

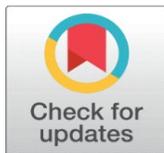
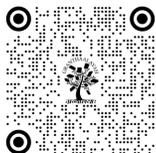
EXPLORING GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES: INSIGHTS FROM MARKETING MANAGERS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

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DOI

[10.29121/shodhkosh.v4.i2.2023.2455](https://doi.org/10.29121/shodhkosh.v4.i2.2023.2455)

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

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ABSTRACT

Creating and promoting items according to their perceived or actual environmental sustainability is referred to as "green marketing." Two instances of green marketing involve highlighting the reduced emissions linked to a product's manufacturing process or using recycled materials in product packaging. Some companies might further position themselves as mindful businesses by giving a portion of their sales profits to environmental projects like planting trees. Green marketing is part of a broader trend toward socially and environmentally friendly business practices. Consumers are increasingly expecting companies to demonstrate their commitment to improving their operations while also following to various environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards.

To continue to achieve this, a lot of businesses will continue to send out social impact statements in which they transparently track their advancement toward these goals on a regular basis. Reducing the carbon emissions linked to the company's operations upholding strict labor laws both domestically and in foreign supply chains, and charitable endeavors aimed at benefitting the communities where the company operates are common examples of ESG-related improvements. Green marketing, while primarily referring to environmental measures, is increasingly being offered alongside with corporate governance and social goals. Based on a survey of 120 marketing managers, a collection of green marketing practices is identified in this article.

Keywords: Green marketing, ESG Criteria, Consumer Expectations, Social Impact, Marketing Practices, Corporate Social Responsibility

1. INTRODUCTION

Green marketing is the practice of promoting products or services that are sustainable and environmentally friendly. Companies that invest in green marketing benefit from increased customer loyalty and positive brand reputation while helping to protect the planet and contribute to a more sustainable future. The importance of green marketing

- Green marketing helps raise awareness of environmental issues and encourages consumers to make more sustainable choices.
- By promoting environmentally friendly products and practices, companies can differentiate themselves from their competitors and appeal to consumers who are increasingly looking for environmentally friendly products and services.

- It can also help companies reduce their environmental impact by promoting products and practices with a lower carbon footprint or recycled materials.
- Companies that are seen as environmentally responsible can benefit from increased customer loyalty and a positive brand reputation.
- By adopting sustainable practices and promoting them through marketing campaigns, companies can contribute to positive change and contribute to a more sustainable future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The marketing management literature well recognizes the strategic importance of customer retention and long-term customer relationships in achieving marketing performance (Webster, 1992). Converging ideas of sustainability in marketing, also known as green marketing, are discussed as one effective approach in this regard (Menon and Menon, 1997). Green marketing was first introduced by Lazer (1969) as a social dimension of marketing that deals with the limited availability of environmental resources, the environmental impacts of conventional marketing, and the greening of various aspects of traditional marketing. Kotler and Armstrong (2009) define green marketing as “marketing that meets the current needs of consumers and businesses while maintaining or improving the ability of future generations to meet their needs”. It is based on the basics of how marketing impacts society and the environment. It questions the current ideologies of consumption, brings under the microscope the ecological impact of marketing and calls for the need to solve environmental problems in marketing (Lazer, 1969). Over the past 25 years, several aspects of green marketing have received serious attention from researchers and have featured prominently in the literature. Green marketing has gradually emerged as a philosophy of developing, practicing and communicating business operations focused on an environmental mission that lead to improved corporate reputation and market performance (Lu et al., 2013; Stainer and Stainer, 1997). During this period it evolved from a response to business, market and regulatory pressures to enlightened corporate self-interest and notions of environmental responsibility. This enables them to adapt to changing marketing boundaries (Lazer, 2013) and ensure their survival, stability and success in the markets they operate. Environmental consciousness, once limited to the ideology of activists, has become a matter of market competition (Mostafa, 2009; Follows and Jobber, 2000).

3. METHODOLOGY

To draw meaningful inferences and conclusions, a minimum sample size of 100 is recommended (Alreck and Settle, 2003). Accordingly, 120 marketing managers from Pune were surveyed through a questionnaire containing agreement accorded to the 10 green marketing best practices statements given below:

- 1) Using environmentally friendly materials in products
- 2) Promoting the use of recycled or recyclable materials
- 3) Encouraging customers to repair and reuse products rather than buying new ones
- 4) Offering products that are energy-efficient or have a low carbon footprint
- 5) Promoting the use of renewable energy sources
- 6) Partnering with organizations that promote sustainability and social responsibility
- 7) Educating customers about the environmental benefits of a product or service
- 8) Using eco-friendly packaging materials
- 9) Offering products that are organic, natural, or free from harmful chemicals
- 10) Supporting Environmental issues

Likert scales were used for response options. The response options were - 0 - Can't Say, 1 - Somewhat agree, 2 - Completely agree, 3 - Somewhat Disagree, 4 - Completely Disagree.

Responses were received from 120 marketing managers. The questionnaire was tested for reliability, and it returned a Cronbach Alpha score of 0.84 and hence was considered reliable. Following hypotheses were formulated:

Ho: There are no best practices in green marketing

Ha: There are best practices in green marketing

The hypothesis was tested based on the average agreement/disagreement responses to the five statements of the questionnaire. The average agreement/disagreement response of the 120 respondents for all the ten statements was taken as the sample mean and it was compared with a hypothesized population mean of 50% agreement/disagreement connoting an event by chance and not due to any statistical significance. A t-test was applied at 95% confidence level and based on the p-value the null hypothesis was tested for rejection or non-rejection.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

35 respondents were from the Northern region of Pune, 15 were from the Eastern region, 35 were from the Western region, and 35 were from the Southern region. 41 respondents were from the age-group of <30 years, 45 were from the age-group 30-40 years, and 34 were from the age-group of >40 years.

Table 1 gives the ten green marketing statements items and their agreement ratings by the 120 respondents:

Table 1: Average ratings for the ten statements

Sr. No.	Item	Agreement %
1	Using environmentally friendly materials in products	79%
2	Promoting the use of recycled or recyclable materials	77%
3	Encouraging customers to repair and reuse products rather than buying new ones	89%
4	Offering products that are energy-efficient or have a low carbon footprint	81%
5	Promoting the use of renewable energy sources	91%
6	Partnering with organizations that promote sustainability and social responsibility	92%
7	Educating customers about the environmental benefits of a product or service	86%
8	Using eco-friendly packaging materials	84%
9	Offering products that are organic, natural, or free from harmful chemicals	88%
10	Supporting Environmental issues	79%
	Average	85%

The average agreement for the ten statements was 85% and this was compared with the hypothesized population mean of 50%. Results were as under:

Table 2: Summary statistics

Parameter	Value
Sample mean	85%
SD of sample	1.0236
Hypothesized population mean	50%
n	120
t-value	3.74566
p-value	0.00014
alpha	0.050

As the computed p-value is lower than the significance level $\alpha=0.05$, one should reject the null hypothesis H_0 , and accept the alternative hypothesis, H_a .

Thus, the null hypothesis there are no best practices in green marketing was rejected in favor of the alternate that there are best practices in green marketing.

5. CONCLUSION

The importance of green marketing is quite clear; it refers to the practice of promoting and selling environmentally friendly products and services. There are several ways green marketing can have a positive impact on the world. These include:

- Encouraging companies to adopt more sustainable business practices
- Raising consumer awareness of the importance of sustainability
- Stimulating the development of new, more sustainable products and technologies
- It helps reduce waste, pollution and other negative impacts on the environment
- To contribute to the long-term health and well-being of the planet and all its inhabitants.

Green marketing helps companies adopt more sustainable business practices by helping to promote the environmental benefits of their products and services. In addition, green marketing can increase consumer awareness of the importance of sustainability and the environmental impact of their purchasing decisions. It could encourage consumers to make greener choices that could help reduce waste, pollution and other negative impacts on the planet.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

None.

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