

Walking the Talk of Sustainability Practices: The Case of Lush Retail Ltd.

Deepanjana Varshney

City University Ajman, United Arab Emirates

Yousr Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed

City University Ajman, United Arab Emirates

Abstract

The shift of the consumer focus to organic, pure and preferably sustainable-oriented beauty products has been a massive trend in recent years. Organic cosmetic products are certified, offer benefits through natural means and have little or no side effects. Consumers in recent years are more entitled and aware of natural products and sustainable, ethical procedures from buying the raw resources, making, packaging and eventually disposal of the products post-usage. Circular beauty is also embedded in the sustainable goals of such organizations as Lush. Circular beauty comes under the umbrella of the circular economy. It implies that products follow a series of lifecycle stages in a loop, as reflected by the transformative phases of the ingredients of Lush. Lush encompasses sustainable procurement, wildlife protection (particularly endangered flora and fauna), and minimal packaging to align with the sustainable goals that enhance reputation and goodwill.

The Organic Cosmetic Industry

Consumers in current times have become aware of the detrimental effects of chemical ingredients used for manufacturing beauty products over the years and have started purchasing organic products. Circular beauty is an emerging trend that implies a viable green business framework that generates usable materials through reuse and recycling, reducing disposable food waste (vegetables and fruit pulp) by purchasing rejected produce and performing content recycling on the materials. Repurposed contents create cosmetic products. On the other hand, circular economy refers to an economy where organizations design reusable products. In 2020, the revenue

of natural and organic beauty products in the United Kingdom was 221 million British pounds demonstrating that there has been an increase in consumer knowledge about sustainable practices, consumption and natural composition in product manufacturing.¹ The Statista Consumer Market Outlook has projected that by 2025, the revenues will increase to 339 million pounds. Subsequently, there has been a paradigm shift, especially from 2021 onwards, as consumer awareness gradually led to organic products capturing the conventional, regular markets. The Sales of Soil Association report stated that the pandemic may have triggered consumer preferences for hand-made organic items.² The 2022 Organic Beauty and Wellness Report of the Sales of Soil Association revealed a 15% positive growth in 2021 and the present market value at 138.23 million pounds in the UK (United Kingdom). According to the report, new consumers demand eco-friendly products and complete transparency about product details. Lush is a case of a UK-based cosmetics company that ventured into the field of sustainable activities at a time even when other established companies needed to foresee the impact of blending Sustainability into its ethical, organic methods and fair buying values. It was also simultaneously successful in generating good profits. The company's tagline says it all: 'Leaving the world Lusher than they found it'.

Company Background, Inception and Growth

Lush Retail Ltd originates from the United Kingdom and is a cosmetics retailer. Mark Constantine, his wife Mo Constantine and other members (Andrew Gerrie, Liz Weir, Rowena Bird, Helen Ambrosen and Paul Greeves) founded the company in 1995. The company manufactures and sells soaps, lotions, moisturizers, scrubs, masks, shampoos and other cosmetic items. The company operates in 49 countries and has 951 stores globally. Lush has manufacturing plants in Canada, Germany and Australia, whereas its headquarters is in Poole, England. The company practices forward and backward integration. Over two decades have elapsed, and the company has been making fresh hand-made cosmetics for happy users in different countries. The key founders, Mark Constantine, a trichologist, and Liz Weir, a beautician, in 1977 formulated small batches of products from their formulae and a small scale of herbal hair products at the beginning of the business operations by supplying to the large cosmetic company, the Body Shop. Eventually, Body Shop wanted the manufacturing rights and paid the business partners for the manufacturing rights. The pair patiently waited for the next few years before launching Lush in 1995 in Poole. Lush fresh hand-made Cosmetics emerged within six years, an independent entity altogether.³ The company at this stage was clear about pursuing its values and principles.

The Case of Lush Retail Ltd.

The Constantine couple started a cosmetic outlet in 1995 sourced from fresh vegetables and fruits, ⁴ after which two more stores were opened. ⁵

The sustainable business methods led the couple to be awarded the OBE (the most excellent Order of the British Empire) for their valuable services provided to the beauty industry.⁶ In the same year, Gorilla perfume (a collaboration of Lush) launched its independent store. Another milestone was the launch of the naked skincare products and the naked outlets in Britain and Germany. In 2019, Lush opened its largest store in Liverpool, United Kingdom. Later it expanded to other countries like Croatia, Australia, and Brazil.

Lush's Sustainability Strategies

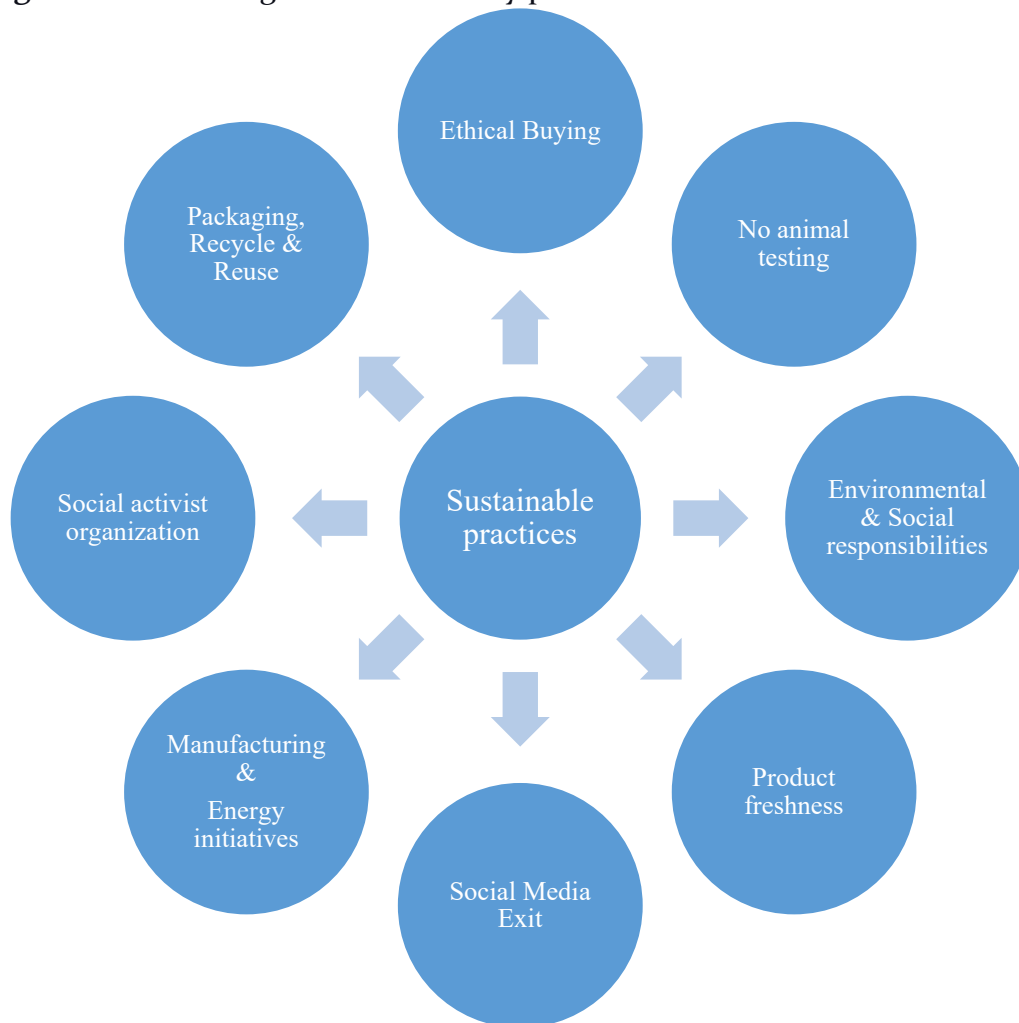
Synonymously termed the green industry, the sustainable business aims to alleviate harmful environmental impact and enhance a positive focus. Overall sustainable companies also holistically emphasize ecological and human rights. Such businesses apply sustainability guidelines, produce environmentally friendly products, and genuinely follow sustainable principles in their business and external operations while generating profits.

Lush's sustainable practices are manifold, which is precisely why the company has carved a distinctive position in the organic beauty industry in the UK and worldwide. Based on the analysis of Lush's sustainable practices from several research papers, newsletters, and the company website, we narrowed down the vital sustainable activities and developed a model highlighting the same. The sustainable domains can be bifurcated, as shown in Figure 1.

Manufacturing & Energy initiatives

In its article, the Manufacturer elaborated that Lush had seven manufacturing sites worldwide and employed twelve-thousand employees trained to comply with the manual instructions to produce fresh, hand-made products.⁷ Most of the employees are compounders, and a sense of task and creative identity is imparted as their names and faces are exhibited on each product's batch sticker. Sustainability is the essential foundation of the company's business framework and carves the primary identity of the organization to the stakeholders. For example, Lush has developed several sustainable innovations (like the shampoo bars that do not require preservatives and are plastic-free), stressing those that do not require packaging.

Figure 1. Lush - range of sustainability practices



Lush is a sustainable player, especially in transporting raw materials, finished products and even employee transportation. The strategic objective has been to reduce energy demand and increase the supply of renewables. The company also has a designated energy manager to monitor and trace the potential scope of energy saving in business (like electrical wirings, building fabric or roof insulation). The management has direct control over the operations and foresees energy conservation. Lush has always used Fair-trade coffee and free-range eggs; the stores have Ecotricity (renewable or green energy). The company has been introducing solar panel capacity on various sites.

Packaging, Recycling and reuse patterns

The emphasis on the circular economy approach has made the company distinctive. The circular economy is the industrial framework that is purposefully made regenerative and strives to improve the resources to combat the climate and other environmental challenges. The outcome is a massive scope of value creation within the macro-environmental influences.

The company has established the Lush Green Hub, a learning center aiming to make the manufacturing sector rethink industrial ecology. The thrust of Lush Green Hub has been to recycle and reuse materials that could otherwise have to be disposed of and may harm the environment of the United Kingdom or any other country that does not have the system to manage them. The Lush Green Hub collects the materials from the customers and elaborately cleans, crushes and converts them into a packaging state again. Lush demonstrates reuse to different levels, even in aspects like furniture reuse from its stores or repair. Lush prefers to avoid quickly disposing of items, materials and durables and does not conceal this philosophy; they invite people to attend workshops and collaborative initiatives. Lush's predominant motto is to transcend generic sustainability activities to regenerative levels, where environmental contributions are made (waste disposal management, afforestation and purifying water). The long-term sustainability goals of Lush in internal operations are to wholly remove carbon impacts from energy and transport usage and turn buildings into zero waste through the company's embedded cycle of transforming products into a reusable state again through progressive and mobile packaging. Unlike other cosmetics companies, Lush does not use collaborative robots, automated systems, and processes to generate high production. Instead, it ensures that fresh assortments are manufactured though the expiry dates of such products are shorter than other competitors. Customers can return five black pots to any Lush outlet and receive a free fresh mask. The used black pots are crushed and reshaped into new usable black pots. The company believes that hand-made cosmetics render community service and create employability for people, hence the plans for automation.

From its inception, Lush has successfully created a sustainable culture and integrated it into its business model effectively. Since Lush started with the sustainability practices from its inception, it has applied all the possible sustainable practices. The ingredients are fresh with natural fruit and vegetables, essential oils, and scarce preservatives. Minimal packaging is one of their mottos. The package design has some unique features: the date of expiry, the date and time when the product was manufactured, and the name with a graphic image of the staff who made the product. Additionally, the company strategizes on its hand-made products, prints its labels and

produces its fragrances- to sum fresh and pure are the business ethos of the global company.³

Furthermore, Lush has set up a carbon-positive packaging solution that obliterates plastic, does not involve cargo shipping and reduces carbon dioxide gas from the atmosphere. This Carbon positive activity creates the advantage of eliminating additional greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. Lush has also partnered with Eco Interventions, a non-profit firm, whereby the company procures cork oak (renewed and restored process of growing) to be shipped through commercial sailboats, not cargo ships. The contributions from purchasing each cork are cascaded to provide vital resources to grow regenerative oak plants without pesticides.

Lush Group pays particular attention to the "design phase" through a specific concept of eco-design of its products: Visual design and permaculture design for agriculture that offers natural alternatives for the environment and people with innovative ecology models.

As discussed before, the purchasing team of Lush seriously follows the environmental sustainability dimension and collaborates with local producers for natural ingredients to ensure ecological preservation. During production, cosmetics are primarily made from self-preserving items. The cosmetics group has implemented the recycling phase and successfully reduced waste. The company also applies complete recycled packaging and has minimal resources used. The packaging material and instruction manuals are completely recycled, and the logistics target minimum carbon dioxide pollution. Lush has aptly practiced the widely used topic of the circular economy; it buys the Charity Pot Cream and gives part of the revenues to social organizations.⁸

In the "post-consumer-use phase," the company has significantly reduced waste by efficiently using resources. It has also obtained fair-trade certification for its focus on fair trade. Lush's nonfinancial disclosure is provided by a circular economy dedicated report (the year 2019) of 33 pages. It is the only company producing a specific report on this theme. Recurring terms are recycling/reuse.

Product freshness

The company's products are solid to ensure minimal use of water. The body products of Lush are entirely safe, and the ingredients are made of fresh raw materials, vegetarian and with scarce preservatives. The cosmetic brand aims to keep its products fresh; hence, the manufacturing is batch focused on retaining the freshness. Also, Lush removes products from outlet shelves older than four months. Several of the products are also given stickers stating the last usage date. Lush also extends to ethical selling and does not compel

customers to buy more than needed by unnecessary offers because they believe this approach is detrimental to the environment. The marketing and the natural ingredients, sleep, and water consumption are promoted.

No animal testing

From the beginning of its operations, Lush was firmly against animal testing of products and has highlighted that in its policy. The company even dissuades the suppliers and refrains from buying from suppliers who continue to do so. On the contrary, Lush supports human volunteers in testing for the ingredients. Additionally, less than 30 % of Lush's products have animal ingredients.

Environment and Social Responsibilities

Lush Cosmetics has become a global household name by blending cosmetics with environmental concerns. As discussed before, the products are environment-friendly and vegan to remove packaging waste (most of their products can be purchased that are not packaged, like bath bombs, shampoo bars, and soaps). Also, ninety percent of the Lush packaging constitutes recycled materials. For example, Lush fights for animal rights, demonstrated by its sincere association with Sea Shepherd, which safeguards whales, seals and other sea animals. Lush firmly believes in supporting organizations incapable of obtaining financial aid.⁹ The social activities are categorized into three groups: environmental preservation, animal rights and humanitarian. It prefers to involve itself in the crucial activities of these organizations rather than donate funds. There are charity officers and Green Helpers in the company's stores to reinforce the values and principles of Lush. The Lush Prize explores and recognizes alternative, sustainable, and humane ways. Through the 'Charity Pot' program, Lush has donated a considerable amount to associations globally. Additionally, employees are greatly inspired to participate in charity activities with paid leave or hours and international employee volunteer travel to countries like Mexico, Cambodia and Tanzania.

From 2009 onwards, Lush's steadfast focus was on regenerative components. After a few years, it charted biodiversity locations (around 2016 and 2017), and currently, it has well-operational sourcing hubs in some continents. Additionally, it sought active partnerships to support sourcing cosmetic ingredients that would minimize deforestation or poaching activities. The company simultaneously followed the vertical integration strategy (making raw materials, manufacturing, and also selling through the company-owned retail outlets).¹⁰ To sum up, both backward and forward integration has been practiced by Lush.

Employee orientation

Lush has a diverse workforce from thirty-four nationalities, and the percentage of the women workforce is higher than the males. The recruitment strategy targets young ones in colleges and universities, and sixty-three varied careers are available. The company offers employees health benefits. It imparts a healthy lifestyle pattern with a subsidized gym membership, transit passes in Canada, and paid childcare leave benefits for managers in the USA.

In the story section of the Lush USA website, "Why work at Lush", it is highlighted that the company practices a daily chat-in and chat-out activity to develop its employees continually. These sessions with the supervisors were mainly to help the employees to focus on the respective products for that specific day. The chats were associated with daily goals which the employee sought to achieve.

Ethical buying

Packaging Europe has elaborated on the ethical buying of Lush. The ethical buying team proactively explores sources by continuously traveling globally to trace suitable suppliers, raw resources, and producers.¹¹ Additionally, they observe their concern for the environment and the employees' work conditions. This approach of ethical integrity followed by the organization underlines the deep, sustainable values entwined with the procurement of the final products. Quality orientation is another serious concern of the organization, which is scrutinized in the bottles, black polypropylene pots, and even ocean plastic in the packaging. Animal testing is a strictly prohibited practice for Lush to such an extent that the company refuses to buy from animal testing vendors.

It was a backbreaking 3-year hard work to develop this project. The process involved identifying a manufacturer and checking the source of the plastic and its authenticity. Currently, the plastic used in Lush's manufacturing facilities in Vancouver originates from the Western Seaboard of North America, a total post-consumer recycled content. The black pots' supply chain has been developed in Asia, and such a recycled chain was not operating in North America. The challenge was high in developing a regional manufacturer in such a situation. Nguyen interviewed the Shop Manager, Mr. Barker of Lush Cosmetics, about the raw material used by Lush and its sources.¹² As mentioned by Mr. Barker, raw materials picked with lots of precautions and deliberation, such as natural essential oils, were sourced from genuine producers and not from the general market; neroli oil had been hand reaped in Tunisia, Benzoin resin from Northern Laos, a poor region,

The Case of Lush Retail Ltd.

organic fresh fruit and vegetables have been procured from sources that were organic and local, orange flowers from the orange groves in Tunisia etc.

Social Media Exit

Lush exited four large social media platforms suddenly in 2021. It deactivated on 26th November Tiktok, Instagram, Facebook and Snapchat accounts in all the 48 countries it operates and cites the act to provide a safe environment to the users.¹³ However, its press release assured new ways of connecting to the public. The words shared by the founder were self-explanatory:

"I've spent all my life avoiding putting harmful ingredients in my products," said Lush's co-founder Mark Constantine. "There is overwhelming evidence we are being put at risk when using social media. I'm not willing to expose my customers to this harm, so it's time to take it out of the mix."

The rationale may have been given, but it sent mixed messages because Lush had previously taken a roundabout in 2019 but returned during the covid period. The social media accounts are active, but there have been no posts.¹⁴

Lush -the social activist organization

Lush strongly believes that environmental and sustainable change can be fostered by recruiting activists, and the process triggers exemplary practices. Lush reflects a vibrant and solid employee culture.

"If you want to make change, hire activists," stated Ruth Andrade (Earth Care Strategy Lead, Lush) to emphasize ushering substantive change in social and environmental aspects.¹⁰

The company carved itself around multiple campaigns and employed in-house campaign professionals (in-house activists). Once a campaign is traced, the in-house activist must ensure all employees are thoroughly briefed and educated. Employee input about the issues to be pursued is diligently taken.¹⁵ The leadership motto stresses issues that remain undiscussed but must be stimulated. The company also associates with firms that are working in all those areas. The outcome is that Lush has forayed into those realms that have virtually little or no connection with the essential products or processes of the company.

Moving beyond Sustainability

It was highlighted that the global climate crisis had made Lush realize that more than sustainable practices with environment-friendly policies is required.¹⁶ The goals have now been deeper into overturning climate change

and the harm done due to biodiversity loss through reshaping business activities altogether.

The objective of Lush is to achieve the following milestones soon:

- ✓ The use of 100 % renewable energy
- ✓ Restore forests and the natural landscape.
- ✓ Lowering pollution from transport emissions
- ✓ Renewing its materials
- ✓ Advocating climate rights and adjusting

The Earthcare and Sustainability teams support the business units to understand and identify how to enforce the changes to achieve the goals. Energy consumption, for instance, has been reduced by 20% in the company's North American business.

Discussion

The embeddedness of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) principles into the brand's strategic identification is an aspect consumers deliberate on before purchasing.¹⁷ Lush as a brand has been increasing because it has steadfastly integrated ethical and CSR practices. Lush has become a successful winner after incorporating all these dimensions into their brand reputation. The company's value system thrives on using products that have not been tested on animals, and even in the procurement from suppliers, the same persists. Lush's website accentuates: "We are committed to becoming more sustainable the more we grow, by using our buying power to drive positive change."¹⁸

Consequently, the conditioning of the values and sustainable practices also profoundly influences the new employee onboarding dynamics. Hence, hiring employees whose core values juxtapose with the company's values is a critical consideration for Lush. When such motivated employees start working, it is natural that they carry with them the aura of energy and creates a successful in-store experience along with social, sustainable ideologies. There are ethics training sessions and people's impact on how life is conducted, as stated on the website: "We believe in happy people making happy soap, putting our faces on the products..."¹⁹

Lush is famous for its natural handmade cosmetics products. On the other hand, cosmetics company Lush is a zero-packing pioneer on the high street. Lush has been doing more than just simply trying to sell more products; it has also been seeking to shape the lifestyles and behaviors of consumers in ways that would both expand the business and achieve sustainability goals.²⁰

The Case of Lush Retail Ltd.

Lush's circular economy focuses on effective supply chain management from zero waste policy and core ethical values. Lush imbibes the waste hierarchy framework by reducing (the thickness of plastic bottles and unnecessary packaging). Lush's launch and promotion of the naked or free package free variety has been a massive endeavor in zero-waste living and has far-reaching managerial implications in the packaging and sustainability arenas. The naked products were manufactured to reduce water content. The shampoo bars of Lush have saved around 20 million plastic bottles from being produced, which implies more than 500 tons of plastic avoided. Furthermore, a new type of marketing and positioning has emerged with the new retail branching of the naked shops and the customer-friendly Lush Lens App.²⁰

The creation of strong brands is imperative for social innovations. Sustainability is a vital strategic component as they effectively garner organizational resources.²¹ Lush abandoned traditional marketing strategies and did not spend on advertising and sales promotions. Instead, it developed the narrative of sustainability practices inside and outside the organization. It also identifies as a campaigning company (anti-fur trading, anti don't ask/don't tell, no animal testing). Today, with numerous stores being set up, brand equity building and sustaining have become a challenge to some proportions. The company has sought to resolve this by including its stakeholders to create the image through fund generation from the 'Charity Pot'. It has pointed out the benefit of doing this as it gives the leverage to Lush to address the local contextual and cultural activities to generate like-minded, ethical consumers of those regions.²²

Managerial Implications and lessons

The managerial implications of this case have far-reaching implications—the first implication is related to the impracticality of the sourcing operations of Lush, especially in different parts of the globe. The focus on ethical buying by the company has often imposed challenges because there are problems in always following the standards and questions about travel activities. Though the buyers build relations with those suppliers who share their same ethos through meticulous research done on these suppliers by the company's ethical buying team, limitations exist. It is always impossible to trace a local supplier, and in such a case, traveling is required to identify other global suppliers. These trips are expensive and involve the complete phases of the raw material transformation from planting to harvesting. "Through these visits, our buyers build close relationships with growers and producers while helping to maintain sustainable practices and fair conditions for workers." (Elisia Gray, Buyer at Lush Cosmetics, Australia and New Zealand).²³

The inevitable question arises whether it is a viable and sustainable model in the long term as the company expands and spreads its wings. Backward integration should be started incrementally to alleviate the risks of controlling foreign suppliers. Moreover, the rigid sustainability standards and, to some extent, self-imposed regulations have positioned the product towards a differentiated focus brand that serves a niche customer group.

The second managerial implication revolves around the company staff's travel activities. Lush's travel programs across the globe are austere and stringently managed. The program involves a no-fly policy for door-to-door journeys under eight hours, restricted taxi travel and a monitoring company travel team that conforms to all bookings following sustainable regulations. Previously, Lush imposed an internal carbon tax on flights. Though the company is exploring new technology and trying to minimize the need for travel, more practical solutions must be identified. Lush strategy Lead for Earth care Ruth Andrade had summed up aptly: "We really don't think like a corporate. We think like activists most of the time." Herein lie the contradictions and bottlenecks because to adhere to sustainability standards, such rigid internal practices can only partially sustain. With such an extensive network of stores worldwide, stopping travel becomes implausible, and on the other hand, decarbonizing the transport sector is only partially possible.²⁴

The third managerial implication demonstrates Lush's transparent activist image that sometimes exhibits its impulsive actions. For instance, the controversial campaign states that "police are paid to lie."²⁵ The firm was generating awareness of the undercover policing scandal. The stickers adorned the chain of outlets: "Police have crossed the line," and the press release said the activists had been spied on for taking an approach. Interestingly, the transparency factor was demonstrated internally when workers complained in the factory in Sydney, Australia. Complaints related to physical injuries, breathing issues and heavy lifting activities with suitable or personal protective equipment. The workers also complained about sexual harassment and bullying incidents.²⁶ The key takeaway for the company from this serious incident is to consider how to prioritize the employee factor not only in select stores of the home country but consistently across the stores established in other countries.

The final managerial implication implies the company's exit from social media. Lush's sudden exit from social media whimsically highlights a different narrative altogether, and the risk may have cascading results in the coming years. Understandably, Lush announced that it was going to deactivate its Instagram, Facebook, Tiktok and Snapchat account to take a

The Case of Lush Retail Ltd.

call about the adverse effects of the mental health of social media despite losing a substantial amount of money.²⁷

The exit from the social media platforms has been rightly described by Annabelle Baker, brand and marketing director "People can see why we came off now." It was the foresight of the marketing and branding decision-makers of Lush to discern that the operations of the social media platforms were not feasible. Lush's strategies after the exit sent a message to the sustainable firms to reach prospective customers and even the loyal ones through less tried options. Furthermore, it was found that there was reduced engagement and people's visits to the brand on social media. Now that the decision was appropriate considering the collapse of Twitter, Meta and even the vigilance on the data policies of their platforms. Nevertheless, the decision-timing could have been more beneficial, and the marketing output dropped drastically. To overcome this challenge, Lush launched Bathe, a self-care app, a solution to the social media platform and has been conducting experiential events from October 2022 to the first half of 2023. Additionally, it chose to create its presence on Pinterest and Youtube.²⁸

Conclusion

Today, in case discussions of sustainability, the natural, green company is being used to highlight a critical reality – that ethical, sustainable practices and profitability can be balanced successfully. Corporate transparency is a reality in the context of the triple bottom line (TBL), and consumers today are more aware of sustainability and understand the impact of buying and using products that have harmful effects²⁹ Consumers prefer to buy those cosmetics that do not violate their sense of moral right and wrong. Covid-19 has been a game changer in this buying behavior because it stimulated the customer's preference for safe and healthy ingredients.

and a broader leaning towards sustainability with value and purpose over profits.^{30,31} There are myriad challenges for a cosmetic company like Lush because the production requirements are stringent, sustainability standards and stakeholder expectations are high. These dimensions have to be balanced with the strategic goals and business models. Lush is a synergic and transparent combination of business insights and underprivileged human groups - that inextricably created an unmatched global supply chain framework.

Concluding Remarks

This case has emphasized some inputs and strategic directions managers can refer to grow and enhance a sustainable global cosmetic brand despite the embedded challenges. The case also reflects that an organization that

wants to emulate sustainable practices can carve an image of sustainable players irrespective of the challenges encountered in keeping up the standards and policies. The practical barriers to reaching sustainable goals can be discussed with illustrations, and the subsequent measures taken can be critically discussed in the class. The case can be studied for MBA courses like Sustainability, Business Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) areas.

Authors

Deepanjana Varshney is a Senior Professor –Business and has academic experience in India and overseas universities. She has published her research in Scopus and ABDC-listed journals. Dr Varshney has been extensively involved in research publications focusing on Minority Workforce psychology, Self Concept, Employee performance, Sustainability practices, Workforce agility and Employee resilience. She has also been actively associated with research grants, consultancy projects and has been an advisor to some projects besides being a reviewer to some top-cited research journals. She also conducts behavioral training and workshops for the corporate sector.

email: dvfaculty@mail.com

Yousr Ahmed Mohamed Ahmed is a Sudanese employee of Lush residing in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and a management student at City University Ajman, UAE. She has been working at Lush Cosmetics for the past three years. Ms Ahmed deeply understands how a company can apply business ethics and social responsibility in real-life scenarios. In her current position as the Junior Sales Supervisor at Lush, she has received first-hand experience in understanding how the company can apply business ethics and social responsibility initiatives in real-life scenarios and make a difference in the community. Moreover, she has always been inspired by Lush for its responsible practices and also as an exemplary example of demonstrating that sustainable practices are doable if the intentions are appropriate. In her present leadership position, she is trying to set up aspirational team management and customer service practices to reach standards of excellence.

email: yousrahmed20@outlook.com

Endnotes

1. Petruzzzi, D. (2022, February 16). Natural and organic cosmetics in the United Kingdom (UK) - Statistics & Facts. *Statista*.
2. Kuro. (2020, December 21). Sustainability with Lush. *Medium*.
3. Soil Association. (2022). *Organic Beauty and Wellbeing Market Report 2022*. Bristol, UK: Soil Association.
4. Slade, D. (2015, July 28). Mark and Mo Constantine on the 20-year success of LUSH. *Bournemouth Daily Echo*.
5. Gregor, K. (2010, August 20). Fresh approach brings Lush result. *The New Zealand Herald*.

The Case of Lush Retail Ltd.

6. BBC News. (2010, December 31). OBE for Dorset couple who founded cosmetics firm Lush. *BBC News*.
7. Many hands make Lush work: A look inside the factory. (2022, November 28). *The Manufacturer*.
8. Gilliland, N. (2016, June 14). How Lush Cosmetics uses word-of-mouth marketing. *Econsultancy*.
9. SOMO. (2012). *Lush Cosmetics Ltd.: Quick Scan*. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Stichting Onderzoek Multinationale Ondernemingen.
10. Culliney, K. (2022, November 9). Lush exec: 'If you want to make change, hire activists'. *Cosmetics Design Europe*.
11. Packaging Europe. (2020, January 6). How Lush puts Sustainability at the heart of its successful business model. *Packaging Europe*.
12. Nguyen, V. (2014). *How the making and marketing of sustainable brand affect consumer behaviour. Case company: Lush hand-made Cosmetics* [Thesis, Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Finland]. CORE by Open University.
13. Levine, N. (2021, November 27). This is why Lush just quit TikTok, Instagram & other social media platforms. *Refinery 29*.
14. Halstead, J. (2021, November 30). Lush quits social media. Was it the right decision? *Honcho*.
15. Casey, T. (2019, September 25). Lush: A business model built on campaigns. *Triple Pundit: The Business of Doing Better*.
16. Salecka, L. (2022, November 21). *Lush CFO on why being 'sustainable is no longer enough'*. *The CFO*.
17. Autio, M., & Heinonen, V. (2004). To consume or not to consume? Young people's environmentalism in the affluent Finnish society. *YOUNG*, 12(2), 137-153.
18. Our policies: Our environmental policy [organization website]. (2023). *LUSH*.
19. Our values: The Lush Ethical Charter [organization website]. (2023). *LUSH*.
20. Shum, K. (2020, May 12). How cosmetics retailer Lush is making purposeful profit through circular processes. *GreenBiz*.
21. Rizzo, F., Komatsu, T. T., & Deserti, A. (2015). *SIMPACT PRoject Report Report #D4.1 (Part 1): Existing Forms of Social Innovation: SI Processes and Business Models*. Brussels: European Commission, DG Research & Innovation.
22. Cipriani, T. K. (2017). The emerging challenge of brand design and brand management in social innovations. *The Design Journal*, 20(1), S3536-S3545.
23. Sustainability. (2018, May 31). Q&A with Lush Cosmetics Australia and New Zealand [Blog post]. *Sustainability: Association for Sustainability in Business Inc.*
24. Cohen, A. (2022, January 6). There's nothing cosmetic about Lush's sustainable travel policies. *BTN: Business Travel News Europe*.
25. Hayes, A. (2018, June 1). Outrage over Lush ad campaign as cosmetics firm claims police are 'paid to lie'. *Sky News*.
26. Zhou, N. (2020, August 20). Ethical cosmetics company Lush accused of poor working conditions for Australian staff. *The Guardian*.
27. Hou, F. (2021, December 2). Lush CEO says he's 'happy to lose' \$13 million quitting social media. 'We're talking about suicide, not whether someone should dye their hair blonde'. *Fortune*.
28. Faull, J. (2022, November 28). 'People see why we came off now': Lush has no regrets about quitting Instagram and Facebook. *The Drum*.
29. Grădinaru, C., Obadă, D.-R., Grădinaru, I.-A., & Dabija, D.-C. (2022). Enhancing sustainable cosmetics brand purchase: A comprehensive approach based on the SOR Model and the Triple Bottom Line. *Sustainability*, 14(21), 14118.

30. Zollo, L., Carranza, R., Faraoni, M., Díaz, E., Martín-Consuegra, N. D. (2021). What influences consumers' intention to purchase organic personal care products? The role of social reassurance. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 60, 1-11.
31. Euromonitor. (2021). *From Sustainability to Purpose in Beauty: Market Research Report*. Euromonitor International.