

# REFLO



**2021 SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING DESIGN OF THE YEAR - REUSE SILVER WINNER**



**2021 BEVERAGE PACKAGING DESIGN OF THE YEAR BRONZE WINNER**



## Reflo PodPress Capsule System

### Key Outcomes and Measurement



Lightweight, compact reusable, refillable & sustainable alternative for in-home machines that use pods



Can refill any number of capsules and coffee types, install a new cover and store capsules for future use



Sealed packaging of ground coffee in re-usable capsules and 100% recyclable foil seals



Diverts used capsules from landfill



Aluminium foil closure is **100%** recyclable



Gives you freedom to choose the capsule contents



PP capsule bodies are easily cleaned and reusable indefinitely



Used coffee grounds are readily removed from the capsules, and used for garden composting



Capsules can be packed together and in packs of nine are captured in MRFs



**Product:** PodPress Capsule System  
**Company:** Reflo  
**Country:** Australia

The Reflo brand and its ethos: Reflo is focused on people first, ensuring every product improves their flow rather than hinders it. They don't add, they reimagine. Sometimes Reflo are a little bit nerdy, but never at the expense of simplicity and clear communication. Everyone should be able to understand what they are saying, so they feel empowered and invigorated.

Reflo are committed to the improvement of lives through technology. When faced with an obstacle, they ask themselves 'How can this be better?' The team at Reflo encourage everyone to think like this. The Podpress - RE-IMAGINING THE EVERYDAY FLOW OF LIFE.

COORDINATED BY



ANZ REGIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM



INTERNATIONALLY ENDORSED BY



EXCLUSIVE ENTRY TO



- ✓ **PodPress is a device that enables the reuse of capsules for beverage dispensing machines to overcome the inconvenience of specialised refillable capsules and sealing covers; all the while continuing to give the user freedom to choose the capsule contents and refill the capsules at will.**
- ✓ **PodPress consists of a compact manual system which creates and applies a cover sealing the open end of beverage capsules, for use in beverage dispensing machines using a range of types of capsules.**
- ✓ **PodPress requires the user to provide empty capsules. The user refills the capsule with the desired beverage type, install a new cover and store them, ready for next use.**
- ✓ **PodPress system:**
  1. **Is attractive to the DIY spirit and fun to use.**
  2. **Is super convenient, hand operated and compact.**
  3. **Allows a choice of capsule filling.**
  4. **Allows a choice of capsule filling strength.**
  5. **Delivers big cost savings.**
  6. **Is environmentally responsible because it prevents capsules entering the waste stream.**

### In the context of your packaging innovation, what do you see as Sustainable Packaging?

Gary White, Managing Director, Reflo says, "I would characterise the Podpress Capsule System as a step forward in the global drive to a world free from single use packaging for the coffee category. Single use packaging is almost 'waste-worshipping', blindly assuming that 'someone else, even a higher authority' will take care of my consumption waste."

"I see sustainable packaging as a culture where my consumption does not add to the burden of waste disposal, rather eases the societal demands on our packaging waste management systems."

"The 3 'R's', reduce, re-use and recycle are an absolute governing set of values for sustainability in all things, not just packaging. 3R's do not stifle creativity, rather they steer creativity in a new direction."



## What would you say were the decision-making drivers (Internal and External) influencing your packaging design?

As a coffee-drinker, Gary decided to buy a capsule machine to try out the system. In Australia, almost as many capsules are used each day as the population.

*"There is a negative environmental impact when disposing of capsules because they slip through many recycling processes and end up in landfill."*

Gary once read that aluminium capsules were not being recycled. Far less than 10% of all capsules are saved from landfill. This weighed heavily on him so he decided to do something about it.

The Reflo team decided to reuse the capsules by washing out the coffee grounds, refilling them with fresh coffee and wrapping a piece of foil over the top for sealing until they needed a drink. Each capsule lasted maybe 30 refills.

Then they invented a tool for cutting and folding the foil onto the capsule. The team did not stop there - they developed a filling table where they could fill 9 capsules in the one session.

Reflo found a supplier of capsules that were plastic and specifically designed to avoid the need for the machine to pierce the base of the capsule. They also happened to be easily emptied and washed.

## What benefit does this new design offer your business and your consumers? Why is the pack more sustainable?

At Reflo they believe life can be more enjoyable when it's simpler. As consumers rush through the day, there is nothing better than a strong coffee. Consumers deserve the freedom to choose where their coffee comes from, and how it is delivered.

Coffee capsule machine users have been limited (until now) in when and where they can obtain quality, flavoursome capsules.

Podpress lets you easily re-use brand-compatible capsules to overcome the inconvenience of capsule systems. A set of totally reusable plastic capsules is provided with each Podpress. An optional filling table makes it easy to prepare 9 Podpress-sealed capsules at a time with no mess, fuss or bother.

More importantly, Reflo's Podpress is a consumer product that reduces consumption and waste. That is absolutely a fact. Consumers who use this method of making capsules for their coffee capsule machine will have the satisfaction that they are helping drive sustainable packaging as a culture in their life, home and office.

Using Podpress, consumers can refill capsules, install a new cover and store capsules for future use.

More than this - the 'icing on the cake' - is that users of this product can choose their own coffee, sourced sustainably and equitably, support their local roasters and enjoy a known quality of beverage, all with the convenience of a capsule machine.



## What volumes of materials, packaging and waste have you saved by designing this new packaging?

### Did you do this through changing materials, lightweighting, recycled content, making the packs recyclable or reusable?

The Podpress system is supplied with 10 reusable capsules of food-grade polypropylene that is a 100% recyclable material. They do not deteriorate in the brewing process so can be reused indefinitely. Using these capsules eliminates the consumption of any capsules.

But they can only be easily reused with the Podpress system.

Podpress does require ordinary kitchen foil for the sealing material, and this foil is recyclable when bundling with other aluminium foil used in the household.

**Australians consume 3 million coffee capsules and pods daily, with only 10% of these capsules recycled. This equates to an estimated 8,500 tonnes of aluminium, plastic and used coffee grounds going to landfill every year. There has been a capsule use (in \$ value) compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 8% in Australia (over 20% in the Asian region) over the past 7 years.**

These are very optimistic projections, but if each capsule user globally took up Podpress as their way of making a difference, eliminating use of the 1g aluminium capsules would result in up to 16,000 tonnes of the metal being saved from landfill each year.

### How much on-pack and off-pack information do you provide your customers?

Reflo.co provides videos of the Podpress in action. The reflo.co website features a blog area with Q&A, news, updates and commentary. The user instructions for Podpress are available for download, and website visitors can also register for newsletters and other updates.

Reflo has taken a minimalist approach to packaging used for Podpress System itself and retail sales.

The sales packaging is untreated kraft cardboard.

Labelling on the packaging has been upgraded to provide additional information and directions for consumer disposal of the 'sales' packaging.

The Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) instructions are included on the box with the new labelling.

A QR code integrated with the new labelling gives users further instruction for recycling the packaging and using the Podpress.

## Please share a little bit about each of the partners/collaborators who worked on this packaging design.

### Can you explain each of their roles?

Coffee drinkers - voice of the customer - have heavily influenced my design and development of the Podpress System.

Dr Gary White, GJW Enterprises - Coffee drinker, designer, publisher, manufacturer. Gary managed all the product activities from concept, through product development to marketing and sales.

Mr Brendon Holmes, Caps & Closures - injection mould designers, volume manufacturers. Brendon saw the potential for Podpress and has been an encouraging mentor, offering feedback on design and how to bring Podpress into mass production.



## What do you feel will be needed to further improve packaging design in the future? (e.g. education, investment, policy/legislation, tech, etc?)

*"We have to stop sending our 'long-life durable' wrappers to landfill. It is that simple. It is such a small technical step to recover these materials from the current waste stream before they even get into it. Our consumer culture is built around 'pillars' of 'aesthetics, convenience, function and durability', but the emerging sustainable culture is not yet matched to this culture and this order of priorities. Recycling is not yet generally seen as pretty or convenient, and the industry needs to persevere and build on these, and that order of priorities to radically change public perception and behaviour."*

Packaging design today is rapidly transforming to support sustainability and social equity legislation. This legislation is a good thing for packaging, providing a much needed balance of marketing 'sizzle' with the 'steak' - functional requirements of packaging. Reflo are hopeful that recent changes to waste plastics exports and funding programs to support it will make the 3R's for plastics a viable business concept. Ultimately, this side of the sustainability chain is a business case.

The industry needs to study and explore what will cause a fundamental, radical change in consumer/dispenser behaviour, and it is not a simple business case. For example, city councils providing a recyclables bin for each home changed behaviour because it was convenient, but it needed a serious education program to really accelerate the change. The ARL logo is a great step. Plastics numbering has caused some confusion, and different councils accept different combinations, causing more uncertainty about whether the packaging can be recycled.

Let's aim for and take action to provide a 'pleasing, convenient, simple, and consistent' way for all consumers (manufacturers and end-users) to correctly divert all durable packaging materials from the landfill/waste stream.

From Reflo's perspective, each aspect of Podpress is under scrutiny continuously for performance, compatibility with machines and coffee brewing quality. The use of foil in the sealing process will be reviewed, and enhancements to the Podpress design for sustainability and usability will be seen in a next generation model. Reflo needs to make it simple, convenient and pleasing to responsibly reuse the waste products from the Podpress system.

The sales packaging (currently untreated kraft cardboard) will be further minimalised in terms of paper and cardboard usage, printing material usage and adhesives.

Labelling on the packaging is being upgraded to provide additional information and directions for consumer disposal of the 'sales' packaging.

The Australasian Recycling Label (ARL) instructions will be included on the box with the new labelling.

A QR code integrated with the new labelling gives users further instruction for recycling the packaging and using the Podpress.

## What does your company have planned in the future? Any new innovations on the horizon?

Reflo will follow through with their vision to reimagine the flow of everyday life. The team are working on product concepts that simplify current consumer goods, to facilitate automated manufacture and viably bring manufacturing back to Australia. A family of coffee/Podpress related products is in the pipeline, for example.



## As a winner of two PIDA awards, how valuable are the awards to your organisation?

*“The development of Podpress and the Reflo brand has been a long hard road, but we have had some staunch supporters and encouragers who have motivated my efforts, and I thank them for all they have done,”*

*The silver and bronze PIDA awards are the industries way of recognising that packaging can be elegant, fun and effective. Such recognition has motivated us to develop more innovative products to simplify our lifestyle, and address demands for sustainability.” says Gary White, Managing Director, Reflo.*



The Australasian Packaging Innovation & Design (PIDA) Awards are an Australia and New Zealand program that is coordinated by the Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP). The awards recognise companies and individuals who are making a significant difference in their field across Australia and New Zealand. The PIDA Awards are the exclusive entry point for Australia and New Zealand for the prestigious WorldStar Packaging Awards.

The Design Innovation of the Year company awards recognise organisations that have designed innovative packaging within each of these six manufacturing categories:

- Food
- Beverage
- Health, Beauty & Wellness
- Domestic & Household
- Labelling & Decoration
- Outside of the Box

There are four special awards available:

- **Sustainable Packaging Design**
- Save Food Packaging Design
- Accessible & Inclusive Packaging Design
- Marketing Award

The **Sustainable Packaging Design Special Award** is designed to recognise companies that have developed innovative packaging solutions that incorporate sustainability considerations. All entries are judged on Sustainable Packaging Design considerations such as social impact, material, source reduction, energy and recovery and what packaging changes the company is undertaking to meet the 2025 National Packaging Targets. This is also a WorldStar Packaging Awards category.



The Australian Institute of Packaging (AIP) is the peak professional body for packaging education and training in Australasia. The AIP helps shape the careers of generations of packaging professionals – from packaging technologists to international packaging business leaders along with a host of people in associated disciplines – sales and marketing, purchasing, production and environment.

**Australian Institute of Packaging**

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