

PRESERVING PRINTER PLASTICS



For the first ever GreenLight Bootcamp, our team partnered with AZ StRUT (Arizona Students Recycling Used Technologies) to increase their capacity in recycling printer plastics, and overall electronics recycling in rural communities. Our team provided a database of local recycling partners, plastic shredders, rural community centers to store the plastic shredders, and NGOs working in rural communities.

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Challenges & Opportunities

Most plastics and printers go to the landfill at the end of their useful life, especially in rural communities. AZ StRUT collects these printers and refurbishes the printers that are usable. For printers that cannot be fixed, all printer plastic goes to R2 Recyclers and Broadway Metals. AZ StRUT does not currently take part in the downstream recycling solutions for the printer plastics. They also have limited local educational partners in rural areas like Safford, Second Mesa, and Hereford, AZ, to teach these communities how to produce less electronic waste.

Recommended Solutions

AZ StRUT envisions “a world where obsolete technology is repurposed or recycled to prevent this plastic waste from entering the landfill”. To achieve this vision, we recommend they establish and increase their local and rural recycling partnerships. We have identified and contacted local plastic recyclers for AZ StRUT to give them more options for how to recycle printers. We have also researched plastic shredders for AZ StRUT to purchase and clubs that may be able to store the shredders in the rural communities. Lastly, we researched educational organizations to help AZ StRUT engage the rural community in electronics recycling.

Project Benefits

BENEFITS TO PROJECT PARTNER

The Project Partner now has a spreadsheet of options for plastic recyclers, plastic shredders, clubs where AZ StRUT can store the plastic shredders, and NGOs in rural communities to help with electronics recycling education.

BENEFITS TO SOLUTIONEERS

We now have more specific knowledge about recycling and have the ability to think logically about recycling processes. To solve the challenges faced by AZ StRUT, we researched and documented suitable solutions. We had the chance to go out into the community and actually see what the printer recycling process looks like, which gave us a better understanding of the project. This project also allowed us to practice English and overcome language barriers.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The community is benefitted by less waste going to the landfill; therefore, creating less greenhouse gas emissions and harmful pollution.