



Case study #1: Selfridges

In 2015 Selfridges was the first retailer in the UK to permanently remove and stop the sale of single-use plastic water bottles. Here's how they did it and an overview of the results.

In 2015, as part of the Project Ocean campaign, which ran between 9 July and 3 September 2015, Selfridges was the first retailer in the UK to permanently remove and stop the sale of single-use plastic water bottles in its Foodhalls and restaurants, amounting to approximately 400,000 bottles annually. Instead, customers are able to buy a variety of refillable water bottles, as well as disposable alternatives such as Aquapax, CanO Water, Voss, Tau, Elm Spring and Basalt.

As part of this move, Selfridges hosted a supporting exhibition in the Oxford Street store, which was curated by the Jane Withers Studio and featured a range of installations designed to raise awareness and communicate the scale of the marine plastic pollution problem and possible solutions.

A water fountain - where customers can refill their bottles free of charge - was also installed in the store along with a water bar, which offered customers the chance to sample a variety of free infused filtered water served by sprites which reminded people that tap water is a safe and healthy option. The water fountain has now become a permanent feature.

Alannah Weston, Deputy Chairman of Selfridges Group

"The Selfridges Project Ocean campaign has helped drive awareness and action to protect our oceans. With our latest initiative, we aim to create and implement innovative alternatives to single-use plastic water bottles with the ultimate aim of making London a single-use plastic water bottle free city by 2021. We hope London will join us on this incredible initiative."

The move to go single-use plastic water bottle free generated a tremendous UK-wide response:

- More than 13,000 glasses of water were served at the water bar, reminding people that tap water is a safe and enjoyable option and an average of 1,500 people per week visited the exhibition
- The [Project Ocean film](#) on the Selfridges website was viewed over half a million times (the highest number recorded for any Selfridges online film) and on Twitter #ProjectOcean was mentioned almost 3,500 times.
- Over 100 articles covering the campaign were run in the national and regional media, and total circulation is estimated at over 43 million people. National print coverage included a page four news feature in The Times, an Evening Standard news piece and a three-quarter page news feature in the Daily Mail.

Selfridges saw an **1,780% increase in sales of refillable water bottles** compared to the same period in 2014. Overall, sales of water only decreased by 6% after the move to remove plastic, and this decline was more than offset by the uplift in refillable vessel sales.

Research commissioned by Selfridges to determine the impact of Project Ocean on attitude, behaviour and brand equity showed that the Project had increased customers' and team members' awareness and engagement around ocean issues. Customers applauded Project Ocean and Selfridges' leadership and expected and encouraged further action. 94% of those surveyed believed that Selfridges should try to make a positive contribution to society beyond profit.