

A study of new age challenges for green marketing practices in India

¹Ekta Rastogi, ²Dr. MS Khan

¹ Ph.D Scholar, SMS, Department of Rural Management, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (A Central University), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

² Associate Professor, Ex- Head/Co-coordinator-MBA/M.Phil, SMS, Department of Rural Management, Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (A Central University), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

Abstract

With an increase in corporate environmentalism and green consumerism with fast catching up all over the world, companies have started making use of green marketing strategies and techniques. Environmentalism has started gaining ground in India. There are environmental laws have been promulgated in the country to prevent environmental degradation. The present paper provides an overview of the green marketing concept and discusses its application in the Indian context. A number of problems hindering the truer adoption of the green marketing concept have been identified and measures have been suggested for making Indian consumers and organizational buyers ecologically more conscious in the future. Both government and non-government organizations have launched green campaigns to combat the ever increasing problems of pollution and fast depletion of natural resources. In this research paper, main emphasis has been made of concept, challenges of green marketing. Data have been collected from multiple sources of evidence to understand the importance of green and sustainability management, in addition to books, journals, websites, and newspapers. The Paper aims at finding out what actually Green Marketing is all about and how can a business firm be more competitive by using green marketing strategies to gain a competitive edge over others. It explores the main issues in adoption of green marketing practices. The paper describes the current scenario of Indian market and explores the challenges and opportunities businesses have with green marketing. Why companies are adopting and what kind of challenges they are facing in implementing the concept of green marketing.

Keywords: green marketing, consumerism, Indian scenario, sustainability, environmental

Introduction

Green revolution, going green, environmental protection, sustainable lifestyle, sustainable development, protecting our earth and many more has become a natural phenomenon in our everyday life. Green Marketing is also known as ecological marketing or environmental marketing has become a vital topic in today's fastest growing world. Manufacturers across the world are worried about the declining condition of the environment and thus heralding the pace of healthy growth of the economy. The modern society has become health conscious and is more concerned with the natural environment, businesses too have begun to modify their behavior in an attempt to address society's "new" concerns. Some of the businesses have been quick to accept and adapt the concepts like environmental management systems and waste minimization, and have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities. Many governments around the world have become so concerned about green marketing activities that they have attempted to regulate them. In very simple and precise way, green marketing can be defined as the marketing of those products that are presumed to be environmentally safe and friendly. It incorporates a large range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. In more detail green, environmental and eco-marketing belong to the group of approaches which seek to address the lack of fit between marketing as it is currently practiced and the ecological and social realities of the wider marketing environment.

History of Green Marketing-

Evolution of green marketing: The green marketing has evolved over a period of time. According to peattie (2001) ^[15], the evolution of green marketing has three phases.

First phase

The first phase was termed as "ecological" green marketing, and during this all marketing activities were concerned to help environment problems and provide remedies for environmental problems.

Second phase

In the second phase was "environmental" green marketing and the focus shifted on clean technology that involved designing of innovative new products, will take care of pollution and waste issues.

Third phase

The third phase was "sustainable" green marketing. It came into prominence in the late 1990's and early 2000.

Green Marketing is posing some of challenges which require innovative technology so that the 'green products' can fetch wider market at domestic and international levels. It require a periodic review of the 'green product', so that the products may become 'ecological viable' as well as 'economical viable' for the consumers, especially belong to middle and low income groups. Finally, consumers, industrial buyers and supplier need

to pressurize effects on minimize the negative effect on the environment-friendly.

Literature review

Green marketing has been an important academic research topic since it came. (Coddinton. 1993; Fuller; 1999; Ottman, 1994) ^[16]. Attention was drawn to the subject in the late 1970's when the American Marketing Association organized the first ever workshop on Ecological marketing in 1975 which resulted in the first book on the subject entitled Ecological Marketing by Henion and Kinnear in 1976. Peattie and Crane (2005) ^[17, 18] claims that despite the early development, it was only in the late 1980's that the idea of Green Marketing actually made an appearance because of the consumers growing interest in green products. Green marketing was given prominence in the late 1980s and 1990s after the proceedings of the first workshop on Ecological marketing held in Austin, Texas (US), in 1975. Several books on green marketing began to be published thereafter. The green marketing has evolved over a period of time. According to Peattie (2001) ^[15], 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. During 1990s, the concern for environment increased and resulted in to increasing challenges for the companies (Johri and Sahasakmontri, 1998) ^[20]. Dutta, B. (2009, January) in his article on Green Marketing titled *Sustainable Green Marketing The New Imperative* published in Marketing Mastermind states that Green Marketing involves developing good quality products which can meet consumer needs and wants by focusing on the quality, performance, pricing and convenience in an environment-friendly way. Barkar is of the view that, Companies need to believe first that Green Marketing „can work“ and make diligent efforts to make necessary product improvements, which deliver performance, and are marketable and profitable. Unruh, G. And Ettenson, R. (2010) in their research article titled, *Growing Green: Three smart paths to developing sustainable products*. Published in Harvard Business Review, is for executives who believe that developing green products make sense for their organization and need to determine the best path forward.

Research objective

- To find out what kind of challenges the organizations are facing in implementing the concept of green marketing.
- To find out the interest and worthiness of the product of the companies.
- To find out that what actually Green Marketing is all about and how can a business firm be more competitive by using green marketing.

Research methodology

The research methodology will comprise of mainly secondary data which includes, existing literature, different scholars' and

researchers' published books, articles published in different journals, periodicals, conference paper, working paper, magazines, newspaper, central & state government website.

The secondary data and information will analyze for preparing the paper extensively.

Findings

Implementation of Green Marketing in India

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.

The Surf Excel detergent which saves water (advertised with the message" do bucket paani roz bachana") and the energy-saving LG consumers durables are examples of green marketing. We also have green buildings which are efficient in their use of energy, water and construction materials, and which reduce the impact on human health and the environment through better design, construction, operation, maintenance and waste disposal. In India, the green building movement, spearheaded by the Confederation of Indian industry (CII) - Godrej Green business Centre, 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. Companies that develop new and improved products and services with environment inputs in mind give themselves access to new markets, increase their profit sustainability, and enjoy a competitive advantage over the companies which are not concerned for the environment. Many companies want to have an early-mover advantage as they have to eventually move towards becoming green.

Challenges in Green Marketing:

1. Majority of the people are not aware of Green products and their uses.
2. Green products require a recyclable and renewable materials or elements which are expensive.
3. People are often perceived that green products are expensive compared to traditional products.

Conclusion

Green marketing mainly focuses on four issues. These issues are: first, importance of green marketing; second, impact of green marketing on firms' competitiveness and performance; third, improving effectiveness of green marketing. Most of the companies are venturing into green marketing because of the following reasons: 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. Many companies have started realizing that they must behave in an environment-friendly fashion and believe both in achieving environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. Various regulations recently framed by the government to protect consumers and the society at large led to the adoption of Green marketing as a compulsion rather than a choice. For example, the ban of plastic bags in many parts of the country, and prohibition of smoking in public areas, etc. Many companies take up green marketing to maintain their competitive edge.

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