

## PITCHING THE SWITCH TO REUSE: HOW TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO CORPORATE SUSTAINABILITY

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Marine plastic pollution is a global issue that has exacerbated problems of environmental degradation, bioaccumulation, and biodiversity loss. As awareness of the magnitude and implications of this pollution has spread, businesses are beginning to adopt reusable packaging systems to minimize single-use waste. However, there are various barriers that prevent corporations from implementing reusables. Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify the barriers to adopting a reusable packaging system and provide solutions to better market these systems to businesses. To accomplish this task, I worked closely with Cascadia Consulting Group under their Reuse Seattle initiative to obtain a more precise look at reusable packaging systems. I then conducted research through interviews with professionals in the corporate sustainability field, analysis of data on various packaging materials, and library research to estimate environmental and fiscal values. Findings show that perceived barriers to reusables center around costs to businesses and consumers. In order to surmount these obstacles, reusables must be presented in a way where there is no upfront cost, they are legitimized, and cost parity is established. Additionally, vendors must be empowered to market reusables to customers and build a consumer base with in-café events. Lastly, data shows that switching from compostable single-use plastics to reusable polypropylene plastics yields the largest economic savings and environmental favorability. These solutions should thus be implemented when adopting reusable packaging systems in order to embolden the shift away from single-use. Through this, marine plastic pollution will shrink, ultimately benefiting the health of ecosystems and humanity.