

# Easier recycling and healthier staff – a win-win outcome for Shopping Metr pole



Sustainability



173 shops



Brazil



Waste management

## KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Shopping Metr pole team found a way to decrease the number of injuries and provide a safer environment for its suppliers, reducing the number of injuries and reported back pain by 100%.
- The changes implemented also increased the efficiency of the recycling process, eliminating the need for an extra worker in peak hours and also reducing the time allocated to waste management in 175h per year.

## SOLUTION

- Installation of a new electric hoist with to enable the compacted bales to be lifted mechanically instead of manually.

## KEY NUMBERS AND FACTS

**100% decrease**  
number of injuries  
and reported back  
pain

**Increased**  
operational  
performance

# Easier recycling and healthier staff – a win-win outcome for Shopping Metr pole



Shopping Metr pole



S o Paulo, Brazil



29,941m<sup>2</sup>



173 shops



1,200 parking spaces



Sustainability

## Abstract

Sonae Sierra's Shopping Metr pole has the highest recycling rate in our Brazilian portfolio, recycling around 76 percent of its waste. However, the shopping centre team was aware that successfully reducing the environmental impact of Shopping Metr pole's waste production was taking a toll on the physical health of the people who were responsible for sorting and transporting recyclable materials.

By studying the problem; installing equipment that could hoist compacted materials bales and training workers to use it safely, Shopping Metr pole reduced the number of instances of injury and reported back pain by 100%. What is more, the new equipment has enabled contractors to increase the efficiency of their waste management process, whilst maintaining best-in-class results.

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## Introduction

Sonae Sierra strives to maintain high rates of waste recycling and reuse across its shopping centres, thereby reducing or eliminating waste sent to landfill. **Shopping Metr pole** in Brazil is no exception. Over the past six years, the centre has increased its recycling rate dramatically by improving its management processes; inspiring suppliers and tenants to take action and investing in waste recycling equipment such as compactors.

As a result, **Shopping Metr pole** now generates recyclable materials weighing around 60 tonnes per month. As part of the recycling process, these materials have to be compacted and transported to the waste skips for removal. With the compacted bales weighing up to 200kg, manual lifting requires considerable physical effort and puts workers at risk of accidents and injuries, as well as back pain.

## Background

Repetitive tasks such as the manual packing of goods and the handling, pushing and pulling of loads that require excessive force poses health and safety risks to workers including back pain and other musculoskeletal disorders. Fortunately, these risk factors can often be prevented through workplace interventions, the application of ergonomic job design principles and health and safety training.

At Sonae Sierra, we are committed to providing a safe environment for everyone who visits or works within our shopping centres, aiming towards zero accidents.

We monitor our performance by tracking Accidents Rate and the Accident Severity Rate among suppliers in all our owned portfolio. We investigate the cause of all incidents and communicate these across the Company so that lessons can be learned to avoid repeat occurrences, and we hold regular meetings and annual training sessions with our security, maintenance, cleaning and waste management suppliers to discuss common issues and highlight basic housekeeping procedures that help reduce safety risks.

## Challenge

Having identified the increase in safety and health incidents among waste management suppliers, **Shopping Metr pole** was eager to address the situation, seeking a solution which would protect workers' health without impacting on the efficiency and effectiveness of the recycling process in place. Without any previous experience to draw from, **Shopping Metr pole** had to seek a unique solution that would fit with the specific characteristics of the shopping centre's waste recycling area.

## Solution

The shopping centre's operations team took the first step forward by investigating the feasibility of installing new equipment to enable the compacted bales to be lifted mechanically. They worked closely with the maintenance teams and waste management workers to understand the real difficulties they faced, until they identified the best potential solution as the acquisition of an electric hoist.

An electric hoist with capacity of up to 500 kg was purchased and installed at a cost of €3,857, an investment which could be paid for by the revenue earned from the sale of the shopping centre's recyclable waste. The installation was completed over a period of two months, during which time the logistics of the recycling process were fine-tuned to fit with the use of the new equipment and to minimise any potential safety risks. Most importantly, this allowed time for the efficiency of the equipment to be tested and for workers to be fully trained in its use.

The use of the electric hoist proved to be a great success. Since the installation was completed, no further accidents were reported and no workdays were lost. The number of visits to the emergency room for back pain **decreased by 100%**. The use of the equipment also increased the efficiency of the recycling process, meaning that there was no need to bring in an extra operative during times of greater visitor traffic in the shopping centre, avoiding costs of around €1,800 for each extra worker. Besides that, there was an improvement in the process reducing the time allocated to the waste handling, estimated in around 175h

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per year. Shopping Metr pole has improved people’s health and wellbeing, obtained economic benefits and maintained the highest recycling rate in the Brazilian portfolio, at 76%.

**Before:** workers manually lifting heavy compacted bales to the skip, causing back strain



**After:** workers use an electric hoist to lift the compacted bales, eliminating this safety risk



## Conclusion

Shopping Metr pole’s consistent commitment to the goals of Safe People & Resource Resilience, the dedication of the whole shopping centre team and added support from Sonae Sierra Brasil’s Corporate Operations Manager enabled us to successfully resolve a health and safety challenge in a way that benefited Shopping Metr pole’s operational performance; the health and wellbeing of its workers and the environment.