

Integrative Perspective of Green Marketing in Modern Business Setup

Dr.K.Gunasundari,

Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences,
PSG College of Arts and Science, Coimbatore.

Introduction

Development and conservation professionals are increasingly incorporating conservation products into their portfolio of activities to contribute to biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation for the communities that live in high biodiversity areas. Tremendous progress has been made in involving communities in good conservation practices, developing enterprises that are sustainable and generating income that also promotes biodiversity conservation. Yet, these groundbreaking enterprises and products still struggle to understand the markets for their products and how to access these markets. Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Green marketing is a holistic marketing concept wherein the product, marketing consumption on disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch into green products and services. "Those human activities directed at satisfying needs and wants through voluntary exchange processes, with full consideration of the social, ecological, and economic impacts of those transactions.

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.

Green Marketing Mix

- **Product:** A producer should offer ecological products which not only must not contaminate the environment but should protect it and even liquidate existing environmental damages.
- **Price:** Prices for such products may be a little higher than conventional alternatives. But target groups like for example LOHAS are willing to pay extra for green products.
- **Place:** A distribution logistics is of crucial importance; main focus is on ecological packaging. Marketing local and seasonal products e.g. vegetables from regional farms is more easy to be marketed "green" than products imported.
- **Promotion:** A communication with the market should put stress on environmental aspects, for example that the company possesses a CP certificate or is ISO 14000 certified. This may be publicized to improve a firm's image. Furthermore, the fact that a company spends expenditures on environmental protection should be advertised. Third, sponsoring the natural environment is also very important. And last but not least, ecological products will probably require special sales promotions.

Additional social marketing "P's" that are used in this process are:

Publics: Effective Social Marketing knows its audience, and can appeal to multiple groups of people. "Public" is the external and internal groups involved in the program. External publics include the target audience, secondary audiences, policymakers, and gatekeepers, while the internal publics are those who are involved in some way with either approval or implementation of the program.

Partnership: Most social change issues, including "green" initiatives, are too complex for one person or group to handle. Associating with other groups and initiatives to team up strengthens the chance of efficacy.

Policy: Social marketing programs can do well in motivating individual behavior change, but that is difficult to sustain unless the environment they're in supports that change for the long run. Often, policy change is needed, and media advocacy programs can be an effective complement to a social marketing program.

Golden Rules Of Integrative Green Marketing

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Perspective For Effective Green Markets

Green marketing mirrors the goals of traditional marketing, which is to “facilitate exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants.” The point of difference is that green marketing seeks to accomplish that with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment. As companies face limited natural resources, they must also develop new or alternative ways of satisfying their customers’ needs. So green marketing is also a way of looking at how marketing activities can make the best use of these limited resources while meeting corporate objectives.

- Set the Right Green Objectives
- Demonstrate Social Responsibility
- Demonstrate Social Responsibility
- Respond to Competitive Initiatives
- Provide Accurate Environmental Information
- Identify Products with Green Characteristics
- Focus Product Development on Sustainability
- Set Realistic Prices
- Eliminate Unnecessary Packaging
- Practice Greener Distribution
- Promote Green Credentials Efficiently
- Make It Easy for Customers to Be Green

Keys To Successful Green Marketing

Show potential customers that you follow green business practices and you could reap more green on your bottom line. Green Marketing isn’t just a catchphrase; it’s a marketing strategy that can help you get more customers and make more money. But only if you do it right. For green marketing to be effective, you have to do three things; be genuine, educate your customers, and give them the opportunity to participate.

Being genuine means that (a) that you are actually doing what you claim to be doing in your green marketing campaign and (b) that the rest of your business policies are consistent with whatever you are doing that’s environmentally friendly. Both these conditions have to be met for your business to establish the kind of environmental credentials that will allow a green marketing campaign to succeed.

Educating your customers isn’t just a matter of letting people know whatever you’re doing to protect the environment ; but also a matter of letting them know why it matters. Otherwise, for a significant portion of your target market, it’s a case of “So what?” and your green marketing campaign goes nowhere.

Giving your customers an opportunity to participate means personalizing the benefits of your environmentally friendly actions, normally through letting the customer take part in positive environmental action.

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. (Whirlpool learned the hard way that consumers wouldn't pay a premium for a CFC-free refrigerator because consumers didn't know what CFCs were!).

Empower consumers : Make sure that consumers feel, by themselves or in concert 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.

Be transparent : Consumers must believe in the legitimacy of your product and the specific claims you are making. Caution: There's a lot of skepticism out there that is fueled by the raft of spurious claims made in the "go-go" era of green marketing that occurred during the late 80s to early 90s- one brand of household cleaner claimed to have been "environmentally friendly since 1884.

Reassure the buyer : Consumers need to believe that your product performs the job it's supposed to do — they won't forego product quality in the name of the environment. (Besides, products that don't work will likely wind up in the trash bin, and that's not very kind to the environment.)

Consider your pricing : If you're 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 consumers can afford the premium and feel it's worth it. Many consumers, of course, cannot 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.

Reason For Use Of Green Marketing In Modern Business Setup

Man has limited resources on the earth, with which she/he must attempt to provide for the worlds' unlimited wants. Hence there is "freedom of choice", that individuals and organizations have the right to attempt to have their wants satisfied. As firms face limited natural resources, they must develop new or alternative ways of satisfying these unlimited wants. When looking through the literature there are several suggested reasons for firms increased use of Green Marketing. Five possible reasons are as follows:

1. Organizations perceive environmental marketing to be an opportunity that can be used to achieve its objectives.
2. Organizations believe they have a moral obligation to be more socially responsible. Governmental bodies are forcing firms to become more responsible.
3. Competitors' environmental activities pressure firms to change their environmental marketing activities.
4. Governmental bodies are forcing firms to become more responsible.
5. Cost factors associated with waste disposal, or reductions in material usage forces firms to modify their behavior.

Challenges In Green Marketing

1.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.

2. 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.

3.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.

4.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.

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. With the threat of global warming looming large, it is extremely important that green marketing becomes the norm rather than an exception. 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. Green marketing assumes even more importance and relevance in developing countries.

