



For Immediate Release
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Q&A with Eric Hudson, President/Founder of Recycline

Why did you start Recycline?

I started Recycline in 1996. I wanted to start my own business that developed creative ways to conserve and re-use the earth's resources. There was a lot of recycling going on back in the early '90s and there weren't a lot of companies putting those materials back into new products. I saw an opportunity in that 45% percent of people recycled and I thought they would have an interest in products made from their efforts. The biggest opportunity was with #5 plastics. They weren't being recycled well nor reused well. And there you have it. I also wanted to start a company that I would feel good about coming to every day.

What is Recycline's mission?

Simply put, to deliver consumer products that offer great looking design, high performance and are better for the environment than alternative products. We do this by using recycled materials for our products and packaging. To reduce the waste created by consumer products, we work with suppliers and other companies to reduce, recover, and reuse. We also have a commitment to support the recycling industry through our business practices and through volunteer, professional and community efforts.

Were you always an environmentalist?

I've always loved the outdoors. As you get older, I think you learn to really respect nature. And when I was in my 30s, I felt I wanted to merge my professional life with the concern to reduce our impact on the earth. I mean, I grew up in the Berkshires and my family was a bit crunchy and have been known to literally hug trees, but it wasn't until the early 90s that I decided I wanted to marry my professional career with my love of nature.

What was the first Preserve® product you came out with?

It was a toothbrush. I actually had an idea for a toothbrush since I was a teenager. My dentist always told me to brush in a certain way, with a 45 degree angle, but the brushes out there just weren't made to do that. My Dad, who was an industrial designer of cars and boats, designed the first Preserve® toothbrush, with input from professional dentists.

How do you decide which products to develop?

At first, we sought to come out with products that almost everyone used and were frequently thrown away for which we could come up with an alternative, a way to reuse and recycle them. As we've developed, we've come to seek to be a company that can offer more well-designed products that are environmentally friendly, made with biodegradable or recycled materials. Right now, we make personal care products, tableware, and kitchenware, and have a range of other products in the pipeline that offer solutions for every room of the home.

Where can people find Preserve products?

We're now found everywhere from independent natural health food stores to online drug stores to national chains like Target, Whole Foods Market, Trader Joe's, and Wal-Mart.

How did you come to partner with Stonyfield Farm yogurt?

They found us at Boston's Earth Day event on the Charles River. At the time, Stonyfield sent their excess yogurt containers straight to a plastic lumber company and thought maybe they could do something cooler like make toothbrushes or other products from it. And there we were giving out our Preserve toothbrushes. Our plastics engineers over at UMass Lowell found it hard to use the containers at first but then got the formula right. It's been a great relationship with Stonyfield Farm as we share similar ideals. They are widely known as a national leader in socially and environmentally progressive business practices and they incorporate environmental action in almost all their initiatives.

The Preserve products are not only made with recycled materials, but are also recyclable. What happens to the Preserve products that are returned to Recycline?

They are made into plastic lumber, used to build things like bridges, porch decks, benches, picnic tables, and children's playground equipment.

Since starting Recycline, have you noticed an increased popularity in green products? Are consumers becoming more environmentally conscious?

No question. When we founded the company, the natural products industry was just starting to take off. In the last 3 to 4 years, especially, it has increased manifold and has really hit the mainstream. More and more people consider the environment, along with price and other attributes, when they make a purchase. There are an estimated 70 million people in the US who rank the environment, health and natural living as their chief priorities when making purchasing decisions. And there seem to be more media articles every day about "going green."

Why do you think people are more environmentally aware these days?

More and more people are seeing the effect that we humans are having on the earth -- impairing the natural world and affecting the air we breathe, the water we swim in, the ecosystems we depend on. Scientific research has shown that climate change is real and that we can't ignore it. We have to figure out a way to live in a more environmentally friendly way if we want to sustain life on this planet. I'm optimistic about the rapid innovations we are seeing in sustainable living and alternative energy.

What can the average person do to cut down on waste?

There are a ton of easy things everyone can do like unplug unnecessary clocks and lights and appliances when not in use. Reuse bags. Eliminate store-purchased bottled water. Ride a bike to public transport. Try to change to greener large purchases - refrigerator, home heating and insulation, car. And recycle! At Recycline, we take pride in turning other people's trash into great looking, functional products that are affordably priced so that folks have one more way to live in an environmentally responsible way every day.

What other products are you looking to develop?

Now that the company has covered the bathroom and dining room table, we're moving into the kitchen with cutting boards, colanders, food storage containers, and other products. We're looking to provide solutions for every room in the house and solutions for everyday use.

Where do you see Recycline in 10 years?

I see our company really making a name for itself as a leading environment-friendly consumer products company; a company that is recognized globally as both innovative in product design for function and look, and for the ways we care for the environment.