

## **Case Study #1: WasteNot Compost**

*\*This is a fictional case study devised for educational purposes. Neither the author nor Northwestern University are affiliated with the company.\**

### **Contents:**

Press Release (Launch of services)  
Speech (Internally directed, employee audience)

By: Maddie Stengel  
Master of Science in Communication, 2022  
Northwestern University, School of Communications

**Company Contact:**

WasteNot Compost  
Maddie Stengel  
(773) 123-4567  
mstengel@wastenotcompost.com

**Release Date:**

July 1, 2023

**LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL TRAILBLAZER, WASTENOT, LAUNCHES ON-DEMAND ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES FOR DISABLED CUSTOMERS**

*Beginning July 28 (World Conservation Day), WasteNot kicks off an individualized accessibility program to include all consumers in the effort to reduce food waste.*

[CHICAGO, IL July 2023]: In honor of this year's World Conservation Day, Chicago natives, Liam Donnelly and Lauren Kaszuba, are expanding WasteNot's "mission to keep delivering sustainability, sustainably" to include disabled consumers. The company's member portal will now feature a tab for accessibility services that can be individualized for specific needs. Through the member portal, customers can request Braille and/or large-print copies of the instruction materials (including acceptable compost items). WasteNot's website will be upgraded to offer accessibility features including read-aloud capabilities, large print, and captioned videos.

The site's member portal will now allow mobility-impaired customers to schedule assistance with the swapping of compost buckets. At the customer's chosen time, a WasteNot employee will assist in removing and replacing full buckets.

WasteNot believes that all food-consumers deserve a chance to reduce food waste. Every day, consumers choose to dispose of food-related waste be it through recycling packaging or throwing scraps away. However, the company reminds us that "there is no such thing as "away," there's only better." Compost is the better choice. Climate change does not discriminate against disabilities and WasteNot believes that climate preserving solutions should not discriminate either. The company is committed to making compost available to everyone, regardless of disability or difference.

To schedule an assisted bucket pick-up, click [HERE](#) and sign in to the member portal or create a new profile. If you are a caretaker or guardian looking to schedule services for another person's residence, please reach out to [access@wastenotcompost.com](mailto:access@wastenotcompost.com). Services begin July 28, at which time the new website capabilities will also become publicly available.

**Annual All-Company Meeting (Internal)**  
**Opening Remarks - Chief Communications Officer**

Good afternoon! Thank you so much for gathering together today - I'm still adjusting to seeing everyone in-person for these meetings and it's wonderful!

To kick-off our annual all-company meeting, I want to start by reading a recent feedback email:

*Dear WasteNot,*

*I'm a new customer and recently shared your business with my elderly mom. She is an avid gardener, but doesn't have the space to compost on her own. Mom suffers from advanced cataracts and struggles to read most text. Unfortunately, your website is not compatible with her computer's read-aloud function. She couldn't create a profile to sign up for her first bucket. Please consider updating your website to include disabled users. While I'm happy to help her, she values her independence and would rather be able to use the site on her own. We support your mission, but hope that in the future, you will make room for disabled people to join too.*

*Sincerely,  
Linda*

Ouch. Not exactly a rave review. I hate to think that we have left anyone out of the composting mission, especially people who are already disadvantaged. Not only did we leave people out, though, but we did so by simply overlooking basic communication. Linda's letter got our team thinking about how we can be more inclusive to disabled users across the board. If we overlooked one demographic, how many others may have fallen through the cracks? So, after some brainstorming (and a good deal of research into accessibility practices), I am proud to announce WasteNot's new accessibility initiative.

In honor of this coming World Conservation Day, we are debuting **two** changes to expand our community reach and include disabled customers in existing business practices. We see these changes as an expansion of WasteNot's "mission to keep delivering sustainability, sustainably."

First, thanks to our IT department, the website is undergoing a shift. This will include new buttons that allow blind/low vision users to access read-aloud services or large-print text. Those features will appear on each page of the site. Other changes will be found in the member portal. The portal will now feature a tab for accessibility services that can be individualized for specific needs. On this page, customers can request Braille and/or large-print copies of the instruction materials (including acceptable compost items). If we post promotional or educational videos, they will include English-language captions by default. The website changes won't impact most employees unless you are on the tech team, in which case, maintenance will be imperative.

Second, we are introducing a new method of collection/bucket-replacement for customers with mobility impairment. The member portal will allow mobility-impaired customers to schedule assistance with swapping their compost buckets. At the customer's chosen time, a WasteNot employee will assist in lifting the full bucket out of the home and replacing it with a clean one. This impacts our drivers most because you will be the ones interfacing with customers directly. When services are requested, collection routes will be adjusted to accommodate the

extra time required for the assistance. Training will be provided before the debut of the service.

A little over 10% of Chicagoland's population identifies as having a disability. We are intentionally publicizing the launch on July 28, World Conservation Day, to further demonstrate WasteNot's belief that *all* food-consumers deserve a chance to reduce food waste. Climate change does not discriminate against disabilities and we believe that climate preserving solutions should not discriminate either. We are committed to making compost available to Linda's mother and to everyone in Chicago, regardless of disability or difference.

It is important to me and to all of our leadership team that you, the employees on the ground doing the hard work of supporting our customers, feel excited and involved in the process. If you are aware of areas that WasteNot does not currently serve but might benefit from a collection route, let us know so we can continue building a more inclusive service map. When the official announcement is made, we encourage you to spread the word to your friends and family. We will be sending targeted announcements to community organizations that work directly with the disabled population. If you have questions or concerns about the implementation, feel free to reach out to me directly.

Thank you for your support and commitment to fighting food waste, inclusively!

## Citations

### Press Release —

Free press release templates. Smartsheet. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <https://www.smartsheet.com/press-release-templates>

Roos, D. (2007, August 28). How press releases work. HowStuffWorks. Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <https://money.howstuffworks.com/business-communications/how-press-releases-work1.htm>

Wastenot compost. WasteNot Compost. (n.d.). Retrieved April 15, 2022, from <https://www.wastenotcompost.com/>

### Speech —

Facts and figures about people with disabilities in Chicago and the U.S. City of Chicago : Facts and Figures about People with Disabilities in Chicago and the U.S. (n.d.). Retrieved June 14, 2022, from [https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mopd/supp\\_info/guidelines\\_for\\_writingandreportingaboutpeoplewithdisabilities/facts\\_and\\_figuresaboutpeoplewithdisabilitiesinchicagoandtheus.html](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/mopd/supp_info/guidelines_for_writingandreportingaboutpeoplewithdisabilities/facts_and_figuresaboutpeoplewithdisabilitiesinchicagoandtheus.html)

Wastenot Compost. WasteNot Compost. (n.d.). Retrieved June 14, 2022, from <https://www.wastenotcompost.com/>