
To Analyse The Consumer Awareness With Respect To Practices Followed By Companies With Green Product

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Abstract: Green marketing is now becoming an important area of attention for both companies and society in general. It is similar to traditional marketing, the only difference is that it incorporates marketing activities that entail manufacturing, differentiating, pricing and promoting goods or services which are environmentally safe and are able to satisfy consumers' environmental needs. Green marketing is defined as a range of activities, which include alteration of the production process, adjustment of product lines and progression in packaging, as well as transforming advertising. The term "green marketing" is used interchangeably with "sustainable marketing", "ecological marketing" or "environmental marketing". The objective is, ultimately, to sell products that are harmless to the environment, whilst simultaneously actively encouraging consumers to support and protect the environment. People started to rethink their own behavior and started to ask for more environmentally safe products. In response to that, companies reformed their operations and strategies and a trend called sustainable development was born.

Keywords: environment, business, green marketing

1. Introduction

The trend of being green started few years back to pervade all over the world. This was a consequence of increased awareness among the people of the importance to protect the environment. After being spread over, consumer's increased interest towards the environmental friendly products forced firms to change their marketing strategies (Chen & Chang 2012, Kotler 2011). Concept of green marketing was created in 1990 at the Earth Day in the United States. After that, there was an explosion in the number of firms, which sought to utilize this consumers' increased sensitivity to environmental issues. (Kotler, 2011, 91)

Now-a-days companies around the world are turning their attention towards environmental sustainability. Being green is also seen as a way to differentiate from competitors and gain competitive advantage. Thus Green Marketing involves:

- Manufacturing and providing good quality products to the consumers which are not harmful to them and for the environment as well even in the long run.
- Use the resources for progress in such a manner that will enable the future generations to use the resources in order to meet their needs to achieve Sustainable Development.
- Developing and implementing such policies which will not have any negative effect on the environment i.e. at present as well in future.

Now-a-days people are highly concerned about the environment and changing their behaviour by demanding environment friendly products, which results in the growing market for sustainable products as well as services.

2. Green Marketing Concept

Peattie (2001) classified the evolution of green marketing concept in three stages.

- First stage was "Ecological" green marketing and during this period all marketing actions were concerned to investigate environment related problems and also provide remedies for those problems.
- "Environmental" green marketing was the second stage. During this stage the focus shifted on designing and introducing innovative new products which take care of waste and pollution issues.
- The third stage focused on achieving sustainable development by using the resources in such a way that will enable the future generations to avail the resources to meet their needs.

For understanding the green marketing philosophy, one must understand the green products and their characteristics and the difference between traditional and green marketing. The products that are produced through green technology and cause no environmental risks are called green products. In order to conserve the natural resources and sustainable development, the promotion of green technology and green products is essential.

3. Traditional vs Green Marketing

There are important differences in the concept of thinking between green as well as traditional marketing. However, similarly to what happens when implementation of a marketing philosophy, application of the philosophy behind green marketing cannot be attained only by setting up a department of marketing to implement green marketing techniques. Respect for the environmental needs to infuse all behaviour throughout the organisation, not only commercial aspects. Moreover, to get entire organization to be concerned about the ecological impact arising out of its activities, the environment should become one of the core values of the firm's organizational culture.

In spite of it's incredibly long run in the business, a fundamental issue exists in the traditional marketing is that at any cost, it achieves its goals and targets. Now, the question arises that what will Green marketing gain that traditional marketing won't? To answer this, let's have a look at from where traditional marketing starts? It starts from examining research data of consumers, viewing at the internal goals of the organization and finally making a sale of products. Now, Green Marketing will achieve all of that, but it will also look at the overall environmental cost as well as ecological burden that the entire marketing process entails. Traditional marketing has always externalized costs which have been moved somewhere in the supply chain or deferred to some future time through waste generation and emissions. Sustainable marketing includes all those costs and reaches an optimal solution without moving the costs somewhere in the supply chain. And due to this, true costs of goods will appear that have been made to appear very cheap traditionally. This is what Green Marketing can do and all this is enough to fulfill all encompassing goals of sustainability.

4. Consumer Awareness

Pressure from various shareholders, non-governmental organizations, government, environmentalists and consumers is placed on businesses which, in turn, put them under constant and relentless watch in their day-to-day functioning. Direct consequences can be seen in developed and less developed countries where government became very strict in implementing regulations for environmental protection; at the same time, the customers of these nations are being more outspoken regarding their needs for environmentally safe products, even though questions remain on their desire to pay a higher price for such goods.

So, in this era where customers determine the fortune of a company, green marketing helps the company to form a pro-active strategy in order to cater the market by transmitting environmentally safe products and services which will lower any harmful impact on the nature. With the increasing awareness among the consumers regarding protection of the environment, consumers are slowly moving towards environment friendly products. Consumer's attitudes with an ecological conscience should be a part of the marketing plan of the firms and communicated to the consumers in a genuine way. Green marketing activity is to be followed by the marketers and manufacturers as the green awareness of the consumer is increasing day by day.

5. Research Methodology

Under the study, the consumer awareness with respect to the practices followed by the company with green product was analysed by using the mean and standard deviation. The awareness level was measured as the awareness level in terms of green product strategies, green product pricing strategies, green product promotion strategies and lastly the awareness in terms of green product. The channel of distribution was analysed with the research questionnaire indicators asked from the respondents which was six hundred in numbers. (Refer the table 1 given below for the quantitative inferences about the mean and standard deviation on the observed variables).

There is the total number of 27 questions on awareness which were asked from the respondents. As given in the table 1, awareness 1 indicates the level of awareness of the respondents varies in the mean value and it is equal to 3.5800. It indicates that the consumers are having the general level of awareness and they are agreeing on the specific indicated that was asked to them. All the mean values indicate that, the consumer are having the general awareness in related terms not in absolute terms and also they are aware about the product, price, promotion, place strategies of the green product of the company. They are well aware about the benefits of the green product which the company is providing to the masses that is the target customers and the customer believes that the company appeals for the green product to the customers and they aware about this aspect of the company's practice.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
AWARE_1	600	1.00	5.00	3.5800	1.05773

AWARE_2	600	1.00	5.00	3.8200	.93580
AWARE_3	600	1.00	5.00	3.5500	1.00624
AWARE_4	600	1.00	5.00	3.7883	.92644
AWARE_5	600	1.00	5.00	3.7833	.86851
AWARE_6	600	2.00	5.00	3.9900	.85895
AWARE_7	600	2.00	5.00	4.0433	.93251
AWARE_8	600	2.00	5.00	4.2933	.72675
AWARE_9	600	2.00	5.00	3.9833	.74877
AWARE_10	600	1.00	5.00	3.9100	1.08499
AWARE_11	600	1.00	5.00	3.9667	.99021
AWARE_12	600	2.00	5.00	3.9500	.81769
AWARE_13	600	1.00	5.00	4.0950	.97856
AWARE_14	600	2.00	5.00	4.3300	.73621
AWARE_15	600	1.00	5.00	4.0583	.99494
AWARE_16	600	1.00	5.00	3.9900	1.04804
AWARE_17	600	1.00	5.00	4.0550	.94169
AWARE_18	600	1.00	5.00	3.2367	1.09818
AWARE_19	600	1.00	5.00	3.4750	1.07919
AWARE_20	600	1.00	5.00	3.3133	1.15934
AWARE_21	600	1.00	5.00	3.4267	1.01965
AWARE_22	600	1.00	5.00	3.3300	1.14744
AWARE_23	600	1.000	5.000	3.42167	1.188649
AWARE_24	600	1.00	5.00	4.0767	.86913
AWARE_25	600	1.00	5.00	4.0600	.88187
AWARE_26	600	2.00	5.00	4.0583	.76980
AWARE_27	600	1.00	5.00	3.8600	1.01593

6. Findings

1. Consumers are having the general awareness in related terms not in absolute terms.
2. They are aware about the product, price, promotion, place strategies of the green product of the company.
3. They are well aware about the benefits of the green product which the company is providing to the masses that is the target customers.
4. The consumers believe that the company appeals for the green product to them and they aware about this aspect of the company's practice.
5. Consumers are aware about the packaging that can be recycled or reused.
6. They are aware about the quality of the product with the environmental dimension.
7. On the basis of their awareness they believe that the product is marketed on eco-friendly features and they are having extended warranty.
8. They are also highly aware in the relative terms that the products are design in eco-friendly manner under packaging.
9. On the basis of their awareness the customers believe that there are not many regular products' offers available on green product in the market place.
10. The customers are aware about that the companies use the environment impact as the additional promotion tool.
11. The customers are aware about that the companies positioned their products based on the green product benefits along with that.
12. Consumers are also aware about the outdoor advertisement of the green product that is being done by the companies.

7. Conclusion

Green marketing has an environmental and social dimension attached to it. So it should not be considered as just one more approach to marketing; rather has to be pursued with much greater vigour. Marketers also have the responsibility to educate the consumers about the need for and benefits of green products in comparison to traditional products. But from the above findings it can be concluded that both marketers and consumes are

becoming highly conscious to the need to switch into green products as well as services. In future, success will come only to those companies who will come up with new products, new innovations and technologies which are eco-centric to promote greener environment. India being the second largest country in terms of consumers has witnessed a new segment of environment conscious customers who want to go for green products instead of using the traditional products. The rising price, growing population and resource consumption in Asia and political pulls to address environmental change are leading innovation toward healthier, more efficient, high performance products. India has great potential for green marketing but still there is very low penetration due to lack of awareness. Hence there need a change and innovation in marketing strategies used by the marketers. Going green has become the new mantra for marketers to satisfy the needs and wants of consumers and earns healthy profits in a greener way.

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