



Green Marketing

KEYWORDS

green products, environmental safe, eco-friendly

***Dr. M. THIRUMAGAL VIJAYA**

****M.THAMILARASI**

Head, Department of Commerce, PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore 641 014.

Department of Commerce, PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore 641 014.

ABSTRACT

Green Marketing is a phenomenon which has developed particular important in the modern market. In the emerging world the concept of pollution free activity is given more importance in all the sectors and in all stages. The environmentalists are targeting the industrial sectors as the major contributors for depleting natural resources and environmental destruction. Hence, both production and marketing divisions of industries are stressed more to take utmost care in these areas along with fulfilling the market demands. To overcome these difficulties a new concept has born in the present globalized world where production, consumption and also marketing of the products can be carried effectively ensuring environmental safety. This concept is named as 'Green Marketing'. But the question still remains "how safe can it be in the Indian scenario?" since India is one of the fastest developing nations and utilization of resources has to be carried continuously in order to maintain trade balance, both internal and external. The Balance of Payments has to be maintained at a proper level which was negative in the past and the country is still struggling to recover the losses. Hence this paper highlights how effective business can be carried out and how Green customers, who are concerned about the environment can be convinced and support their purchasing decisions. The paper explores the challenges and opportunities businesses have with green marketing. The paper also describe the reason why companies are adopting it and concludes that green marketing is something that will continuously grow in both practice and demand.

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. Thus "Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing consumption an disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, no biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch in to green products and services. While the shift to "green" may appear to be expensive in the short term, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous, cost-wise too, in the long run.

Objective and Methodology

One of the biggest problems with the green marketing area is that there has been little attempt to academically examine environmental or green marketing. While some literature does exist, it comes from divergent perspectives. This paper attempts to throw light on the conceptual issues associated with green marketing. The present study is exploratory in nature to provide a clear guidance for empirical research. It is also descriptive where the focus is on fact-finding investigation with adequate interpretation. For this purpose secondary data were collected. The secondary data were collected through newspapers, magazines, books, journals, conference Proceedings, Government re-

ports and websites.

Challenges in Green Marketing

1) **Need for standardization:** It is found that only 5% of the marketing messages from "Green" campaigns are entirely true and there is a lack of standardization to authenticate these claims. There is no standardization currently in place to certify a product as organic. Unless some regulatory bodies are involved in providing the certifications there will not be any verifiable means. A standard quality control board needs to be in place for such labeling and licensing.

2) **New concept:** Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more aware about the merits of green products. But it is still a new concept for the masses. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. The new green movements needs to reach the masses and that will take a lot of time and effort. By India's ayurvedic heritage, Indian consumers do appreciate the importance of using natural and herbal beauty products. Indian consumer is exposed to healthy living lifestyles such as yoga and natural food consumption. In those aspects the consumer is already aware and will be inclined to accept the green products.

3) **Patience and Perseverance:** The investors and corporate need to view the environment as a major long term investment opportunity, the marketers need to look at the long-term benefits from this new green movement. It will require a lot of patience and no immediate results. Since it is a new concept and idea, it will have its own acceptance period.

Golden rules of Green Marketing

1) **Know your customer:** If you want to sell a greener product to consumers, you first need to make sure that the consumer is aware of and concerned about the issues that

your product tempts to address.

2) **Empower consumers:** Make sure that consumers feel, by themselves or in connect with all the other users of your product, that they can make a difference. This is called "empowerment" and it's the main reason why consumers buy greener products.

3) **Be transparent:** Consumers must believe in the legitimacy of your product and the specific claims you are making. The rest of your business policies are consistent with whatever you are doing that's environmentally friendly.

4) **Reassure the buyer:** Consumers must be made to believe that the product performs the job it's supposed to do-they won't forego product quality in the name of the environment.

5) **Consider your pricing:** If you are charging a premium for your product and many environmentally preferable products cost more due to economies of scale and use of higher-quality ingredients-make sure that consumer can afford the premium and feel it's worth it. Many consumers, of course, can't afford premiums for any type of product these days, much less greener ones, so keep this in mind as you develop your target audience and product specifications.

Why Green Marketing?

It is really scary to read these pieces of information as reported in the Times recently: "Air pollution damage to people, crops and wildlife in US. Total tens of billions of dollars each year".

"More than 12 other studies in the US, Brazil Europe, Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan have established links between air pollutants and low birth weight premature birth still birth and infant death". As resources are limited and human wants are unlimited, it is important for the marketers to utilize the resources efficiently without waste as well as to achieve the organization's objective. So green marketing is inevitable. There is growing interest among the consumers all over the world regarding protection of environment. Worldwide evidence indicates people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior. As a result of this, green marketing has emerged which speaks for growing market for sustainable and socially responsible products and services. Thus the growing awareness among the consumers all over the world regarding protection of the environment in which marketing by the business class is still in the selfish anthropological perspective of long term sustainable business and to please the consumer and obtain the license by the governing body. Industries in Asian countries are catching the need of green marketing from the developed countries but still there is a wide gap between their understanding and implementation.

Present Trends In Green Marketing in India

Organizations are Perceive Environmental marketing as an Opportunity to achieve its objectives. Firms have realized that consumers prefer products that do not harm the natural environment as also the human health. Firms marketing such green products are preferred over the others not doing so and thus develop a competitive advantage, simultaneously meeting their business objectives.

Organizations believe they have a moral obligation to be more socially responsible. This is in keeping with the phi-

losophy of CSR which has been successfully adopted by many business houses to improve their corporate image. Firms in this situation can take two approaches. Use the fact that they are environmentally responsible as a marketing tool. Become responsible without prompting this fact.

Governmental Bodies are forcing Firms to Become More Responsible. In most cases the government forces the firm to adopt policy which protects the interests of the consumers. It does so in following ways:

Reduce production of harmful goods or by products. Modify consumer and industry's use and /or consumption of harmful goods; or ensure that all types of consumers have the ability to evaluate the environmental composition of goods. Competitors' Environmental Activities Pressure Firms to change their Environmental Marketing Activities. In order to get even with competitors claim to being environmentally friendly, firms change over to green marketing. Result is green marketing percolates entire industry.

Cost Factors Associated with Waste Disposal or Reductions in Material Usage Forces Firms to modify their Behavior. With cost cutting becoming part of the strategy of the firms it adopts green Marketing in relation to these activities. It may pursue these as follows: A Firm develops a technology for reducing waste and sells it to other firms.

The Future of Green Marketing

There are many lessons to be learned to be learned to avoid green marketing myopia, the short version of all this is that effective green marketing requires applying good marketing inciples to make green products desirable for consumers. The question that remains, however, is, what is green marketing's future? Business scholars have viewed it as a "fringe" topic, given that environmentalism's acceptance of limits and conservation does not mesh well with marketing's traditional axioms of "give customer what they want" and "sell as much as you can". Evidence indicates that successful green products have avoided green marketing myopia by Following three important principles:

Consumer value positioning

Design environmental products to perform as well as (or better than) alternatives. Promote and deliver the consumer desired value of environmental products and target relevant consumer market segments. Broaden mainstream appeal by bundling consumer desired value into environmental products.

Calibration of Consumer Knowledge

Educate consumers with marketing messages that connect environmental attributes with desired consumer value. Frame environmental product attributes as "solutions" for consumer needs. Create engaging and educational internet sites about environmental products desired consumer value.

Credibility of Product Claim

- Employ environmental product and consumer benefit claims that are specific and meaningful.
- Procure product endorsements or eco-certifications from trustworthy third parties and educate consumers about the meaning behind those endorsements and eco certifications.
- Encourage consumer evangelism via consumers social and internet communication network with compelling,

interesting and entertaining information about environmental products.

Importance of Green Marketing

Green marketing offers business bottom line incentives and top line growth possibilities. While modification of business or production processes may involve start-up costs, it will save money in the long term. For example the cost of installing solar energy is an investment in future energy cost savings. Companies that develop new and improved products and services with environmental impacts in mind give themselves access to new markets, substantially increase profits and enjoy competitive advantages over those marketing no environmentally responsible alternatives.

When looking through the literature there are several suggested reasons for firms increased use of Green Marketing. Five possible reasons are as follows:

1. Organizations perceives environmental marketing to be an opportunity that can be used to achieve its objectives.
2. Organizations believe they have a moral obligation to be more socially responsible.
3. Governmental bodies are forcing firms to become more responsible.
4. Competitors' environmental activities pressure firms to change their environmental marketing activities.
5. Cost factors associated with waste disposal, or reductions in material usage forces firms to modify their behavior.

Conclusion

Now this is the right time to select "Green Marketing" globally. It will come with drastic change in the world of business if all nations will make strict roles because green marketing is essential to save world from pollution. From the business point of view because a clever marketer is one who not only convinces the consumer, but also involves the consumer in marketing product. Green marketing should not be considered as just one more approach to marketing, but has to be pursued with much greater vigor, as it has an environmental and social dimension to it. With the threat of global warming looming large, it is extremely important that green marketing becomes the norm rather than an exception or just a fad. Recycling of paper, metals, plastics, etc., in a safe and environmentally harmless manner should become much more systematized and universal. It has to become the general norm to use energy-efficient lamps and other electrical goods.

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