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## Case Study: Film Producer Enhances Recycling Program With Rotary Batch Mixers

Posted  
July 16, 2025

OMNOVA Solutions significantly improved recycling capabilities at its plant in Auburn, PA by investing in Rotary Batch Mixers from Munson Machinery Co. Inc. OMNOVA supplies printed flexible and rigid films to commercial and residential product makers for flat and three-dimensional (3D) lamination to wood, metal, particle board and substrates used in high-end and commodity products. Applications include cabinets for kitchens, bath and healthcare; home and office hospitality furniture; retail displays; wall and floor coverings; and interiors of recreational vehicles.

The plant compounds, calenders, prints, embosses, and coats primarily PVC films. Despite significant reductions in waste through LEAN SixSigma and other continuous improvement programs, OMNOVA's calendering process still generated process waste material that could be recycled. To effectively re-utilize this material and improve the plant's environmental footprint, OMNOVA invested in its recycling program.

### Low Reuse Rate

OMNOVA's options to recycle material were initially limited. To improve the recycling process, OMNOVA invested in a Munson 700-TSC-300 Rotary Batch Mixer with capacity of 18,000 lb (8,165 kg) and 300 cu ft (8.5 cu m). The company granulated its start-up and process waste material, reducing its particle size and then blended it in the mixer. Plant process engineer Steve Reed said, "The homogeneous mixing action of the Munson machine produced high-quality recycled blends that could be added back into compound formulations in-house or sold outside to brokers." One benefit of the machine's mixing efficiency was to reduce variations in particle size distribution. This prevents particle segregation and problems arising from different melt temperatures during re-processing.

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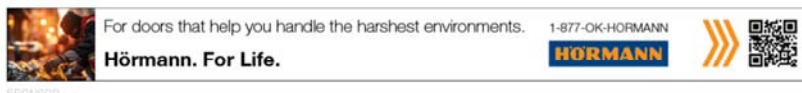
The company was recycling a handful of colors at the time – black, white and blends of red, green and blue. The ability of the mixer to produce consistent blends made in-house recycling possible. "The blends that we were releasing to production had to be within a pretty tight color tolerance," Reed said. As a result of the mixer's blending capabilities, he was able to build the company's recycling activities into a viable operation.


The Rotary Batch Mixer achieves homogeneous blending through the use of specially designed internal mixing flights that tumble, turn, cut and fold the batch. The gravity-fed process produces uniformly mixed batches in 3 minutes or less and achieves full discharge. The mixer has a small footprint, dust-tight operation and low energy consumption.



## Market Changes Affect Reclaim

As OMNOVA's business grew, so did the need for recycling capacity. With more materials and colors added to the production schedule, OMNOVA invested in a second, smaller Munson rotary batch mixer with a capacity of 5,000 lb (2,268 kg). The company evaluated machines from other manufacturers and concluded that Munson stood out in two categories: distribution of particles by particle size (i.e., good mixing) and color consistency.



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OMNOVA manufactures more than 1,500 custom colors. Reed spent a lot of time fine tuning the process of color matching virgin and recycled material figuring out how to use both to obtain good color consistency. "The more control over color matching, the better our ability to recycle back into grade 1 material " he says.

## Part of Commitment to Sustainability

The recycling operation at Auburn fits perfectly with OMNOVA's commitment to reduce waste as part of its Vision sustainability initiative. Under the program, the company has set specific energy and waste reduction goals to achieve. The Auburn plant is certainly doing its part in helping to reach those objectives.

For more information, visit [www.munsonmachinery.com](http://www.munsonmachinery.com).



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