

Efforts of McDonald's Towards Green Environment: Case Study on McDonald's

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ABSTRACT

McDonald's is an American fast food company, founded in 1940 as a restaurant operated by Richard and Maurice McDonald, in San Bernardino, California, United States. McDonald's is the world's largest restaurant chain by revenue, serving over 69 million customers daily in over 100 countries across approximately 36,900 outlets as of 2016. Although McDonald's is best known for its hamburgers, cheeseburgers and french fries, they also feature chicken products, breakfast items, soft drinks, milkshakes, wraps, and desserts. In response to changing consumer tastes and a negative backlash because of the unhealthiness of their food, the company has added to its menu salads, fish, smoothies, and fruit.

McDonald's is one of the first big chains in the U.S. to begin widespread testing of plastic straw alternatives. McDonald's, which operates 14,000 restaurants in the U.S., has been working to find a more sustainable solution for plastic straws globally.

The purpose of this project is to analyse the effort taken by McDonald's globally to reduce plastic usage, specifically plastic bags and straws, to find the flaws in their efforts, to provide suggestions to overcome the flaws, enhance learning in organisational behaviour and by this joint project students can learn other cultures and share their experiences globally.

The methods that we are going to use to complete this research are by interviewing which enables face to face discussion, brainstorming by having discussion in group to solve the issues, survey, questionnaire, online research method to get more informations, such as company history company organisation. Based on the research, the efficiency of plastic reduction and the methods focused towards green environment. Based on this project, we can conclude that this project can be a new and effective way and solutions to companies that are having flaws in their management and operation.

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INTRODUCTION

Every piece of plastic that's produced in the world started out as the product of a piece of coal, a slick of oil, or natural gas. There were naturally-derived polymers around long before that, including materials like animal horn and rubber, but the kind of plastic that we package things in today didn't show up until 1907, with the invention of the first synthetic plastic made from fossil fuels: Bakelite. Because of the way these new, manufactured polymers are heated up and cured, many plastics can't ever truly be recycled. That robust quality once made them a wonderfully remarkable, nearly unbreakable replacement for older, more fragile products like porcelain or glass. But it also means that "plastic might sit in a landfill, or litter a street, for thousands of years without decomposing," as the BBC put it. The plastics that our straws are made from (usually one like polypropylene) might be recyclable, at least in theory, but most aren't. They're dumped into landfills or hauled off on big boats over to China – a plastic trade that's in decline. Straws were among the many throw-away products being rapidly manufactured by large corporations. Plastic straws quickly became cheaper to produce and more durable than paper. They could easily wedge between the crosshairs of a fast food restaurants to-go lid without ripping or tearing. Throughout the 1960s, the manufacturing infrastructure to mass produce plastic straws was put into place.

At the beginning of July 2018, Seattle became the largest U.S. city to ban plastic straws. They're not alone. Starbucks plans to phase out plastic straws by 2020. McDonald's recently announced it will ban plastic straws at its U.K. and Ireland restaurants. Bon Appétit Management, a food service company with 1,000 U.S. locations, announced last May it will phase out plastic straws. Alaska Airlines will be one of the first airlines to phase out plastic straws and stirrers, in part thanks to an environmentally conscious girl scout. These groups are responding to public outcry demanding action against a product that, on one hand, seems very simple—but which is harming the world's oceans, experts warn. In just the U.S. alone, one estimate suggests 500 million straws are used every single day. One study published earlier this year estimated as many as 8.3 billion plastic straws pollute the world's beaches. Eight million tons of plastic flow into the ocean every year, and straws comprise just 0.025 percent of that. McDonald's is one of the first big chains in the U.S. to begin widespread testing of plastic straw alternatives. Seattle is believed to be the first city in the U.S. to ban the use of plastic straws. The ban went into place July 1, a move that's in line with the city's progressive standards when it comes to saving the planet. In June, the Chicago-based chain said it started phasing out plastic straws in about 1,300 restaurants in the United Kingdom and Ireland. The United Kingdom in April became the first country to ban plastic straws and stirrers, in a move to be implemented next year. McDonald's said it plans to replace plastic straws with paper straws in restaurants starting in September. The transition to alternative straws in those countries should be complete in 2019. Belgian restaurants are also testing straw alternatives, with more trials planned for select restaurants in the U.S. At the time, McDonald's did not name the U.S. markets where it planned to experiment with straw alternatives.

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METHODOLOGY

In this section, we discuss in detail about the methods that we applied to obtain data and analyse it in order to make a valid and reliable study report. The main source to get the information is by interview. We also look up for related information in web.

Interview

According to the responses that we get, we got to know that McDonald's given importance to environment as they only provide straws if customers request but they are still using plastic for saucer and cup lid. They are finding alternatives which are cheaper and safe to use.

Web

We use web to find some information regarding the problem faced by McDonald's in reducing the straw usage and the solutions they can consider to overcome the problem.

3 CHALLENGES

McDonald's had a strong reason when they banned the plastic straws which is it pollute the environment. One straw can take up to 200 years to decompose. Multiply that by the amount that Malaysians use daily and the number is no longer as small as we think. The main reason McDonald's banned the straw usage because eliminating plastic straws gives negative impact on our oceans and marine wildlife. It is estimated that the average person uses 1.6 straws per day. That means that if 25,000 people stop using straws, we would eliminate 5,000,000 straws and prevent them from entering oceans and harming wildlife. Based on an analysis of trash collected on U.S. coastlines during cleanups over five years, it was found that there are nearly 7.5 million plastic straws on America's shorelines. There are figured to be about 437 million to 8.3 billion plastic straws on the entire world's coastlines. And since they are not biodegradable, they are not going anywhere.

Plastics is not biodegradable it does not break down into compounds (like carbon dioxide or water) that can be easily reused. Therefore, it takes years to break down plastic particles. Because of this, when plastic is not recycled and ends up in the ocean, it stays there, forever. MCD stopped to provide (still provided upon request) straws because they want to reduce plastic waste and to create green environment. But the question is, are they really working on green environment?

McDonald's worldwide has applied this policy where they provide straw only upon request, which is to reduce plastic, but their cups' covers, spoons and cups are still made up of plastic. This clearly shows that it does not fulfill their objective which is to reduce plastic or to create a green environment.

Therefore, the challenges faced by McD in this case is that finding a replacement for plastic cups, straws, saucer, lids and whichever is in plastic. McDonald's have not thought about the consequences of the usage of plastic as a whole. They have only focused on straws.

4 SOLUTIONS

McDonald's can just stop providing any straws and just ask its customers to drink without any straws but there is a problem because of McDonald's newly introduced beverage which is Frozen Fanta and Frozen Coca Cola. This Frozen beverage is made of mixing blended Ice with Fanta and Coca Cola drink. It will be hard for their customers to drink it when its cold as the ice can just slide to their face and drop on the floor or even on their clothes. They would have to wait if they want to drink it when the ice melts to avoid the blended ice from sliding to their face. People goes to Fast Food restaurants because they have no time to wait until the food is prepared but waiting for the ice to melt does gives any difference from Fast food restaurants with other restaurants. Although McDonald's have banned the straw usage, but they are still using plastic items such as plastic saucer and plastic cup lid. Straws are not just the problem here. The main problem here is the usage of plastics by McDonald's. Therefore, McDonald's can use different kind of alternatives to reduce pollution due to plastic usage which are:

Paper straws

Before there were plastic straws, there were paper straws. Marvin Stone created the very first straw by wrapping pieces of paper around a tube and gluing the pieces together. Paper straws, such as Aardvark straws, decompose in 45–90 days and provide an eco-friendly alternative to plastic straws. Things used to make paper straws:

- Scrapbook paper
- Paper
- Non-toxic white glue
- Wood Dowel
- Scissors
- Paraffin wax
- A tall glass container you don't mind filling with wax
- A cooking pots
- Paper towels

Glass straws

Glass straws can be used as a substitute for plastic straws. Companies have created both straight and bent glass straws in a variety of widths to provide options for people looking for alternatives. Strong material borosilicate - this ensures that the straw won't crack or shatter while you're drinking from it.

Silicone straws

BPA-free silicone straws, made from food-grade silicone, are another straw alternative gaining popularity. Silicone straws are also a good option for kids who like to chew on their straws. Silicone straws are not only better for inner health, but it also can save you from any possible injury. Its soft and bendable material is steady enough to move around when it hits our lip, nose or even eyes.

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Metal straws

Due to how long they can last, metal straws are considered one of the eco-friendliest options for straw alternatives. Metal straws do not leach BPA into our drinks which may impact on people's health. The advantages of using this straw are easy to clean and will not break.

Paper Saucer

This can be used as an alternative for plastic sauce plate. They can be made of biodegradable products such as papers or boxes. Just like paper straws they will be made of products that are safe to be used.

Glass Saucer

They will be usable so that McDonald's won't have to invest a lot for this product. This will safe to use as material such as borosilicate are used to create this sauce plate.

Paper Cup lid

This can be used as an alternative for plastic cup lids. This have a risk of water leakage but proper research and usage of quality products can avoid this problem.

Things they can do to reduce plastic straw usage and encourage these straws usage

1. Provide discount if they use McDonald's straw

McDonald's can sell their own metal straw which has mcd logo on it. This can be used for promotion purposes and to encourage metal straw usage. McDonald's can provide certain amount of discount if its customers bring McDonald's metal straw during their order. Through this customer can enjoy their meals in a cheaper price while mcd will gain some profit by selling its metal straw and reduce plastic straw usage.

2. Provide free metal straw if they purchase more than certain amount

McDonald's can bring some promotion as customers will be given one free metal straw for purchase of every RM50 or McDonald's will give free metal straw for purchase more than RM20 on a weekday. This promotion will attract customers to go to their stores during weekdays and not only weekends. The usage of this alternative products by big companies like McDonald's will influence small company who follows their footste

6 BENEFITS

The benefits we get from banning 100% plastics in McDonald is we can reduce the plastic waste in the sea. Besides we can prevent sea wildlife from being endangered. For example, in Thailand, a pilot whale died earlier in 2018, after throwing up a handful of plastic bags, 80 more were found inside its stomach. Besides, according to National Geographic research, one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals are killed annually from plastic in our oceans. Forty-four percent of all seabird species, 22 percent of whales and dolphins, all sea turtle species, and a growing list of fish species have been documents with plastic in or around their bodies. So, this clearly shows how plastic waste can endangers the sea wildlife. So, by banning the plastics in McD, we can save our sea wildlife species from being endangered.

Furthermore, by banning plastics in McDonald's, we can increase the usage of biodegradable product. We also can take care positive step toward improving our care of the environment because this biodegradable plastic is made from renewable raw materials and plastics that come from petrochemicals that have biodegradable additives. These biodegradable types will turn to compost after a certain period of time. So, we can substitute the usage of plastics in McD with this biodegradable product, for example they can use paper cup instead of plastic cup, replace plastic straws with metal straws and such on. Apart from it, biodegradable items can easily be recycle because it will take less time to discarded and are non-toxic since they contain no chemicals or toxins compared to other types of plastic that can emit harmful chemicals, especially if it burned.

Besides, banning plastics in McDonald's will create a real green environment rather than doing for the sake of doing. For example, before this McDonald's worldwide has applied the policy to banned plastic straws but their cups' covers, spoons and cups are still made up of plastic. This clearly shows that it doesn't really will create a real green environment.

So, by banning all type of plastics not only plastics straws in McDonald's will also set an example to all other big restaurants like KFC, Marrybrown, Starbucks and such on to ban plastic and create a green and zero plastic environment.

7 Results and Discussion

McDonald's has been criticized for having bad influence on the environment. In response to public pressure, McDonald's will end the use of plastic straws in British restaurants next year, after nearly half million people called on the company to ditch them. McDonald's is moving away from plastic straws in Australia, UK, Ireland, France, Sweden and Norway. While all companies need to urgently reduce their plastic usage to keep our environment clean and save the marine life. It's vital that we continue to pressure companies to do what's right by people toward environment. McDonald's has changed its original straw to a paper straw. They will use paper coming from certified sustainable sources. McDonald's has been conducting trials of paper straws at a handful of venues one year ago, with a majority of customers supporting the effort to protect the environment.

8 Conclusion

In conclusion, banning straws is a successful process where it has been reached to worldwide and already implemented in most of the outlets. The main reason McDonald's came up with this project is because the number of plastics being dumped is increasing gradually throughout these recent years, and banning straws would bring a big difference to the environment worldwide. Unfortunately, McDonald's have not reached their goal 100% as they still face challenges in reducing straws as some of their drinks can be only taken with straws and paper cup lid which used are also plastics. As mention in solutions, paper straws, glass straws, silicone straws, metal straws, paper saucer, glass saucer and alternative paper cup lid are things that can be considered by McDonald's that can be implemented in their outlets to fully achieve their

goal. This process will take some time to be fully launched in all McDonald's and yet still it is possible to be done for a healthier environment and for betterment of nature.

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