

Green Marketing and Entrepreneurship



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Abstract The world's environmental situation is a great source of concern for most people and industries that do nothing but grow over time. People have begun to develop a greater awareness of what they consume and these products' impact, processes, and transport. The concept of green marketing has been generated. Green marketing is a tool used to show the sustainable objectives of the company while meeting the needs and expectations of customers. This concept is being applied more and more among companies, thus causing a particular influence on the behavior of consumers when making purchases. In addition, the decision of its application gives rise to both advantages and challenges, which are related and can be closely observed in entrepreneurship and small businesses. This chapter presents the concept of green marketing, its importance, presence in current markets, the advantages and challenges of its application. In the same way, it is necessary to highlight the approach taken by this work when relating and highlighting the importance and influence of green marketing in entrepreneurship and small companies over large companies.

Keywords Green marketing · Entrepreneurship · Sustainability · Greenwashing · Green marketing mix · Behavior · Green · Brand

1 Introduction

Big companies and entrepreneurship produce goods and services in an environment where they are forced to interact [37]. In recent years, it has been proposed that this interaction needs to be sustainable in the future, and it has become one of the most critical problems on the agendas of both countries and businesses. It has been considered to rethink the traditional forms of marketing to be adapted to their environment

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and the new needs of companies because macromarketing, a field of marketing that is responsible for studying the effects it can have on the economy and society in general. At the same time, it focuses on the environment and its problems. It also carries out the vital work of proposing activities that allow businesses to harmonize with the environment [59].

Since 1960, people specializing in marketing have begun to include the term “green” when talking about consumption [52]. However, in recent years, the issue has taken on greater importance as sustainability is one of the most crucial issues in business. In addition to applying what “green” consumption is, other concepts such as environmental responsibility have been introduced [30, 39, 51].

On the other hand, the relationship between the term “green,” the environment, and marketing activities was evaluated a year later at the beginning of the 1970s; its objective was to include these new environmental terms developed previously to include them in your marketing processes. At the same time, the aim was to identify these responsible consumers who desire to buy ecological and environmentally friendly products. In 1980, with responsible consumption being a necessary behavior in business, changes in marketing trends began; it was identified that the problem with green products would be the volume of consumption rather than the quality of the products; this is how they began to develop strategies regarding their development, use, transport, and the valuable life cycle of these products [35].

However, there is a contradiction between consumer behavior and their attitude toward the environment. According to past research, consumers have a positive trend toward green consumption; however, this attitude does not necessarily translate into actual buying behavior, which means that although some consumers have attitudes that are favorable to more responsible and green consumption, this it rarely ends in an actual purchasing practice [6, 24, 46].

The two theories mentioned first are the most used [7, 29]. This incongruity has been registered in different countries [45], which makes the reasons for these incongruities highly requested to understand this behavior, and from these developed strategies, some of the conceptual theories to explain the green behavior are as follows: the theory of reasoned action of [2], according to this theory, the behavior of people is conditioned by their intention if they want to do something or not, but the intention is a balance of two things, our attitude and what we think we should do is, this theory takes into account social pressure. There is also the extension of this theory, which is planned behavior [1], among others. Despite this, the theory of planned behavior has limiters that make people who investigate them propose many variations. An example of this is the study by [10], where they expanded the theory of planned behavior to include environmental awareness, social impression, among others. Other investigations, such as [58], did the same, including long-term orientation factors and man-nature orientations in their framework.

This chapter talks about the importance of green marketing in the current market, its relationship with startups, and its success stories. In addition, the significant benefits and obstacles that arise in the application of green marketing are mentioned in the text.

2 Green Marketing in Today's Market

Green marketing results from the companies' efforts to follow and fulfill the consumer's needs and expectations regarding environmental awareness [11, 62]. Without a doubt, "green," "environmental," and "sustainable" marketing has grown significantly, with most of it centered on promoting "green" products, analyzing market niches and consumption patterns for eco-friendly items, and the importance of the environment in branding [15, 33, 38]. Green marketing encompasses various actions, including product modification, manufacturing process improvements, packaging adjustments, and advertising changes [11]. Some businesses are investing in green marketing strategies to be seen as environmentally and socially conscious [17] because of the idea that being environmentally friendly in the eyes of the consumer would increase their revenues [44, 47].

While environmental awareness and customer attitudes toward the environment are on the rise, empirical research suggests that attitudes toward green products rarely transfer into actual buying behavior as it has been mentioned before [27, 45, 61], but a favorable influence of buying intention on purchasing behavior for a greener product is amplified thanks to green marketing [61]. Environmental commitment presented in green marketing should be emphasized in advertising and promotional initiatives, but consumers do not buy simply because a company is environmentally friendly, products and services must fit the needs of customers in terms of quality, pricing, and usefulness [49, 61, 64].

It is necessary to consider the context in which we live where increasingly restrictive policies are developed to achieve a correct application of green marketing. In addition, it is necessary to consider the term green marketing mix and determine the 4P's before launching the green product on the market. For cases of this type, the first P for product must consider the impacts of its manufacture and use on the environment. Regarding the price, the development can be more expensive than a conventional product, but the consumer may be willing to pay an additional cost if he understands the added value of the green product and why it is expensive. On the other hand, for the promotion, this can be directed to the ecological product, promoting sustainable living, and to the company's environmental responsibility. Regarding the last P for point of sale, the channels must be by the proposed ecological strategy and enhance the business culture. The form of distribution must work as a team with the marketing area to optimize the chosen campaign and ensure a sustainable product distribution [12].

Parts of the population who care about the environment are more likely to use more concrete criteria to make purchasing decisions [60]. The presence of ecological seals and certificates, which can be found on product labels or via alternative distribution channels, is one manner that consumers may find appealing [19]. Based on "green certification" or labels, it can be used to promote environmental sustainability and the interest of consumers. Green certification is a licensed seal of approval that may be featured on a firm's Web site or in advertising to show customers that the

company has been independently examined and certified as ecologically sustainable [11]. Environmental labels are given to customers to assist them in identifying between environmentally friendly and conventional products [9]. These assist in overcoming a lack of knowledge, environmental labeling would be superfluous if all important data about the product and the conditions of its manufacture were known [44]. Corporate clients usually demand that their suppliers show their adherence to environmental rules [22].

Businesses are expected to take the lead in terms of environmental sustainability because they are the main producers of unfriendly environmental activities and are projected to make a substantial impact [64]. Moreover, many companies have adopted green marketing in their operations processes [49, 53, 64, 66]. Green marketing provides financial incentives and opportunities for growth [44, 62]. It integrates the company's existing business, operations, and investment strategies, essentially assisting a company in making environmentally friendly decisions, considering that, while changes to corporate or manufacturing processes may incur initial expenses, they save money over time [36, 62]. These companies can promote financial progress, social prosperity, and environmental protection by following the green marketing philosophy. They help to resolve the tension between conflicting goals and the simultaneous focus on economic success, environmental quality, and social through green marketing, which significance in everyday life has made it unavoidable [11].

3 Opportunities and Challenges of Green Marketing for Entrepreneurship

In an era when consumers determine a company's fate, green marketing provides a strategic approach for these businesses to cater to the market by providing environmentally friendly products or services, or both, that eliminate or minimize any negative influence on the environment [11]. Nevertheless, as with any other strategy in the business world, green marketing poses some challenges or disadvantages in the present day that may make it challenging to apply for entrepreneurship in small companies [25].

3.1 Opportunities of Green Marketing

Marketers must recognize how green marketing is not solely altruistic; it can also be a successful venture for long-term development. Nowadays, green marketing has become a competitive advantage among companies in most industries due to the current environmental issues such as the inefficient use of natural resources and climate change [44]. As stated before, a green image would increase the chances of a product or company being preferred by consumers since they appreciate social

and environmental responsibility. Thanks to customers' preference for these products, it would increase their value on the market and, therefore, their profits [44, 64]. However, it is not the only advantage produced by adopting a green marketing plan. Green marketing can save the company some money in the long term (e.g., investing in a renewable source of energy for the company's production line eventually would lead to savings on that matter) [62, 64], which could also provide long-term profitability through ensuring long-term growth with more disposition of investing [11, 64]. Another advantage of green marketing is that the relationship with the company's stakeholders improves due to the decreasing pressure put on the company's social responsibility and good reputation [44, 49, 64].

The practical implementation of green marketing can be noticed in some cases, such as The Body Shop and Levi's; these are examples of big companies that have successfully applied green marketing in their business model [12].

A. The Body Shop

It has been one of the pioneer brands applying the green marketing mix, a brand present in several countries that sells food and beauty products inspired by nature and respect for the environment. They are also a brand that does not test its products on animals and actively promotes organic and vegan products. On the other hand, it accompanies its green products with a sustainable store design, making all its retail points of sale ecological by incorporating wood with the SSC certification of local origin in the construction, LED lighting, and non-toxic paints. An artificial grass space was also added inside the store precisely where payments are made to make consumers aware of their payment, helping to build in the long term to demonstrate these changes to their customers. This proposal to visually show users what is changing also translates into showing them the crops of the company's ingredients through videos. All the initiatives promoted by the company, such as Bio-Bridge, are transmitted to consumers through their marketing strategies. They are mainly exhibited in video format by social networks, and due to the age of regular consumers, the brand has dared to try channels such as Pinterest, Snapchat, and Instagram. The objective of the green marketing that this company uses is that consumers keep in mind that they are acquiring an eco-friendly product from a brand that is striving to be the most sustainable in the long term [26]. It also has several social initiatives in the process [12]. This brand has declared its desire to become the most truly sustainable ethic in the industry [26].

According to the study carried out by [8], ecological marketing positively influenced the loyalty of the customers of this brand, giving primary importance to the ecological product itself. In turn, green marketing proved to influence customer satisfaction positively. However, the combination of green marketing and customer loyalty through customer satisfaction proved the most influential (Fig. 1).

The success of The Body Shop brand focuses on the use of green marketing that focuses on keeping its customers satisfying their needs for quality green organic products that are constantly becoming more sustainable. In addition to giving importance to social issues that the brand strives to address through campaigns present on social networks.

Fig. 1 Relationship between green marketing, loyalty, and satisfaction of the body shop's customers. *Source* [8]



B. Levi's

This clothing brand is recognized worldwide, and that has become very popular for using only denim or mezclilla for its garments, encourages ecological and sustainable practices such as the use of its primary material (denim) recycled or cotton that is of an ethical origin as well to apply innovative solutions to reduce the use of water during its manufacture. In addition, this brand pays equally to both its workers and community organizations [12].

In the beginning, the production of jeans was to make them resistant so that workers could use them in the mines; for this reason, materials such as anilines were used for the highly polluting dyeing process. On the other hand, natural resources such as water for the manufacturing process were abundant and could be wasted a lot. However, Levi's has been able to adapt over time both to the new needs of its customers and their change in mentality; this is how this brand plans to be more sustainable. In the first instance, the use of water used for washing the jeans has been replaced using stones that have been shown to have an effect like that of water. At the same time, the materials that are used to manufacture have changed, and, like many others, it has used recycling as part of its production process [40]

The brand's efforts to be greener have also been transferred to the company's marketing using campaigns such as "Buy Better, Wear Longer", to promote the consumption of sustainable and responsible clothing. To this end, celebrities were used in its campaign, which is present on different platforms worldwide. The objective of this was to promote the use of clothing that lasts longer and raise awareness about the importance of the brand investing in being sustainable in the future and by using technology that improves the quality of its products to extend its cycle of life. In addition, the need for more environmentally friendly alternative materials such as cottonized hemp and organic cotton stands out a lot, and alternative plans to reduce the waste of natural resources in the production processes [31]. This brand has collaborated with others to make collections that use fewer polluting products and

use fewer resources, creating the most sustainable jeans where its entire production process uses strategies that make it sustainable and environmentally friendly [48].

These are two examples of large companies with a long time in the market that have managed to change many aspects of their businesses to be more sustainable and transmit this message to their consumers through green marketing; however, these companies are not the only ones that have made use of this tool. There is also entrepreneurship that has managed to have a successful implementation of green marketing.

C. “Too Good to Go”

It connects consumers with stores or restaurants that report having surplus food that they have not sold; these are in good condition; however, over time, they would probably be thrown away for not having been sold; this is how this app connects you with users willing to buy this food that mostly has a much lower price. This venture mainly covers European cities and operates in North America [12]. In this business model, everyone benefits since one of the biggest problems in the food industry is partially solved, which is overproduction. The main objective of its creation was to reduce the exorbitant amount of waste that is generated, part of its marketing strategy is to make consumers and restaurants that are part of the app feel that both are benefiting from the transaction and that also are helping to reduce waste and prevent healthy food from going to waste [57]. On the other hand, this business culture is complemented by green marketing that presents a series of initiatives that help grow the company’s image as a green one. He has developed companies that extend the idea of reducing waste to homes through tips and recipes to educate their customers to continue with the company’s objective even in their homes. In addition, they also offer users and establishments projects that help them sell their products more safely within the app [41].

D. WISErg

It is the case of a sustainable enterprise that uses technology to convert food waste into fertilizers; this helps so that waste of this type does not end up in landfills or composters. The most popular product of this brand is called “Harvester,” a machine that can be installed in any store or supermarket that has groceries. In this machine, people can deposit food, and it crushes them and capture their nutrients, and they are later converted into fertilizers that can be used for organic soils without any limitation. This machine also offers statistics of its use and a report of how much waste each establishment produces so that the owners can use this information to make better decisions [55].

For this undertaking, the brand focuses on offering clients the opportunity to turn their own businesses greener safely; this is reflected in its Web site that uses green colors to represent its image as a sustainable and environmentally friendly brand environment. It uses green marketing when offering its organic product, mainly highlighting the use of waste for other purposes such as fertilizer [65]. In addition, the brand has chosen to partner with Vivid Life Sciences to create 100% sustainable agricultural products.

E. Resto-Zero

It is the example of another venture that seeks to be sustainable by reducing waste and emissions generated by the production of Peruvian coffee. This brand seeks to propose a circular model for the coffee industry where coffee and its parts are used to the maximum [54]. It uses the coffee husks that were usually discarded and treated as waste and uses them to develop new products through innovation and technology. The green marketing of this brand is based on offering its consumers ecological products derived from what was usually considered waste and which are also nutritious products whose added value is that they contribute to the well-being of our planet by reducing waste.

3.2 Challenges of Green Marketing

As previously mentioned, the implementation of green marketing can sometimes be quite challenging, especially when compared to small companies or entrepreneurship [25]. Due to their severe financial constraints against them, small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) face a significant barrier in undertaking operations corresponding to the green marketing strategy compared with larger companies [25]. Green products necessitate the use of expensive renewable and recyclable materials. It also needs current technology, which necessitates a significant investment in research and development [64]. Moreover, since it is a more sustainable production strategy and a relatively new concept, it could take more time to obtain the expected revenues, making it imperative for marketers and stakeholders to be patient to appreciate their results in the long term [62]. SMEs and even entrepreneurship are severely behind in adopting innovative knowledge even though the application of creative knowledge has steadily transferred from academics to industry [34].

Green marketing myopia is defined as underestimating either or overemphasizing the former at the latter's expense [11, 62, 64]. Green marketing must concentrate on customer advantages or the major reason why people buy certain products, as previously mentioned. When done well, it encourages customers to switch products or even spend more for the sustainable option [44, 64]. According to [64], several green products have crashed due to marketers' myopic concentration on the "greenness" of their products rather than the broader expectations of others. It won't benefit if an eco-friendly product is developed that is entirely green in every way but fails to meet customer satisfaction criteria. Furthermore, if green products are too costly, they may lose market acceptance.

Finally, one of the most well-known problems for implementing green marketing in entrepreneurship and companies is "greenwashing." This term refers to the overlap of two company behavior patterns: harmful environmental performance and favorable advertising about said environmental performance [21]. Companies may be tempted to engage in greenwashing to gain legitimacy and improve their reputation

for environmental stewardship [63]. Purchasers must frequently rely on their subjective assessments of suppliers' actual sustainability [56]. Due to greenwashing, those companies who apply the sustainable guidelines correctly are affected by a growing skepticism presented by customers [10, 17]. By wrongfully recognizing green characteristics in products for their benefit, companies set a precedent into customers' minds and affect the image of the unethical company [11] and of the companies that apply or are beginning to apply green marketing correctly. From this, those that could be most affected are those small companies and ventures with fewer monetary resources since a lousy reputation could cause their investments in sustainable practices not to be rewarded.

It is convenient to observe the cases of McDonald's and Coca-Cola and how they affected them to illustrate these challenges better.

A. McDonald's

In the case of this famous fast-food chain, in 2018, to be more sustainable, they decided to change the traditional straws that they delivered with their drinks to ones made of paper. At first, this change was very well received by its audience, especially among young people; however, shortly after, it was found that these new straws were even less recyclable than the previous ones. The brand's spokesperson admitted that although they could be recycled, the thickness of these straws prevents them from being processed and recycled. This act evidenced a greenwashing strategy where the company did not think about recycling these straws, but only pretended that they would do it so that consumers feel happy [42]. This event demonstrates the importance of investigating the components of the current materials of our business and the new materials that we want to use to ensure that there is a fundamental change and not fall into greenwashing.

B. Coca-Cola

The famous carbonated drink is a huge company that fell into greenwashing when, to attract more customers with eco-friendly beliefs, it launched a product that, instead of using traditional sugar, used stevia. This product was sold in green Coca-Cola bottles and was accompanied by green marketing with propaganda showing natural elements to show an eco-friendlier image to its consumers. However, the bottles in which they have only 30% vegetable fiber, which does not show enough commitment on the part of the brand for many [50]. This example demonstrates the importance of examining each part of our process and considering all the materials used in production. In the case of Coca-Cola, despite having changed one of the ingredients in its formula for a more natural one, the bottle material that was still contaminating took away much of the credibility of the brand's green image.

Recent Suggested Lectures About Green Approach

- Waste reduction and carbon footprint [28]
- Material selection for circularity and footprints (Morales-[43])
- 3D print, circularity, and footprints [16]

- Virtual tourism [16]
- Leadership for sustainability in crisis time [3]
- Virtual education and circularity [13]
- Circular economy for packaging [5]
- Students oriented to circular learning [18]
- Food and circular economy [14]
- Water footprint and food supply chain management [32]
- Waste footprint [4]
- Measuring circular economy [20]
- Carbon footprint [23].

4 Closing Remarks

It is undeniable that by this time, most companies are clear that they must include green marketing and have been doing it for all these years, some better than others. However, it is essential to understand the efforts of startups to apply green marketing and its effect on their consumers. As it has been mentioned previously, the use of this marketing has multiple benefits in all kinds of business; however, the brands that use it must not fall into using green marketing only for fashion or their benefit, since the use of it for the sole economic purpose will most likely end in negative consequences for the company. Entrepreneurs must be cautious not to fall into greenwashing, as this can seriously affect their reputation and affect how consumers perceive the added value of their products. Moreover, these must be aware of implementing it rightly and presenting it clearly since the reputation of other companies accused of greenwashing can affect them and, therefore, keep them away from success and the advantages of using green marketing.

In recent years, thanks to technology and innovation, many enterprises offer 100% ecological products; thus, their processes and marketing are 100% green. In this context, it is essential for consumers to feel encouraged to buy these products and understand the reasons behind and the fundamental changes your purchase makes. In addition, it is essential to consider purchase intentions and behaviors since, as explained above, these do not always go hand in hand and can be contradictory for entrepreneurs. In this way, strategies can be created, and products adapted so that the intention into a total purchase of the organic product.

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