

GREEN MARKETING, BRAND DEVELOPMENT AND DIGITAL STRATEGIES: FORGING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

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Abstract: Today, increased environmental awareness is driving companies to adopt green marketing strategies for competitiveness and sustainability. Originally a niche concept, green marketing plays a central role in corporate sustainability, enhancing image, reputation and consumer perception and providing a unique competitive advantage. Green marketing has become a necessity in line with the global interest in sustainable growth and involves the design, promotion, pricing, and distribution of products that support environmental protection. Much research suggests that companies that promote collaborative networks and environmental awareness are more likely to innovate sustainably, while highlighting the critical role of the 'technology push'. Green marketing, environmental management and sustainability strategies are integrated into business innovation, emphasising the responsible use of environmental resources for economic growth. Supported by digital marketing, companies are implementing targeted strategies, maintaining an online presence, using transparent communication through social media and engaging consumers through online channels, collaborating with digital environmental influencers and implementing sustainable SEO strategies. Indeed, the integration of digital marketing is essential for companies that want to meet the expectations of today's sustainability-conscious consumers. These practices aim to increase the impact of green marketing. First introduced by Lazer in 1969, the evolution of green marketing reflects a paradigm shift towards social and environmental responsibility. The green economy emphasises the responsible use of environmental resources and requires companies to adapt to a changing landscape. Combining environmental sustainability and business ethics, green marketing is the key to achieving green innovation and competitive advantage. Today's digital environment enhances the competitive advantage that green marketing can generate, as it promotes greater visibility of the strong link between marketing activities and the environment. Environmental practices have a positive impact on business performance and image, with long-term benefits in line with Porter's hypothesis. The correlation between technology push and eco-innovation highlights the role of innovative technologies in generating positive environmental outcomes. The internal dimensions of sustainability, driven by employees' environmental behaviour, contribute to organisational trust and identification. In conclusion, green marketing is an integral part of corporate strategies in an era that prioritises sustainability, aligns with consumer values and delivers tangible benefits. Integration with digital marketing increases transparency and interaction, creating a powerful combination and a sustainable competitive advantage in the evolving landscape of digital and sustainable marketing.

Keywords: Green marketing, sustainability, digital marketing, competitive advantage.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's world, environmental concerns have become a top priority, and companies are compelled to adopt green marketing strategies to remain competitive and sustainable (Kautish et al., 2019; Mahmoud, 2019; Onditi, 2016). Green marketing, which was once considered a niche concept, has now become a necessity that companies must embrace to align with the global interest in sustainable growth. It involves the design, promotion, pricing, and distribution of products in a manner that supports environmental protection, playing a crucial role in corporate sustainability. Prioritising ecological balance in operations not only contributes to environmental protection but also enhances corporate image, reputation, and consumer perception, providing a distinct competitive advantage and access to new markets (Cherian et al., 2012; Reddy et al., 2023; Yasir et al., 2020).

Research conducted on a significant number of companies indicates that those with collaborative networks and/or greater environmental awareness are more likely to innovate sustainably. The study highlights the role of 'technology push' as a primary determinant and how the promotion of eco-innovation can generate environmental benefits. Moreover, research indicates that green employee behaviour has an impact on organisational sustainability through trust and organisational identification (Zubeltzu-Jaka et al., 2018). This highlights the internal dimension of sustainability efforts, where employee commitment and actions play a decisive role in achieving and maintaining

environmentally responsible practices within the organisation. The integration of digital marketing has become essential for addressing environmental challenges and communicating with an increasingly connected audience. Strategies such as maintaining a sustainable online presence, transparent communication through social media and websites, green e-commerce, digital engagement through surveys and webinars, collaborations with digital environmental influencers, and sustainable SEO strategies are crucial. These practices not only reinforce the impact of green marketing but also enable companies to adapt to the expectations of modern, sustainability-oriented consumers.

The integration of digital strategies reinforces the impact of green marketing and enables companies to adapt to the expectations of sustainability-oriented consumers. Digital transparency enhances the communication of environmental responsibility, aiding in the development of a positive reputation and distinguishing the company in the competitive marketplace.

2. ORGANISATIONS' RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES

Companies are increasingly viewing the environment as an opportunity to achieve their goals and maintain a competitive advantage by establishing a strong relationship between marketing activities and the environment. The increasing adoption of green marketing strategies, environmental management systems, and the integration of environmental issues into business innovation demonstrate this change (Hang et al., 2019).

The green economy represents a transition to a sustainable development model that emphasizes the responsible use of environmental and natural resources to promote economic growth and improve people's quality of life. In this context, companies must adapt to a volatile and ever-changing business landscape to improve their performance. To successfully navigate the complexities of sustainable business practices, it becomes essential for companies to harness the knowledge and resources of their suppliers and customers. Therefore, the key to success is to leverage the knowledge and resources of suppliers and customers.

In the realm of digital marketing, companies are implementing targeted strategies to convey their environmental dedication and appeal to digital consumers. These strategies include maintaining a sustainable online presence, using social media to communicate transparently and in real-time about sustainability practices, implementing green e-commerce with targeted online advertising campaigns, engaging consumers in their sustainability journey through digital interactions, hosting sustainability-focused webinars and online events, and collaborating with digital environmental influencers.

The increasing pressure from government agencies, consumers, competitors, and other stakeholder groups for companies to behave in an environmentally responsible manner has made environmental sustainability a decisive factor for business growth. Companies are now more aware than ever of the negative impact that changes, largely driven by production processes, can have on both business and the natural environment.

Effective sustainable supply chain management and the creation of a sustainability-oriented corporate culture are crucial for the long-term success of companies in the green economy. Many companies have embraced green innovation as a strategic response to these challenges, to achieve their goals of environmental protection and economic growth. Green marketing has become popular as a crucial part of corporate strategy, providing a competitive advantage by aligning corporate practices with environmental responsibility.

In conclusion, organisations are increasingly integrating green marketing, environmental management, and sustainability strategies into business innovation, viewing the environment as an opportunity rather than just a challenge. The use of digital marketing is crucial in effectively communicating these commitments and adapting to the expectations of consumers who are increasingly focused on sustainability.

3. THE EVOLUTION OF GREEN MARKETING

Green marketing was first introduced by Lazer in 1969 as a dimension of social marketing. Over the years, the concept has evolved. In 2008, Kotler et al. defined green marketing as an approach that meets the needs of current consumers and companies while preserving or improving the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This evolution reflects a paradigm shift from a profit-oriented approach to one that emphasizes social and environmental responsibility.

In Italy, green marketing is considered a vital tool to overcome challenges and emerge from crises by mobilising the country's best resources. The Italian cultural and economic context, combined with the growing awareness of environmental issues, makes green marketing a strategic choice for companies to contribute to broader social and environmental objectives.

The green economy represents a shift towards a sustainable development model, utilising environmental resources responsibly to foster economic growth and enhance people's quality of life. To achieve success, companies must adapt to a volatile and ever-changing business landscape. It is essential to leverage the knowledge and resources of

suppliers and customers on this journey. The green economy emphasises the responsible use of environmental resources and requires companies to adapt to a changing business landscape (Hang et al., 2019). This adaptation involves harnessing the knowledge and resources of suppliers and customers, which is essential to navigate the complexities of sustainable business practices.

The need for companies to adopt environmentally responsible practices has increased due to pressure from various stakeholders, making sustainability essential for business growth. To achieve environmental protection goals and promote economic growth, many companies have embraced green innovation, making green marketing an integral part of corporate strategy.

4. CSR, REPUTATION AND GREEN MARKETING

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies have become increasingly important for companies as they aim to enhance their corporate image and achieve success. Such policies focus on social and environmental initiatives, which contribute to a positive brand image and leave lasting impressions on consumers. Research has shown that consumers unconsciously process CSR information, leading to positive attitudes towards the brand (Ramesh et al., 2019). In the current global business landscape, intensified by globalization, brand development is crucial to stand out (Zameer et al., 2020). Companies can generate a positive brand perception among consumers by developing a CSR policy.

Consumers worldwide are increasingly focusing their attention on environmental issues and sustainable consumption, recognizing the impact of their behaviour on the planet. Brands that promote environmental responsibility align with consumer values, leading to positive responses. Green marketing effectively communicates a company's environmental commitment, responding to the needs of environmentally conscious consumers who increasingly seek brands that reflect their values. Therefore, the integration of CSR, green marketing and digital marketing strategies is essential for companies aiming to build a solid reputation and maintain a competitive edge. CSR provides an ethical foundation, while green marketing conveys environmental efforts. Digital marketing amplifies these initiatives by reaching a wide online audience.

In conclusion, in today's digital landscape, the development of a robust CSR, combined with green marketing strategies and the effective use of digital marketing, becomes the springboard for a positive and sustainable corporate image in the long term.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies are important for shaping a positive brand image and demonstrating a company's commitment to social and environmental well-being (Alhalalmeh et al., 2020; Afiuc et al., 2020). The digital world offers companies an expanded platform to communicate and amplify their CSR initiatives. Companies can use social media channels to share real-time updates on their sustainability practices, promoting transparency and accountability (Kotler et al., 2008). Optimising online content for search engines can improve visibility and shape a positive narrative around a company's commitment to sustainability (Chahal et al., 2014). E-commerce platforms can be utilised to promote and sell environmentally friendly products. Online advertising campaigns can be targeted towards eco-conscious consumers (Shaukat et al., 2022). Digital interactions, such as online surveys and reviews, enable companies to engage consumers in their sustainability journey, fostering a sense of community (Mukonza et al., 2020). Webinars and online events focused on sustainability can be conducted, using digital channels to educate and engage a wider audience (Tang et al., 2018). Collaborating with environmental influencers can enhance a company's green initiatives' credibility by utilizing their online reach and public trust (Tang et al., 2018).

5. GREEN MARKETING, CUSTOMER ORIENTATION AND DIGITAL STRATEGIES: AN INTEGRATED VISION

In today's environmentally conscious world, companies must implement green marketing strategies to remain competitive and sustainable (Kautish et al., 2019; Mahmoud, 2019; Onditi, 2016). This evolution from an once niche concept to a business necessity is crucial to align with the global interest in sustainable growth.

Research indicates that companies with collaborative networks and environmental awareness are more likely to innovate sustainably. The concept of green marketing orientation was developed to understand how companies can maintain a competitive advantage by combining environmental sustainability and business ethics. Adopting a green marketing orientation is essential for achieving green innovation and gaining a competitive advantage in green marketing performance. This requires a focus on various dimensions such as green innovation, processes, and the green supply chain. Companies that adopt this approach recognise the importance of not only satisfying customer needs but also considering the environmental impact of their marketing activities. The development of sustainable strategies and products that effectively address environmental issues is necessary (Rajadurai et al., 2021; Shaukat et al., 2022). In the digital marketing landscape, a green orientation translates into targeted strategies that leverage

digital platforms to communicate sustainability efforts effectively. Companies are developing a sustainable online presence and using social media for transparency and real-time communication on sustainability practices (Ar, 2012).

In addition to meeting the needs of traditional customers, companies must also consider the environmental impact of their marketing activities in the digital age. This requires the development of sustainable strategies and products that address environmental issues, considering the growing expectations of sustainability-oriented digital consumers.

Green marketing in the digital sphere not only meets consumer expectations but also offers a competitive advantage. Adopting a marketing orientation through green innovation is considered a crucial strategic decision. Offering products with specific values and green attributes provides significant differentiation from competitors, establishing a relationship between digital marketing activities and the environment (Wang, 2019). The green marketing orientation, which is crucial for maintaining a competitive advantage, involves combining environmental sustainability and business ethics. This approach, which includes aspects such as green innovation, green processes, and green supply chain, is essential for achieving green innovation and excelling in green marketing performance (Chahal et al., 2014; Papadas et al., 2017). Companies need to consider the environmental impacts of their marketing activities while meeting customer needs. The development of sustainable strategies and products that address environmental issues is necessary.

Green marketing has emerged as an essential approach in the overall marketing landscape. It aims to meet the needs of today's consumers and businesses while preserving or improving the environment for future generations. In this context, a green marketing orientation has become a key component for companies seeking to maintain a competitive advantage and promote green innovation. Adopting a marketing orientation through green innovation is recognised as a critical strategic choice for organisations that aim to create unique products that resonate with environmentally conscious consumers. Offering products with specific values and the benefits of green attributes provides a competitive advantage over competitors by establishing a deep relationship between marketing activities and the environment. In conclusion, green marketing is essential to meet current consumer and business needs while preserving or improving the environment for future generations. A green marketing orientation is crucial for companies that want to maintain a competitive advantage and promote green innovation. Adopting a marketing orientation through green innovation is a strategic choice that enables organisations to create unique products for environmentally conscious consumers.

Companies must consider the environmental impacts of their marketing activities in the digital age while meeting the needs of traditional customers. The development of sustainable strategies and products that address environmental issues is necessary, considering the growing expectations of sustainability-oriented digital consumers. Green marketing in the digital sphere not only meets consumer expectations but also offers a competitive advantage. Adopting a marketing orientation through green innovation is recognised as a critical strategic choice. Providing products with specific values and green attributes offers a significant advantage over competitors, establishing a strong connection between digital marketing activities and the environment (Wang, 2019).

6. POSITIVE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES ON CORPORATE IMAGE AND PERFORMANCE

Recent studies have shown that environmental practices have a positive impact on corporate performance and image (Hang et al., 2019). While improved environmental performance may not result in immediate financial benefits, companies can benefit significantly in the long run, aligning with Porter's hypothesis. Companies use green marketing strategically to enhance their corporate image and overall performance. Green marketing is perceived by consumers as a company's commitment to developing better methods of pollution prevention and more efficient use of energy. Research, such as that conducted by Mukonza et al. (2020), indicates a correlation between green marketing strategies and a positive impact on corporate image and business performance. Empirical evidence suggests that environmental practices have a positive impact on corporate performance and image (Hang et al., 2019). Although an increase in environmental performance may not result in immediate financial benefits, companies can achieve significant long-term gains, which aligns with Porter's hypothesis. Green marketing strategies can enhance a company's image and business performance by demonstrating a commitment to developing better pollution prevention methods and more efficient energy use. According to Mukonza et al. (2020), research shows a correlation between green marketing strategies and positive impacts on corporate image and performance.

The correlation between technology push and eco-innovation is a key aspect highlighted by various studies. The adoption of innovative technologies is considered the primary determinant in driving eco-innovation, leading to environmental benefits. This emphasises the role of technological advances in driving positive environmental outcomes through innovation. In addition to external strategies, internal dimensions of sustainability are equally significant. Organisational sustainability is influenced by green employee behaviour through trust and organisational

identification (Zubeltzu-Jaka et al., 2018). Therefore, it is important to foster a culture of sustainability within companies, where employees actively contribute and identify with environmentally responsible practices. Internally, the environmentally responsible behaviour of employees has a significant impact on the sustainability of the organization. According to Zubeltzu-Jaka et al. (2018), employee engagement in environmentally responsible practices establishes organizational trust and identification. It is essential to promote a culture of sustainability in which employees actively contribute to and identify with environmentally responsible practices.

7. CONCLUSION

Green marketing has become a crucial aspect of corporate strategies in an era where sustainability is a global priority. Companies that adopt green marketing not only align themselves with emerging consumer values but also achieve tangible benefits in terms of corporate image, reputation, and access to new markets.

Green marketing strategies are not limited to traditional communication practices but also embrace the rapidly evolving digital landscape. Through online channels, companies can transparently communicate their sustainability initiatives and engage consumers in environmental responsibility. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) becomes a powerful tool when synergistically integrated with green marketing strategies, shaping a positive and sustainable reputation.

Green innovation is a key driver for success in green marketing. The adoption of innovative technologies and eco-innovation can improve environmental performance and offer opportunities for differentiation and competitive advantage. Additionally, employee commitment and green behaviour are critical for organisational sustainability, creating an internal culture of environmental responsibility.

Ultimately, green marketing is not only an ethical approach but also a strategic necessity. Companies that adopt sustainable practices not only benefit the planet, but also establish a more sustainable future for themselves. This builds a stronger connection with environmentally conscious consumers and provides a lasting competitive advantage.

In conclusion, integrating green marketing with digital marketing strategies can be a powerful strategic choice. The integration of sustainable practices into the online sales process, the creation of a sustainable online narrative, and the active participation of digital consumers through online interactions can contribute to a sustainable competitive advantage in the digital landscape.

To thrive in the evolving landscape of digital and sustainable marketing, companies must stay ahead of the curve by adopting new technologies and green innovations. It is crucial to communicate their environmental efforts transparently and authentically. The integration of green marketing orientation and digital marketing strategies is the key to success in a sustainable future. In conclusion, the integration of green marketing with digital marketing strategies can be a powerful strategic choice. This can be achieved through the creation of a sustainable online narrative, active participation of digital consumers through online interactions, and the integration of sustainable practices into the online sales process. Such integration can contribute to a sustainable competitive advantage in the digital landscape.

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