

# GO GREEN! GREEN MARKETING: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO SUCCESS

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## ABSTRACT

“Green or Environmental Marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment”.

Currently, there is escalating awareness among the consumers all over the world concerning protection of environment. The growing awareness among the consumers regarding the environmental protection had inculcated the interest among people to bestow a clean earth to their progeny. Various studies by environmentalists indicate that people are more concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior pattern so as to be less hostile towards it. Now we can see that most of the consumers, both individual and industrial, are becoming more concerned about environment-friendly products. Most of them believe that environment-friendly products are safe to use. Now is the era of recyclable, non-toxic and environment-friendly goods. As a result, green marketing has emerged, which aims at marketing sustainable and socially-responsible products and services in the society. This has become the new mantra for marketers to satisfy the needs of consumers and earn better profits.

**Key Words:** *Environmental Marketing, Awareness, Recyclable, Indian Corporate Sector, Global Competition*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to the American Marketing Association, **green marketing** is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Yet defining green marketing is not a simple task where several meanings intersect and contradict each other; an example of this will be the existence of varying social, environmental and retail definitions attached to this term. Other similar terms used are Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing.

- \* The first wave of Green Marketing occurred in the 1980s. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Reports started with the ice cream seller Ben & Jerry's where the financial report was supplemented by a greater view on the company's environmental impact.
- \* In 1987 a document prepared by the World Commission on Environment and Development defined sustainable development as meeting "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need", this became known as the Brundtland Report and was another step towards widespread thinking on sustainability in everyday activity.
- \* Two tangible milestones for wave of green marketing came in the form of published books, both of which were called Green Marketing. They were by Ken Peattie (1992) in the United Kingdom and by Jacquelyn Ottman (1993) in the United States of America.

In the years after 2000 a second wave of Green marketing emerged. By now CSR and the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) were widespread. Such publications as a 2005 United Nations Report, then in 2006 a book by Al Gore and the UK Stern Report brought scientific-environmental arguments to a wide public in an easy to understand way.

## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### 2.1 Do You Need To Be Green?

**Authors:** Beck, Ernest-

**Source-** Business Week; Summer2006 Small Biz Supplement, p42-47, 6p.

The article discusses the implications of environmentally conscious consumers and the green business movement for small business owners. Green labels on products allow companies to charge a premium of up to 20 to 30 percent, which is one reason green companies have profitable returns. Green companies also have higher costs from socially responsible policies, such as paying a living wage.

### 2.2 Industry Voices Concerns Over Eco Labels

**Source:** Business & the Environment with ISO 14000 Updates; Dec2003, Vol. 14 Issue 12, p12-13,2p

This article discusses the packaging industry in Europe. Europe's packaging industry fired a heavy broadside at eco-labels for product packaging during a European Commission consultation exercise to obtain views on proposals to integrate environmental aspects in the development of new standardization rules. The organization did give a broad welcome to incorporating relevant environmental concerns into the standardization process. The environmental aspects of standardization rules, aimed at ensuring conformity of packaging across the European Union, have not been fixed yet because European countries differ on what is considered best for the environment.

### 2.3 Eco-Labeling And Horizontal Product Differentiation

**Authors:** Clemenz, Gerhard  
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**Source:** Environmental & Resource Economics; Apr2010, Vol. 45 Issue 4, p481-497, 17p

This paper investigates the impact of eco-labels on the abatement of emissions in a market with horizontal product differentiation. A distinction is

made between an end-of-pipe abatement method and a clean technology approach. In the former case underinvestment is likely to occur even if the marginal willingness to pay for abatement of consumers is equal to the social marginal benefit of abatement. The level of abatement depends on the number of firms and on the number of consumers. For a large market with few firms overinvestment in abatement is also possible. Clean technology abatement achieves a first best level regardless of market size if all consumers have a marginal willingness to pay for abatement equal to its social benefit.

#### **2.4 Eco-Labeling : Green or Smokescreen?**

**Authors:** Aichlmayr, Mary

**Source:** Material Handling Management; Feb2010, Vol. 65 Issue 2, p18-20, 3p, 1. The article focuses on the legitimacy of sustainability labels, logos, and certifications in the global market. It states that only three among 500 labeling agencies conform to the standard for environmental labeling, or the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 14024, which include EcoLogo, Green Seal, and Energy Star. Furthermore, it presents several indicators to help companies in spotting fake labeling agencies including hidden tradeoffs, vague claims, and irrelevant claims. INSETS: Retail Giants Develop Eco-Labels; Are Fuel Cells Really Sustainable?

#### **2.5 The Use Of Eco-Labels: A Review Of The Literature**

**Authors:** Gallastegui, Ibon Galarraga

**Source:** European Environment: The Journal of European Environmental Policy (Wiley); Nov/Dec2002, Vol. 12 Issue 6, p316, 16p

Reports on how labelling programs seek first to encourage a move towards more environmentally friendly consumption patterns, and second to induce productive structures, governments and other agents to increase the environmental standards of the products and services in the economy. How this paper is devoted to revising the relevant literature on the issue.

#### **2.6 The Impact Of Environment Labelling On Consumer Preference : Negative Vs. Positive Labels.**

**Authors:** Grankvist, Gunne, Dahstrand, Ulf, Biel, Anders,

**Source:** Journal of Consumer Policy; Jun2004, Vol. 27 Issue 2, p213-230, 18p

Eco-labels in use today signify environmentally benign outcomes: "Choose this product, it is better for the environment than the average product." Another strategy would be to indicate negative outcomes with the purpose of trying to persuade consumers to avoid a product: "Do not choose this product; it is worse for the environment than the average product." In a computer-based experiment, it was investigated how these two types of labels affected preference for some everyday products. Individuals who had a weak or no interest in environmental issues were unaffected by either kind of label. Individuals with an intermediate interest in environmental issues were more affected by a negative label than by a positive label. Individuals with a strong interest in environmental protection were equally affected by the two kinds of labels.

#### **2.7 Preference For Green Packaging In Consumer Product Choices – Do Consumer Care?**

**Authors:** Rokka, Joonas [joonas.rokka@hse.fi](mailto:joonas.rokka@hse.fi)  
Uusitalo, Liisa

**Source:** International Journal of Consumer Studies; Sep2008, Vol. 32 Issue 5, p516-525, 10p, 1 Color Photograph, 3 Charts, 1 Graph

In this paper, consumer environmental choice is studied by analysing the relative importance of green packaging when compared with other relevant product attributes. The empirical study is based on a choice-based conjoint analysis of preferences for functional drink products of a sample of 330 consumers using these products. Our choice-based approach on environmental behaviour brings new insights to previous research, which predominantly relies on attitude models. Results indicate that consumers differ in their preferences for packaging, brand, price and convenience of use of daily products. In addition,

various distinctive consumer segments can be identified on the market. Contrary to several previous studies, we found that the largest consumer segment, one-third of consumers, favoured environmentally labelled packaging as the most important criteria in their choice. The findings emphasize the increasing importance of ethical and environmental dimension in product choices. We also propose that the attention in environmental consumer research should be shifted from general attitude studies towards the study of actual product choices.

### **2.8 The Influence Of Eco-Labeling On Consumer Behaviour – Results Of A Discrete Choice Analysis For Washing Machines.**

**Authors:** Sammer, Katharina, Wüstenhagen, Rolf , rolf.wuestenhagen@unisg.ch

**Source:** Business Strategy & the Environment (John Wiley & Sons, Inc); May/Jun2006, Vol. 15 Issue 3, p185-199, 15p, 1 Diagram, 5 Charts, 3 Graphs

Eco-labelling is an important tool to overcome market failure due to information asymmetries for environmental products. While previous research has discussed the importance of labelling, this paper provides empirical data on the influence of eco-labels on consumer behaviour for household appliances. It reports on the results of a survey involving a total of 151 choice-based conjoint interviews conducted in Switzerland in Spring 2004. Choice-based conjoint analysis (also known as discrete choice) has been applied to reveal the relative importance of various product attributes for consumers. The EU energy label is used for the product category chosen in our survey, washing machines, and we investigate the relative importance of this eco-label compared with other

product features (such as brand name) in consumers' purchasing decisions. We draw conclusions for sustainability marketing and policy. Copyright © 2006 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd and ERP Environment.

### **2.9 Measuring Consumer's Willingness To Pay For Organic And Fair Trade Products.**

**Authors:** Didier, Tagbata, Lucie, Sirieix ; tagbata@univ-valenciennes.fr

**Source:** International Journal of Consumer Studies; Sep2008, Vol. 32 Issue 5, p479-490, 12p, 1 Color Photograph, 2 Diagrams, 6 Charts, 2 Graphs

Previous research has extensively studied consumer's environmental and social concerns. However, measuring the value of the environmental or social dimension of a product remains a challenge. This paper proposes to partially fill this gap by measuring the double 'Fair Trade and organic' labels' value using an experimental method – the Becker-DeGroot-Marschak's mechanism. Two 'organic and Fair Trade' and two conventional chocolate products were tested on a sample of 102 consumers. Results show that organic and Fair Trade labels increase consumers' willingness to pay, and allow the identification of three consumers clusters. The first cluster represents people insensitive to the label. For the second cluster, the 'organic and Fair Trade' labels' influence on the improving image of the products is positive and important. And finally, for the third cluster, the valuation of the 'organic and Fair Trade' label is determined by the product's taste. Our research contributes to a better understanding of consumers' valuation of Fair Trade and organic labels, leading to our conclusions, which offer managerial implications with respect to this market (importance of taste and usefulness of double labels).

### **2.10 A Proposal For Environmental Labels: Informing Consumers Of The Real Costs Of Consumption.**

**Source:** New Scientist; 1/9/2010, Vol. 205 Issue 2742, p5-5, 1p.

The article discusses the issue about fishes in the supermarkets and restaurants labeled as sustainable or responsibly sourced. Such practice is regarded as a sign that consumers are taking efforts to prevent consuming threatened species. However, no consensus exists over what these labels mean. With this, consumers may not determine if it is a real conservation effort or exaggerated claim.

### **2.11 Eco-Labelled Food Products : What Are Consumers Paying For ?**

**Authors:** Bougherara, Douadia, Combris, Pierre

**Source:** European Review of Agricultural Economics; Sep2009, Vol. 36 Issue 3, p321-341, 21p

The paper investigates whether the premium consumers are willing to pay for an eco-labelled product is driven by selfish or altruistic motives. Using an incentive-compatible experiment with both a within- and a between-subject design, we study the effect on this premium of information stating that eco-friendly products do not necessarily lead to higher private benefits. We find that this information does not affect buying prices in the within-subject experiment. This suggests that consumers' willingness to pay for the eco-labelled product does not derive from perceived higher taste or safety attributes but from other motives. These results are confirmed in the between-subject design where we find that information affects buying prices for the eco-friendly product but also for the control product in the between-subject experiment.

### **2.12 Non-Dirty Dancing ? Interactions Between Eco-Labels And Consumers.**

**Authors:** Teisl, Mario F. teisl@maine.edu, Rubin, Jonathan, Noblet, Caroline L.

**Source:** Journal of Economic Psychology; Apr2008, Vol. 29 Issue 2, p140-159, 20p

Current studies on eco-labeling have been limited because they either examine the relationship between individual characteristics and eco-behavior or between label characteristics and eco-behavior. We extend this literature by designing and testing a model that explicitly links how the characteristics of the individual and the information simultaneously influence an information program's success. The specific application studies the potential effects of providing eco-information in the private market for passenger vehicles and light-duty trucks sold in the United States. The results point toward the importance of well-designed labeling practices as they significantly impact individuals' perceptions

of the eco-friendliness of products. Further, the importance of underlying psychological factors; and individuals' priors of the product and of the environmental problem suggests a strong role for the long-run provision of eco-information, especially in cases where individuals hold incorrect perceptions.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research design used is of descriptive nature. Data has been collected from secondary sources like books, magazines, websites etc.

### **3.1 Objectives of the Paper are as under**

- a. To review literature pertaining to green marketing
- b. To evaluate the initiatives taken by the Indian companies and concern for green marketing in their core business values.
- c. To present marketing mix of green marketing and also challenges for green marketers in future.

## **4. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

### **4.1 Green marketing of MNCs**

#### **4.1.1 Philips Light's CFL**

Philips Lighting's first shot at marketing a standalone compact fluorescent light (CFL) bulb was Earth Light, at \$15 each versus 75 cents for incandescent bulbs. The product had difficulty climbing out of its deep green niche. The company re-launched the product as "Marathon," underscoring its new "super long life" positioning and promise of saving \$26 in energy costs over its five-year lifetime. Finally, with the U.S. EPA's Energy Star label to add credibility as well as new sensitivity to rising utility costs and electricity shortages, sales climbed 12 percent in an otherwise flat market.

#### **4.1.2 Electronics sector**

The consumer electronics sector provides room for using green marketing to attract new customers. One example of this is HP's promise to cut its global energy use 20 percent by the year 2010. To accomplish this reduction below 2005 levels, The Hewlett-Packard Company announced plans to

deliver energy-efficient products and services and institute energy-efficient operating practices in its facilities worldwide.

#### **4.1.3 Introduction of CNG in Delhi**

New Delhi, capital of India, was being polluted at a very fast pace until Supreme Court of India forced a change to alternative fuels. In 2002, a directive was issued to completely adopt CNG in all public transport systems to curb pollution.

#### **4.1.4 ITC**

- \* ITC has been 'Carbon Positive' three years in a row (sequestering/storing twice the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> than the Company emits).
- \* 'Water Positive' six years in a row (creating three times more Rainwater Harvesting potential than ITC's net consumption).
- \* Close to 100% solid waste recycling.
- \* All Environment, Health and Safety Management Systems in ITC conform to the best international standards.
- \* ITC's businesses generate livelihoods for over 5 million people.
- \* ITC's globally recognised e-Choupal initiative is the world's largest rural digital infrastructure benefiting over 4 million farming families.
- \* ITC's Social and Farm Forestry initiative has greened over 80,000 hectares creating an estimated 35 million person days of employment among the disadvantaged.
- \* ITC's Watershed Development Initiative brings precious water to nearly 35,000 hectares of dry lands and moisture-stressed areas.
- \* ITC's Sustainable Community Development initiatives include women empowerment, supplementary education, integrated animal husbandry programmes.

#### **4.1.5 Maruti: Greening of Supply Chain**

The company has remained ahead of regulatory requirements in pursuit of environment protection and energy conservation at its manufacturing

facilities, and in development of products that use fewer natural resources and are environment friendly.

The company credited the 'Just-in-Time' philosophy adopted and internalized by the employees as the prime reason that helped to excel in this direction.

The company has been promoting 3R since its inception. As a result the company has not only been able to recycle 100% of treated waste water but also reduced fresh water consumption. The company has implemented rain water harvesting to recharge the aquifers. Also, recyclable packing for bought out components is being actively promoted.

The company has been facilitating implementation of Environment Management System (EMS) at its suppliers' end. Regular training programs are conducted for all the suppliers on EMS. Surveys are conducted to assess the vendors who need more guidance. The systems and the environmental performance of suppliers are audited.

The green co-efficient of this system is much better than the conventional system

#### **4.1.6 HCL's Environment Management Policy under HCL ecoSafe**

In building a system to identify, develop and sustain the maintenance of an environment management system at corporate level we have formulated a program that we proudly refer as HCL's ecoSafe.

The aim is to encapsulate knowledge, awareness, and key developments on all environmental issues faced by today's world and to incorporate these in HCL's operations assuring our commitment in delivering quality products, solutions and services

The key objective under HCL eco Safe is targeted at integrating environmental management procedures into its business processes thereby protecting the environment, health, and safety of all its stakeholders. HCL commits to manufacture products that are environment friendly in all respects and are free from hazardous chemicals.

HCL eco Safe focuses on product lifecycle management to ensure that our products right from when they are manufactured, bought by customers, recovered at their end-of-life and recycled after useful life are done in an environmentally responsible manner. Key initiatives undertaken through HCL eco Safe program are:

#### 4.1.7 Some more Examples

- \* McDonald's restaurant's napkins, bags are made of recycled paper.
- \* Coca-Cola pumped syrup directly from tank instead of plastic which saved 68 million pound/year.
- \* Badarpur Thermal Power station of NTPC in Delhi is devising ways to utilize coal-ash that has been a major source of air and water pollution.
- \* Barauni refinery of IOC is taken steps for restricting air and water pollutants.

## 4.2 Green Marketing Mix

Every company has its own favorite marketing mix. Some have 4 P's and some have 7 P's of marketing mix. The 4 P's of green marketing are that of a conventional marketing but the challenge before marketers is to use 4 P's in an innovative manner.

### 4.2.1 Green Product

Due to the increased awareness of using environment friendly products the companies need to have development of green products after identification of such consumers needs. Recycled materials or used goods can be used to make such products. Green products not only save water, energy and money, but also reduce detrimental effects on the environment. Green chemistry forms the growing focus of product development.

For example, Nike is the first among the shoe companies to market itself as green. It is marketing its Air Jordan shoes as environment-friendly, as it has significantly reduced the usage of harmful glue adhesives. It has designed this variety of shoes to emphasize that it has reduced

wastage and used environment-friendly materials.

### 4.2.2 Green Price

Price is a critical and important factor of green marketing mix. Most consumers will only be prepared to pay additional value if there is a perception of extra product value. This value may be improved performance, function, design, visual appeal, or taste. Green marketing should take all these facts into consideration while charging a premium price.

Green pricing takes into consideration the people, planet and profit in a way that takes care of the health of employees and communities and ensures efficient productivity. Value can be added to it by changing its appearance, functionality and through customization, etc.

Wal Mart unveiled its first recyclable cloth shopping bag. IKEA started charging consumers when they opted for plastic bags and encouraged people to shop using its "Big Blue Bag".

### 4.2.3 Green Promotion

Green promotion involves configuring the tools of promotion, such as advertising, marketing materials, signage, white papers, web sites, videos and presentations by keeping people, planet and profits in mind.

British petroleum (BP) displays gas station which its sunflower motif and boasts of putting money into solar power.

Indian Tobacco Company has introduced environmental-friendly papers and boards, which are free of elemental chlorine.

Toyota is trying to push gas/electric hybrid technology into much of its product line. It is also making the single largest R&D investment in the every-elusive hydrogen car and promoting itself as the first eco-friendly car company.

International business machines Corporation (IBM) has revealed a portfolio of green retail store technologies and services to help retailers improve energy efficiency in their IT operations.

We even see the names of retail outlets like “Reliance Fresh”, Fresh@Namdhari Fresh and Desi, which while selling fresh vegetables and fruits, transmit an innate communication of green marketing.

Green marketer can attract customers on the basis of performance, money savings, health and convenience, or just plain environmental friendliness, so as to target a wide range of green consumers.

#### 4.2.4 Green Place

Green place is about managing logistics to cut down on transportation emissions, thereby in effect aiming at reducing the carbon footprint.

For example, instead of marketing an imported mango juice in India it can be licensed for local production. This avoids shipping of the product from far away, thus reducing shipping cost and more importantly, the consequent carbon emission by the ships and other modes of transport.

#### 4.3 Initiatives Taken up by Business Organizations towards Green Marketing

Many companies have started realizing that they must behave in an environment friendly fashion. They believe both in achieving social & environmental objectives as well as financial objectives. India is growing at 9% annually and expected to double its energy consumption between 2005 and 2030, is under pressure to take action for providing clean environment for all future generations to come. Many Indian companies have come forward for the cause of environmental concerns and issues requiring immediate attention like: global warming, Water and Air pollution, E-waste.

NTPC Limited has decided to allocate 0.5% of distributable profit annually for its “Research and Development Fund for Sustainable Energy,” for undertaking research activities in development of green and pollution free technologies.

In India, around 25% of the consumers prefer environmental-friendly products, and around 28% may be considered healthy conscious. Therefore, there is a lot of diverse and fairly sizeable untapped

segment in India which green marketers can serve through offering eco-friendly products for profitability and survival in the era of globalization.

For example, Mahindra Group has formally announced the launch of project Mahindra Hariyali in which 1 million trees will be planted nation-wide by Mahindra employees and other stakeholders including customers, vendors, dealers, etc. by October 2008. Of these, 1, 50,000 trees have already been planted by Mahindra employees since September 2007.

Nokia’s environmental work is based on life cycle thinking. This means that we aim to minimize the environmental impact of our products throughout our operations, beginning with the extraction of raw materials and ending with recycling, treatment of waste, and recovery of used materials.

India is a world leader in green IT potential, according to a recently released global enterprise survey. Indian respondents scored over respondents from 10 other countries in expecting to pay 5% or more for green technology if its benefits for the environment and return on investment (ROI) are proven in a survey conducted by Green Factor, which researches and highlights green marketing opportunities. Among the companies that have succeeded thus far in their green marketing strategies are Apple, HP, Microsoft, IBM, Intel, Sony and Dell. HCL has a comprehensive policy designed to drive its environment management program ensuring sustainable development. HCL is duty bound to manufacture environmentally responsible products and comply with environment management processes right from the time products are sourced, manufactured, bought by customers, recovered at their end-of-life and recycled.

Potato starch trays made by Dutch Paper Foam protect the new i- Phone just launched by Apple Computer which equals 90 percent reduction in the carbon footprint compared to the plastic tray used in the past. Indian Oil also aims at developing techno-economically viable and environment-friendly products & services for the benefit of millions of its consumers, while at the same time



ensuring the highest standards of safety and environment protection in its operations

#### 4.4 Challenges Ahead

- \* Green products require renewable and recyclable material, which is costly
- \* Requires a technology, which requires huge investment in R & D
- \* Water treatment technology, which is too costly
- \* Majority of the people are not aware of green products and their uses
- \* Majority of the consumers are not willing to pay a premium for green products

#### 5. CONCLUSION

A clever marketer is one who not only convinces the consumer, but also involves the consumer in marketing his product. Green marketing should not be considered as just one more approach to marketing, but has to be pursued with much greater vitality, as it has an environmental and social dimension to it. With the threat of global warming alarming large, it is extremely important that green marketing becomes the norm rather than an exception or just a fad. Marketers also have the responsibility to make the consumers understand the need for and benefits of green products as compared to non-green ones. In green marketing, consumers are willing to pay more to maintain a cleaner and greener environment. Finally, consumers, industrial buyers and suppliers need to pressurize effects on minimize the negative effects on the environment-friendly.

Green marketing should not neglect the economic aspect of marketing. Marketers need to understand the implications of green marketing. If we think customers are not concerned about environmental issues or will not pay a premium for products that are more eco-responsible, think again. We must find an opportunity to enhance our product's performance and strengthen your customer's loyalty and command a higher price.

Green marketing is still in its infancy and a lot of research is to be done on green marketing to fully

explore its potential. Think of a refrigerator for example. While we may have had to be convinced in the 1950s to buy a refrigerator, we would have wanted the great white box to look cool in the 1970s, but in today's uncertain world, we might ask ourselves about the impact of the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) that our refrigerator is emitting and demand a more environmentally friendly refrigerator.

**So, if today's successful marketing** is about appealing to personal values and delivering consumer empowerment, then surely the time is right to inject sustainable development into the marketing mix to help address some of the gritty issues currently facing our planet. Green marketing methods produce highly effective results. They apply all of the steps you need to cut costs, raise response rates and increase growth in the most important marketing metric we are all held accountable for—the bottom line.

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