

## A determined team could have saved Woolies

Letter from Alan Braithwaite to Retail Week as published 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010

"John Richards' article claiming that City short-termism was the death knell of Woolworths (Retail Week, April 30th) is only partly correct.

His point was that Woolworths could have been saved by radical surgery with a change of the offer, but that would have taken time it did not have.

From first-hand experience, radical change was indeed necessary, but not surgery. Some areas of the business were remarkably sound, but the overall offer was marred by poor focus on net profit by category, and flawed commercial and category management processes.

The effect was that one department had a contribution margin of more than 10%, while another in the same category was heavily loss-making.

The changes needed could be secured by a determined management team in months rather than years, and be worth several points of margin. That determination and clarity in the face of much, possibly conflicting, City advice was, in my opinion, the missing ingredient"

**Alan Braithwaite - Chairman of LCP Consulting and visiting professor at Cranfield University**

### About LCP Consulting

LCP Consulting is a leading specialist in customer-driven supply chain management. With over 20 years experience in the field, we identify where supply chains make major contributions to how businesses operate profitably and compete effectively. We support businesses review, re-design and implement changes to their end-to-end operations. Our fact-based diagnostics pin point exactly where & how to cut costs, enhance operational efficiency and invest for the future.

LCP Consulting is a member of the Green Logistics Consultants Group, which is an international collaborative network of supply chain consultants who focus on improving the environmental performance of supply chains.

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