

PRESENT SCENARIO OF GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

In today's era of globalization, the biggest challenge is to preserve our natural environment. Because of the increasing awareness on various environmental issues, consumers are changing their attitudes and lifestyle in order to keep the environment safe and healthy. Businesses and organizations are also trying to keep up with this change in the consumer attitudes by engaging in the business activities that are environment friendly to remain ahead of their competitors and gain competitive advantage. Therefore, green marketing has come up as an important concept in India and in different parts of the world as well. Green marketing is comparatively a new branch in the marketing thought, but it is emerging as one of the fastest growing areas in Marketing Principle. This paper emphasizes the importance of green marketing, its future in the times to come and the way companies can gain an advantage by incorporating the green marketing practices.

KEYWORDS: Globalization, Marketing Principle & Green Marketing

INTRODUCTION

Today, the harmful effect on the environment caused by various human activities is a matter of concern all over the world. The need of green marketing has become imperative throughout the globe. Consumers are becoming more and more aware about the negative impact of the products that are harmful for the environment; therefore corporate firms have started to incorporate those products and practices which do not deteriorate the environment as well as the health of the consumers. According to the American Marketing Association, "Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe". Now, governments all across the globe have also become concerned about the various environment issues and they have passed many rules and regulations that prohibit environmental degradation.

GREEN MARKETING - TODAY'S NEED

The definitions of green marketing may sound somewhat confusing because green marketing practices can imply anything from creating a product from the raw material to developing the product and to finally advertising the product. Terms such as sustainable marketing, eco marketing, green advertising, organic marketing, etc. all refer to similar concepts. Order to be more precise, green marketing is essentially marketing that incorporates various activities combined to capture more and more market and provide services that are safe for the environment. Production of goods and services result in many environmental problems, therefore an organization has to find the various ways in which it can market its eco- friendly offerings. Green marketing can address a wide range of issues by providing goods and services which can save water, reduce green house gases, minimize air pollution and recycle products in a better way. Because consumers are more concerned about the environment nowadays, therefore green marketing as a field of study is immensely important.

GREEN MARKETING- 4P'S

Green Product

The products that are made by using green technology in the manufacturing process and are environmentally friendly after being used or consumed are named as green products. Some important features of green products are:

- Products which use eco-friendly raw material.
- Products which are less toxic.
- Products which can be reused are biodegradable and recyclable.
- Products that use approved chemicals.
- Products not tested on animals.
- Products that are packed in eco-friendly materials, i.e. reusable, refillable containers etc.
- Products that conserve the environment.

Price

The major characteristic of the green marketing mix is price. Consumers would only be willing to pay more for the green product only if they understand the entire product value. Product value means the overall improvement of the product, such as color, taste, quality and function etc. Before charging a premium price, green marketing firms should take all these aspects into consideration.

Place

The environment where the sale of green products takes place can have a significant impact on the outcome. Not many customers are willing to go beyond the common norms to buy green products. Green place is about handling the logistics for reducing the transportation emissions, thereby aiming at minimizing carbon footprint. If an effort is made to make the environment more eco-friendly and natural, then, likelihood of eco sale will increase.

Promotion

Green promotion involves configuring different elements of promotion such as, marketing materials, advertising, white papers, web sites, videos etc. by taking into account, people, planet and profit. In other words, the communication with the market should lay stress on the environmental aspects. Consumer awareness can be created by informing them about the plus points of eco-friendly products. The expenditure that an organization spends on preserving the environment should also be publicized.

Reasons to go Green

As the resources of the world are limited and the human wants are unlimited, it is essential for the marketers to manage resources efficiently as well as meet the organization's objectives. Therefore, green marketing becomes inevitable. Consumers are becoming more and more concerned about environmental and are showing a change in buying behavior. As a result, green marketing is gaining much importance and the market is becoming receptive for sustainable and socially responsible products and services. Green marketing is about those products that protect natural resources. It comprises of various activities including product modification, changes in the production process, changing in packaging and modifications in advertising. The main benefits for the companies by using green marketing are:

- **Providing customer Value**
 - As marketers, we should make green marketing strategies such that the customers get the best in terms of products as well as services. We should pay attention to the health of the consumer as well as provide such packaging that does not harm the surrounding environment.
- **Gaining Competitive Advantage**
 - Green marketing allows companies to be different from its competitors in terms of product performance and value. Companies that incorporate green marketing enjoy attention from the consumers for the products and services provided by them.
- **Developing Feeling of Pride and Responsibility among Employees**
 - Green marketing is the manifestation of the brand that not only pursues advantage of the brand but also involves manifestation of the brand involving good for the natural surroundings as well. This approach creates a sense of pride and makes them more responsible and keen to maintain the quality of the product.
- **Opening the Opportunity for Customer Participation**
 - There are few customers who are aware of the importance of protecting the environment. These customers can be encouraged by providing them a platform where they can directly participate in promoting green marketing e.g. social media can be used as it is a very effective medium compared to other medium.
- **Creating an Impact**
 - Green marketing enables us to create an influence because new ideas can be generated that influence customers to realize how important is environmental health and sustainability.

GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA

Green Marketing is a global topic of interest. According to Google Trends report, on a relative basis, Green Marketing got most hits from India as compared to other countries.

Table 1: Countries Ranked According to their Response Level on Green Marketing

Rank	Countries
1	India
2	UK
3	US
4	Thailand
5	Australia
6	Canada
7	China

Considerable steps are being taken in India for incorporating green marketing. Organizations have started to recognize Environmental Marketing as a breakthrough to gain competitive advantage as well as achieve the firm's objectives. Organizations have recognized that consumers have a preference for products that conserve natural environment and preserve health of the people as well. Organizations have started to accept and adopt that being socially responsible as a moral obligation.

GREEN INITIATIVES TAKEN IN INDIA

WIPRO Green Machines

Wipro Infotech was the first and foremost organization of India to introduce computer peripherals that do not harm the environment. Wipro has started a new series of laptops and desktops called Wipro Greenware. These products are termed as ROHS, (Restricted of Hazardous Substances) thereby minimizing e-waste in the environment.

Free No Polythene Carry Bags

Forest and environment ministry of India had ordered big retail outlets like Big Bazaar, D-Mart etc. to offer paper and cloth carry bags to the customers subject to the condition, only if the customers are willing to pay for it.

IndusInd Green ATM

IndusInd Bank is the first bank of India having installed the first ATM powered by solar energy, thereby bringing about pro-environmental modification in the banking sector around India.

Starting CNG Vehicles in Delhi

Delhi is a very severely polluted city of India and in order to check the pollution levels to some extent, directives were issued by the government to switch to CNG based public transport completely.

Nerolac's Lead Free Paints

Nerolac is a paint manufacturing organization that has been working on to free their paints of the harmful heavy metals. Dangerous heavy metals like lead, chromium and mercury can affect humans adversely. They can lead to kidney, nervous system and reproductive system damage. Lead poisoning can also cause children to have low levels of intelligence and even cause memory loss.

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)

ONGC is India's largest oil producer, and it has started eco-friendly and energy efficient crematoriums that are likely to replace the traditional wood pyre all over India. ONGC's "Mokshada Green Cremation" initiative will save up to 60–70 percent of the wood used for cremations and also save fourth of burning time for every cremation.

Suzlon Energy

Suzlon Energy is the manufacturer and marketer of wind turbines. It is the world's fourth biggest wind turbine maker which provides alternative energy considering its source as the wind energy. This green step started by the company is a major step in decreasing the carbon footprint.

FUTURE OF GREEN MARKETING

Even though one is well versed with the principles and practices of green marketing, one can easily fall into green marketing myopia. In order to get the best of green marketing, green marketing requires applying good marketing principles, so that consumers perceive green products as most desirable for them. According to a recently conducted Study, it has been revealed that green products can effectively avoid marketing myopia, if these three principles are followed:

- **Consumer Value Positioning**
 - It involves designing green products that perform better or at least are at par with the alternatives.
 - Promoting and delivering the desired value of green products to the consumer and targeting appropriate consumer segments.
 - Associating consumer desired value into the green products for enhancing mainstream appeal.
- **Calibrating Consumer Knowledge**
 - Educating consumers by spreading marketing messages that create a link between desired consumer value and green attributes of the products.
 - Framing green attributes of the products as “solutions” for consumer’s needs.
 - Creating educational and interactive websites featuring green products and their desired customer value.
- **Credibility of Product Claim**
 - Using claims about green product and consumer value that are meaningful and specific.
 - Acquiring product endorsements and green certificates for the products from authentic third parties.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

To sum it all up, we can say that even though India has made many efforts with respect to green marketing, but it is still at beginning stage and considerable research still needs to be done to explore its potential to the fullest. In order to make green marketing successful, it’s imperative to educate consumers about the concerns affecting our environment and the merits of green products. This can be accomplished by green marketing drive and green advertising. Consumers should feel the need for switching over to eco-friendly products and should be willing to pay a premium price.

It’s important to make the consumers feel that they have the potential to create a positive impact. This empowerment will act as the main reason due to which they will buy green products. Another important aspect of the successful implementation of green marketing is the government regulations. The organization, consumer and government need to work together to ensure that the world becomes a better place to live in.

Green marketing is a mean for conserving the environment for future generations, but its implementations is not as easy as it seems. Firms need to carry out proper planning and research to assess its feasibility in the market. Adopting green marketing might be difficult initially but its long term effect would surely have a positive impact on the firm. We should not consider green marketing as yet another approach to marketing but its implementation should be much more vigor as it involves the environmental and social aspect also. Because the danger of global warming is getting worse day by day, it is imperative instead of becoming an exception; green marketing should become a norm.

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