



# How Circular is Your Supply Chain?

More than ever before, customers care about the environmental and social impact of their purchases. To stand out in a competitive market, it's crucial to seize the opportunity that boosting sustainability can bring – along with the financial and operational benefits.

However, with so many areas to it can be tough to know where to start. To help you identify areas of opportunity, we've put together **10 questions** to ask about your existing supply chain.

Get started and find out where you can save money, increase efficiency and boost sustainability throughout the product's lifecycle.

## Scoring:

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point



# Product design

1

Are your products designed using renewable, recycled or recyclable materials?

*By considering the materials used at the design phase, you can reduce the waste and environmental impact while meeting demands for eco-friendly products.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point

2

Are your products modular or designed for easy disassembly?

*Modular design helps minimise waste and simplify product repairs. By ensuring products can be disassembled, you can enable efficient reuse, repair and remanufacturing.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point

3

Do you use product lifecycle management tools to track and optimise product design and performance?

*These platforms centralise data, managing the lifecycle of a product from ideation to disposal. They can also provide data for digital twins, helping forecast wear and tear and modelling end-of-life scenarios.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point



## Production and inventory management

4

Do you leverage AI-powered demand forecasting to align production and customer demand?

*Align production volumes with real-time customer demand by using past sales data and customer behaviour patterns to predict future demand for products. Seasonal peaks, regional preferences and emerging trends can all be analysed to influence decisions.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point

5

Do you use Internet of Things (IoT) devices or predictive analytics to optimise efficiency and monitor product performance?

*This approach helps limit over-ordering by identifying how well products are received by customers and which should be discounted, repurposed or reallocated.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point



## Reverse logistics and re-commerce

6

Do you have a seamless returns system in place that deters serial returners?

*£6.6 billion of products are returned in the UK alone by serial returners. Combat this with AI-powered personalisation of the returns process.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point

7

Do you leverage digital platforms to unlock revenue from refurbishment opportunities?

*Physical retailers could be missing out on revenue by not offering customers refurbishment. Digital platforms help streamline the process.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point

8

Do you use digital ID and RFID tags to authenticate and manage products for resale?

*Re-commerce can generate additional revenue and support sustainability goals. By leveraging the right technology, you can build trust by ensuring product authenticity and condition.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point



# Data, technology and future focus

9

Do you use data analytics to monitor your supply chain's environmental impact?

*Data insights can help identify inefficiencies and drive continuous improvement. Along with environmental benefits, this can drive cost-savings.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point

10

Is your current technology infrastructure robust, flexible and ready to adopt emerging technologies (digital twins, robotics etc) to improve circularity?

*Legacy systems may not be compatible with new technologies. Modernising outdated systems is key to supporting innovative solutions that optimise circular supply chain operations.*

Always

+4 points

Sometimes

+3 points

Rarely

+2 points

Never

+1 point



# Identify your next steps



## 10–20 points: Lay the foundations

You're currently missing out on significant opportunities to boost sustainability and drive efficiency within your supply chain. Begin with the essential steps, ensuring modernised, robust systems. Then, consider improving data management and integrating AI-powered tools to build a foundation for circularity.



## 21–30 points: Evolve your strategy

You may have the foundations in place, but there are several opportunities you haven't yet leveraged. To support a circular supply chain that gives you a competitive advantage, focus on integrating IoT devices, predictive analytics and scalable platforms like PML tools to accelerate your progress.



## 30–40 points: Stay ahead of the curve

With modern, flexible systems in place, you may already be incorporating advanced technologies such as IoT devices and predictive analytics. Now, consider looking at cutting-edge solutions such as AI-powered digital twins, robotics and enhancing data capabilities to optimise your supply chains further. With an outstanding circular supply chain, you'll be poised to meet the growing customer demand for sustainable, environmentally friendly products.





# Ready to take the next step?

Download our e-book and dive deeper into each stage, learning how to build a circular, sustainable and competitive supply chain.