

Case Study: The Reuzzi System at The College of Wooster Achieves a 99% Return Rate of Reusable To-Go Clamshell Containers and Travel Mugs

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Highlights Using Reuzzi:

- 99% *Reusable item return rate*
- \$8,500 Annual savings
- 50% Student engagement
- 25,487 Disposables averted, corresponding with 278 tree equivalents

Background and Challenges Before Reuzzi:

The College of Wooster, known for its commitment to sustainability and student-led initiatives, sought to reduce single-use waste on campus. With an increasing awareness of the environmental impact of disposable to-go containers, the college tried an honor system to promote reusable to-go containers.

Wooster faced significant challenges in its efforts with its reusable to-go containers, including:

- Using an honor system for returns of reusable to-go containers, which did not work.
- Spending thousands of dollars replacing three-compartment reusable containers each semester—about \$8,500 replacing containers the year before we implemented Reuzzi.
- Losing well over 2,000 containers in an academic year.
- Giving students compostable single-use containers when reusable containers ran out.

The Reuzzi Solution:

The College of Wooster, partnered with Creative Dining Services, introduced Reuzzi QR code technology to track to-go for both reusable clamshells and mugs (see photo below) at the start of the fall 2024 semester. They saw a very dramatic increase in returns. Using the Reuzzi system for seven months, they still have a 99% return rate of reusable items. This is an impressive return rate especially considering that they have not implemented the Reuzzi reward system yet. So far, the students have simply accrued Reuzzi Climate Champ badges. The staff was initially concerned that the technology would either not work as anticipated or be glitchy, and that students would not embrace the new procedures. To the contrary, they said, “Reuzzi is a great program. The software works very well. We are very glad that we decided on Reuzzi and so are the students.”



Marketing Reuzzi to the Campus:

The College of Wooster used a multi-pronged approach in their marketing efforts to introduce Reuzzi to the campus, for example:

- Created social media posts on Instagram and Facebook
- Introduced Reuzzi during first year student orientation during the summer
- Featured Reuzzi again when students returned to campus in August
- Posted large signs at the dining hall entrance
- Posted small signs on dining tables, at cafes, and in the dining weekly newsletter
- Writeups in The Wooster Voice:
 - <https://thewoostervoice.spaces.wooster.edu/2024/09/13/reuzzi-launches-at-wooster-for-sustainability-approach/>;
 - <https://thewoostervoice.spaces.wooster.edu/2024/09/27/campus-dining-dir-marjorie-shamp-discusses-changes-green-boxes/>
- Conducted tabling in the dining hall and the cafes to get students signed up
- Enlisted student Green Team and dining interns to encourage their friends
- Used word of mouth approach in classes, with RA's, and other student groups
- Friendly competition among class years to see who could use Reuzzi more

Results with Reuzzi:

- **Impressive Return Rates:** Within the first seven months, the college reported a significant uptick in the return of reusable containers—shifting from losing nearly all of them to a 99% return rate with Reuzzi tracking and friendly reminder technology.
- **Significant Savings:** With Reuzzi accountability and tracking, reusable items are successfully reused and single-use disposables are averted, resulting in \$8,500 annual savings.
- **Improved Student Engagement:** With a student body a little less than 2,000, there are 1068 Reuzzi users. Considering that students are opting in to reuse to-go items, 50% Reuzzi users is remarkable.
- **Excellent Metrics:** With Reuzzi real-time metrics, 25,487 disposables have been averted. This is equivalent to preventing CO₂ emissions equivalent to 278 mature trees in a year.

Conclusion:

The collaboration between Reuzzi and The College of Wooster demonstrates how technology-driven solutions can make meaningful sustainability progress. By integrating Reuzzi's tracking technology, the campus has not only reduced single-use waste but also fostered a sharing culture of environmental responsibility. This initiative serves as a model for other organizations looking to implement practical, data-driven solutions that encourage sustainable behaviors and long-term environmental stewardship.

Would you like to experience great results like these with your reusable to-go program?

Contact Reuzzi today! Visit www.reuzzi.com to learn more, or email Luke at luke@reuzzi.com.