



For more than a decade, WRI's Sustainable Enterprise Program (SEP) has harnessed the power of business to create profitable solutions to environment and development challenges. BELL, a project of SEP, is focused on working with managers and academics to make companies more competitive by approaching social and environmental challenges as unmet market needs that provide business growth opportunities through entrepreneurship, innovation, and organizational change.

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THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY: Disposable and Reusable Diapers – A Life-Cycle Analysis (ABSTRACT)

When the Procter & Gamble (P&G) Company unveiled Pampers disposable diapers in the 1960s, consumer products manufacturers and parents considered it the product breakthrough of the decade. By the early 1990s, P&G's invention contributed over 18% to the company's annual revenues of \$24 billion. The product has also presented consumers with a decision that has generated significant attention in recent years: which type of diapers to use-- disposable or reusable? Used by environmental and consumer advocate groups as a symbol of the "throw away" mentality, disposable diapers account for 1-3% of America's yearly trash output, or 3.6 million tons. In an effort to deflect criticism, P&G decided to take matters into its own hands. In 1990, the company commissioned Arthur D. Little, Inc., an international management and technology consulting firm specializing in environmental issues, to analyze the full range of environmental impacts, or to conduct a "life-cycle analysis," of both types of diaper to settle the debate