addition or report any containers that are not included in the database at return-it.ca/brandregform/.

