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# Jupiter Imagines a Healthier Planet



**Jupiter**



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CEO Sidney Rittenberg's drive to embrace environmental consciousness might just change how B2B companies think and do business. **By Dan Ferrisi**

As the effects of global climate change become increasingly obvious, greater environmental consciousness is approaching critical mass. Sidney Rittenberg, the sustainability-minded CEO of Hayward, Calif.-based Jupiter, believes the younger generation is raising everyone's awareness. "My kids, and kids their age, are very conscious about this," he says, declaring that their ethos is driving B2C giants to make end-to-end supply-chain changes. "Apple is certainly a great role model in this area and is leading a lot of these initiatives," Rittenberg continues, adding that the levels of supervision, inspection and standards that Apple adheres to are "...something that we can certainly study and learn from." Lamenting that, right now, consumer-facing brands exhibit much greater environmental consciousness than corporate enterprise-facing brands do, Rittenberg describes wanting Jupiter to lead the way and, hopefully, influence other B2B players positively. Here, we'll delve into the company's laudable efforts.

### Understanding the Inspiration

Rittenberg makes something clear from the outset: This isn't about marketing. "I don't do it because it sounds good," he stresses. "It is something that I personally strongly



Jupiter's Pana 34, a 21:9 desktop productivity tool, was designed from the ground up with environmental consciousness in mind. Jupiter found that the product packaging is where the company could really contribute meaningfully.

believe in, and [I decided] I want to bring this — I must bring this — to the company as a whole." Rittenberg points out that many of us make environmentally conscious choices in our everyday lives (e.g., using less disposable plastic, conserving water); therefore, it's only natural to try to translate that into our business lives, as well. The motivation is especially clear because, as he observes, "We see the [effects of climate change] throughout our own lives." Therefore, ever since becoming CEO in early 2020, Rittenberg has worked with all stakeholders — from his Board to rank-and-file employees — to make change. "This is something I embedded into our business from the very beginning," he declares.

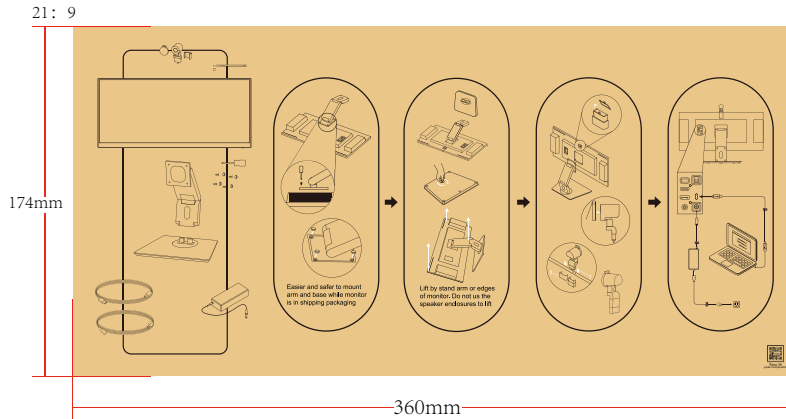
Rittenberg makes explicit that, although the efforts he's driving enjoy broad support from the Jupiter board, sustainable practices entail making hard choices. "Being socially and environmentally responsible does come with a cost," he acknowledges, observing that large B2C companies, with their wide consumer bases, can scale initiatives more easily. Rittenberg says it really comes down to these questions: What approaches can a company afford to embrace? And how complicated is it for a company to navigate the whole supply chain — from raw materials to finished product? The other question is how much additional cost companies can pass along to buyers. "Sometimes," he concedes, "we just have to absorb it because we believe in [the worth of] the cost." All these considerations illuminate why Rittenberg describes Jupiter's burgeoning efforts as

“taking baby steps.” They also explain why he emphasizes the company’s ongoing efforts to make plans, do studies, and identify ways to improve and expand its approach.

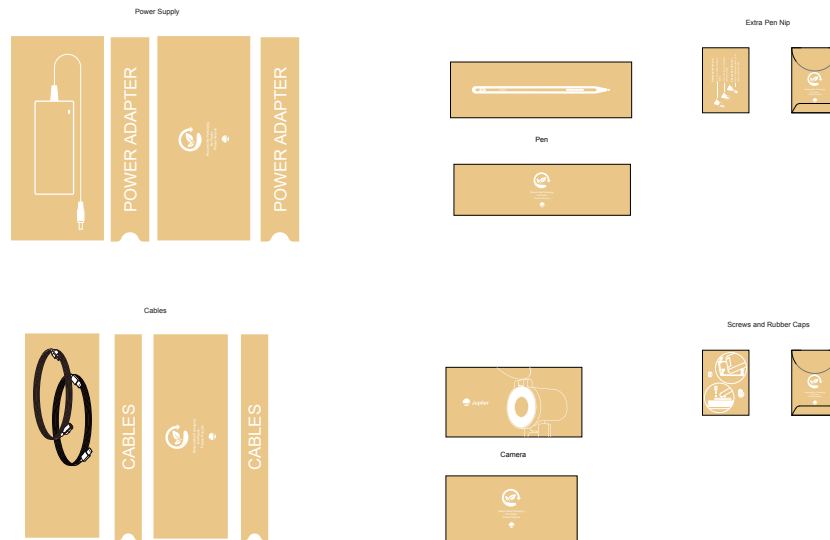
## From Raw Materials to Finished Goods

Rittenberg and the Jupiter team are acutely aware that environmental consciousness in manufacturing must manifest throughout the supply chain, extending from raw-material sourcing to finished-goods delivery. That means the company had to look closely at the factories it uses. He notes that Jupiter’s Hayward facility has attained ISO 9001 certification, indicating that the facility meets international criteria for a quality management system. However, he characterizes that designation as “basic.” Rittenberg explains, “For contract manufacturing and for final-assembly factories, we have to go far beyond that because they have a much bigger scale than what we can afford in our own facility.” That paves the way for more ambitious standards, such as SA8000 (a mark of adherence to high social standards); ISO 14001 (an international standard for environmental management systems); and ISO 45001 (an international standard for occupational health and safety management systems).

Jupiter’s Pana 34, a 21:9 desktop productivity tool, was designed from the ground up with environmental consciousness in mind. And, although the company made sustainability-minded choices throughout the plastic and metal-fabrication process, Rittenberg affirms that the product packaging is where Jupiter could really contribute meaningfully. The Pana 34 is manufactured in a facility with SA8000, ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 certifications. Rittenberg elucidates the meaning of that, declaring, “These are not simply numbers that you throw out there. These are facilities that not only get the certificate but [also] get regularly inspected. They have to really abide by the quality and the safety of their workers and what they use on a raw material basis.” That means, when integrators spec and end users purchase Pana 34s, they can be confident that the entire supply chain checks out.



The Pana 34 is manufactured in a facility with SA8000, ISO 9001, ISO 14001 and ISO 45001 certifications. Facilities like these not only get the certificate but also get regularly inspected.



One of the key virtues of the packaging is the use of 100% recycled paperboard. What's more, the Pana 34's packaging includes no plastic bags; instead, the company opts to use FSC-certified recycled paper exclusively. All printing is with soy-based ink only.

## Painstakingly Rigorous

Rittenberg explains the painstakingly rigorous process for the Pana 34, saying that Jupiter scrutinized every part of the supply chain. “[We asked] every single vendor and supplier,” he begins, “‘What kind of certification do you have? How do we verify your certification? Who else do you supply to that you give these kinds of commitments and promises to?’” In fact, in one case, Jupiter actually went to the certifying agency to ensure partner compliance and ongoing verification. This kind of rigor is, frankly, uncommon. But it’s of a piece with Rittenberg’s deep-seated environmental consciousness and his desire to make Jupiter a beacon that can guide others. “With environmental consciousness and responsibility building in all the mindsets — not only in ours but also in our vendors and supply-chain partners — we hope to elevate this,” he declares.

Turning to the Pana 34’s packaging, Rittenberg lays out the guiding vision, saying, “We dove into what we could do to make this, hopefully, [completely] environmentally conscious.” One of the key virtues of the packaging is the use of 100% recycled paperboard. “And that paperboard is not just 100% recycled,” he adds, “but [also] Forest Stewardship Council certified.” That, of course, is a mark of responsible forestry, indicating sustainable raw-material cultivation. What’s more, the Pana 34’s packaging includes no plastic bags; instead, the company opts to use FSC-certified recycled paper exclusively. What’s more, all printing is with soy-based ink only. As noted earlier, these standards affect vendors and supply partners up and down the line, underscoring the



Even with all these investments in sustainably packaging the Pana 34, Rittenberg sees more work for Jupiter to do. The company is still actively researching, looking for ways to eliminate EPE foam and do a 100% cardboard packaging design.

magnitude of Jupiter’s organizational commitment. “Chasing back layers and layers of supply chain to make sure that we are responsible throughout this process was quite a journey,” Rittenberg reflects.

Even with all these investments in sustainably packaging the Pana 34, Rittenberg sees more work for Jupiter to do. He laments the challenge of packaging heavier products like the Pana 34 — let alone the Pana 81 and Pana 105 — in an environmentally friendly way. “Because it’s so heavy, we couldn’t do 100% cardboard packaging design in the interior to protect it,” Rittenberg acknowledges. “The yield on logistics would be extremely low.” So, Jupiter resorted to using some EPE foam, as well. “But it’s not satisfactory to us,” he adds, “so we’re still researching.” Moreover, Rittenberg notes, he’d like to cascade further packaging improvements throughout the Pana family.

### **Guiding Others to Enlightenment**

Rittenberg’s disappointment is evident when he acknowledges that, to this point, he’s not seen other B2B companies make sustainability-minded investments like Jupiter has. “I hope the little bit of noise we’re making can really strike some interest in our industry,” he says optimistically. He observes that, in the B2C market, shoppers reach into their own wallet to purchase items, creating a close relationship between buyer and brand. This can amplify buyers’ desire to support things like “Made in America” and sustainable

practices. By contrast, the B2B landscape, by its nature, is more impersonal. In Rittenberg's words, "That separation kind of detaches this whole chain of business from the direct awareness level of being environmentally conscious." But for someone with Rittenberg's passion for environmental stewardship, that fact only emboldens Jupiter to act. "Regardless, we push forward on our own," he declares.

Jupiter continues to march forward, recognizing the deeply damaging effects of climate change and making choices not only to ensure its packaging is environmentally friendly but also to influence customers and partners to tread a more enlightened path. Already, Rittenberg has won unanimous organizational buy in. "You have to have the support of the entire team," he emphasizes, "and, fortunately, I do. Everybody is onboard." That is no small feat, given Jupiter's large and diverse workforce, as well as its fiscally minded board that must eye spending watchfully. But Rittenberg himself earns that buy in, his passion for environmental stewardship so sincere...so deeply felt...so compellingly conveyed. "It's not a marketing phrase," he concludes. "It's something that everybody — the entire team — is conscious about." ●



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