Bottled vs. tap water.

How bottled water manufacturers get you buying less for more.

Daisy Kelly
Community Marketing
community@cleanup.com.au
Bottled Water Myths

Is bottled water really any better than tap?

How it’s sold

The tricks of the trade that get you to the checkout

Convenience for Consequence

Why bottled water is a losing choice long term.
It takes 3L of water and 250ml of oil to produce 1L of bottled water.
Bottled water

Why do people buy bottled water when it’s on average around 2000% more expensive than tap?

- Branding
- Myth of bottled water benefits
- Idea of “safer” water
- Idea of “healthier” water
- Temporary convenience

Branding

Nature, pure imagery, water sources as unpolluted and natural.

Myths

Healthier, safer, better, more effective at rehydration, clean.

Convenience

Easily accessed, disposable, single use.
Who is buying bottled water?

25-34
YEAR OLDS
25 – 34 year olds are the biggest purchasers of bottled water according to Roy Morgan Research.

726
MILLION LITRES.
In 2015, Australians bought 726+ million litres of bottled water – Cool Australia

30L
PER PERSON.
The average Aussie drinks 30L of bottled water each year – Cool Australia

More Australian women (29.7 per cent) drink bottled water than men (24.5 per cent).
The amount Australians are spending on bottled water each year according to Choice.

$500 MILLION
It can take up to 8 years to recoup the cost of a bottle of water by refilling the bottle with tap water.

Cool Australia
Branding

Is what you see, what you get?
"Marketers can't claim bottled water is better for you than tap water, so they use things like 'fresh', 'natural' or use images like snow-cap mountains to lead us to believe that,"

Gary Mortimer, marketing expert at Queensland University of Technology
The Psychology of Color

Source: Supermoney.com
Which brand would you buy?
It’s not just a product, it’s an idea

Love life with no sugar.

Images property of Mount Franklin
The environment on the bottle...

...the bottle in the environment.
Damage to aquifers.

Bottled water damages the environment in more ways than one.

Spring water is extracted from underground aquifers upstream from where the water surfaces. This disrupts aquifer flow, affecting flora and fauna.
What are you really buying?

$2800
PER YEAR
The average cost of drinking 2L of bottled water every day each year.

$1.50
PER YEAR
The average cost of drinking 2L of tap water every day for a year.

2000x
MORE EXPENSIVE
You’ll pay up to 2000x more each year for bottled water than you would for tap.

Bottled water manufacturers aren’t obligated to tell you the source of the water, only the country of origin.
6/34 brands surveyed were treated tap water.

Queensland University of Technology

Water terms

Mineral Water – Ground water obtained from a subterranean water-bearing strata that, in its natural state, contains soluble matter. It must have a level of total dissolved solids of greater than 250 parts per million. No minerals may be added.

Natural Water – Bottled spring, mineral or well water which is derived from an underground formation or water from surface water that only requires minimal processing, is not derived from a municipal system or public water supply, and is unmodified except for limited treatment.

Purified Water – Bottled water produced by distillation, deionisation, reverse osmosis.

Spring water – Ground water obtained from a subterranean water-bearing stratum that, in its natural state, contains soluble matter. No minerals may be added.

(credit: Australasian Bottled Water Institute)
"The water is basically free, so I see it as just selling plastic bottles,"

Warren Peffer, owner of Nature's Best.
TODAY, 95% OF PLASTIC PACKAGING MATERIAL VALUE IS LOST AFTER A SHORT FIRST USE CYCLE

95% LOSS
($80–120 billion)$

COLLECTED FOR RECYCLING (%)

VALUE YIELD (%)

86%

64%

36

14

0

100

100
The myth of “healthier and safer” water

Australian tap water is best standard quality drinking water.

"Tap water is managed in a much more holistic way than bottled water. And the safety practices around pathogens like bacteria and viruses are much more rigorous with tap water than they are with bottled water,"

Stuart Khan - Associate Professor at the University of New South Wales
Not so great for your health...

The British Dental Journal found that children consuming bottled water received between 26 per cent and 48 per cent less fluoride compared to those drinking tap water.

Sparkling water is acidic and contributes to enamel erosion which leads to dental decay.

Flavoured water can be high in sugar which damages your teeth and can lead to weight gain.
So long soft drink!

With people moving away from soft drink for health reasons, the bottled water industry has flourished.

Now it’s giving people a new sugar fix – flavored water! Marketed as the “healthy” and “pure” alternative to soft drink.
Convenience for Consequence

How convenient is bottled water long term?
Single use madness

- Smaller servings = more packaging
- Spending more money for less product
- Lighter bottles
- Less recycling value
- 3 pieces of plastic per bottle
- Single use focus in marketing
Long term damage

The long term environmental, financial and health effects of bottled water outweigh short term convenience.

1,000 YEARS
The time it takes for plastic bottles to break down in the environment.

60,000 TONNES OF GREENHOUSE GASSES
Used in the manufacture and transport of bottled water in Australia alone.

460,000 BARRELS OF OIL
Used in the manufacture and transport of bottled water worldwide.
So what can you do?

• Choose tap!
• Grab a reusable BPA free water bottle
• Take note of refill stations near you
• Recycle bottles if you find them
• Encourage family and friends to ditch bottled water for tap