

Hi everyone,

As you've hopefully seen over the past few years, we at Sports Interactive aren't scared of delving into subjects that affect the world with our Football Manager series of games. From footballers having the courage to come out as gay in the game, through simulating Brexit, via the charities we promote with ad hoardings and the donation that goes to War Child for each PC game we sell, we are lucky to have a voice and to use it to tackle some difficult subjects that need wider discussion.

One thing we haven't been great with, though, is our environmental footprint. Up until now, the packaging for our boxed games has used a plastic case, like any DVD release. This is better than the huge cardboard boxes with CD cases inside that we used to produce 20 years ago, but it's not good enough. Our average play times being so high uses lots of electricity, and we hope our consumers do what we've done in our office home of Here East and switch to green energy.

We, along with our colleagues at SEGA, are committed to reducing our environmental impact and this week, in the lead up to the United Nations' Climate Action Summit 2019, is the perfect opportunity for us to reveal what we've been working on.

I'm very proud to announce that packaging for the standard edition of Football Manager 2020 will be what we believe to be a first for the industry – it's the most environmentally friendly packaging we've been able to put together. We are replacing the plastic box that is typically used across the industry with a reinforced, 100% recycled gatefold cardboard sleeve, made with 100% recycled fibres. We've changed the printing on the packaging to vegetable and water-based ink with a recycled paper manual inside and have managed to source recyclable shrink wrap to encase the packaging and keep it secure on its travels.

This packaging is not only recycled, but it's also almost entirely recyclable. Everything can be put into standard recycling bins, with the exception of the disc and (in certain places) the shrink wrap (both of which can be recycled at specialist outlets in certain territories). Please check with your local recycling authority for further information on recycling the FM20 disc and shrink wrap – although we will be working on getting a list together that we will place on our website at when it's ready, and announce that URL via our social channels at that time.

There are still some environmental aspects to look at outside of the core packaging though – such as the aforementioned distribution travels. Because the packaging is so much lighter than the heavy plastic, it should (in theory) use less fuel to transport. So we could make savings there too.

It's also easier (and cheaper) to 'destroy' this packaging at the end of the games cycle. Rather than requiring landfill, it's just a case of taking the disc out of the packaging, sending it off to a recycler and putting the rest into a recycling bin.

From a retail perspective, the packaging is around 2mm smaller in height to what retailers are used to. The spine is almost identical in dimensions. So there's no need for any re-racking. Mail order retailers will potentially make some savings on postage too (and, if any of you reading this are in that business, we'd be very grateful if you used recyclable packaging too).

Due to these changes in our packaging, we are estimating (based on expected sales) a saving of around 20 tonnes of plastic this year. It's about 55g of plastic per box that is simply not needed.

But we're not interested in being the only people doing this. So I'm throwing down the gauntlet here to ALL entertainment companies who use plastic for their Blu Ray, DVD and CD packaging. Imagine

how much plastic we could save, how much landfill we could avoid and how much less plastic would make it into the oceans if we were all do this?

“Ah, but is it more expensive?” you ask. Well, the simple answer is yes. Each package costs about 20c more, but that extra cost will be partly offset by cheaper distribution costs and partly offset by cheaper destruction costs. And, as footballer Héctor Bellerín points out in the video we’ve just [released](#), “if there’s no Earth, there’s no money to spend”.

We’ve spent a lot of time working on this with our colleagues at SEGA. But rather than keeping this to ourselves, forcing everyone else to re-do the hard work already done, instead we’ve decided to reveal the materials that we’ve used to help all entertainment companies switch easier.

DOUBLE PRINT 100% recycled board sourced through our preferred printer Bridge Media Group (<https://www.bridgemediagroup.com/>).

LDPE film sourced through our chosen PC manufacturing partner Sonopress GmbH (<https://www.sonopress.de/en/>).

Packaging size – 138mm Wide x 188mm Tall x 13mm Deep.

This new packaging will be used around the world from the day of Football Manager 2020’s release in November.

Many thanks for reading this whoever you may be – but if you are involved in the decision making process when it comes to packaging, particularly in the entertainment industry, think what could happen if we all made small changes like this? We can help at least slow down climate change, but we have to act now. This IS a climate emergency.

Cheers

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