

Going Green With Your Marketing Without Greenwashing

Today's businesses are not just looking at generating more profits or increasing sales. They are also finding ways to reduce their carbon footprint. That's where green marketing comes in.

Green marketing is an approach to doing business that emphasizes sustainability. The idea is to make the product or service as green as possible.

Here are some examples of what green business looks like: emitting fewer pollutants, carbon offset programs such as planting trees, switching to a paperless office, or making products chemical free and/or recyclable. There are as many approaches to doing business in an environmentally friendly way as there are companies who do it.

However, there can be a dark side to running a so-called green business. Some companies claim they are ecologically friendly, but the reality is their business practices are far from it. These types of companies are engaging in a practice known as greenwashing – that is, presenting a false front of environmentally friendliness, while in reality being an egregious polluter. How do we get around this?

Your Green Business Strategy Has to Be Real

The key to green marketing is to walk the talk. Today's consumer is increasingly sophisticated and expects transparency around business practices. In order to align with green values, and avoid greenwashing, your business must actually be green.



Telling the story of sustainable business practices is as important as doing them, and that's where green marketing shines as a business strategy.

In green marketing, areas such as manufacturing, packaging, transportation and storage take center stage, with businesses trying to identify safe and environmentally-friendly ways to conduct their day-to-day operations.

A New-Age Business Practice

Global regulatory bodies constantly urge businesses to go green. In fact, many of them make it mandatory for companies to incorporate green strategies in their operations. While it is evident that green marketing is the need of the hour, most businesses are actually unsure about the benefits it will bring.

Here are a few reasons why businesses should consider investing their time and money in green marketing:



1 IT HELPS ATTRACT NEW SEGMENTS OF CONSUMERS

Certain groups of consumers may not purchase your products because they are either unhealthy or they are polluting the environment. By improving your production practices and by focusing on the health benefits of your product, you can acquire new customer segments. However, your claims will need to be verifiable and truthful, in order to avoid greenwashing.

2 IT OFFERS A UNIQUE PRODUCT POSITIONING

Customers often consider green products to be of superior-quality, compared to products that aren't marketed as green. Businesses can use this opportunity to position their product in the premium category. They can even charge their customers higher prices to recover the expenses incurred in implementing green practices.

3 MORE PRODUCT INNOVATIONS ARE POSSIBLE

To go green, businesses often have to rework and redesign their manufacturing processes. They may even need to bring in new technology to support this change. These new approaches and technologies give businesses the ability to experiment with product development and add new products to their pipeline.

4 CONSUMER EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT BECOMES EASIER

Green marketing is a relatively new concept. Not all customers may be aware of it. When businesses go green, they can

encourage their customers to go green as well. Additionally, businesses can engage their customers through green marketing initiatives. They can create contests where customers are asked to provide solutions to urgent environmental concerns.

They can also release videos and podcasts to educate customers on using their products in a more environmentally-friendly way.

5 BUSINESSES CAN BECOME MARKET LEADERS AND INFLUENCERS

Implementing green practices will help businesses be product and process innovators, which may give them a much-needed competitive advantage. Soon, they may find themselves creating benchmarks for their competitors to follow. They may even become market leaders.

6 IT INCREASES BRAND VISIBILITY AND BRAND RECALL

Product innovations and unique positioning allow businesses and brands to gain visibility. The more a business implements green practices, the higher its visibility will be. Given that green practices are a newsworthy topic, new PR and marketing opportunities may open up for companies, and these in turn can have a positive impact on brand awareness.

Is Your Business Truly Green, Or Do You Have Some Work To Do?

Green marketing can be a powerful business strategy for aligning with consumer trends and expectations while being a bit friendlier to the planet. The key is to avoid greenwashing by ensuring that your eco-friendly initiatives are truthful, and a shining example for others to follow.

Perhaps sustainable business practices are best summed up by the following: **If you want to make green, then be green.**

