

Chapter 9

The Concept of Green Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Environmental concerns have become one of the most important issues of today's business world. Companies have discovered the importance of green marketing and sustainability and that consumers will buy products that are greener and sustainable. This chapter focuses on the concepts of green marketing and sustainability. The concepts of green marketing and sustainability are discussed, analysis of green markets and green market examples are provided, and viable green marketing strategies are also suggested.

INTRODUCTION

Environmentalism emerges as one of the most critical issues in the business world today. Many studies show that consumers are integrating their concern for the environment into their purchasing decisions. Various factors such as the rise of activist groups, increased media attention, and strict regulations create an environmental awareness and as a result consumers become more concerned about their regular behaviors and the impact that they can have on the environment (Kalafatis et al. 1999).

As consumers become more concerned with the environmental problems, businesses have begun to implement green marketing practices into their operations in an attempt to address consumers' concerns. In the recent years, businesses have demonstrated serious commitment towards environmental programs to achieve environmental goals and to meet consumer needs. Companies are increasingly

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reporting details on their environmental performance and see sustainability practices as core to the ability of the business to grow. Integrating environmental practices into business operations and strategy has become an opportunity for the organizations (Porter and Reinhardt 2007; Dangelico and Pujari 2010).

The objectives of this chapter are to explore the green marketing concept, to propose viable green marketing strategies, to present green marketing examples from global companies and to view sustainability concept.

BACKGROUND

In order to explain green marketing concept, it is important to have an understanding of what marketing is. The American Marketing Association defines marketing as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. This definition emphasizes the importance of satisfying needs for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Green marketing definition by The American Marketing Association is divided into three types as retailing definition, social marketing definition, and environments definition. Retailing definition: The marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Social marketing definition: The development and marketing of products designed to minimize negative effects on the physical environment or to improve its quality. Environments definition: The efforts by organizations to produce, promote, package, and reclaim products in a manner that is sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns. All three types of definitions focus on being environmentally friendly.

Concern for the environment is not new, it started to appear in the 1970s, however, public awareness for the environment is at a very high level today. Earlier studies found five main environmental concerns. These are landfills that are almost full of over hundred million tons of trash per year, drinking water problems that approximately 40 percent of Americans suffer from, high levels of ozone areas where approximately 30 percent of Americans live in, natural resource related problems such as the decreasing number of rainforests, and greenhouse effect which is a potential threat to the world's survival (McDaniel and Rylander 1993).

ANALYZING THE GREEN MARKETS

In order to challenge increasing environmental concerns, Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) suggest that companies can segment the market into five different categories: True blue greens, greenback greens, sprouts, grouzers, and basic browns. True blue

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