

“A Revolutionary Approach: Green Marketing”

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Abstract

The term Green Marketing came into prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The American Marketing Association held the first workshop on “Ecological Marketing” in 1975. The proceedings of this workshop resulted in one of the first books on Green Marketing entitled “Ecological Marketing”. In today’s era every firm needs to adopt innovative methods to sustain itself in the competitive environment, thus Green Marketing becomes an important avenue which every firm will have to select and implement in the near future, so why not start practicing it immediately. Indian Government has already begun to adopt strength policies to enable sustainable development; marketers in India should realize this and switch to Green Marketing.

KEYWORDS: Green Generation, Environmental Marketing, Sustainable Development, Eco-labeling, Green Marketing, Green products, Green Packaging, Carbon Emission, Green Technology, Green Supply Chain, Green Washing, etc.

Introduction:

Green Marketing simply means providing environment friendly products to serve dual purpose of customer satisfaction and improved environmental quality but the concept of Green Marketing is really broad with various dimensions to it including social, ecological, economical, ethical and environmental besides organizational and sustainable development. We can also say that Green Marketing is the process of planning, implementing, coordinating and controlling the development, pricing, promotion and distribution of products in a manner that satisfies the organizational goals and customer needs with processes that are compatible with ecosystem.

Green Marketing has emerged as an holistic marketing concept in which the production, marketing consumption, disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less harmful to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., Many Governments around the world have become concerned about global warming and are now promoting Green Marketing activities. Also because of global warming greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and energy crises, world is facing a severe threat of being a very difficult place to live in. Therefore, the marketers need to include a green approach in farming the marketing programs/ strategies to go green. It means that due care must be taken while farming the marketing plans, strategies and policies so as to prevent the environment and nature from any harm caused due to its operations not only today but also in future.

Objectives of the study:

The researcher has identified the following objectives of the study:

1. To understand the evolution and concept of Green Marketing.
2. To identify principles of Green Marketing in India.
3. To evaluate challenges of Green Marketing.
4. To suggest the measures to enhance Green Marketing.

Evolution of Green Marketing:

The first wave of Green Marketing occurred in the 1980s. Two substantial milestones for wave one of Green Marketing came in the form of published books, named Green Marketing. The term Green Marketing came into prominence in late 1980's, when American Marketing Association held their first workshop on "Ecological Marketing" in 1975. And then Green movement started in U.S.A., which picked up, pace with rising environmental concerns and increasing awareness among customers. Most important aspect of Green Marketing is that it has also been connected with sustainable development. In 1987, world Commission on Environment and development defined sustainable development as "Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs", the report known as Brundtland Report says Green Marketing can act as a catalyst for corporate to achieve success in efforts of alignment towards sustainable development coupled with profitability, ecofriendly image and economic progress. Green Marketing has emerged as prime concern for all developed as well as developing countries due to increased environmental deterioration and more so because it has varying degrees of social, ethical, health and safety related angles attached to it besides its major objectives.

Jacquelyn Ottoman, expert, consultant and author of various books on Green Marketing recommends that environmental considerations should be integrated in all marketing elements of any organization for becoming a successful green organization; he says that green marketing emphasizes balancing environmental issues with primary customer needs.

- Manufacturing, packaging and providing green products to consumers which are of good quality and efficiency and at the same time not harmful to them even in the long run.
- Utilization of natural and manmade resources in such a manner, which will enable the future generations to avail the resources to meet their needs leading to sustainable development.
- Most importantly farming and implementing policies for manufacturing, production, packaging and distribution processes with green touch which will not have any detrimental effect on the environment i.e. at present as well as in future.

Past decade has shown tremendous awareness about Green Marketing. Green Marketing movement has gained much speed in the light of growing global concern about climate change.

Green Marketing movement has gained momentum in the contest of global warming, green house gas emissions, pollutions, energy crises, dependency on imported fossil, fuel and severe environmental threats and climatic changes and this has forced many companies to in cooperate the principles of Green Marketing. Recently Green Marketing has been taken up as a priority issue by Government of India and as a result Government has introduced environment friendly manufacturing policies for various sectors. Green Marketing promises to be very important for India's future and also it is destined to play an important role in sustainable development of our country. Green Marketing highlights the fact that resources are limited and human needs and wants are unlimited, hence all resources should be utilized economically and ecologically, so that our future generations do not face their scarcity, in this way Green Marketing actually can bring about sustainable development of India.

Green Marketing Meaning and Definitions:

Green Marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus Green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes as well as modifying advertising. A defining Green Marketing is not a simple task where several meanings intersect and contradict each other, and example of this will be the existence of varying social, environmental and retail definitions attached to this term. Other similar terms used are Environmental Marketing and Ecological marketing different authors have given different definitions of Green Marketing. Some of the commonly used definitions are:

According to American Marketing Association, Green or Environmental Marketing consist of "All activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants such that the satisfaction of these needs or wants occur with minimum detrimental impact on natural environment"

Another definition of Green Marketing says "Green Marketing is the implementation of marketing programs directed at the environmentally conscious market"

According to Jacquelyn Ottoman, Green Marketing serves two key objectives first, achievement of organizational goals and second to enable the development of products that incorporate convenience, affordability, economic price and performance, both objectives are served while having minimal impact on the environment. As referred earlier Green Marketing is marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus, Green Marketing incorporates a wide range of activities including product, modification, changes to the production process, changes to the packaging as well as modifying advertising in the interest of society and environment.

Principles of Green Marketing:

Following can be considered as principles of Green Marketing:

- Green Marketing must provide ecofriendly products offering convenience, comfort, performance, good price, ease of use and efficiency besides achieving organizational goals.
- Two main objectives are Green Marketing are improved environmental quality and increased customer satisfaction.
- Promotion of green products by adopting and implementing green manufacturing and packaging strategies and practices.
- Green products are essentially those products that strive to protect natural environment by conserving energy and resources and offer reduction / elimination in use of toxic agents, pollution and waste.
- Green Marketing aims at creating and promoting more sustainable products that increase the productivity of natural resources, follow biological/ cyclical production models, encourage dematerialization, and reinvest in and contribute to planet's natural capital.
- Green Marketing stresses on promotion and implementation of environmentally sensitive production techniques and innovations collectively called as Cleantech (Clean Technology).
- Green Marketing calls for energy conservation and renewal to maintain ecological balance besides common practices such as eco-labeling, recycling of scrap and waste material to produce alternate products, use of byproducts and substitutes with low energy and cost consumption.
- Green Marketing essentially allocates five features to green products which distinguish them from traditional products- efficiency and cost effectiveness, health and safety, performance, symbolism and status and convenience.

Challenges of Green Marketing:

Implementing Green Marketing is not going to be an easy job. The firm has to face many problems while treading the way of Green Marketing. Challenges which have to be faced are listed as under:

- Green Marketing encourages green products / services, green technology, green power / energy, a lot of money has to be spent on R & D programs. Thus practicing Green Marketing initially will be a costly affair.
- The customers may not believe in the firm's strategy of Green Marketing, the firm therefore should ensure that they convince the customer about their green product, this can be done by implementing eco-labeling schemes. Eco-labeling schemes offer its "approval" to "environmentally less harmless" products have been very popular in Japan and Europe in fact the first eco-label program was initiated by Germany in 1978.
- Initially the profit will be very low since renewable and recyclable products and green technologies are more expensive. Green Marketing will be successful only in long run.
- Many customers may not be willing to pay a higher price for green products which may affect the sales of the company.

- The firm may give up on Green Marketing concepts or be forced to practice unfair means to cut cost to sustain in the competition and thus the entire idea of going green will be farce.
- The firms practicing Green Marketing have to strive hard unconvincing the stakeholders and many a times there may be some who simply may not believe and cooperate.

Measures to Enhance Green Marketing:

- There has to be a stimulus provided by the Government to encourage and support the manufacturers who are manufacturing Green Products by providing subsidies.
- Financial assistance should be given in the form of easy loan facility to equip for manufacturing green products.
- Tax incentives or Tax holidays will also help the small and medium scale manufacturers as Green Marketing is costly.
- Awards and recognition should be given to those who successfully practice Green Marketing which becomes a motivating factor for others to implement it.
- Social advertising to be carried out on a large scale through various Medias to promote environment friendly practices, to promote the consumption of green products.
- Promotion of Eco-mark or Eco-labeling has to be done to create awareness not only amongst manufacturers but also consumers.

Conclusion:

Green Marketing is based on the premise that businesses have a responsibility to satisfy human needs and desires while preserving the integrity of the natural environment. Indeed, there are significant indications that environmental issues will grow in importance over the coming years and will require imaginative and innovative redesign and reengineering for existing markets. A smart marketer is one who not only convinces the consumer, but also involves the consumer in the marketing his product. Marketers also have the responsibility to make the stakeholders aware about the need and the advantages of green products. The Green Marketers will have full support of the Government, and the consumers also will not mind paying more for a cleaner and greener environment. Therefore, Green Marketing should not be considered as just one more approach to marketing, but has to be pursued with much greater verve, as it has an environmental and social dimension to it. So, if today's successful marketing is about applying to personal values and delivering consumer empowerment, then surely the time is right to inject sustainable development. Green Marketing not only provides better quality, customer oriented, satisfactory, economical and environmentally safe products to consumers but also it helps in environmental conservation and long term sustainable development of mother earth and natural lifecycle. Green Marketing is no longer a privilege it's the right of every twenty first century customer and organization need to realize that.

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