



TO MELT OR MERGE: BEN AND JERRY'S TRANSITION BOARD, 2007

The year is 2000 and Ben and Jerry's, the Vermont-based ice cream company, has been bought out by British consumer goods conglomerate Unilever. While the acquisition is public knowledge, Ben and Jerry's is preparing to work hard in order to maintain its appearance as an unchanged independent company. The goal of this committee is to explore the transition of Ben and Jerry's from a small business to a corporate-backed international enterprise. The committee will begin in 2000 after the acquisition is complete with the transition team composed of Ben and Jerry's and Unilever executives who are responsible for easing Ben and Jerry's into the Unilever family, in order to usher in a new era of Ben and Jerry's. This partnership needs to be successful, with both companies feeling like they have gotten everything they wanted from this deal. However, this task will be complicated by agreed-upon stipulations in the buyout that protect core values of Ben and Jerry's, like continued political activism and high ethical standards for dairy and ice cream production that may contradict Unilever's plans for their newest addition. It's up to this committee to determine if Ben and Jerry's will successfully merge or melt away.

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