



GREEN MARKETING: THE EMERGING TREND IN INDIA

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Abstract

Green marketing is a phenomenon which has been developing in the modern Indian market. Urban consumers are more aware about the green products but still it is a new concept for the masses. Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally preferable to others. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, sustainable packaging, as well as modifying advertising. This article presents the present trend of green marketing in India.

Key Words: Green Marketing, Environment, Products.

Introduction

In the modern era of globalization, it has become a challenge to keep the customers as well as consumers in fold and even keep our natural environment safe and that is the biggest need of the time. Environmental pollution is a buzz word in today's business environment. Consumers are also aware of the environmental issues like; global warming and the impact of environmental pollution. Green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed particular important in the modern market and has emerged as an important concept in India as in other parts of the developing and developed world, and is seen as an important strategy of facilitating sustainable development. In this research paper, main emphasis has been made of concept, Golden rules, Opportunities, Challenges and Benefits of green marketing.

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 attempts 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.

Green Marketing- Challenges

Although a large number of firms are practicing green marketing, it is not an easy job as there are a number of problems which need to be addressed while Implementing Green marketing. The major challenges to Green marketing which have to be faced are:

- **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 .
- **Cost Factor-** Green marketing involves marketing of green products/services, green technology, green power/energy for which a lot of money has to be spent on R&D programmes for their development and subsequent promotional programs which ultimately may lead to increased costs.
- **Convincing customers-**The customers may not believe in the firm's strategy of Green marketing, the firm therefore should ensure that they undertake all possible measures to convince the customer about their green product, the best possible option is by implementing Eco-labeling schemes. Eco-labeling schemes offer its approval to environmentally less harmless products. In fact the first eco-label program was initiated by Germany in 1978. Sometimes the customers may also not be willing to pay the extra price for the products.
- **Sustainability-** Initially the profits are very low since renewable and recyclable products and green technologies are more expensive. Green marketing will be successful only in long run. Hence the business needs to plan for long term



rather than short term strategy and prepare for the same, at the same time it should avoid falling into lure of unethical practices to make profits in short term.

- **Non Cooperation-** The firms practicing Green marketing have to strive hard in convincing the stakeholders and many a times it may fail to convince them about the long term benefits of Green marketing as compared to short term expenses.
- **Avoiding Green Myopia-** Green marketing must satisfy two objectives: improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. Misjudging either or overemphasizing the former at the expense of the latter can be termed green marketing myopia.

Opportunities

In India, around 25% of the consumers prefer environmental-friendly products, and around 28% may be considered healthy conscious. Therefore, green marketers have diverse and fairly sizeable segments to cater to. In India, the green building movement, spearheaded by the Confederation of Indian industry (CII) - Godrej Green business Center, has gained tremendous impetus over the last few years. From 20,000 sq ft in 2003, India's green building footprint is now over 25 million sq ft.

- **Social-Responsibility:** Many companies have started realizing that they must behave in an environment-friendly fashion. They believe both in achieving environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. The HSBC became the world's first bank to go carbon-neutral last year. Other examples include Coca-Cola, which has invested in various recycling activities. Walt Disney World in Florida, US, has an extensive waste management program and infrastructure in place.
- **Governmental-Pressure:** Various regulations are framed by the government to protect consumers and the society at large. The Indian government too has developed a framework of legislations to reduce the production of harmful goods and by products. These reduce the industry's production and consumers' consumption of harmful goods, including those detrimental to the environment; for example, the ban of plastic bags in Mumbai, prohibition of smoking in public areas, etc.
- **Competitive-Pressure:** Many companies take up green marketing to maintain their competitive edge. The green marketing initiatives by niche companies such as Body Shop and Green & Black have prompted many mainline competitors to follow suit.
- **Cost-Reduction :** Reduction of harmful waste may lead to substantial cost savings. Sometimes, many firms develop symbiotic relationship whereby the waste generated by one company is used by another as a cost-effective raw material. For example, the fly ash generated by thermal power plants, which would otherwise contribute to a gigantic quantum of solid waste, is used to manufacture fly ash bricks for construction purposes.

Benefits of Green Marketing

Today's consumers are becoming more and more conscious about the environment and are also becoming socially responsible. Therefore, more companies are responsible to consumers' aspirations for environmentally less damaging or neutral products. Some of the advantages of green marketing are,

- It ensures sustained long-term growth along with profitability.
- It saves money in the long run, though initially the cost is more.
- It helps companies market their products and services keeping the environment aspects in mind. It helps in accessing the new markets and enjoying competitive advantage.
- Most of the employees also feel proud and responsible to be working for an environmentally responsible company.

Conclusion

Green marketing involves focusing on promoting the consumption of green products. Therefore, it becomes the responsibility of the companies to adopt creativity and insight, and be committed to the development of environment-friendly products. This will help the society in the long run. Companies which embark on green marketing should adopt the principles in their path towards greenness.

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