



# Pilot Project to Collect and Recycle Used Computers Using Reverse Distribution Systems

Under EPA's Plug-In To eCycling Program

## Partnership Between Staples and the Product Stewardship Institute in New England

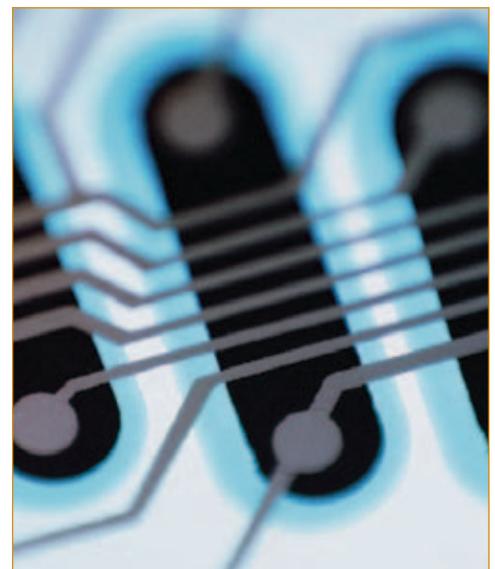
### Project Description

The goal of the pilot was to test and measure the reverse distribution process as a unique strategy for transporting old computers and other business equipment from consumers to recyclers. This process uses the same channels that provide the new products to customers to collect and transport the old electronics to the distribution centers.

**Staples, Inc.**, a \$13.2 billion retail and commercial seller of a wide range of office products, including supplies, technology, furniture, and business services, partnered with the **Product Stewardship Institute** (PSI) to launch a six-week pilot program to measure the success of retail-based electronics recycling during summer 2004. PSI is a national organization that seeks to reduce the health and environmental impacts of consumer products.

Staples collected and recycled old computers, peripherals, and office equipment from its customers by providing the labor, transportation equipment, and storage capacity for the pilot. Participating manufacturers shared the costs of transporting used electronics from consolidation points to the recycler, as well as paying a share

of the recycling costs. Local and state government agencies assisted in designing the project, and promoting the collections. They also provided technical assistance and regulatory guidance regarding the handling of collected materials. PSI collected data from Staples' retail and delivery operations. The goal of the pilot is to evaluate a sustainable business model for long-term electronics collection and recycling. Currently PSI is compiling and evaluating the data to assess the potential to expand this program nationwide. The final report for the project will be published in January 2005.



## Preliminary Results

This pilot included 27 collections at retail stores in five New England States (Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode Island) and 19 collections from catalog customers. The pilot ran from June 8 to July 11, 2004 and the preliminary results for all equipment collected are presented below.

PRODUCT	NUMBER OF UNITS	POUNDS
Computer Monitors	1,642	62,396
CPUs	1,076	24,748
Small Peripherals	649	10,386
Printers/MFDs/Fax/Desktop Copiers/Scanners	1,089	8,844
Laptops	66	987
<b>SUBTOTAL — COMPUTER EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>4,522</b>	<b>107,361</b>
Audio/Visual Equipment	645	4,516
Other	90	3,152
<b>TOTAL – ALL EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>5,257</b>	<b>115,029</b>

### Manufacturer Partners

Apple, Brother, Dell, Epson, HP, Intel, Lexmark, Panasonic, Sharp, Sony

### Government Partners

Connecticut DEP, EPA New England, Maine DEP, Massachusetts DEP, New Hampshire DES, Rhode Island DEM

### Recycler Partners

Envirocycle, WasteCap of Massachusetts.

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