

CASE STUDY

REPACK



Company Name

RePack

Category

Reusable packaging for e-commerce businesses

Location

Helsinki, Finland

Website

<https://www.repack.com/>

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*Circular Packaging
Delivering Scalable
Impact*

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S-Pack

M-Pack

Introduction

RePack, founded in 2011 in Helsinki, is a circular-economy packaging company whose mission is to **eliminate single-use e-commerce waste by making reusable packaging the norm** (Circle Economy, n.d.). RePack designs durable returnable packaging and operates an integrated digital return logistics system that enables customers to send empty packages back through national postal networks. RePack exemplifies how European SMEs can embed **environmental, digital and inclusive values** into a cohesive, purpose-driven narrative that resonates with retailers, consumers and policymakers (Bocken et al., 2014).



Environmental Impact

Traditional e-commerce packaging contributes significantly to landfill growth and CO₂ emissions. RePack addresses this challenge by offering packaging designed for **20–50 reuse cycles**, drastically reducing waste per parcel compared with single-use alternatives (Circle Economy, n.d.). By streamlining customer returns and incentivizing participation through discount vouchers, RePack keeps packaging in circulation and cuts lifecycle carbon emissions by up to **80%** (RePack, n.d.). In doing so, the company places environmental sustainability as a **core operational value**, consistent with circular business model archetypes (Bocken et al., 2014).

Technological Innovation

RePack also frames its business model through a **digital and technological lens**. The packaging system is supported by a digital platform that manages tracking, reuse cycles, customer notifications and impact reporting (Fondazione Carta Etica Packaging, n.d.). This digital backbone enables precise monitoring, cost-efficient coordination and seamless integration with major e-commerce platforms—reflecting the principles of digital entrepreneurship outlined by Nambisan (2017). The result is a scalable infrastructure that allows circular packaging to function across borders and retailer sizes.

Social Inclusion and Equity

At the heart of RePack's mission is **accessibility and inclusion**. SMEs, which often face cost barriers in adopting sustainable packaging, can subscribe to RePack's low-cost model rather than investing in expensive alternatives. Meanwhile, RePack partners with social enterprises to manage cleaning and refurbishment, generating local employment opportunities (Floship, 2021). This mirrors George et al.'s (2021) argument that inclusive business models strengthen legitimacy while addressing societal challenges.

Storytelling Through the Story Spine

RePack's narrative aligns clearly with Egri's (2003) Story Spine structure. **Once upon a time**, e-commerce relied on single-use packaging, generating vast waste. **Every day**, this contributed to landfill growth and emissions. **Until one day**, RePack introduced a reusable packaging system supported by digital returns. **Because of that**, retailers and consumers reduced waste and CO₂ dramatically. **Until finally**, RePack envisions a future where circular packaging is the default. This narrative balances logic, values and emotion, demonstrating how sustainability-oriented SMEs can craft compelling stories (Denning, 2005).

Lessons for Startups

RePack demonstrates how SMEs can build legitimacy and scale by embedding **sustainability, technology and inclusion** into their core narrative. By partnering with retailers of all sizes and aligning with European circularity goals, RePack illustrates the importance of **ecosystem collaboration**. Most importantly, its story shows that a well-designed narrative—grounded in proven environmental benefits and digital infrastructure—can mobilize customers, investors and regulators while staying true to mission and values.

References

Circle Economy. (n.d.). *RePack: Reusable packaging for e-commerce*. <https://knowledge-hub.circle-economy.com/article/23287>

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