



Introduction:

At the end of 2011, Lush Cosmetics became the first cosmetics company to undertake an analysis of its plastic use based on the principles of the Plastic Disclosure Project (PDP). The PDP asks for yearly voluntary reporting from companies and institutions to monitor and measure their plastic use, or waste generation vis-à-vis plastic. The goal is to bring efficiencies in the use of plastic, so that plastic is reduced from the waste stream, thus leading to reduced environmental impacts. By setting baseline metrics of use, managing the material from the standpoint of use, waste creation or waste aggregation, becomes easier on a yearly basis.

Report Summary:

Benefits of Plastic in Lush's product lines:

- For the liquid products made by Lush plastic offers a packaging solution to safely contain the product
- Lighter than alternative packaging/design, such as glass, which results in reduced emissions due to shipping

How much plastic does Lush use?

- Lush has over 800 shops worldwide
- The UK manufacturers for 46 of the countries
- There are also manufacturing plants in Canada, Australia, Chile, Croatia and Japan whose figures are not included here
- 46% of the 650 products Lush produces are solid and displayed unpackaged
- The UK produced in 2010/2011 153,931 tonnes of plastic packaging, 75 tonnes of which was for the UK and nearly 79 tonnes of which was exported (this does not include the plastic moulds used for making products an additional 51 tonnes)
- Of the plastic packaging used to package products 95% by weight is easily recyclable by customers (able to be recycled by the local council, or accepted by Lush shops), and Lush are working hard on the other 4% - half of the unrecyclable post-consumer plastic will be recyclable by the end of the year

Lush efforts to reduce plastic

- Lush redesigned its bottles, shaving 14% of the weight off the bottle in 2010
- Lush continues to invent products that are solid, or do not use plastic packaging; for example, the solid shampoo bar, equivalent of three bottles of shampoo
- Lush removed PVC from being used as the primary material for product moulds over to PET which is easier to recycle
- Lush has removed all single use plastic cups from its factory for staff and replaced them with ceramic cups
- Lush re-uses up to half of its product moulds 4 times or more in production. The other half are sent with the product inside to protect it to the shops, and the shops will either return it to the factory or have it recycled with its local contractor
- Lush has recently invented toothy tabs which are solid toothpaste pieces which can replace liquid toothpaste, negating the need to use plastic tubes. After completing research into the environmental impact of plastic tubes compared to cardboard, it was apparent to us that a great impact could be made without the plastic tubes. We then made a simplified guide for our shop staff and customers, which is posted on our website (<https://phoenix.lush.co.uk/content/view/1632>).

Lush efforts to recycle plastic

- In the UK Lush recycled 85% of its waste in 2011 (730 tonnes of waste), 50 tonnes of this waste was plastic which was recycled
- Lush moved their plastic packaging company to Poole near the Lush factory, benefiting in the ability to work closely with the company, and also use Lush waste plastic in the feedstock
- Lush has run a scheme to collect and recycle customer black pots (empty, and cleaned used Lush pots). The black pots are then recycled back into black pots in the UK. Other countries are now setting up similar reuse or recycling schemes. To incentivise people, for every 5 pots returned customers will receive a free fresh face mask
- Empty manufacturing HDPE EC containers are cleaned, taken to the local packaging manufacturer and recycled into Lush black bottle packaging
- In the UK customers can bring their no.2 and no.5 bottle tops back into lush shops. These are not commonly recycled in the UK. Lush will be integrating the tops into their plastic packaging feedstock
- At present all of the UK 101 shops have local recycling contractors which take the shops plastic waste to recycle

- By the second half of the year Lush will have rolled out a recycling scheme called 'Pac Bac'. The 60 southern shops will return their waste, including plastic, to the UK factory in Poole, where it will be recycled. This is to increase knowledge of how and where items are recycled (for example Lush aims for all recycling to take place in the UK) and also to increase the amount of rebate earned from waste

Governance

- Lush has an environmental manager (direct interaction with founders and senior managers) and recycling manager for day-to-day recycling opportunities
- Lush has fully embraced the principle of Extended Producer Responsibility

Public Disclosure

- We believe the Plastic Disclosure Project is a very good tool to help with management and strategy planning for the use of plastic in our materials.