

fiblon

Corporate responsibility
report 2015–2016

Fiblon's magazine for customers and stakeholders

**A more sustainable world,
one napkin at a time**

Focus on the customer

**We take responsibility
for nature**

Learning through trial
and error

Dear reader

For us, being responsible is all about providing our customers with products that meet their needs and that are manufactured in a responsible way, from responsibly sourced materials.

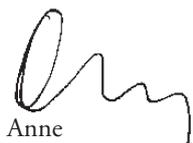
RESPONSIBILITY CONSISTS of making decisions – do we act responsibly or not – and then putting those decisions into action. At Fiblon, we have made a lot of choices and worked hard to ensure that we act responsibly every day. We have chosen responsibly produced raw materials and environmentally friendly production methods so we can have a clear conscience. We take equally good care of our employees as our families, because we want everyone to feel good about coming to work in the morning.

This is Fiblon's brand new corporate responsibility report.

NOW WE WANT to take a new step and help our customers make smart and responsible choices as well. This means our number one priority is to ensure that our customers have enough information to base their choices on. In the restaurant industry, it is quite common to see products being chosen based on price, which can result in the wrong products being used in the wrong way. When there is enough information available, a product can start to provide additional value instead of causing costs. Poorly chosen products usually also lead to resources being wasted. That is not what we want.

THROUGH THIS REPORT, we want to convey our message even more clearly than before and, most importantly, increase our stakeholder groups' awareness of how they can make smart choices. Hopefully we have achieved that goal!

WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THIS REPORT!



Anne

P.S. Please let us know what you thought about our report – we'd be happy to talk about the subject!

 @EkbergAnne, @FiblonOy



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Surprising and unique ideas for table-setting and cleaning

We are an easy-to-approach industrial company that offers customers personalised services and new ideas.

WE OFFER OUR customers in the accommodation and restaurant industry responsible table-setting and wiping solutions that support their success. All our products are made in Finland and they have all been granted the Key Flag symbol.

FIBLON IS a family business founded in Pori in 1979. It is currently run by the second generation. First, there was a man and his tools – now there is an automatised high-tech production line.

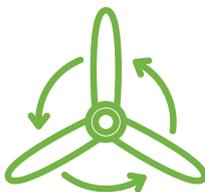
WE WANT TO run a business that we can be proud of, and that is why responsibility is so important to us. We always do our best to use natural resources sparingly and wisely. All our actions are guided by our values: profitable growth, satisfied customers, the joy of working and respect for the environment.

Carefully and wisely chosen products ensure the sensible use of Earth's resources.



5,8 M€
in sales

26 employees



100 %
wind power

300 km or less from most raw materials



Customer orientation is at the core of our operations

OUR GOAL is to fulfil our customers' needs and wishes. That is why we aim to determine each customer's specific needs together with them, instead of mass producing mediocre products. We can tailor the solutions using, for example, stylish prints and surprising designs, or by adjusting the size and packaging of the products so that they are perfect for the intended use. The intention is to make sure that the products feel just right for the end user, work perfectly and are not wasted – not even one napkin or wipe.

Focus on the customer

Professional quality products for professionals

WHEN WE are developing products, we always have a clear idea of how the solution will make the customer's life easier. In professional use, products must be functional, safe and efficient – a perfect match for their intended use. We want to know what the waiter at a café thinks about his tools – is wiping tables easy, do the surfaces become nice and clean?

SOMETIMES OUR customers are not sure what they need or cannot express their needs clearly. That is why our most important tool is asking questions at several points so we get a clear idea of the customer's needs.

We do not want to finish and perfect our products at our facility without actually knowing what the customer needs.

We are an open book

WE WANT to increase our customers' awareness of how they can choose the right products. Responsible production and responsibly sourced materials are not enough – providing the customer with the right product for each purpose is the key. Responsible manufacturing is not worth much if the product itself is not suitable for its purpose.

WE SPEAK openly about our business and manufacturing and the features of our products. The reason behind our openness is that we want to encourage our customers to recognise and avoid the wasting of resources and materials. For example, our customer might want napkins with an unusual shape. We will then tell them the potential waste percentage and give advice on how the waste could be avoided.

When napkins or covers are cut to unusual shapes, extra waste is created. After learning this, our customer wanted to make a more responsible choice.

The shape of a cover does matter

OUR CUSTOMER, a European railway company, used diagonally cut head rest covers in their trains. It looked very elegant, but the customer had no idea how much waste was created in the manufacturing process of their head rest covers. When the covers or napkins are cut to shape, some unusable waste is always created.

OUR PROCESS includes explaining the entire manufacturing process to the customer, because very few customers know how the products are actually made. We want all our customers to know what kind of choices they are making – and what effects each choice will have.

WE CAN, of course, also manufacture diagonally cut head rest covers, but we wanted the railway company to know how much waste was being created in the process. After receiving the new information, the customer wanted to make a more responsible choice and switched to rectangular head rest covers whose manufacturing doesn't create extra waste.





Interpreting wishes and needs

WHEN PURCHASING disposable products, people often do not consider total consumption or overall economic efficiency. Many tend to choose the cheaper option, because the more expensive one feels, well, expensive. This often results in choosing products that are not optimal for their purpose and that may lead to wasting resources and higher overall expenses. For example, when choosing wipes, focusing on the price of the product may prevent the customer from seeing the overall expenses resulting from the use of the product.

People use fewer products if the products are well suited to their purpose

QUESTIONS TO SUPPORT YOUR DECISION-MAKING

- Is the napkin or wipe the right size, is one enough?
- Can it provide the desired level of cleanliness, is the quality right?
- Does the packaging function well once it has been opened, or will the rest of the products be disposed of without even being used?

WHAT FACTORS AFFECT OVERALL COSTS?

For example, the way that customers or employees use the products and tools they have available, such as napkins or wipes. The total consumption depends on whether one napkin will be sufficient to meet their needs or not.

The size, quality and number of the napkins or wipes used affects not only costs, but also the amount of waste created and raw materials required. Would the situation have been different, if the napkin had been big enough and of a good enough quality? And what would be the total cost of that option after a hundred customers?

Details are the key to improvement

ATMOSPHERE AND decoration influence the customer experience, which means that it is important for cafés and restaurants to choose their products carefully. Beautiful cups make coffee taste better and elegant napkins provide a finishing touch.

YOU ARE VISITING a café that you have heard a lot of good things about, and you have high expectations. What a wonderfully decorated space! What a delicious smell of coffee! You are looking forward to a wonderful coffee break. You order your coffee and pastry. The coffee is brewed just for you – from freshly ground beans – and the pastry is still warm. To accompany the beautiful cup and delicious food, you grab a small and ugly napkin...
Stop! Was the enchantment just broken?

LUCKILY, THERE are other options. Let's fix the enchantment with a beautiful napkin that bears the café's logo and completes the experience. A wonderful napkin to match a wonderful moment, like in Cafe Solo in Pori.

Napkins are like background music

WHEN A CAFÉ-ROASTERY in Pori, Cafe Solo, updated their coffee cups and other dishes, they felt it was also time to update the napkins. Their new coffee ware, which was made in Portugal, is now complemented by black napkins personalised with coffee beans and the company logo.

– Stylish napkins are the finishing touch. They may not be at the top of a café owner's priority list, but they still make a big difference, café entrepreneur Teijo Villa notes.

Cafe Solo used to have separate coffee and food napkins, but the new napkins are suitable for both purposes.

– And since they are stronger and of a better quality, one per customer is enough. The number of wasted napkins has been reduced significantly, Villa notes.

When everything needs to be just right. The customer only uses a napkin for a brief moment. Yet it's a key element whose importance and functionality you will discover in practice.



A more sustainable world, one napkin at a time

Designing a responsible product is not the easiest job. To produce a responsible product, various options should be considered every step of the way.



IT IS NOT irrelevant what a product's raw materials are like and where they come from, how the product is made, how big it is, what shape it is, how it is packed or used or where it ends up after use. The goal is to create responsibly produced, functional products that are well suited for their intended purpose.

Keep the first links short

THE SHORTER a company's supply chains are, both in terms of physical distances and the number of links in a chain, the easier it is to monitor what is happening in the chain. Therefore, the first phase of design work is to decide how the materials will be sourced.

IT IS IMPORTANT to us to know where the raw materials we use came from. We do not want to have our raw materials transported from the other side of the globe, either. That is why we favour Nordic wood. The majority of our suppliers (tissue paper, corrugated board, printing ink, packaging plastic) are located less than 300 km from our facilities in Pori, where we manufacture all our products.

One is just right, two is too many

TO MAKE SURE that responsibly manufactured products are also used responsibly, we need to ask some questions. What kind of a product is needed? Where and how will it be used? The total consumption depends on how well the products work.

WHEN THE SIZE, quality and functionality are all correct, consumption is optimised. Insufficient size or poor quality often mean that more than one napkin or wipe is needed. Products that are too large usually lead to materials being wasted. In both cases, more raw materials are used and more waste created as compared to an optimal product.

Responsibility must be present
every step of the way

QUICK AND MESSY FOOD

You decide to grab a quick and filling bite at a fast food restaurant. You have a favourite portion that tastes great but makes a big mess, so you will need a good napkin to clean your mouth and fingers. You grab a lot of napkins, because you already know one will not be enough. How many napkins did you grab?

TRAY COVERS ON PLANES

The tray covers used on airplanes have several purposes. A good cover is visually attractive and in line with the airline's visual image, exactly the right size and very absorbent so that any spilled coffee is immediately absorbed. They must also be friction-treated to ensure that both the tray cover and the items on top of it stay in place.

#Commitment2050

WE ARE committed to building a better Finland – and we hope you join us!

We commit to increasing awareness of the importance of choosing table-setting and cleaning products with care. Choosing your products well ensures that the Earth's resources are used wisely. We can help preserve our unique planet for future generations. Responsible manufacturing cannot make up for choosing the wrong product – smart choices count.

#smartchoice #biodiversity #sustainabledevelopment #responsibility #diversityofnature
sitoumus2050.fi

According to the Finnish Constitution, everyone is responsible for protecting nature and its diversity!

Smart choices

CAN WE influence biodiversity by choosing the right products?

Yes we can, by making smart choices. The loss of biodiversity is one of the greatest threats of our time. Each company should try and assess their own operations' effect on biodiversity.

DIVERSITY IS THREATENED, in particular, by the destruction and fragmentation of habitats, the over-exploitation of natural resources, environmental toxins and climate change.

THE BEST OPTION is, of course, to stop the harmful practices. If those practices cannot be changed or stopped, they can be compensated by protecting, restoring or creating similar biospheres elsewhere.

Our commitment to biodiversity

At Fiblon, we want to help our customers make smart choices. Our goal is to influence our customers' choices and the use of natural resources by increasing awareness.

IN THE RESTAURANT industry, it is quite common to see products being chosen based on nothing but price, which can result in the wrong products being used in the wrong way. This means that the Earth's resources are being wasted, and extra waste is generated in the process. Now we want to help our customers make smart choices and the most important thing is to provide information to support their decision-making.

OUR OWN biodiversity promise is that we want to increase awareness of the importance of choosing table-setting and cleaning products with care. By choosing your products well, you can ensure that the Earth's resources are used wisely and biodiversity is preserved.

IN AUTUMN 2016, we participated in a biodiversity contest for companies, organised by FIBS.



Disposable for a reason

Are reusable products always the best option? The answer depends on how you look at things. In terms of functionality, reusable products meet the requirements rather well, but when you also take manufacturing into account, they may hold some surprises.

LET'S COMPARE a textile napkin and a disposable napkin. What effects will the napkins' manufacturing and use have on people and the environment?

Textile napkin

TEXTILE NAPKINS are designed to have a long useful life and can, in the best-case scenario, be used for years. On the other hand, in e.g. restaurants the napkins may have a much shorter useful life as the result of knife cuts, challenging stains or frayed edges. These problems have a significant effect on the napkin's usability.

HOWEVER, the production chains of textile napkins made from e.g. cotton are a lot more complicated. From a Finnish perspective, cotton cannot be locally sourced and there are several phases in its production where the circumstances are more or less unclear. Where and how was the cotton farmed, the cloth manufactured and the napkin sewed? In a worst-case scenario, reusable products may turn out to be utterly unsustainable.

Disposable napkins

WHAT ABOUT disposable napkins, then – aren't they automatically a poor choice? Not necessarily, if the products are manufactured and used in a sustainable way. We manufacture our napkins in Pori and can easily describe the entire manufacturing chain. The raw material suppliers that provide us with Nordic pulp know exactly which forest their products come from and how those forests are managed.

WE TAKE good care of the wellbeing and work environment of our employees, who manufacture our products, and offer our customers tailored solutions based on their needs. The products are, of course, disposable – but the story behind them is a story of sustainability.

WHEN SUSTAINABLE napkins are needed, disposable napkins offer a real, responsible option. That is why we encourage our customers to consider all the implications that their decisions have – and to make smart choices.

In a worst-case scenario, reusable products may turn out to be utterly unsustainable.

We manufacture our napkins in Pori and can easily describe the entire manufacturing chain.

Our own production in Pori

We manufacture products that have a very short useful life. This means it is extremely important that we manufacture those products in a way that respects nature and uses resources sparingly. We only want to produce high-quality products that suit their purpose well, which allows us to optimise the use of raw materials and reduce the amount of waste created.

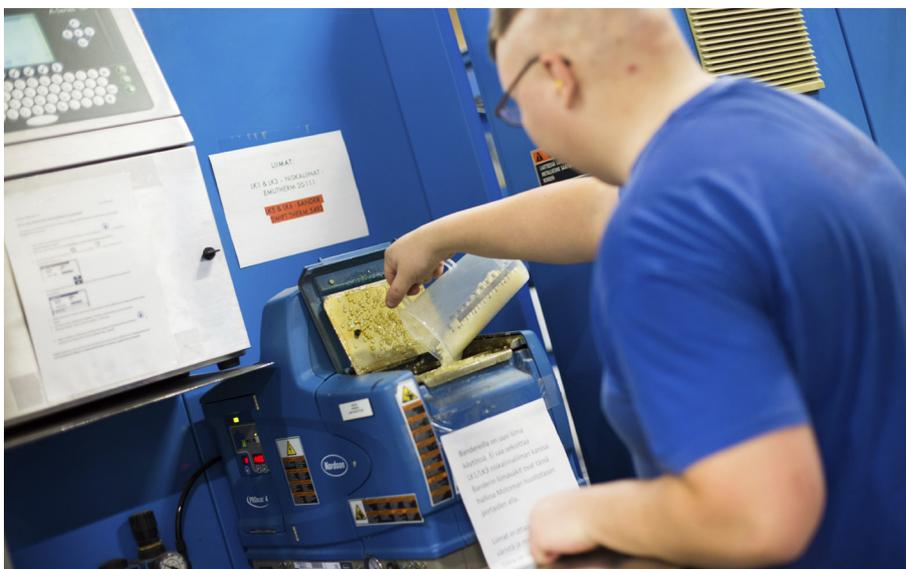
ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS has been a hot topic at our facilities in Pori ever since we started recycling 25 years ago. By now we are practically recycling specialists, only a small fraction of the waste we produce ends up at a landfill.

OVER TIME, we have managed to save a lot of energy in our production processes. Nowadays, all our machines and devices go into a power saving mode when they are not being used. Lights are automatically turned off in spaces where there are no people. We do not even need a separate source of heat for our facility, because we use the waste heat from our production processes to heat the factory and our offices. We do need electricity, but don't want to cause emissions. That is why we only use wind power.

OUR MAIN raw materials are tissue paper, dry-laid paper, various fibre cloths, corrugated board, plastic films and printing inks. We only use raw materials from reliable sources. Our Nordic pulp suppliers know exactly which forest their products come from and how those forests are managed. We only use water based printing inks, which we mix ourselves. The leftovers are stored and used in other projects, to the last drop.

Recycling is one of our areas of expertise – 99.9% of our waste is reused.

We only use raw materials from reliable sources.



RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT 2016





One big family

The joy of working is one of our four values, and it is important to us that our employees feel good about coming to work in the morning.

OF COURSE, there are as many factors that influence the joy of working as there are employees. As an employer, we need to create the framework that allows our employees to try new things, learn, influence their own work and really participate in the development of our operations. This means we must always be listening and prepared to change the way we work.

Common goals, common journey

THERE ARE 26 of us working at Fiblon, and it feels natural to do things together. Once a week we pause production in order to brainstorm together and come up with ideas on how to further improve our products and processes. Once a year, we stop production for a full day and all our personnel spend this Common Goal Setting Day together, thinking about our goals for the next year.

OVER THE YEARS we have had to change and develop our operations to keep pace with the changing world around us. Setting common goals helps us all get a clear idea of where we want to go next.

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JOY OF WORKING



Annual CGS negotiations

In January, we had our eighth Common Goal Setting (CGS) Day, where the entire personnel participated in setting our goals for the coming year.

EACH CGS day has been a unique experience, because we always create the day's programme and results together. We have covered a lot of different themes, such as understanding differences, listening and participation. Even some difficult topics have been handled successfully. The CGS Day has brought us closer and given us ideas on areas that could use some improvements.

JARI VUORI, who is responsible for mechanical maintenance, has worked at Fiblon for nearly 22 years. Jari sees the CGS Day as a good opportunity to pause and chat, especially with those colleagues who you don't have time to talk with during work days.

– It's nice to spend an entire day away from the factory with all of my colleagues, and also focus on topics outside business results. It's also about spending time together and improving team spirit.

IT DOES make your work feel more meaningful and encourage commitment when you get to participate in developing the company and its goals. It gives you a chance to influence your own work, he continues.

The CGS day has brought us closer together and given us ideas on how to improve.





Let's try something new!

The more flexible we are and the better we become at adopting new practices, the better we will survive even the toughest spots.

That is why we encourage our personnel to participate actively and to try new approaches.

TRIAL AND error sounds like a fun method, but in real life it often requires taking a long step outside your comfort zone. Trying out new things always tends to cause some difficulties – minor or major. When you are trying out something new, you may have to do new things and the results may not be what you expect. Some examples of things we have tried include new materials, packages, product sizes and folding patterns.

WHEN TRYING new things, the key is to remember that every new idea cannot be a success. Trial and error requires boldness from the personnel, but it's also challenging for the management, because they have to tolerate failures and encourage their people to try again. Instead of being too worried about failures or wasted resources, we need to see trial and error as a process through which we can learn something new.

When trying new things, the key is to remember that every new idea cannot be a success.

Skill development as an investment

As a company, our level of expertise is determined by the skills our employees possess. We view improving our employees' skills as an investment, not a cost.

IF OUR employees want to participate in work-related training, we are happy to support them – it always benefits us in one way or another. If we notice that the skills we have don't match our goals, we organise trainings to bridge the gap.

FOR EXAMPLE, different products are needed for various wiping situations and the products used in wipes are constantly developing, so we need to have cutting-edge expertise. Our personnel are encouraged to attend trainings and keep their skills up to date.

We view improving our employees' skills as an investment, not a cost.

GETTING HOME ON TIME

We want to take care of both our employees and their families. We discourage working overtime, and after five o'clock in the evening, the alarms are switched on at the office and even the last employees head home. Flexible worktimes and other arrangements are also available, as necessary, to ensure that everyone who works at Fiblon has a chance to maintain a good balance between work and leisure.

After five o'clock in the evening, the alarms are switched on at the office, and even the last employees head home.



Looks good and stands the test of time

Responsibility means actions and results. Here are some of our results in figures. We are particularly happy about the figures describing environmental effects and the joy of working. Results are made by people, which is why the figure representing commitment is particularly important to us. Even when faced with challenges, we have been able to make the necessary improvements. This has also begun to show in our economic figures.



PROFITABLE GROWTH 2016 (€)



Sales



Materials and products



Energy



Wages, benefits and social costs



Stylish products that stand the test of time

Ideally, a napkin should be perfect for its intended use, look good and feel pleasant. Fiblon napkins have even more to offer. A napkin made in Finland from responsibly sourced materials can be proudly presented to even the most demanding customers.

WE MANUFACTURE traditional disposable products, which are often chosen based on price. Overly cautious investment strategies rarely pay off. On the other hand, wisely chosen products can lead to cost savings and added value. Through responsible choices, you can help protect nature's diversity and avoid wasting the Earth's resources.

AS A PARTNER, we can offer our expertise and help you make good choices. We offer surprising and unique ideas for table-setting and cleaning. Functional and technical properties by themselves are not sufficient. It's always about creating impressions and an inviting atmosphere.

A CAREFULLY CHOSEN napkin gives a positive impression. It supports the company's brand and improves the customer experience. If necessary, our napkins can even be turned into attractive decorations. Wherever, whenever and however you use our products, you are supporting our values – Finnish work and respect for the environment.

WE ARE COMMITTED to carrying our responsibilities in the future, as well. It is important to us to ensure that our employees have the chance to influence their work and develop themselves. We aim to improve our operations in accordance with the values shared by our entire workplace community and the goals we have set together. We care about people and the environment – and help others make smart choices.

Pekka Ekberg
CEO

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and however you use
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for the environment.





fiblon

WANT TO KNOW MORE? PLEASE CONTACT: [f](#) [@](#) [t](#) [in](#) [p](#)

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