

Make the most of your membership

"Being an Accredited member of the CHSA's Sack Scheme has helped us grow our business. It's a clear statement of our commitment to maintaining standards and dealing openly, honestly and ethically with employees, customers and suppliers. It's something we're proud to shout about."

James Lee, Managing Director of Cromwell Polythene

Cromwell Polythene has expanded, recently moving to a purpose-built larger facility near Leeds. The management team views its membership of the Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers Association's Accreditation Scheme for Plastic Refuse Sacks as an integral component of the success. For Cromwell Polythene, membership is much more than the Scheme marque stamped on the box. It underpins the philosophy embodied by two of its core values – quality and integrity. As a result, Cromwell makes sure it capitalises fully on the investment its membership represents.

Run by its members for its members, the Cleaning & Hygiene Suppliers Association represents all the major manufacturers and distributors of cleaning and hygiene products in the UK. At the heart of the Association is its commitment to standards. Its Accreditation Scheme for Distributors and Manufacturing Standards Accreditation Schemes for Soft Tissue, Plastic Refuse Sacks and Industrial Cotton Mops drive standards in the sector.

The Association also offers networking opportunities to its members, provides bursaries to children of its members employees at university and donates tens of thousands of pounds to charity.



Paying the membership fee and attending events provides some benefit but to really get the most, you have to get fully involved. Beginning by finding out why they are a member, we asked Cromwell Polythene to tell us how they make sure their membership pays.

Why are you a member of the CHSA?

Membership gives us the opportunity to both influence and drive change in one of our core markets. We can network with industry professionals, which opens up opportunities to share ideas, suggestions and understanding.

The Accreditation Schemes are the CHSA's Crown Jewels. They guarantee standards in the sector. Membership adds to our credibility – we have an independent stamp awarded only after a rigorous auditing process that proves we adhere to standards. Recognising the value of this process of independent inspection, buyers of plastic sacks now tend to specify Scheme membership – fully accredited, our products pre-qualify.

Membership of the Scheme is adding value throughout the whole sales process, from the initial contact through to finished products arriving in our customers' warehouses.

Has your attitude to membership changed over the years?

One thing is for sure, membership has become more and more important to us over the years. It has transformed from being nice to be part of, to one of the most important associations we are part of, fundamental to helping us accelerate our growth.

How do you promote your membership?

We use the marketing materials the CHSA produces – Scheme video and leaflets, sales presenters, updates to the Standard, articles, eNewsletters, news stories and case studies – to keep our sales team and customers up to speed with what is going on.

We use the Association and Accreditation Scheme logos on all our collateral and talk about our membership and what it represents at every opportunity. We want our customers, prospects and suppliers to know all about our memberships and understand the fundamental difference it signifies between us and non-members. It's only by buying from a Scheme member you can be sure 'what's on the box is what's in the box' and the plastic sacks are fit-for-purpose!

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Has membership helped you win business?

All the time. We're always talking to customers and prospects about the 'fit-for-purpose' and 'other' grades within the Scheme for plastic sacks. The 'fit-for-purpose' Accreditation guarantees the sack can carry a specified, defined weight, as clearly indicated on the label. 'Other' was introduced to combat the challenge of plastic sacks in unmarked brown boxes. Where previously there was no certainty about the size or number of sacks in a brown box, the Scheme requires each box to be clearly labelled and guarantees 'what's on the box is what's in the box'.

There's now a level playing field between all Sack Scheme members selling CHSA accredited products. If we're up against non-accredited product we can explain the difference and talk about the benefits of buying accredited products. Who wouldn't want to get what they are paying for!

Does your team know about your membership and what it represents?

Yes. The CHSA and what it stands for is part of our induction process and we regularly talk about the Accreditation Scheme in sales meetings, discussing drop weights and future developments.

It's also part of our major push to be more resource efficient. LowCO2t is our range of lightweight recycled refuse sacks that perform in the same way as heavier alternatives.

Looking ahead?

We all – the CHSA and the Accredited members – need to be relentless in promoting the benefits of the Accreditation Schemes. With all the major distributors now members of the Accredited Distributor Scheme, I understand CHSA Accredited product now accounts for over 90% of the market but we need to find a way of getting more independent distributors involved to add value.

Our ongoing push to get contract cleaners and our customers' clients to specify accredited product is also important. It will really add value and help to drive sales through the Accreditation Schemes.

And finally ...

We are proud of our commitment to standards and the contribution we have made to driving them up in the sector through our Scheme membership and participation on the Panel that governs it. Our customers have a right to expect high standards and we are committed to meeting and exceeding their expectations!



JOIN CHSA

Run by our members for our members, the CHSA is the powerful collective voice of all the major manufacturers and distributors of cleaning and hygiene products, from global multinationals and national networks to privately owned independent businesses.

Visit OUR website www.chsa.co.uk for a full list of our Accredited Distributors and Manufacturers.

Contact us at secretary@chsa.co.uk or 0800 243919 for more information.