

## GREEN MARKETING: A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENT

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### ABSTRACT

*The Marketers has always tried to recognize the new opportunities and threats constantly presented by the marketing environments and all together they understand the importance of continuously monitoring and adapting to that environment. Today main challenge before marketers is to think creatively about how market can fulfil the needs of the most of the world's population for a better standard of living in the center of sustainable development. To grab the new emerging opportunities and to ensure better standard of living with sustainable development, the new concept in market – Green Marketing has emerged. Green marketing is a philosophy which primarily advocates sustainable development. Now people are concerning for a healthy environment to live and preferring environmental friendly products and services to consume, marketers these days are trying to take advantage on the same to ensure sustainable development and using these concepts in developing their strategies. This paper attempts to introduce the terms and concept of green marketing. The paper tries to explain why green marketing is important in current situation. This paper tries to represent the basic problems associated with green marketing and suggests the required solutions. This paper also describes recent trends in green marketing, and how green marketing can be a means for sustainable development.*

**Keywords:** Green Marketing, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Consumption, Green Myopia, Greenwashing, Environment.

### Introduction

As the society became more concerned with natural environment, business has started to modify their behaviour in an attempt to address society's new concerns. Green Marketing is the result of these valuable concerns. The term Green Marketing came into existence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The American Marketing Association (AMA) organised the first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. The proceedings of this workshop resulted in one of the first book on green marketing entitled "Ecological Marketing". Today green marketing has incorporated a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. According to the American Marketing Association (AMA), Green Marketing can be defined in three different ways: First, Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe (Retailing Definition). Second, Green Marketing is the development and marketing of products designed to minimize negative effects on the physical environment or to improve its quality (Social Marketing Definition). Third, Green Marketing is the efforts by organizations to produce, promote, package, and reclaim products in a manner that it is sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns (Environmental Definition).

### Literature Review

Today, many companies have accepted their responsibility not to harm the environment. So, products and production processes become cleaner and more companies, 'Go Green' because they realize that they can reduce pollution and increase profits at the same time. Green marketing is a creative opportunity to innovate in ways that make a difference and at the same time achieve business success.

The following are some literature has been reviewed from the reputed journals of both National and International Journals pertaining to Green Marketing and its related issues. The literature has also been reviewed from Textbooks, Magazines, & Websites.

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The study by Dharmendra Mehta (2011) indicated that Indians are not only conscious about their environment but also health conscious as well. This paradigm shift in attitude has made Indian consumers attractive to green marketers. It has made the population more responsive and aware towards green marketing appeals. The study by Vinay et al (2015) determined that the concept of green marketing has been around at least since the first earth day in 1970. But the idea did not catch on till 1980's, when rising public interest in the environment led to a demand for more green products and services. The companies like Wipro, HCL, TNPL, IBM, ONGC etc., implemented the concept of green marketing in their organization. The study by Saranya (2017) analyses that Green Marketing mainly focuses on promoting the consumption of green products. Marketers also have the responsibility to make the consumers understand the need for and benefits of green products than non-green products. Green marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The first book titled Ecological Marketing was the outcome of first workshop on "Ecological Marketing", held by American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1975. Green marketing acquired an eminent status since early 1990s. There has been occurring about green consumers and green consumerism in 1970s and 1980s. Henion and Kinnear (1976) defined green consumers as environmentally conscious consumers while Antil (1984) described green consumerism as a specific type of socially conscious consumer behaviour with prime focus on protection of environment. Green consumerism was described as a form of "pro-social" consumer behaviour (Weiner and Doescher, 1991). Michael Polonsky (1994) defined green marketing as the marketing that 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.

#### **Need For the Study**

Green marketing has now evolved as one of the major area of interest for marketers as it may provide competitive advantages. However it requires investment in terms of technology enhancement, process modification, communicating benefits to customers etc. Many of the companies in India have now started marketing themselves as green organizations due to certain government regulations and shift in the preference of the consumers worldwide. However, not much research with respect to green marketing has been done in India and there is question about the awareness of green products among consumers. The attitude of Indian consumers towards green products and the relationship between the attitude and behaviour is also questionable. As green marketing is different from the marketing in traditional way, marketers need to know the factors that persuade the consumer to buy the green products. This study aims to resolve the research question that what factors influence the consumer persuasion to buy the green product or not.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

- To study the awareness of consumers towards eco-friendly products.
- To measure the green values of the customers.
- To identify the factors that influences the customers buying decision on green products.
- To give suggestions to improve the customers' awareness and buying decisions of Green Products

#### **Green Products and its Characteristics**

The products those are manufactured through green technology and that caused no environmental hazards are called green products. Promotion of green technology and green products is necessary for conservation of natural resources and sustainable development. We can define green products by following measures:

- Products those are originally grown
- Products those are recyclable, reusable and biodegradable,
- Products with natural ingredients,
- Products containing recycled contents, non-toxic chemical,
- Products contents under approved chemical,
- Products that do not harm or pollute the environment,
- Products that will not be tested on animals
- Products that have eco-friendly packaging i.e. reusable, refillable containers etc.

### **Challenges of Green Marketing**

- **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 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 labelling and licensing.

- **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 need 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.

- **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.

- **Avoiding Green Myopia**

The first rule of green marketing is focusing on customer benefits i.e. the primary reason why consumers buy certain products in the first place Do this right, and motivate consumers to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative. It is not going to help if a product is developed which is absolutely green in various aspects but does not pass the customer satisfaction criteria. This will lead to green myopia. Also if the green products are priced very high then again it will lose its market acceptability.

- **The Future of Green Marketing**

There are many lessons to be learned to avoid green marketing myopia, the short version of all this is that effective green marketing requires applying good marketing principles 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.

### 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 his product. Green marketing should not be considered as just one more approach to marketing, but has to be pursued with much greater vig or, 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. 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 green environment. Finally, consumers, industrial buyers and suppliers need to pressurize effects on minimize the negative effects on the environment-friendly. Green marketing assumes even more importance and relevance in developing countries like India.

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