

# The Green Consumer Profile And Transformation In Marketing Strategies

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## Abstract

Green marketing focuses on a mindful commitment to sustainability whereby sustainability is upheld in all facets of life. It attempts to employ the environmental principles which are appealing to the potential consumers or reinforce the loyalty of the existing customers in a bid to become a profitable and environmentally friendly firm. Nevertheless, the views do not necessarily prove to be effective green consumption behaviours. One of the main marketing strategies that marketers employ today in order to promote the sustainable growth is green marketing. Green business strategy and environmental marketing were the descriptions which caused the impression of the fringes of environmentalism and the increase of prices of daily goods 10 years ago. Marketing has changed with the ideas of going green, sustainable and smart marketing as the issue of sustainability is gaining more popularity in terms of consumerism and business ethics. The digital technology is now simplifying and increasing the availability of these concepts. One of the key tools of green marketing is the incidence of increasing green levels usage. Ecolabel-led products are relatively unrepresented and they continue to struggle with a small market share since they have focused mainly on the green customers although there have been considerable efforts to guide their effectiveness and efficiency. In an exposition of the theory on marketing, we discover that after green marketing follows the conventional marketing and it may be able to train the green marketing techniques on how to market in other approaches rather than label. These are the creation of new markets aggressively, adoption of the positioning strategies such as pricing, location, and promotion strategies and extension to a wider customer base.

**Keywords:** Green marketing, Green product, Environmental policy, Consumption behavior Sustainable strategies

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Developing and maximisation of value, which include profits, can be summarised as the main economic objective of the company at the moment. Businesses are engaging the surrounding political and social, technological in the nature, environmental and economic in nature to realise their intentions. As mentioned earlier, each company will influence its business environment, whether positively and negatively. The firm will therefore be impatient of its influence and strive to moderate this by influencing the greater good of the whole society. The firm, as well as the brand in question, could be referred to as environmentally responsible [12].

Green levels are meant to empower the consumers to become the designers of the products they use and also to make decisions that would lessen the effects of their impact on the environment. There are 2800 products which have green levels and 55 product groups in the Nordic nations [2]. Japan has approved more than 5000 products and elaborated ecolabel rules in 64 categories of products. The green products industry is widely recognized to have become well-established and growing. Sales of green food products, as an example, are increasing at a rate of 20 percent annually across the globe in the food industry.

The marketing environment also includes the natural environment hence it is natural that environmental protection would find its way into the marketing strategy of the company. This notable part of research centers on the social and environmental aspect of contemporary marketing, utilization of the ecological resources to address the social aspect of marketing, and eco-updating the constituents of natural marketing.

To date, there is still no generally accepted definition of ecological marketing. Moreover, this term can be used in some other contexts. It can be replaced with the words such as ecological, environmental or eco-marketing. This word is employed by McDaniel and Rylander to refer to the consumer and environmental marketing strategies [3, 4]. Baker explains that green marketing is a comprehensive management approach that is accountable in the identification, prediction, and effectual- and environmentally least negative impact filling of the requirements of the consumers and the society.

The American Marketing Association defines green marketing in terms of environmental, socio-marketing, and point-of-sale among others. Grant has an intention to impose green behaviours on the daily routine of every consumer and wants to explain that all people in society (not only the government [4], the large companies, and nonprofit organizations) must be environmentally responsible. He cites the so-called five I, namely intuitive, integrative, innovative, inviting and informed as the five attributes which define green marketing.

Green marketing is the new approach to marketing which came about due to customers being environmentally aware [5, 6]. The idea of green marketing originates in the 1960s, however till the late 1980s and early 1990s they did not start gaining popularity. It was firstly mentioned at a workshop of the American Marketing Association in 1974. In this case, the definition of green marketing was the examination of green and black sides of pollution and exhaustion of energy sources. In 1970s, some authors released the first statements devoted to the issue.

Many individuals have complained about the marketing industry promoting unsustainable lifestyles and a hedonistic lifestyle of thoughtless excess [5, 6]. To gain a competitive edge in the market and create a good brand image around its products, a company needs to promote the use of environmentally responsive promotion regulations [6, 7].

First, however, we need to make a decision that we will establish a sustainable business [7, 8]. The existing market tends to imply that the companies must be careful of executing their green business plan and must attempt to prevent the myopic focus or marketing myopia [8, 9].

That is, however, it does not mean that the products must be entirely defined according to all the possible changes approaching to the green requirements, but they should not become superior to the needs and wishes of buyers, other interested parties, including partners [10], activists, regulators etc. Therefore, part of the success of green initiatives is understanding the central concepts of environmentally friendly growth, sustainable consumption, and most importantly the behaviours and attitudes of green consumers [4].

According to some, a green consumer can be described as somebody who prefers products or services that cause the least harm to the environment and those who subscribe to some form of social justice [5]. A great number of individuals use the term green synonymously with the environment, sustainable, and ethical. Besides the apparent greenness of the products and services, buyers in this category of consumers also value environment conscious business operations in transaction deals [11].

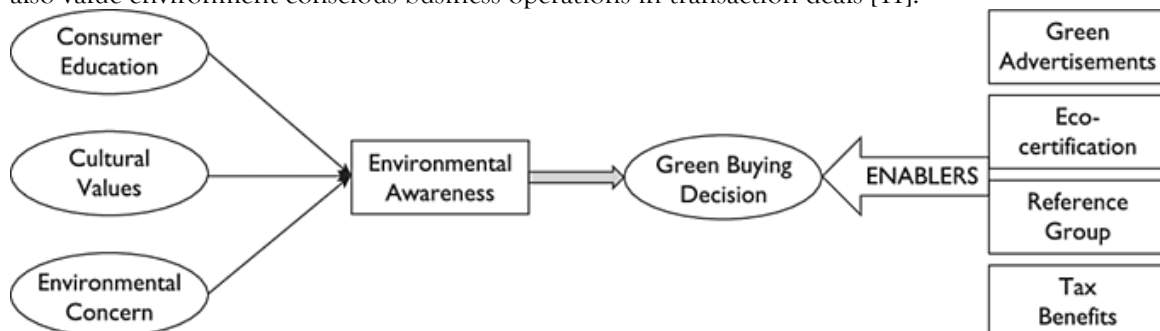


Fig. 1: The green consumer buying model. [14]

To maintain the environment as clean as it is supposedly right to be in terms of ideal-seeking behaviour, the environmental sustainability is the act of ensuring that the current interactions with the environment are being adhered to [15]. Consumer marketers are under an obligation to not only be a front-runner in application of environmental sustainability, but also react to it as a result of heightened environmental awareness [21]. Politics, economics and even moral discussions focus on the controversial aims of every era and are the point of contention in argument as to the most beneficial way of organising our lives. Indeed, one of such objectives is sustainable consumption. It is the latest type of middle-class moralism of several postmodernists.

Companies began to pay attention to environmental protection as a source of promoting sustainable consumption. Firms also pay attention to social and ecological concerns of consumer environmentalism. Aggressive promotion to make people conscious of the environment-friendly products was one of the

marketing trends of the 1990s [14]. It was implemented to accord to the interests of consumers who are sensitive to the environmentally friendly products and services.

There has been a surge in consumer awareness about the green product and services. They prefer environmentally friendly products instead of the traditional products. This therefore obliges businesses to embrace environmental friendly activities and the protection of the environment. Companies apply green marketing campaigns and focus on green campaigns as a form of CSR [15] to appeal to the environmental concerns of the consumers.

Due to customer demand of environment-friendly products and services, sustainable practices have grown and multiplied. Also, global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, and industrial pollution have been identified as the catalysts to the growth in environmentally conscious consumption [18]. Consumers are, therefore, shifting towards the use of green goods. Although green marketing can be costly to the companies in the short-run, it will prove to be beneficial and necessary in the long run [18, 19].

To assess the concerns brought up and establish whether indeed any methods in even the textbooks on traditional marketing failed to be employed in the field of green marketing, we consulted the marketing sources [20].

Marketing can also be referred to as the interface between consumption and the production of a product. The marketing operations impact the communication strategies, the product range decided by the producer, and affect both manufacture and consumption of a product. We are setting ourselves ever more consciously on the path to become a sustainable society when we produce and consume. In this respect then, as is said:

Marketers can be held responsible in the issue of sustainability, both globally and on a localized scale, although they might not realize this.

## II. GREEN MARKETING

Green marketing has been founded in the initial part of 1970s [16]. Nevertheless, green marketing did not take off until 1990. Green marketing arrived in earnest during the early 1990s, when many different green marketing themes were explored by researchers [18]. As an illustration, it has been ruled that further studies on customer wants and marketing needed to be done.

The second body that was of great interest at the initial stages relates to the attributes of green clients [18, 19]. Many studies of this sort had been conducted. In the overview of sociodemographic surveys conducted between 1966 and 1994 to define the green buyer, they identified among others that 21 surveys focused on socioeconomic class, 31 studies focused on sex, 35 studies focused on age and 39 studies focused on education [20].

Table 1 The proportion of customers by typology.

Consumers Typology		
18%	Activists	Probably going to purchase eco-friendly goods and services.
35%	Realists	Concerned about the green trend?
22%	Alienated	Consider the solutions to be someone else's issue.
28%	Complacents	don't know about green difficulties or think they're temporary.

Some researches tried to determine the average characteristics of the demographics of environmentally conscious customers. As another instance, green consumer behaviour proved to be more common among women, young individuals and also among persons with relatively high income and education levels [20, 21]. However, the potential green customer was full of diverse opinions in the various studies that were conducted.

Table 2: US Roper starch type's global consumer share in 2000.

Consumers Typology by US Roper starch worldwide		
12%	True blue greens	Large-scale recycling and green purchases
5%	Greenback Greens Sprouts	Will purchase or donate green products but won't alter their way of life
32%	Sprouts	Though I would just pay a tiny bit more to purchase green
19%	Grouzers	The environment is someone else's concern.
32%	Basic Browns	In essence, don't/won't care

Major problems, the negative publicity and the shrinking green premium were only starting to excite the excitement surrounding the large green market. Consumers surprisingly did not want to pay more to get green products as perceived to a greater extent [23]. The market share of green product has not experienced significant shifts in the past ten years based on the few information available on actual sales of green goods [22]. In fact, the sales in green items were way lower as shown by customer surveys.

Efforts of green branch of consumer psychology have been devoted mainly to attempts to explain the gap that exists between the claimed consumer sentiments and the real consumer purchasing behaviour. A well-known model in this field of study is the so-called Theory of Planned Behaviour by Ajzen [14] (see e.g. ref. [30]). It follows that attitudes, subjective standards and perceived control affect the motives behind a given act. Then, subjective actions may result in specific behaviours. Nonetheless, several barriers may impede this course of action, which determines whether the green cow will be translated into real practice (i.e., making purchases involving eco-labelled products) [21].

### III. GREENLEVELS

It has been stated that to support the promotion of green products efficiently, certain inherently negative aspects would have to be dealt with. Specific attention has been given to the question of how to report on the environmental qualities of the products [22]. In light of this knowledge deficiency, governmental and voluntary organisations have taken the responsibility to fix such knowledge gap by implementing and maintaining credible environmental labelling schemes [14, 28].

Environmental labelling has many kinds of users. The government applies labels to influence the market in an attempt to persuade business to make change. They may also serve as the first stage of gradually putting on pressure to manufacturers, i.e. voluntary to mandatory labelling, such as in [22, 23]. Labels also could be utilized to pressure manufacturers and consumers by NGOs or campaigns involving labels could spark off a debate within society. It is not a secret that companies take the labels as their major means to obtain a competitive advantage or market shares.

### IV. A GREEN PERSPECTIVE OF THEORICAL ANALYZATIONS

When we came to know that the market share of green goods occupied a very small proportion [24], we turned on the novelty of the literature in green marketing and ecolabelling. As we came to realize, these responses came in two categories largely regarding the marketability of green products is either overflooded or does not exist or the information on the environment that is availed has to start giving some better results.

The small sale of green goods can be attributed to the small market niche of green goods in terms of green marketing. The argument has been that there is no increasing segment of green customers buying green goods. This opinion considers green buying as a requirement in environmental awareness [25 26].

Researchers on ecolabelling have concentrated on how to improve the environmental labels as a way of reporting about the evolvement of the green products and as a strategy of providing information that must be considered during a purchase [18]. Thøgersen highlighted the significance of consumer familiarity, qualification and acknowledgement with Greenlevels whereas, Rubik and Frankl drew a conclusion that diverse mechanisms of environmental information of products like Greenlevels must be appropriately incorporated and associated with domestic and global laws [19].

The demand of the customers to obtain environmental information has mostly contributed to the more effective and successful ecolabelling programmes. Since the environmental characteristics tend to be in the form of a secret, businesses must make known the environmental characteristics to the consumers [20]. This argument postulates that the primary responsibility of a marketer should be to identify environmentally concerned consumers and make them aware of the benefits that they can gain by using the commodities. The huge emphasis on the development of different environmental labelling initiatives and the identification of green consumers also adds more weight to this justification. There is a belief among the producers that ecolabelling puts them in the competitive edge.

The marketing process entails a number of various responsibilities that spans between tactical and strategic. Most of what we have been discussing concerning conventional and green marketing is based on two main concepts of conventional marketing; the marketing mix and the marketing strategy. We use these notions as stated. A number of these variants exist in the marketing literature. Competitive

advantages are developed through the cycle of demand measurement, target setting, positioning, and segmentation that perpetually take place in relation to the marketing strategy [24] Figure 1.



Fig. 2 The marketing strategy. [25]

The structure which is provided by the marketing strategy and marketing mix could be used to explain the assertions and results of green marketing research [26]:

Demand measurement -Several pollinations indicate that the growth of green issues in early 1990s is raising the proportion of green consumers [25]. These pollinations also managed to measure the consumer demand by establishing the magnitude of green market.

- Segmentation and Targeting: Targeting principles are quite similar to those of segmentation. Segmentation of markets is a strategy based on which a market is split into sets of consumers with diverse needs, characteristics or behaviours [23, 24].
- Positioning: The newly identified green customer has to be positioned with the product in the market. This is the purpose of the marketing mix which consists of product, location, price, promotion, and [25].

In conventional marketing, demand analysis entails more than determining the number of consumers who are green, but also assesses present and potential market opportunities [28]. Despite the fact that the green literature has in some instances advocated concentration on the needs and wants of the customers, the primary objective of green market research has always been to determine the size and characteristics of the green market [24].

The differences in perspective between the old and the green approach to marketing came out quite significantly in the field of positioning [26]. During the early 1990s, when green marketing was relatively a young profession, the literature encompassed several positioning methods. It was reported that the aspects of the marketing mix require further research [28]. Specifically, the sphere of promotion that consists of the sales promotion, publicity, advertising, and personal selling was discovered to lack or even contain insignificant research.

It is not yet all that is found as could be evidenced by the fact that the green marketing sector has not focused much on the traditional marketing area. The metrics of market demand have strategically placed much emphasis on the figure of existing green customers rather than market demands and desires (and demands) and potential new markets [30]. Technical factors have been explained to the customers rather than being plied by the promotions.

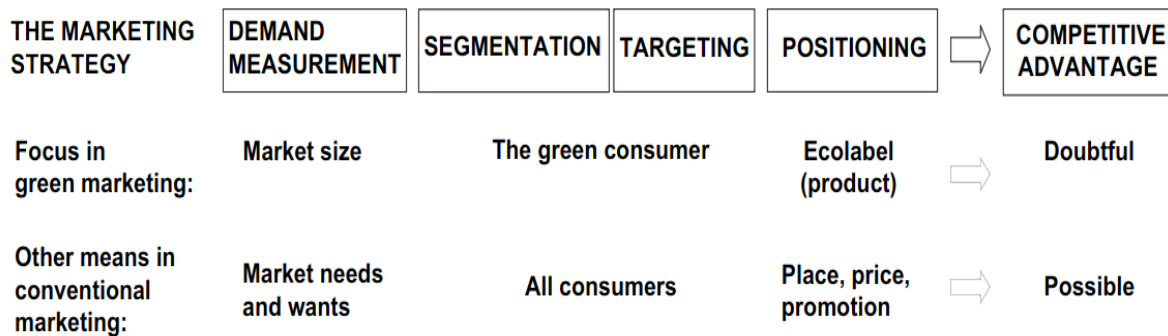


Fig. 3 Examples of other marketing approaches proposed by the conventional texts in marketing and past and present areas of interest in the green marketing are two out of the number of approaches views on the green marketing strategy. [21]

## V. SUPPORTING GREEN MARKETING

The information in this section demonstrates two opposing views of green marketing educating the green customer (i.e. through green level), only to be countered by a co-evolution in supply and demand of the commodities offered [23]. The first perspective appears to have overtaken the research on green marketing [25]. The second perspective could also be used to propel the research on green marketing as reflected in the general marketing literature [25].

There are at least two drawbacks of assuming that customers are already environmentally friendly minds even though it has been attempted to expand the audience of greener products beyond itty-bitty markets [26]. First, it is likely that customers are the ones who should initiate the cause of environmentally friendly production and consumption. Governments and non-governmental organizations can also assist in shielding consumers against incorrect commercial assurances by setting rules, green standards and the legal recourse [27].

This aspect however changes when the normal marketing theory is applied as a basis. The mutual influence producers and consumers have on supply and demand would possibly enable the redesign of the customer targeting strategy [29, 30]. In fact, a careful study on the preferences of consumers should be conducted before developing products and promoting the potential product rather than regarding current green consumers.

As many major social organisations have emphasised on numerous occasions, we have to alter our current way of production and consumption so that we can achieve sustainable development [14]. We cannot afford to have used a small segment of true-blue green customers as the catalyst of effectual changes. The distorted emphasis on the green levels is therefore not ideal.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The demand of ecologically conscience products consumers and socially responsible companies currently rises. An interest in the environmental protection consequently rises. Individuals are putting a serious effort to minimize the destructive effect of their activity on the environment.

Green marketing has led to the need to reconsider marketing. This will involve the expansion of the target market, the focus on green customers with green goods, and the application of the green claims made on the products and vice versa as one of the attractions of the product versus conventional ones.

Thus, the green marketing applied to achieve sustainable growth requires the company to embrace an ecologically healthy business philosophy and to employ its precepts. These precepts include the statements regarding offering secure goods and services to customers, minimizing as well as disposing of trash, and promoting energy usage and restoring the environment. Environmental issues ought to be incorporated in marketing strategies, approaches, and initiatives of businesses; as several studies show.

Despite the popularity of green levels as a means of endorsing the ecological qualities of products, an ecologically friendly system of production and consumption still remains in the distant future. Through this comparison of two literary fields and the observation of demonstrable outcomes, we have attempted to extend green levels in both space and time throughout this work.

Ecolabelling is regarded as an ancillary technical product information strategy to marketing in the sense that it will make all products greener. There is a need to reach more consumers in order to attain greener patterns of manufacturing and consumption, beyond deep green market. The green marketing strategies should be developed and the alternative options of marketing theory, including advertising and customer preference research, should be explored.

Whether in theoretical or applied approaches, such a concentration is vital, as, to illustrate, when deciding whether the green issues require more attention and whether firms assess signals in the market regarding green attributes or those regarding more classic product attributes in different ways. The research is also necessary to identify the manner in which consumer needs and potential market opportunities can be evaluated and how different promotional initiatives influence the consumer behaviour.

Enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the current advertises will not be sufficient to change our mechanisms of production and consumption, but we ought to explore new areas of communication and market research.

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