

In every issue of *GO magazine*, an industry executive is asked five questions related to sustainability and/or the environment. The interviewee is given no prior knowledge of the questions, which are answered within a 5-minute time frame.



Doug Giles

Global marketing director, Universal Textile Technologies



1 THE FALL ISSUE OF *GREEN OPERATIONS* INCLUDED AN ARTICLE ON THE YELLOWSTONE PROJECT. WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THAT?

In 1998, UTT determined it could use a non-woven, recycled, secondary backing to displace the traditional ActionBac. In doing so, we were able to utilize four recycled bottles per square yard of carpet produced. Additionally, we found the product to be cost effective. Meanwhile, demand

continued to grow for recycled products.

UTT is a charter member of the Bio-Based Coalition in Washington. This is a group of businesses working together to find alternative solutions to help America create jobs and improve sustainability and products. Jim Evanoff, environmental protective specialist for Yellowstone National Park, was a featured speaker at one of the events and was sharing Yellowstone's vision of protecting the environment and preserving the park, and talked about the recycling efforts, which included plastics. Those plastics were being shipped overseas for processing. So we decided to put together a team to explore the possibility of keeping those plastics in America and creating American jobs.

2 YOU JUST COMPLETED A SIMILAR ARRANGEMENT WITH THE GRAND TETONS IN THE JACKSON HOLE, WYO., AREA, AND YOU ARE WORKING ON A DEAL WITH GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK. TALK A LITTLE ABOUT YOUR VISION.

Our team has to educate Americans on the impor-

tance of recycling, and that begins at home. A lot of businesses recycle, but Americans today are still throwing eight of 10 bottles in the trash, which are going to landfills. When Grand Tetons found out about its northern neighbor's involvement in the program, they contacted us. Then we were contacted by the Grand Canyon National Park. It is a program Americans can relate to. And let's face it, Americans need jobs.

Our vision is a program where other parks, football stadiums, NFL teams - any entity - takes their own initiative to see how they can not only help their own industry, but partner with other industries toward a common goal. For example, 600,000 member farmers of the Soybean Board did not recycle plastics, yet they are a part of this program. They are educating their members on recycling.

3 YOU ARE A PIONEER, NOT UNLIKE RAY ANDERSON. WHAT IMPACT HAS HE HAD ON YOU?

When I first came on board at Universal in 1998, I met with many mills. While visiting a West Coast mill, a copy of Ray's "Environmental Downsizing and Sustainable Successes" was given to me. It talked about what his company was doing with waste reduction, water reduction, yarn control, etc. I read the book on my way back to Georgia, and it had an amazing impact on my life. This man had a vision that has truly impacted our industry and our company. But it's not just me. I have to thank our owners, the Peeples family, for allowing UTT and its management team the ability to pursue these sustainability initiatives.

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GOPolicy

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successful elsewhere. CRI stresses that it would like to see how the program in California progresses before other states undertake similar programs. If states do decide to head in the direction of carpet-specific legislation, we believe it is critical for industry to have a seat at the table.

WHAT ARE THE SHORT AND LONGER-TERM STRATEGIES FOR WORKING WITH LEGISLATORS ON EPR ISSUES?

Educate, educate, educate. There are some legislators who are completely unfamiliar with the issue as a whole; there are legislators who are unfamiliar with our

industry and its economic impact on and importance to the U.S. economy. It is important to build relationships and work

with both sides of the aisle to educate legislators. It's my job to ensure that policy doesn't adversely impact our industry.

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4 UTT'S TECHNOLOGY WAS USED BY THE GSA AS THE ROLE MODEL AS TO HOW A COMPANY CAN INTERFACE WITH BIO-BASED TECHNOLOGIES AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, CORRECT?

We originally made the first presentation involving our technology to the GSA along with John Deere and the U.S. Soybean Board. At that time, the Federal government was trying to implement the federal

mandate requiring purchasing agents to seek out and purchase bio-based products. As a result, our very first installation was in the Secretary of Agriculture's office.

5 IF YOU HAD TO PICK ONE THING AS IT RELATES TO SUSTAINABILITY THAT DIFFERENTIATES YOUR COMPANY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

We were one of the pioneers in bio-based technology; pioneers in using recycled PET in secondary carpet backings and synthetic turf.

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