

Technetix reduces single-use plastics in cooperation with VMO2



VIRGIN MEDIA O2

Size: 18,700 employees

Industry: Telecommunications operator and energy provider offering internet services including fixed and mobile telephony, broadband and digital television.

Location: London and Reading

Technetix design and supply critical broadband technology and solutions to major operators worldwide. We work across the value chain to minimise environmental impacts and promote responsible production and consumption.

A key initiative at Technetix is the elimination of disposable (or single use) plastics from our products and our operations. In cooperation with Virgin Media O2 we have removed over 18 tons of plastic packaging from product supplied to them. 21 tons including earlier work with Virgin Media.¹

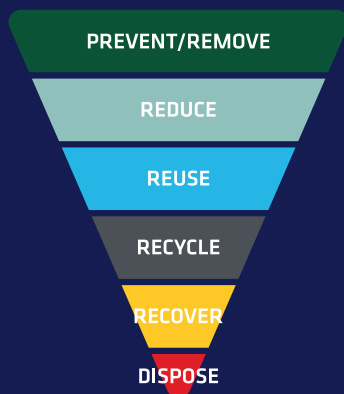
Virgin Media O2's challenge

Operators require products to be delivered in packaging that protects the product, supports downstream logistics, and is safe and easy to handle. Many manufacturers supply products protected by plastic which is then discarded during the installation or supply process, adding to the global plastic pollution problem.

VMO2 is committed to achieving zero waste in its operations and products by 2025. This means ensuring all packaging on customer and network equipment is easily recyclable and excludes single-use plastics.

Notes:

1. Calculated by multiplying the weight of plastic removed per item by annual sales volumes to customer



The Plastic pollution problem

- Global plastic production, use and disposal contributes 1.8 billion tons of CO₂ annually
- 36% of all plastics produced are used in packaging which has a short useful lifespan and is then thrown away
- With global plastic recycling rates at only 25%, most of this ends up in landfill or polluting our lands and oceans
- By 2030 it is estimated there will be 12 billion tons in landfills worldwide
- These plastics take centuries to break down, and remain as harmful micro-plastics that then get into our food and water supply

To address the problem we must look to prevent plastic wherever possible and where this is not possible, reduce, reuse, recycle or recover.



Our Solution

Since 2020, Technetix have partnered with Virgin Media and VMO2 on the removal of plastic packaging in their supply chain.

Technetix supplies a variety of headend, access and connected home products to VMO2. These were previously shipped with protective plastic bags, caps, blister packs or foam, and sometimes with accessories packed in plastic. While this packaging ensured the product arrived at its destination in impeccable condition, it needed to be challenged.

Regular communications and reviews with the VMO2 logistics teams determined that much of the plastic packaging could be removed. When removing the packaging altogether was not viable, the Technetix product and factory teams worked on new packaging and product solutions. Transportation trials and quality tests of new packaging were conducted where necessary.

Changes included:

- removing plastic bags and caps on Technetix cables and indoor splitters
- replacing plastic ties with paper ties on all cables
- a re-design of wall outlets to integrate screw holders into housings: screws were previously shipped in plastic bags
- replacing plastic foam with paper packaging structures for products requiring extra protection, such as DBD-1200 amplifiers and tap banks
- the removal of plastic straps from shipping cartons
- introducing paper packaging tape in Technetix warehouses

New Technetix packaging has been designed with sustainability in mind, ensuring a committed reduction in waste and plastic. This is embedded via our packaging specifications.

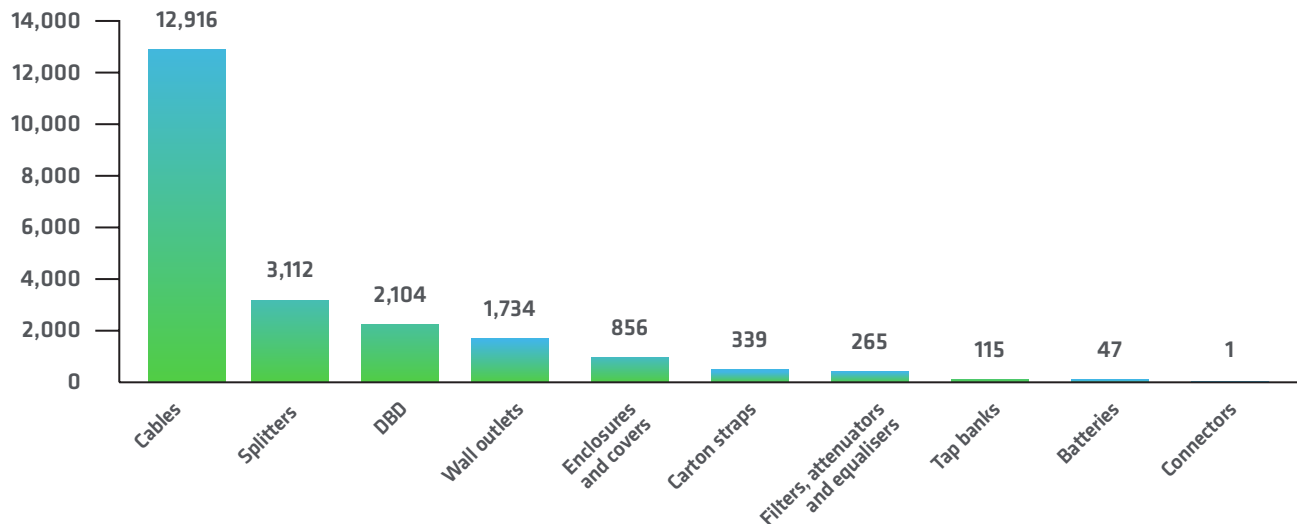
The Results

Removing plastic can reduce environmental impact whilst also improving operational efficiency. Examples of this include:

- Technetix has removed all plastic caps, bags, and ties on their cables so that they arrive at VMO2 in fully recyclable paper packaging, already in the form factor required for the in-home installation kit. This means the kits can be supplied in sustainable packaging and be quickly assembled without the hassle, operational costs, and plastic waste created when removing packaging from other suppliers.
- Click 50 wall outlets are now supplied with fixing screws clipped inside the housings rather than in a separate plastic bag which can be fiddly to open - a small saving in terms of time and plastic, but significant when multiplied across millions of homes.
- Technetix indoor splitters are now supplied without plastic caps and screw bags, simplifying handling and reducing plastic waste.
- The expanded plastic foam, previously used to protect products such as the DBD RF amplifiers, has been replaced with 100% cardboard protection which is more readily recyclable and simplifies waste management in operations.

The chart below shows the amount of plastic by product type that was avoided by VMO2 and Virgin Media since the project started in 2020, totalling over 21 tons. As well as reducing plastic pollution, the switch to paper-based packaging avoids 129 tons of plastic-related CO2e emissions a year, equivalent to 130 return flights from London to New York.^{2,3} These changes must work their way through the supply chain, which is being closely monitored via the Technetix Engineering Change and Quality Control processes. Wherever possible, we are also reducing packaging volumes, thereby further reducing carbon emissions from freight. With the introduction of plastic taxes in the UK and elsewhere, removing plastics can also deliver further time and cost savings.

Plastic removed from VMO2 and Virgin Media products 2020-2023 (kg)



This project demonstrates how small changes make tangible impacts. Technetix continues to challenge their packaging and strives to work together with customers to reduce waste and drive circularity.



We can only address the big environmental challenges that face us through collaboration and partnership. Technetix have shown real commitment to partnering with Virgin Media O2 to tackle single-use plastic, through innovation, a willingness to test new approaches and a desire for quick action.

The changes we make at an individual product level may seem small in isolation but combined will lead to both a big reduction in single-use plastic and will improve the experience for millions of our customers.



Rob McCann
 Head of Environment, Climate & Nature
 Virgin Media O2

Notes:

2. Plastic bags and plastic bottles - CO2 emissions during their lifetime - Time for Change
3. How your flight emits as much CO2 as many people do in a year | Carbon footprints | The Guardian

[technetix.com](https://www.technetix.com)

For more information or to learn more about Technetix sustainability initiatives, visit our website or contact

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