

# Guide To Increasing Workplace Recycling

How to remove recycling  
confusion, complexity and  
contamination



# Why Recycling Performance Stalls In Commercial Workplaces

Organisations continue to invest in recycling infrastructure, yet contamination often remains between **10% and 25%**.

Facilities and sustainability teams regularly encounter hesitation at disposal points, inconsistent use of waste streams, and difficulty maintaining performance across locations.

These challenges are common but addressable.



# Recycling Decisions Happen In Seconds

In busy workplaces, people rely on habit, recognition and confidence.

When systems require interpretation, performance suffers.

- Streams lack clarity
- Signage competes for attention
- Placement does not align with movement
- Rules differ between locations
- Feedback and reinforcement are absent

**High-performing systems support how people work and move throughout the day.**



# High Performance Comes From System Design

Recycling improves when waste disposal is treated as a system rather than a collection of bins.

- Clarity
- Consistency
- Behavioural support
- Visibility



# Clarity At The Point Of Disposal

Clear systems reduce interpretation.

Specific waste streams, engaging signage and intuitive cues help people recognise the correct choice immediately.

When clarity & ease of use are missing, hesitation increases.

**Clarity and ease of use are the foundation every other improvement builds on.**



# Consistency Is A Behavioural Tool

Managing recycling across multiple workplaces introduces friction when systems vary by location.

Different streams, signage and placement logic force people to reassess decisions.

When systems remain consistent across workplaces, recognition replaces learning and confidence improves.

**Consistency builds accuracy at scale.**



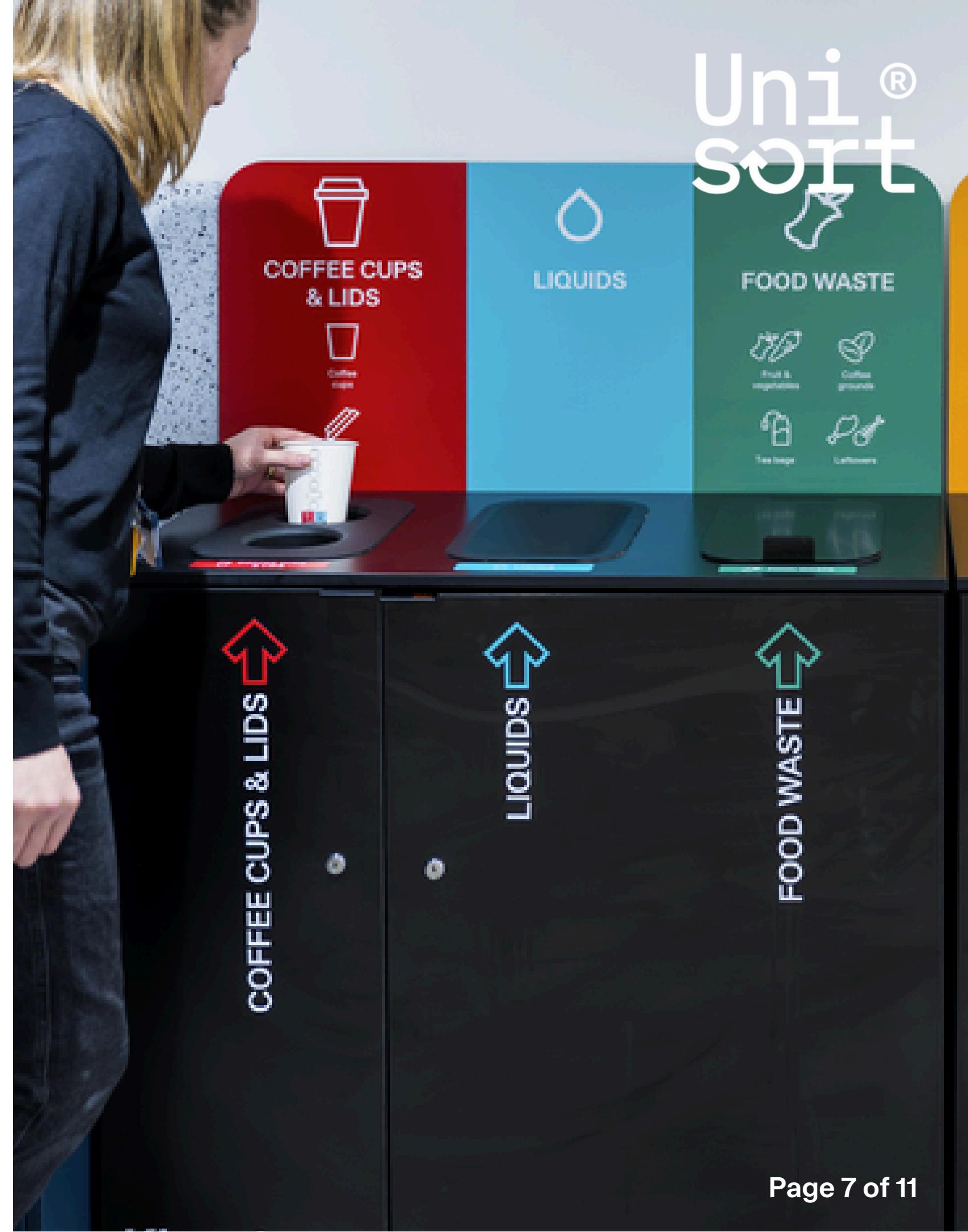
# Engagement Builds Confidence At The Disposal Point

Effective engagement focuses on:

- How people interpret waste streams
- Where uncertainty appears
- How habits influence sorting
- How confidence develops over time

When people understand the system, sorting becomes simpler and more effective.

Engagement strengthens performance rather than compensating for system gaps.



# Visibility Enables Improvement

Recycling performance improves when organisations can see where systems struggle and why.

Visibility includes understanding where hesitation occurs, which streams cause confusion, and how design or placement affects behaviour across workplaces.

When issues are visible, teams can adjust layouts, improve consistency and strengthen engagement with confidence.

**Clear visibility turns assumptions into informed action.**



# Design To Drive Correct Behaviour

High-performing recycling ‘binfrastructure’ typically includes **very specific waste streams, colour-coded apertures, strategic placement, compact solutions where space is limited, and clear signage**.

These recycling stations reduce friction and support correct recycling segregation.



# A Quick System Check For Your Organisation

- Are streams consistent across locations?
- Is signage engaging and easy to read with specific waste streams?
- Are recycling stations positioned in frequently used spaces & walkways?
- Is hesitation common at disposal points?
- Can performance issues be clearly identified?
- Is engagement ongoing or one-off?
- Are contamination rates high despite ongoing efforts?

Each gap highlights an opportunity to improve performance.

# Turning Insight Into Action

Improving recycling performance across commercial workplaces rarely requires starting again.

It requires identifying friction and designing it out.

**Book A Free Behaviour Audit**

A focused conversation about improving real-world recycling performance.

