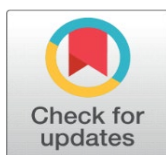


A COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION OF GREEN MARKETING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION ACROSS DIVERSE COMPANIES

Pushendra Mourya ¹✉, Dr. Saurabh Verma ²✉

¹ Research Scholar Department of Business Administration Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University, Bareilly, India

² Associate Professor Department of Business Administration Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Rohilkhand University, Bareilly, India



Corresponding Author

Pushendra Mourya,
pushendramourya132@gmail.com

DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.1749](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v5.i5.2024.1749)

Funding: This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Copyright: © 2024 The Author(s). This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

With the license CC-BY, authors retain the copyright, allowing anyone to download, reuse, re-print, modify, distribute, and/or copy their contribution. The work must be properly attributed to its author.



ABSTRACT

Global economic activities are increasingly relying on natural and environmental resources for their growth, leading to significant ecological impacts. The rapid rise in global warming, driven by various human activities, has negatively affected human life, from the air we breathe to the food we eat. As a result, green marketing has emerged as both a major challenge and an opportunity for companies worldwide. Terms like green technology, green strategy, and green marketing are gaining importance. This research presents a descriptive study using secondary data, concentrating on companies that have embraced green or eco-friendly products. It looks at how these organizations have incorporated green marketing strategies, the obstacles they've faced, and the importance of green technology in modern sustainability, particularly in Indian businesses. The report provides insights into how these organizations' business strategies include green practices and contribute to sustainable development.

Keywords: Sustainable Marketing, Eco-Friendly Products, Indian Companies, Strategic Approaches, Environmental Sustainability.

1. INTRODUCTION

The American Marketing Association defines green marketing as the promotion of eco-friendly products. This concept goes beyond advertising to include activities like modifying product designs, packaging, and marketing tactics to lessen the environmental impact. It refers to a comprehensive strategy for generating, promoting, utilising, and disposing of products and services in an ecologically sustainable manner.

Consumers are increasingly conscious of the substantial influence their actions have on the environment. This knowledge has resulted in a shift away from traditional consumption habits and towards more sustainable activities, with individuals seeking to positively impact environment. Green marketing focusses on

developing and promoting products that have little negative environmental impact, ensuring that environmental responsibility is demonstrated throughout the product's lifecycle—from creation to disposal.

Green marketing involves more than just consumer choices; it requires the engagement of various stakeholders including manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and suppliers. It is not restricted to profit-oriented businesses but also encompasses non-profit organizations and governmental bodies. Each stakeholder plays an essential role in mitigating the environmental footprint of products and services. The objective is to achieve sustainability throughout the supply chain, from sourcing raw materials to managing waste.

As awareness of climate change and environmental issues grows, so too have green marketing strategies. Initially, these strategies focused on practices like recycling aluminium cans and toner cartridges, but now they embrace a broader commitment to sustainability. Companies recognize that all by-products and waste from production processes need to be managed with environmental care. For instance, Shell Oil is investigating innovative ways to cut its carbon emissions by reusing CO₂, while U.S. companies are implementing energy-efficient technologies to conserve resources and cut costs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further driven this shift, as people have become more health-conscious and prefer eco-friendly products. This has opened up new avenues for businesses to adopt green marketing strategies, aligning their products with the increasing demand for safer and more sustainable options. To align with a more environmentally conscious public, companies must integrate green strategies, technologies, and packaging solutions into their overall marketing approaches.

2. GREEN MARKETING

In 2014, a study by a scientist projected a future surge in demand for green marketing, despite its current limited presence. The study highlighted that while green products and services are essential for maintaining environmental balance, the impact of global warming has prompted countries worldwide to focus more on environmental protection and pollution control. The researcher noted that many companies are now taking green marketing seriously and implementing various sustainable development initiatives. The evolution of green marketing is categorized into three phases: "Ecological," "Environmental," and "Sustainable" (Peattie, 2001).

Green marketing, as stressed by specialists such as Ottaman (1993) and Ken Peattie (1993), is gaining popularity over traditional advertising tactics. Azhagaiah and Ilangovan (2006) emphasized the importance of carbon emissions in modern society, as well as the benefits of green marketing and environmental protection. Thakur (2009) did an empirical study in Indore, Madhya Pradesh called "Customer Awareness Regarding Green Marketing of Automobiles," and discovered that green marketing for automobiles appeals to both urban and rural consumers. This indicates a shift toward eco-friendly products in response to environmental concerns.

Welling and Chavan (2010) investigated the viability of green marketing in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in their paper "Evaluating the Viability of Green Marketing in SMEs." They gathered data from 114 participants in suburban Mumbai and discovered that SMEs are rapidly implementing green practices. Their analysis also found that both state and federal governments should assist small enterprises in generating green products. The public is deeply concerned about

concerns such as global warming, dangerous substances, and social responsibility, and many customers want to help ensure environmental sustainability.

In his study "Green Marketing in India: Some Eco-Issues," Ramakrishna (2012) examined eco-issues within the green marketing mix, concluding that there is a need for increased knowledge of the benefits of green marketing and eco-friendly products. He also emphasized that businesses must prioritize the adoption of a green culture in order to remain competitive in today's hard economy.

Although green marketing is not a new concept, it has gained renewed attention in recent times. Various researchers have examined how different companies adopt green strategies and the challenges they encounter. This research provides a detailed understanding of the strategies companies are implementing and the obstacles they face in embracing green marketing.

3. GREEN MARKETING MIX

The Green Marketing Strategy revolves around the four Green Ps—Green Product, Green Promotion, Green Place, and Green Price—each of which plays a critical part in the success or failure of environmentally conscious marketing. These "green variables" are critical to the overall success of green marketing.

- 1) **Green Product:** Companies should incorporate eco-friendly resources or materials into their products during the manufacturing process. The choice of materials and packaging should consider environmental impacts, ensuring the product meets ecological standards.
- 2) **Green Promotion:** Companies must prioritize "Green Advertising" to communicate their commitment to environmental responsibility to both green consumers (those who use eco-friendly products) and conventional consumers (those who do not). Furthermore, businesses can use promotional methods such as discounts, special offers, and incentives to stimulate the purchase of environmentally friendly products.
- 3) **Green Place:** The distribution of green products and services, from their origin to the final consumer, should be strategically managed. Companies should select the most appropriate distribution network based on the characteristics of the products, customers, and the industry.
- 4) **Green Price:** Consumers frequently consider the cost of green items to be higher than traditional alternatives. However, by lowering production and operational expenses, green products can become more competitive in the market.

Figure 1

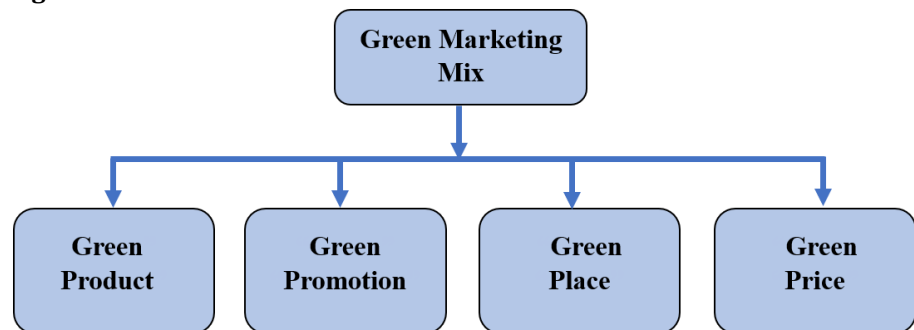


Figure 1 Green Marketing Mix

4. GREEN STRATEGY

- 1) **Lean Green:** This strategy emphasizes enhancing efficiency and lowering product costs, with minimal focus on sustainability and green product differentiation. Companies adopting lean green strategies are often reluctant to adapt to market changes or competition, fearing customer loss.
- 2) **Defensive Green:** Companies employing a defensive green strategy aim to protect themselves from competitors by developing superior strategies. These companies maintain their brand image by offering green products, even if these products have a shorter lifespan, providing some benefits to consumers.
- 3) **Shaded Green:** Companies that adopt a shaded green strategy invest in long-term sustainability, viewing it as an opportunity to attract and satisfy a broad customer base. These firms differentiate themselves by emphasizing green products or technology to stand out in the market.
- 4) **Extreme Green:** Companies deeply committed to environmental concerns adopt extreme green strategies, prioritizing eco-friendly products and processes from raw materials to packaging. These companies typically focus on niche markets, targeting environmentally conscious consumers.
- 5) **Green Technology:** Green technology involves the use of innovative, eco-friendly methods to generate energy and develop products. Companies adopting this approach prioritize sustainability throughout their operations.
- 6) **Green Packaging:** Green packaging refers to sustainable, environmentally friendly packaging options that are recyclable, reusable, or biodegradable, contributing to pollution reduction and a smaller environmental footprint.

5. GREEN MARKETING AND OVERALL FIRM PERFORMANCE: 2013-2023.

Over the last decade, the strategic integration of green marketing has become an increasingly important aspect of commercial success. From 2013 to 2023, the adoption of green marketing methods increased dramatically, demonstrating a greater emphasis on environmental sustainability and its impact on business performance.

6. 2013-2015: INITIAL ADOPTION AND NICHE DIFFERENTIATION

In the early 2010s, green marketing was largely confined to pioneering companies that sought to carve out niche markets through environmental differentiation. The 2013 Nielsen Global Survey on Corporate Social Responsibility revealed that 50% of global consumers were prepared to pay a premium for products from companies with a strong commitment to social and environmental responsibility. However, during this period, the financial impact of green marketing was modest as it remained on the periphery of mainstream business strategies.

7. 2016-2018: ESCALATING CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS AND REGULATORY PRESSURES

From 2016 to 2018, there was a marked increase in consumer awareness and demand for sustainable products. According to the 2017 Cone Communications CSR Study, 87% of consumers were more likely to purchase from companies that supported issues they cared about, particularly environmental sustainability. This era also saw intensified regulatory pressures, with governments implementing more stringent environmental policies. As a result, businesses began to integrate green marketing more deeply into their strategies, leading to improved brand loyalty and competitive positioning.

8. 2019-2021: ESG INTEGRATION AND INVESTMENT IMPACT

The period between 2019 and 2021 marked a transformative phase where Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria became pivotal in investment decisions. The 2020 MSCI ESG Research Report highlighted that companies with robust ESG practices not only outperformed their peers but also attracted substantial investment, with ESG-focused funds seeing record inflows. Green marketing evolved from a niche consideration to a mainstream business strategy, significantly enhancing investor confidence and contributing to higher stock valuations. Companies investing in green technologies and sustainable practices observed improved financial performance, underscoring the strategic importance of green marketing.

9. 2022-2023: MAINSTREAM ADOPTION AND FINANCIAL BENEFITS

In the most recent years, green marketing has become a mainstream business strategy across various industries. The Global Sustainability Study 2023 by Simon-Kucher & Partners found that 85% of consumers had shifted their purchasing behaviour towards sustainable products, with 60% willing to pay a premium for eco-friendly options. Companies that integrated green marketing into their core operations experienced a 25% increase in market share and achieved up to a 20% reduction in operational costs, as reported by the 2023 Deloitte CxO Sustainability Report. These gains were attributed to enhanced energy efficiency, waste reduction, and supply chain optimization.

Furthermore, the UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2023 emphasized that companies adhering to sustainable practices were 30% more likely to comply with rigorous environmental regulations, thus avoiding fines and strengthening their reputations as responsible corporate citizens.

10. SUMMARY: A DECADE OF STRATEGIC EVOLUTION

From 2013 to 2023, green marketing has transitioned from a peripheral initiative to a central element of corporate strategy. Firms that have embraced green marketing have realized substantial benefits in terms of brand loyalty, market share, and financial performance. As consumer demand for sustainability continues to grow and regulatory frameworks become more stringent, green marketing will remain a crucial factor in driving long-term business success.

Table 1

Table 1 Companies Adopted Green Marketing	
Tata Motors	Introduced electric vehicles like the Tata Nexon EV; invests in reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable mobility solutions.
Wipro	Focuses on energy-efficient products; implemented sustainability practices in operations and supply chain management.
Infosys	Achieved carbon neutrality; invests in renewable energy and energy-efficient buildings; emphasizes sustainability in operations.
ITC Limited	ITC's Paperboards and Specialty Papers Division focuses on using renewable materials; implements waste management and water conservation practices.
Godrej Group	The Good & Green initiative focuses on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable products; promotes green buildings and carbon neutrality.
Mahindra & Mahindra	Mahindra Electric has launched electric vehicles, with an emphasis on lowering carbon emissions and supporting renewable energy.
Hindustan Unilever	Implements sustainability initiatives across its product range; focuses on water conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing of raw materials.
Tata Steel	Focuses on reducing carbon emissions; implements energy-efficient processes and promotes sustainable practices in steel production.
Aditya Birla Group	Promotes sustainable business practices; focuses on reducing carbon footprint, water conservation, and energy efficiency across its operations.
Bajaj Auto	Introduced eco-friendly vehicles; invests in energy-efficient manufacturing processes and renewable energy sources.
Dabur India	Uses natural and eco-friendly ingredients in products; focuses on sustainable sourcing and packaging; emphasizes environmental responsibility.
Amul	Implements energy-efficient processes in dairy production; focuses on waste management and water conservation in operations.
HCL Technologies	Achieved carbon neutrality; focuses on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable business practices in IT services.
Tata Power	Invests in renewable energy projects, such as solar and wind power; focuses on lowering carbon emissions and encouraging sustainable energy alternatives.
Reliance Industries	Implements sustainability initiatives in petrochemicals and refining; focuses on waste reduction, energy efficiency, and renewable energy investments.
Asian Paints	Focuses on sustainable products and processes; implements water conservation and waste management practices in manufacturing.
Larsen & Toubro	Focuses on green buildings and sustainable infrastructure projects; invests in renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies.
Marico	Emphasizes sustainable sourcing of raw materials; focuses on eco-friendly packaging and energy-efficient operations in FMCG products.
Hero MotoCorp	Introduced electric two-wheelers; focused on lowering carbon emissions, improving energy efficiency, and promoting green transportation alternatives.
JSW Steel	Implements energy-efficient steel production processes; focuses on reducing carbon footprint, water conservation, and waste management.
Patagonia	Eco-friendly outdoor apparel; uses sustainable materials; advocates for environmental activism and repair services.
Tesla	Focus on electric vehicles and renewable energy; aims to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainable energy solutions.
Unilever	Sustainable Living Plan; reduces environmental impact through sustainable sourcing, waste reduction, and energy efficiency.
IKEA	Uses sustainable materials in products; aims for a circular economy through recycling and reusing materials; focuses on energy efficiency in stores.

Ben & Jerry's	Utilizes Fairtrade-certified ingredients; supports environmental causes; engages in social and environmental activism.
Starbucks	Ethically sourced coffee; promotes the use of reusable cups; implements energy-efficient store designs and waste reduction strategies.
Apple	Operates on 100% renewable energy; focuses on recycling materials; enhances energy efficiency in its products and operations.
Nike	Move to Zero initiative; aims for zero carbon and zero waste; incorporates recycled materials in products; improves sustainability across the supply chain.
The Body Shop	Cruelty-free products; sustainable sourcing; efforts to reduce plastic waste and support fair trade.
Sony	Road to Zero initiative; aims to reduce environmental impact through energy-efficient products and recycling; invests in sustainable technologies.
Google	Operates on 100% renewable energy; invests in green technologies; enhances sustainability across its data centres and operations.
Microsoft	Aims to be carbon-negative by 2030; invests in renewable energy and carbon removal technologies; focuses on energy-efficient operations.
H&M	Uses recycled materials; promotes circular fashion; focuses on reducing environmental impact throughout its supply chain.
Ford	Introduces electric and hybrid vehicles; invests in sustainable manufacturing processes; uses renewable energy sources in operations.
General Electric (GE)	Focuses on sustainable technology solutions; develops wind turbines and energy-efficient appliances; promotes a cleaner energy future.
L'Oréal	Sustainable sourcing of ingredients; reduces carbon emissions; improves water usage in production processes.
Anheuser-Busch InBev	Reduces water usage; improves energy efficiency; sources ingredients sustainably; engages in environmental stewardship.
Dell Technologies	Integrates sustainable practices; focuses on recycling materials, energy efficiency, and reducing carbon emissions in products and operations.
Tetra Pak	Committed to sustainability; uses renewable materials; reduces energy consumption; enhances recycling programs for packaging solutions.

11. ADOPTING GREEN MARKETING CAN OFFER SIGNIFICANT BENEFITS, BUT COMPANIES OFTEN FACE SEVERAL CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING THESE STRATEGIES

1) High Costs of Implementation

- **Problem:** Developing eco-friendly products often requires significant investment in research and development, sustainable materials, and green technologies.
- **Impact:** Higher production costs can lead to increased prices, making it difficult to compete with conventional products on price alone.

2) Consumer Awareness and Perception

- **Problem:** Consumers may be unaware of the benefits of green products or skeptical of companies' environmental claims (greenwashing issues).
- **Impact:** This can result in lower demand for green products, making it challenging for companies to justify the higher costs associated with sustainable practices.

3) Supply Chain Challenges

- **Problem:** Sourcing sustainable raw materials can be difficult, especially if suppliers are not committed to environmental practices. Additionally, establishing a green supply chain can be complex and costly.
- **Impact:** Companies may struggle to maintain consistent quality and availability of green products, which can affect their market reputation and reliability.

4) Regulatory and Compliance Issues

- **Problem:** Navigating different environmental regulations and standards across regions can be complicated. Compliance with these regulations may require significant changes in processes and documentation.
- **Impact:** Failure to comply may result in fines, legal troubles, and damage to the company's reputation.

5) Resistance to Change

- **Problem:** Employees, suppliers, and other stakeholders may resist changes to traditional practices, particularly if they involve new technologies or processes.
- **Impact:** Resistance can slow down the implementation of green marketing initiatives and lead to increased costs and delays.

6) Balancing Profitability and Sustainability

- **Problem:** Companies must strike a balance between profitability and long-term sustainability. Green products may have lower profit margins due to increased production expenses.
- **Impact:** This can make it challenging for companies to sustain green initiatives in the long term, especially in competitive markets.

7) Market Competition

- **Problem:** Companies adopting green marketing may face competition from those that do not invest in sustainability but can offer lower prices.
- **Impact:** Competing on environmental benefits alone can be difficult if competitors are not held to the same standards or if consumers prioritize price over sustainability.

8) Measurement and Reporting Challenges

- **Problem:** It can be difficult to accurately measure the environmental impact of products and activities while also effectively communicating these benefits to customers.
- **Impact:** Inadequate reporting can lead to accusations of greenwashing and erode consumer trust.

9) Short-Term Focus vs. Long-Term Gains

- **Problem:** Green marketing often requires a long-term perspective, but companies may be pressured by stakeholders to focus on short-term financial gains.
- **Impact:** This short-term focus can hinder the development and success of sustainable initiatives, as they may not provide immediate returns.

10) Technological Limitations

- Problem: The lack of advanced green technologies can limit a company's ability to innovate and produce truly sustainable products.
- Impact: Companies may struggle to keep up with evolving consumer expectations and environmental standards.

12. CONCLUSION

The gradual rise in awareness about the importance of green products signifies a pivotal moment for businesses worldwide. As consumers become more aware of the environmental impact of their purchases, businesses are pushed to gradually convert to 100% eco-friendly products. The global increase in pollution has pushed governments to take urgent action, enacting regulations and forming international partnerships to protect our planet from the devastating effects of human activity. In response, both small and large-scale organizations are recognizing the necessity of this transformation, with many viewing their commitment to sustainable practices as an inherent element of their Corporate Social Responsibility. The aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic has further accelerated this trend, with consumers showing a marked preference for eco-friendly products. This change in consumer behaviour underscores the necessity for companies to align their strategies with the growing demand for sustainability. As the push towards greener practices continues, it is essential for companies to embrace this transition, not only to meet regulatory requirements but also to secure their position in an increasingly eco-conscious market. The journey towards sustainability is not just a responsibility; it is an opportunity for innovation and growth in a world that is becoming ever more attuned to the need for environmental stewardship.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

REFERENCES

- Azhagaiah, R., & Ilangovan, A. (2006). Impact of Green Marketing on Modern society: A Study on Carbon Emissions and Environmental Conservation. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 32(4), 205-216.
- Peattie, K. (2001). Towards Sustainability: The Third Phase of Green Marketing. *Marketing Review*, 2(2), 129-146.
- Ottman, J. A. (1993). *Green Marketing: Challenges and Opportunities for the New Marketing age*. NTC Business Books.
- Thakur, R. (2009). Customer Awareness with Regard to Green Marketing of Automobiles: An Empirical Study in Indore, Madhya Pradesh. *Indian Journal of Marketing*, 39(3), 21-29.
- Welling, M. N., & Chavan, A. S. (2010). Evaluating the viability of Green Marketing in Small & Medium Enterprises. *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 17(4), 604-620.
- Ramakrishna, H. (2012). Green Marketing in India: Some eco-issues. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 7(10), 24-32.

- Ginsberg, J. M., & Bloom, P. N. (2004). Choosing the Right green marketing strategy. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 46(1), 79-84.
- Polonsky, M. J. (1994). An introduction to Green Marketing. *Electronic Green Journal*, 1(2), 1-10.
- Rex, E., & Baumann, H. (2007). Beyond Ecolabels: What Green Marketing can learn from Conventional Marketing. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 15(6), 567-576.
- Hartmann, P., & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, V. (2012). Consumer Attitude and Purchase Intention Toward Green Energy Brands: The Roles of Psychological Benefits and Environmental Concern. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(9), 1254-1263.
- Leonidou, C. N., Katsikeas, C. S., & Morgan, N. A. (2013). "Greening" the Marketing mix: Do Firms do it and does it pay off? *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 41(2), 151-170.
- Govind, M., Singh, A., & Gupta, M. (2023). The Role of Green Marketing in Corporate Sustainability: A Decade of Evolution. *Journal of Sustainable Business*, 15(3), 102-119.
- Kumar, P., & Polonsky, M. J. (2021). Green Marketing Strategies: An overview of Business Responses to Environmental Challenges. *Journal of Marketing Development and Competitiveness*, 15(4), 99-112.
- Laroche, M., Bergeron, J., & Barbaro-Forleo, G. (2001). Targeting Consumers who are Willing to pay more for Environmentally Friendly Products. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 18(6), 503-520.
- Dangelico, R. M., & Vocalelli, D. (2017). "Green Marketing": An Analysis of Definitions, Strategy steps, and Tools Through a Systematic Review of the literature. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 165, 1263-1279.
- Ottman, J. A., Stafford, E. R., & Hartman, C. L. (2006). Avoiding Green Marketing myopia: Ways to Improve Consumer appeal for Environmentally Preferable products. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development*, 48(5), 22-36.
- Mitchell, R. K., Agle, B. R., & Wood, D. J. (1997). Toward a Theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(4), 853-886.
- Chen, Y. S. (2010). The Drivers of Green brand Equity: Green Brand Image, Green satisfaction, and green trust. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 93(2), 307-319.
- Zhu, Q., Sarkis, J., & Lai, K. H. (2008). Green Supply chain Management Implications for "closing the loop". *Transportation Research Part E: Logistics and Transportation Review*, 44(1), 1-18.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2022). *Principles of Marketing* (18th ed.). Pearson Education.