

Naturewatch

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST ANIMAL CRUELTY

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PRESS RELEASE

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ONE YEAR ON – ONCE LOYAL, ‘BIG SPENDERS’ BOYCOTT BODY SHOP

When L'Oréal officially acquired the Body Shop one year ago, Naturewatch launched its Boycott Campaign that has successfully ensured that the once loyal Body Shop 'big spenders' have taken their custom elsewhere.

In the late 70's / early 80's, the Body Shop was the only high street shop where shoppers could purchase all their toiletry and cosmetic needs safe in the knowledge they were cruelty free. These committed cruelty free shoppers soon became loyal Body Shop 'Big Spenders' who not only made purchases for their own use but also purchased gifts for friends and family.

Through speaking with many ex-Body Shop customers, it's clear that the large majority of shoppers, who have chosen to boycott The Body Shop since its takeover by L'Oréal are the once loyal Body Shop 'Big Spenders' - people who are genuinely committed to purchasing only cruelty-free toiletries and cosmetics and are prepared to go out of their way to ensure they stick to their principles.

Mandy, ex Body Shop customer says: *"I started shopping at the Body Shop in 1980 and used to buy a lot from there spending £300 - £400 per year on skincare, henna, bath stuff and make up. I have boycotted the Body Shop ever since they announced the takeover.....I can't even walk past the Body Shop without feeling disgusted these days."*

Research conducted by ICM in October 2006 found that many shoppers share Mandy's views. When asked whether they would continue to purchase a particular product from an ethical company that had been taken-over by a multinational, unethical company, 52% of respondents said they wouldn't continue to buy the product. *Please Note: The adults interviewed by ICM during the course of this research were random members of the public not committed cruelty free shoppers.*

To illustrate this, Naturewatch supporters collected 867 signatures from some of the ex-Body Shop customers in just one UK town, with very little effort. The maths is simple – multiply 867 customers by £300 per annum (using Mandy's lower figure) which gives a total of £260,100.00. Multiply this figure by the number of stores in the UK and the Republic of Ireland which is 300 approx. and we have a total of 78, million, 030 thousand pounds sterling. This gives a rough estimate of how much business the Body Shop has lost in the UK and Ireland alone since the takeover which is just the tip of the iceberg.

Heavily discounted products in Body Shop stores over a period of several months also indicate that it hasn't all been plain sailing for L'Oréal and The Body Shop, in the face of competition from truly ethical companies like Neal's Yard and Lush.

The strength of opinion isn't just limited to The Body Shop's own back yard. In Australia, members of Animal Liberation Victoria (ALV) have been urging shoppers to shun Body Shop stores because its new owner, L'Oréal, supports animal testing. Protests have sent a very clear message to consumers and successfully attracted the attention of Australia's national newspapers.

**The Body Shop – now nothing more than a subsidiary company of L'Oréal, one of the largest users of animals for cosmetic and toiletry purposes in the world.
THE BODY SHOP – NO LONGER A CRUELTY-FREE ALTERNATIVE.**

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

About Naturewatch

For over ten years Naturewatch has been at the forefront of the campaign to end animal testing of cosmetics and household products, and was the first organisation to make information regarding the animal testing policies of cosmetic companies available to the public.

As part of its education activities the organisation produces *The Compassionate Shopping Guide*, which is unique in listing both the companies that test on animals and those who adopt a cruelty free stance. Now in its 10th edition, the *Guide* is an invaluable tool to help shoppers make informed ethical choices about beauty and household products.

ICM Research

- ICM Research interviewed a sample of 1,013 UK adults on 6-8 October 2006. The results have been weighted to be fully representative of the population.

“If you had purchased a particular product from an 'ethical' company for a number of years before that company was taken over by a multinational, unethical company, would you continue to purchase that product?”

Yes 48%

No 52%

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