

Change Fashion Workshop

Session E: Closing the Loop

Location: SE Conference Room

Co-Leads:

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Closing the Loop: Definition and Scope

Definition:

Circular fashion and textile systems strive for sustainability by achieving economic, social, political, cultural, and environmental goals simultaneously. Material lifecycle is considered at inception, and designed to maximize resource lifecycle where all materials have a designation and a pathway. The approach and transition to a circular system requires a paradigm shift from waste to resource, and a transition from waste management to asset utilization. An efficient material recovery process where nothing goes to landfill and incineration, where design for disassemble and recovery is at scale, increasing the market for and value-added of the resulting products. Stakeholders throughout the entire product lifecycle are responsible for circular lifecycle management.

Closing the Loop: Current State

- Start with Facts/Research: 85% of apparel ends up in Landfill (EPA)
- In EU 50% ends up in landfill
- Consumption up 400% since 2000
- Historically paths of disposal are being eliminated (i.e Africa)
- Attitude/Behavior Gap
- Marketing/Language to Consumer
- Challenge ways of doing business (retail therapy)
- Heavily rely on Virgin materials
- Swapping/trading of apparel is increasing along with take back programs) (Thread Up, Eileen Fisher)
- New Technologies coming on line (recycling nylon, mixed material separation)
- EPR Programs

Closing the Loop: Ideal State

- Increased awareness of consumption/disposal/use of resources
- Value of Textile waste
- Cost of recycled is greater than virgin
- Material traceability
- No more consumers, only assets (consumers as stakeholders)
- Education marketing
- Systems Theory approach (no silos)
- Technology roadmap
- Sharing of Best Practices
- Potential tax breaks for use of recycled materials
- Use Less plastic/charge of plastic bags
- More facilities that look at plastic waste materials
- High quality material
- Accountability to corporations
- Make convenient
- Personal sustainability scorecard (social media)
- Companies be proactive vs reactive

Opportunities/Actions:

- Stronger consumer relationship - loyalty
- Attract new customers and vendors
- Continued existence
- Recapture a resource
- Should be profitable
- Need efficient sorting tech/process
- Need ability to scale solutions
- Making brands responsible for repair
- Reinventing values - realigning
- Education and Awareness – Storytelling
- Marketing Potential
- Incentivizing companies to act
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Proactive and creative thinking
- Return on Investment
- Recycling tech development
- Potential for global consistency... or not – and tailored to local communities
- Reverse logistics/ green logistics (scope creep)
- Open stakeholder communication
- New business models

Highlighted items were
Selected as highest interest

Barriers/Resource Requirements

- Mindset change – not just disposal/donate
- Concern for brand image/ relevance for brand
- Accessibility – programs and materials
- Competition as a barrier, teams working in silos
- Government involvement – speed and quality of policy
- Consumer privacy and data
- Built environment/infrastructure is not conducive
- Intern company issues and communication
- Energy use
- Cost to change
- Hard to envision the future
- Overwhelming information causes paralysis
- Afraid of criticism
- Current messaging is negative and depressing
- Hard to scale
- Everything takes time, that we don't have on a personal or global scale
- Hard to stay current on what's happening, awareness and visibility

Closing the Loop: Priority Area #1

Description: Scalable solutions

Key issues:

- **Collection - Existing recycling programs are fragmented, too small, or nonexistent**
- **Sorting – lack of technology**
- **Business model/Investment solutions needed**
- **Traceability**

Success Metrics:

Next Steps:

Closing the Loop: Priority Area #2

Description: Collaboration

Key Actions: Research Questions: What circular business models are profitable and why? What aspects are replicable? Mapping: who is doing what? Successes and failures?

Success Metrics:

Next Steps: Safe space for companies to share knowledge. Goal: handbook for circular business models

Closing the Loop: Priority Area #3

Description: Alternative business models

Key Actions: Science- and technology-powered solutions. Prioritize research needs for this.

Invest in modular design solutions to enable cross-sector product and resource use