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## Venue Case Study

### Blue Man Group, Boston, Massachusetts

**Summary:** In 2010 Blue Man Group of Boston sought to reduce their company's impact on the environment and meet sustainability goals. Blue Man Boston, in cooperation with the venue owner, established new recycling and composting programs that divert over 42 tons of combined recyclables and food waste annually, resulting in significant disposal cost savings. The energy savings from these diversions is enough to power 15 homes for a year.

**Business Profile:** The Blue Man Group has a permanent theatrical performance installation at the Charles Playhouse in Boston. Blue Man Group is a multinational media and entertainment company with theatrical and digital media operations across four continents.

**Program Evaluation:** In 2010 Blue Man Group's waste and recycling services were disjointed and inefficient. Paper recycling was piled in an alley in loose bags, cardboard gathered in a hamper and mixed containers were stored in three barrels. The venues two 2-yard dumpsters for trash, one emptied six times a week and one emptied once a week. The dumpsters contained a large amount of food waste generated from performances, including bananas, gelatin, marshmallows and cereal.

**Plan Improvements:** Blue Man Group collaborated with the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), a non -profit environmental organization that now manages the RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts program. Together they worked to match the performance and day-to-day disposal needs, with cost-saving solutions to achieve set sustainability goals. CET determined that the venue could

**At a Glance:**  
**Business:** Blue Man Group

New recycling and composting programs divert over 42 tons of recyclables and food waste annually

**Savings:** significant savings on disposal costs, and equivalent energy savings to power 15 homes a year

*RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is funded by MassDEP and delivered under contract by the Center for EcoTechnology*

BLUE

MAN

GROUP

COMPOST

AND

RECYCLING

PROGRAM

**COMPOST** please, do not put biodegradable plates, cups, or paper towels in compost bins.

all food waste (no bones, please)

- bananas
- jell-o
- marshmallows
- cereal
- fruits
- vegetables
- baked goods
- dairy products
- coffee grounds
- coffee filters
- meat

please rinse all containers before recycling them. no tissues, paper towels, or plastic bags please.

- paper, newspapers, magazines
- wine bottles and other glass containers
- flattened cardboard
- plastic food & beverage containers
- aluminum cans/pans/foil
- empty aerosol cans
- make-up containers

**single-stream RECYCLE**

note: toilet paper from the show is recyclable, but house staff should collect and store it as usual.

Center for EcoTechnology





drastically reduce their disposal costs and improve recycling efficiency through single stream recycling coupled with a new food waste diversion program. Blue Man Group renegotiated their waste hauling contract, and CET helped connect the company with different recycling service providers.



**Implementation:** CET emphasized employee education and training with clear and proper signage. They trained the department managers at Blue Man Group for the new collection systems. CET created custom signs, listing items in detail that needed to be composted or recycled. These items ranged from food used in the office such as coffee grounds and staff lunches, to food used during the performance. The signs also highlighted items not commonly recycled that were specific to the production such as make-up cases and empty aerosol cans.

**Evaluation:** Blue Man Group has significantly reduced the amount of trash they produce by diverting food waste and increasing the efficiency of their recycling program. Transitioning their recycling to a single-stream program reduced the amount of space needed for collection containers, increased participation and lowered the risk of trash contamination in recyclables. One dumpster serviced twice a week annually and two food waste toters emptied four to six times per month handle over 42 annual tons of waste. These changes allowed reduced trash service and resulted in an estimated 70% reduction in waste and recycling costs for Blue Man Group. “The new composting and recycling program has been very beneficial for Blue Man Group, says Jonathan Screnci, the group’s Resident General Manager. “Not only are we reducing our disposal costs, but we’re also doing our part to reduce the impact of our waste on the environment.”

