

# GREEN MARKETING: CHANGE LEADING TO SUSTAINABILITY

Miss. Anjali Chandak

Assistant Professor

J D College of Engineering and Management

## Abstract

The present era of industrialization and globalization has added a lot of comfort and luxury to human life but has also lead to an alarming situation of huge environmental degradation incorporated with all the involved activities. Today, the entire sector in the world economy is facing huge challenge to deal with the environmental problems and their related impacts in their day to day businesses.

Sustainability is one of the most important factors driving the strategy making process of the business fraternity. In this regard, this concern for environmental sustainability by the banks has given rise to concept of Green Marketing. In an emerging economy like India, environmental management needs to be the key focus area of the business fraternity. This would help the firms in the emerging economies utilize their limited resources in an optimum way without harming the natural environment and face the global challenge of sustainability in successful manner.

This paper tries to find out the ways to Go Green through 'Green Marketing. The three R's of environment viz. Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle which are important to supports green marketing. Green marketing is used for environment friendly products that are considered to be green like low power consuming electrical appliances, organic foods, lead free paints, recyclable paper, and phosphate free detergents. Companies are finding that consumers are willing to pay more for a green product. Green marketing in a broader sense is corporate social responsibility because it helps business to become a socially responsible as well. In different research conducted in India High level of awareness about green marketing practices was found among the Indian consumers. However, this is not widespread and is still evolving. In this review based paper, main emphasis has been made of concept, need and importance of green marketing. Data has collected from secondary sources. It considers the main issues in adoption of green marketing practices. The paper explains the context of Indian market and explores the challenges with green marketing

**Keywords-** Green Marketing, Sustainable Development, Environment.

## I] Introduction

The green movement has been expanding rapidly in the world. With regards to this consumers are taking responsibility and doing the right things. Consumer awareness and motivation continue to drive change in the marketplace, notably through the introduction of more ecofriendly products. Compared to consumers in the developed countries, the Indian consumer has much less awareness of global warming issues. Successful marketing has always been about recognising trends and positioning products, services and brand in a manner that supports buyer intentions. Today, "Green" marketing has moved from a trend to a way of doing business and businesses that sell should recognise (a) the value of going green and (b) incorporating this message into their marketing program and communicating the green concept to their consumers. Green is slowly and steadily becoming the symbolic colour of eco-consciousness in India. The growing consumer awareness about the origin of products and the concern over impending global environmental crisis there are increasing the opportunities to marketers to convince consumers. Firms have increasingly introduced GPIs (Green Product Innovations) into their product developments over recent decades. Studies on the consumption of environmentally sustainable products have demonstrated that perceived product performance is a significant barrier to their selection. For example, Ottman (1998) shows that some consumers do not buy "green" products because of their perceived inferiority, citing a study of observable and product specific information (e.g. use of biodegradable and recycling behaviour) by Roper Starch

Worldwide (RSW). Alston and Prince Roberts (1999) found, in their research on environmental strategy and new product development, that there was a willingness to pay slightly more for environmental improvement. However, in his research on green product innovation strategy, Driessen (2005) finds that in order to maintain a competitive advantage, an optimum level of greenness needs to be identified between innovation performance and greenness, thus avoiding merely capturing the niche green market. So, if the market for environmentally sustainable products is to become main stream, it is important to look at what factors influence the consumer's selection process.

## II] 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 they live, People do want to bequeath a clean earth to their offspring. Various studies by environmentalists indicate that people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior pattern so as to be less hostile towards it. Now we see that most of the consumers, both individual and industrial, are becoming more concerned about environment friendly products.

According to Peattie (2001), the evolution of green marketing has three phases. First phase was termed as "Ecological" green marketing, and during this period all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems. Second phase was "Environmental" green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, which take care of pollution and waste issues. Third phase was "Sustainable" green marketing. It came into prominence in the late 1990s and early 2000.

## III] Green Products And Its Characteristics

The products those are manufactured through green technology and that caused no environmental vandalism are called green/eco friendly 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:

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

## IV] Objectives Of The Study

To study literature review and understand the concept of green marketing along with characteristics of eco friendly products. This review based paper also stress upon importance and challenges in green marketing.

## V] Research Methodology

The research is exploratory in nature; it focuses on Literature review, News Papers, Journals, websites and the other reliable sources.

## VI] Literature Review Green Marketing

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 (Hart, 1997, p. 67). Green marketing is a creative opportunity to innovate in ways that make a difference and at the same time achieve business success (Grant, 2007, p. 10). As business activities caused many of the environmental problems in the past and still do, there is increasing recognition that business is vital in the process of a more ecological sustainable society. Companies, especially multinationals, play an essential role in the world economy, and they have also the resources and capacity to put ecological solutions into practice (Tjärnemo, 2001, p. 29). Companies have a responsibility to drive the development towards greater sustainability and becoming greener, so that a company's aim is to create markets for more environmentally friendly products and services and educate and influence customers to change (Hart, 1997, p. 67). At least two motives for companies to change to more environmentally appropriate strategies and practices are cost saving and the market opportunity potential. Companies can save money by reducing the amount of raw material and energy used in production. Becoming more eco-oriented and offering environmentally friendlier products might result in increased market shares as well as an improved company image and thus, companies gaining first-mover advantages in greening should become more competitive (Tjärnemo, 2001, pp. 29-30). This first-mover advantage however is not sufficient anymore as more companies orient themselves ecological and customers can choose from a variety of eco-labeled products.

The role of marketing has become a matter of discussion as lifestyles and consumption patterns in the industrialized world are a major originator of environmental damage. On the one hand, marketing has been criticized for contributing to the environmental degradation by emphasizing on consumption, consequently contributing to a throwaway society and emphasizing on satisfying short-term consumer or customer wants. On the other hand, marketing can be seen as a significant instrument in order to sell new lifestyles and change overall consumption habits, not only to ecologically concerned consumers. Thus, marketing should contribute to more sustainable forms of society. Marketing has developed and widened its scope towards ecological issues from focusing on the production process, transaction and exchange. There is more than one definition of green marketing (Tjärnemo, 2001, p. 34-36). For example, Peattie (1995, p. 28) defines green marketing management as “the holistic management process responsible for identifying, anticipating and satisfying the requirements of customers and society, in a profitable and sustainable way” while Coddington (1993, p. 1) defines it as “marketing activities that recognize environmental stewardship as a business development responsibility and business growth opportunity [...]”. However, both definitions entail an overall eco-orientation further than the marketing section, the universal strategy or philosophy.

Environmental sustainability is defined as a management approach that involves developing strategies that sustain the environment and produce profits for the company. It is a crucial but difficult social target and many companies are taking at least some actions to protect and preserve the environment (Armstrong and Kotler, 2007, pp. 509-510). It is also the idea that environmental objectives are not incompatible with ongoing economic success as it is a step nearer to marketing (Grant, 2007, p. 2).

A green consumer is defined by Peattie (2001, p. 187-191) as someone who voluntarily engages in consumer practices that are regarded as environmentally friendly by marketing academics and practitioners. Thus, green or environmentally friendly activities deal, for instance, with energy efficient operations, better pollution controls and recycled materials (Armstrong and Kotler, 2007, p. 509). Eco labels are a main tool used in green marketing. Eco labels are defined as labels which identify overall environmental preference of a product or service within a specific product or service range. So, an eco-labeled product is entitled to carry

a logo that comes with a claim that the product has been produced in accordance with certain environmental standards. An eco label, in contrast to green symbols or statements, has to consist of three components, namely, the certification standard, an independent accreditation body and independent certification bodies. Eco-labeling schemes demand independent third-party certifications that the product concerned meets the predefined standards, ensuring strict and continuous compliance with the standard by producers. Consequently, the managing label guarantees the correctness of the claim of the eco label (European Commission Homepage).

However, notwithstanding reports that environmental problems constituted one of the uppermost public concerns, market growth for green products disappointingly fell short of marketers' expectations (Wong et al., 1996). The dramatic growth in green marketing excitements at the beginning of the 1990s has gradually subsided (Peattie and Crane, 2005). Green marketing entered its second stage in the 1990s, when marketers started to experience a backlash (Wong et al., 1996). Gradually, marketers realised that consumer concern for the environment and a related desire for green products did not translate into purchasing behaviour (Schrum et al., 1995). Among all the major hindrances, the main aspect contributing to the backlash against green marketing was consumer cynicism about green products, green claims and the companies' intention as well as practices (Mendleson and Polonsky, 1995; Peattie and Crane, 2005; Wong et al., 1996). From the mid-1990s, consumers started to become more and more environmentally and socially aware (Strong, 1996). Critical consumers began to emerge as a new force of green consumerism during that period whereby they require social responsibility from corporations (Gurařu and Ranchhod, 2005).

Gradually, the rise of green consumerism has led to an even broadened consumption concept called ethical consumerism (Uusitalo and Oksanen, 2004). According to Uusitalo and Oksanen (2004), ethical consumerism refers to buyer behaviour that reflects a concern with the problems that arise from unethical and unjust global trades, such as child and low-paid labour, infringement of human rights, animal testing, labour union suppressions, inequalities in trading relations with the Third World and pollution of the environment (Strong, 1996). Both green consumerism and its subsequent ethical consumerism are forms of symbolic consumption because consumers consider not only individual but also social values, ideals and ideologies (Uusitalo and Oksanen, 2004). Since, the emergence of the green consumerism and ethical consumerism which arose in the mid-1990s, consumers have started to demand a say in the production, processing and resourcing of the products.

Anticipating the continuous uprising forces of consumerism, scholars started to call for "sustainability marketing" in the late-1990s (Charter and Polonsky, 1999). Sustainability marketing refers to the building and maintaining of sustainable relationships with customers, social environment and the natural environment (Charter and Polonsky, 1999). In the face of the challenges, green marketing entered a "self-adjusting" mode, whereby only corporations with a true intention for long-term sustainable business development continued to stay and improve on their products. Since 2000, green marketing has evolved into a third stage.

With the implementation of more advanced technology, stricter state enforcement on deceptive claims, government regulations and incentives as well as closer scrutiny from various environmental organisations and the media, many green products have greatly improved and regained consumer confidence in the 2000s (Gurařu and Ranchhod, 2005; Ottman, 2007). Together, with the continuous rise of growing global concern about the environmental quality, green marketing has gradually picked up momentum again. Some researchers postulate (Stafford, 2003) that green marketing is now "making a comeback" (Ottman et al., 2006, p. 26).

## Consumer Beliefs and Behaviours -

Hoyer and MacInnis (2004) state that consumers' values and beliefs need to be considered when examining the influences that affect purchasing decisions. Values are enduring beliefs that a given behaviour is desirable or good and include valuing the environment. Environmental values play a primary role in pro environmental behaviour: values affect people's beliefs, which then have influences on personal norms that lead to consumers' pro-environmental behaviours (Reser and Bentrupperbaumer, 2005; Stern, 2000). Similarly, Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior shows that (environmental) beliefs form attitudes towards behaviour, which is then translated into intention of behaviour. The Global Environmental Survey (GOES) finds a gradual intergenerational value shift in the post-war generation towards post-materialist priorities, likely to result in more pro-environmental behaviour (Bennulf and Holmberg, 1990; Betz, 1990; Hoffmann-Martino, 1991; Inglehart, 1990). So, although pro-environmental values do not guarantee pro environmental behaviour, it is likely that pro-environmental values lead to pro environmental behaviour. However, an individual concerned about the environment does not necessarily behave in a green way in general, or in their purchasing. This is known as the value action gap. Kollmuss and Agyeman (2002) explored a range of analytical frameworks and external and internal factors that promote pro-environmental behaviour and found conflicting and competing factors related to consumers' daily decisions. They concluded that no single definitive model adequately explains the gap between environmental knowledge and pro environmental behaviour. A recent study finds that people who are environmentally conscious do not necessarily behave pro-environmentally: for example, people might throw rubbish away when most people around them do so (reactive process, as opposed to intentional decision making; Ohtomo and Hirose, 2007).

#### **Consumer Exposure to Product Marketing Communication: -**

The average consumer has less opportunity to form an attitude about a green product than about a main stream product, unless they have made a special effort to get to know the green product, as manufacturers of environmentally improved products often make little or no green claims in their advertising (Rand Corporation, 2004). Aspirational and associative reference groups have a strong influence on general consumption (Dittmar, 1992; Hoyer and MacInnis, 2004).

Pooley and O'Connor (2000) argue that providing information on environmental issues does not necessarily foster pro-environmental attitudes. Their research suggests that the key to environmental education is the affective domain. It is reasonable to assume that advertising green products using emotional content would be more successful. Advertising works well when it tries to appeal to those values that drive consumer decision processes (WFA et al., 2002). As consumers often start from a low information base on sustainable consumption, their internal search may fail to supply the information necessary for decision making. If an external search is necessary, this involves high effort (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2004).

Dileep Kumar (2010) analysed that how far the hotel business organizations in the tourism sector meet the customer's needs through green marketing effort and how they influence the consumer behaviour and their satisfaction by inducing environmentally responsible behaviour.

Vijay Jain et al (2010) summarized the three C's process for green marketing implementation as Consumer Value Positioning, Calibration of Consumer Knowledge and Credibility of product.

Artee Aggrawal et al (2010) outlined that Eco-responsible (Green) organizations have a tough task to optimise their product offering mix in such a way so that they can not only attract customer towards them but also can have their products price competitive.

Ramakishen et al (2010) understood that the factors for going green as Goodwill, Differentiation, Competition, Pressure Groups, Government Pressure, Customer Demand, New Market Entry.

The study conducted by Sourabh Bhattacharya (2011) states that the green marketers in India should carry out heavy promotional campaigns, because majority of the Indian consumers are price-sensitive and are not sure about the quality of green products.

The study by Saloni Pawan Diwan & B. S. Bodla (2011) observed that it is not a smooth sailing of the ship carrying green products and services in the sea of intense competition. The boat can encounter an iceberg of increased cost and prices and inflated claims of —greenness.

According to Joseph & Rupali korlekar(2012), there is a scope for in-depth studies on green marketing to be conducted in developing countries like India, not only on understanding consumers' perception but to study the detailed profile of such consumers who have a more positive attitude towards green marketing and green products.

Selvakumar & Ramesh Pandi (2011) indicated that Green Marketing is not all about manufacturing green products and services but encompassing all those marketing activities that are needed to develop and sustain consumers' eco-friendly attitudes and behaviours in a way that helps in creating minimal detrimental impact on the environment.

The study by Moloy Ghoshal (2011) examined that green marketing was still in infancy. In the perception of marketing scholars, green marketing refers to eco-level and market segmentation and the role of structural factors and economic incentives in influencing consumer behavior. The green marketers must understand to satisfy two objectives: improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction.

The research by Anup Sinha & Jamie Gilpin (2009) primarily focused on finding inefficiencies in the carbon value chain of energy production using renewable methods. By utilizing anaerobic digestion and gasification technology Aura could produce biogas from cattle, swine, and other farm animals.

The study by Ann Kronrod et al (2012) highlighted and explained the surprising prevalence of assertive environmental messages in the media. Environmental agencies, which are populated with people who perceive protecting the environment as a highly important issue, should understand that not all consumers are as informed and concerned about the environment.

The study by Murugesan (2008) underlined that firms may use green marketing as an attempt to address cost or profit related issues. Disposing of environmentally harmful by products, such as polychlorinated biphenyl contaminated oil are becoming increasingly costly and the firms that can reduce harmful wastes may incur substantial cost savings.

Charles W Lamb et al (2004) explained that —Green Marketing|| has also become an important way for companies to build awareness and loyalty by promoting a popular issue. By positioning their brands as ecologically sound, marketers can convey concern for the environment and society as a whole.

Robert Dahlstrom (2011) examined that Green Marketing has positive influences on multiple participants in the economy. The environment, developing economies, consumers, corporate strategy, the product, production processes, and supply chain benefit from green marketing. Green marketing firms establish strategic alliances with government, local communities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), industry experts, and competitors.

According to Roger A Kerin et al (2007), Green Marketing takes many forms. It comes from product development opportunities that emanate both from consumer research and its —Pollution Prevention Pays|| program. This program solicits employee suggestions on how to reduce pollution and recycle materials.

Biji P Thomas & H Nanje Gowda (2010) highlighted that environmentally friendly buildings are also known as Green Buildings. Some of the visible —green|| features, such as exterior window shading, good

day lighting, green (landscaped) roofs, and natural ventilation chimneys are often considered as the signals of being green.

Philip Kotler & Kevin Lane Keller (2011): Companies that mount —green programs— can face two main problems: consumers may believe that product is of inferior quality of being green and consumers feel the product is not really that green to begin with.

Arun Kumar & N. Meenakshi(2009) : Consumers have to play an important role if companies have to be made responsible for preservation of the environment. They should stop buying products of companies which are polluting the environment. Apart from companies, NGOs also have very important roles to play. NGOs should carry out research and tell the companies how they can make their process more environment-friendly.

Rajan Saxena(2010) maintained that Green products and services are today increasingly being accepted by both the companies and customers. Following are some of the arguments in favour of green marketing which makes it profitable for the firm/organisation.

- An aware customer now insists on a 'green' product and packaging material.
- Aware customers are joining together to form interest groups which lobby for ecofriendly products and legislation to protect their environment.
- Given the choice, customers tend to buy eco-friendly products.

Arun Kumar and N. Meenakshi(2011) believed that Sustainable innovation and marketing is the key to future profitability and companies need to adopt the following practices :

- Companies that comply with the most stringent standards do not have to manage separate processes for different markets. norms of each country in which its manufacturing facilities are located.
- Smart companies reduce the consumption of non renewable resources such as coal, petroleum and natural gas as well as renewable resources such as water and wood.
- To design eco-friendly products, companies examine product life cycles and understand consumer concerns. Preserving the environment is vital through the eco friendly products and which is vital for our own preservation.

## VII] Challenges In 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 labeling 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.

### VIII] 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 philosophy 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 o 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.
    - ✓ A waste recycling or removal industry develops.

### IX] Conclusion:

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 greener 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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