

ENVIRONMENTAL MARKETING IN INDIA: PROSPECTS AND OBSTACLES

Dr. K. V. Sridhar¹, SK Jaheerunnisa begum²

¹Hod & Associate Professor, Department of MBA, Sir C. R. R. College of Engineering, Eluru, India.

²Assistant Professor, MBA Department, Sir C RR College of Engineering, Eluru, India.

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ABSTRACT

Customers' purchasing decisions are reflecting a growing desire for a green lifestyle as environmental challenges worsen. Individuals are now taking action to lessen their environmental effects. Green marketing is a relatively new idea that is constantly changing. Businesses and organizations see a lot of promise in the green market industry as consumers' attitudes are starting to change. They are trying to make use of this potential to gain an advantage over rivals in the market. The notion of green marketing has gained prominence not just in India but also in several other regions of the world. It serves as a tool to support development that is sustainable. The idea of green marketing has to be widely adopted worldwide. Every person has a responsibility to protect the world from pollution at their level. If we do nothing and allow things to continue as they are, then we will have to deal with natural disasters and calamities. Nature returns the favors we repay it with. It is now up to us humans to care for Mother Nature. Long-term environmental pollution includes the release of harmful gases into the atmosphere, extensive forest clearing, and the discharge of toxic chemicals into rivers and oceans. Recently, Mother Nature has begun to return the favor by causing global warming, erratic rainfall, floods, landslides, and other natural disasters. Therefore, everyone—government, corporations, and individuals—needs to take action to protect the environment. New prospects have also arisen in the market for eco-friendly goods and services. This study focuses on the potential benefits and difficulties that companies and organizations may face while using the green marketing idea. The article also explains why companies and organizations are embracing the idea of green marketing and turning into more socially conscious entities. Furthermore, the current state and prospects of green marketing in India are also discussed in this article.

Keywords: green marketing, environmental issues, consumer, eco-friendly

1. INTRODUCTION

The environment and environmental issues are the driving forces for the development of the Green marketing idea. Environmental problems, including pollution, climate change, global warming, and the greenhouse effect, have been plaguing industrialized nations since the early 1980s, say Yakup and Sevil (2011), and they're only going to get worse. Changes to the product, the manufacturing process, the packaging, and the promotion all contribute to green marketing. To meet customer demands for eco-friendly products and services that don't sacrifice quality, affordability, performance, or convenience, businesses have turned to green marketing. Marketers now use the "Green marketing" notion as a rallying cry to meet customer demands while simultaneously improving their bottom line without negatively impacting the environment.

Changes In Eco-Friendly Advertising

Organizations need to achieve their goals while making efficient use of the resources they have because, as we all know, Earth has limited resources, and human wants are limitless. Throughout the world, consumers are becoming more concerned about protecting the environment.

Companies are creating and promoting environmentally friendly products and implementing green marketing strategies in response to shifts in customer behavior.

Over time, the idea of environmentally friendly advertising has developed. The American Marketing Association (AMA) workshop on "Ecological marketing" in 1975 is where the term "green marketing" first appeared in print. In the '80s and '90s, the phrase "green marketing" started to gain traction. "Green Marketing" was the title of the first book on the topic written by a British author, Ken Peattie (1992), and the second, written by an American, Jacquelyn Ottman (1993). Peattie (2001) states that there are three stages to the development of environmentally conscious marketing.

What we now call "Sustainable" green marketing was actually the third stage after "Ecological" and "Environmental" green marketing, the two preceding ones.

Features of Eco-Friendly Goods

Using these criteria, we may identify "Green" products.

1. Things that are first cultivated.
2. Items that include only natural components.
3. 3 Reusable, recyclable, and biodegradable products are the third category.
 - 1) Chemical-free products that contain recycled materials.
 - 2) Chemicals recognized for use in the products.
 - 3) Items that will not be tested on animals.
 - 4) Items that come in recyclable or compostable containers, etc., are considered environmentally friendly.
 - 5) Items that won't damage or contaminate the environment.

Difficulties with Environmental Branding

As you can see, green marketing faces a number of obstacles, some of which are detailed below:

1. The first wave of green marketing has arrived in India, and it's making its way to the country's educated and urban customers. There is still a significant portion of the population that needs to be informed about environmental issues and educated. The new environmental movements will only gain traction after some time. In terms of traditional Indian medicine, including Yoga and the use of natural foods, Indian consumers have a long history of exposure. An eco-conscious buyer would be fine embracing the product in these areas.
2. Due to a lack of standardization, authentication of "green" advertising claims is difficult, and research shows that only a small percentage of these messages are accurate. A product can only be certified as organic after first undergoing standardization. One must confirm the genuineness of the product attributes with the intervention of a regulatory agency in the certification process.
3. Renewable and recyclable products, as well as green technology R&D programs, are expensive. Therefore, businesses may see minimal earnings at first. Gaining the necessary profits requires patience and perseverance, but it is achievable in the long term.
4. A substantial amount of capital will need to be allocated to research and development programs in order to promote environmentally friendly products and services, as well as green power and energy. As a result, the high initial investment required for green marketing is daunting.
5. Going green requires a lot of initial investment. Thus, it's only natural that the company will charge more for its green products. A drop in sales or even losses for the business can be in store if customers aren't prepared to shell out more cash for environmentally friendly goods and services.

Keep Green Myopia at Bay

Emphasizing the primary reason customers purchase a product or service—its advantages to them—is the fundamental premise of green marketing. Would this be the best way to get people to switch brands and pay more for environmentally friendly items?

When a product is created

It fails to meet consumer satisfaction standards despite being completely environmentally friendly in every way. Green myopia will result from this. Additionally, green products risk losing popularity in the market if they are priced less.

Essential Guidelines for Eco-Friendly Advertising

1. Get to know your target audience: Customers should care about and be informed about the problems your product solves.
2. Keep your customers informed: It's not enough to inform them that your actions are helping to preserve our environment; they must also understand the significance of this issue.
3. Third, be forthright and honest. This shows that your current company practices are consistent with your green marketing efforts and that you are truly making an effort to reduce your environmental impact.
4. Providing reassurance to the buyer: It is important to convince consumers that the product meets their needs and that companies should not sacrifice product quality for environmental reasons.
5. Convince them of the value: If the company is asking for a premium for their product or service, and you know that many eco-friendly items are getting more expensive owing to economies of scale and high-quality materials, convince them that the premium is worth it.
6. Encouraging your clients to get involved: This entails providing them with the chance to take part in various environmental initiatives.

Global acceptance of green marketing is on the rise, and the following are some of the reasons why:

One advantage is that green consumers are more likely to be self-reliant, as they share the duty to preserve the environment with other groups such as scientists, NGOs, and the government. Those who identify as "green" tend to refrain from purchasing items that are detrimental to Mother Earth.

Many companies attempt to get a foothold in the green market because they perceive shifting demand as a chance to gain an advantage over rivals. For instance, in response to customer concerns about polystyrene manufacture and ozone depletion, McDonald's substituted wax paper for clamshell packaging. For businesses concerned about the environment, Xerox has introduced recycled photocopier paper of a "high quality" to meet their needs.

1. The need to stay ahead of the competition: One of the key reasons why organizations are embracing green marketing is to stay competitive. Because of the intense competition in the market, many companies are becoming conscious of environmental issues and are implementing green marketing strategies to gain a competitive advantage. In the long term, businesses that stay the same with the times risk falling behind their competitors who are embracing environmentally friendly advertising campaigns. So, businesses need to start producing greener goods if they want to stay competitive.
2. Pressure from Governments: Nations' governments must step up to the plate if we are to eradicate these environmental issues. Consumers and the environment are perennial targets of government regulation efforts. As an example, the Indian government has also passed legislation to limit the manufacturing of hazardous materials and their byproducts. The production of goods with potential dangers is reduced as a result of these rules. Consider the 2002 judgment from the Supreme Court of India mandating the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) in all Delhi commercial vehicles.
3. The government is currently pushing for the adoption of battery-operated vehicles due to their futuristic design and lack of emissions. Vehicles powered by batteries, such as the Mahindra e-verity and Maruti Suzuki Waggon R, are already on the road. More models will be introduced in the near future by manufacturers like Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. Hero Motocorp, Revolt, and a few others have begun manufacturing electric scooters and motorcycles. There are a plethora of charging stations popping up throughout town for people to use their electric automobiles. They may not be very popular now, but they'll be in great demand in the near future. In addition to these measures, the government has outlawed smoking in public places and plastic bags in an effort to curb environmental issues.
4. CSR, or corporate social responsibility, is a growing trend in modern business. To boost their public profile, they are employing it strategically. Companies that do not care about the environment may find it difficult, if not impossible, to get entrance to other countries for trade. Companies with a strong commitment to social responsibility have an advantage when trying to break into international markets. Therefore, in order to grow, businesses must remember the significance of social responsibility.
5. Financial Concerns: To deal with financial concerns, businesses may employ green marketing strategies. Getting rid of hazardous byproducts like oil polluted with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) is becoming an increasingly expensive ordeal. So, the firms that can reduce the harmful wastes may have significant cost savings as well as improve environment at their level.

Google Trends reports that, on a relative basis, more searches on "green marketing" originated from India from any other country on the map which shows that Indians are becoming more concerned about environmental issues

Table1

Rank	Countries
1	India
2	United Kingdom
3	United States of America
4	Thailand
5	Australia
6	Canada
7	China

There are many companies which are adopting this concept of green marketing in order to address environmental issues and also to exploit this opportunity to capture market share. Examples of such companies are given below

1. WiproandInfosys
2. Tata Metaliks Limited:
3. Maruti Udyog Ltd
4. LG:
5. HCL
6. Samsung
7. MRF Tyres
8. Indus Ind Bank
9. TataConsultancyServices

New Delhi, the capital of India, was rapidly becoming polluted until the Supreme Court of India mandated the use of alternative fuels, leading to the introduction of compressed natural gas (CNG) throughout the city. In an effort to reduce pollution, a directive was made in 2002 to use only compressed natural gas (CNG) in all public transportation systems. In recent times, electricity has emerged as a preferred alternative for powering automobiles. The promotion of battery-operated automobiles is an effort to reduce pollution, as indicated earlier.

Some Ideas

Much more research is needed to fully understand the potential of green marketing, which is still in its early stages. If a company wants to overcome obstacles and make the most of green marketing, it should follow these suggestions. To name a few: The advantages of eco-friendly products and services should be better communicated to consumers. For the majority of buyers, it is still an innovative idea. It is important to raise consumer awareness of environmental issues and educate them. The customer has to know and care about the problems your solution aims to solve.

To handle. Educating the public through green marketing ads and campaigns is another positive step. People need to be incentivized to switch brands or pay a premium for environmentally friendly products. In order to keep green products legitimate and trustworthy, further measures should be implemented to restrict marketers' misleading promises and claims. More focus from the government on this idea, together with more precise and strict legislation and efficient implementation, is required. Only through collaboration between businesses, customers, and the government can these kinds of environmental problems be addressed. All of us must unite behind this social cause if we care about the earth and the generations to come. Therefore, popular brands should pay attention to customer feedback and work to develop eco-friendly items that are affordable. Businesses have a fantastic chance to cash in on the growing demand for environmentally friendly products by meeting the growing number of environmentally conscious consumers with affordable options.

In Summary

To ensure that our planet remains habitable for years to come, "Green marketing" is the way to go right now. Sustainable advertising is still in its infancy. Although green marketing's effects might take time to become apparent, they will undoubtedly bear fruit in due course. Companies have a lot of room to grow as this idea is novel to consumers. If we want to keep ourselves and our world alive, green marketing is a must. Worldwide support for this eco-friendly idea is essential for addressing climate change, global warming, and the greenhouse effect. There needs to be a major systematization and globalization of safe and environmentally friendly recycling of paper, metals, plastics, etc. More energy-efficient light bulbs and other electrical products have become popular.

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