



CONSUMERS PERCEPTION ON GREEN ADVERTISING

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Abstract

Green is slowly and steadily becoming the symbolic colour of eco consciousness in the world. The emergence of Green in every area of management has been the latest development achieved by the organizations. Green Advertising, an effective promotional tool in the process of Green marketing has achieved good amount of success in influencing the people to be environmental conscious and managing that the company's products are environmentally friendly. Since from its emergence, the concept has received considerable amount of success as majority of big companies are going green and creating eco friendly atmosphere through green advertising. The challenges are awaiting as the initial success in green advertising is ready to face the hurdles. Hence, the present paper is a research based paper which gives the impact of green advertising and how the companies are adopting this promotional form by effectively targeting on giving education about the environment as well as selling their products and services which are said to be eco friendly.

1.1). Introduction

Green is presently the emerging concern in every sector and in every area of the world. Because of the high environmental concerns in the last few years, the world is concentrating on green and its significance in the individual and organization's life cycle is growing rapidly. Apart from governments and environmental organizations, presently the businesses are also increasingly getting into the act and offering "green" alternatives. In organizations, the green became the latest saga in different areas in management. Presently, many business organizations are offering environmental products, organic and natural personal care products, environmentally preferable building products. Apart from these products, some agencies are offering green and eco friendly services which are attracting more in the recent past.

Green also emerged in many areas in management. Green is the latest strategy for many companies. The recruiters are adopting green strategies by practicing green recruitment. The production and R&D departments are concentrating on bringing green products. The Banks like State Bank of India(SBI) are presently concentrating on Green Financing by launching and financing "Clean Development Mechanism(CDM) projects. Many finance corporations are offering equity and debt opportunities in renewable energy. SIDBI(Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been engaged with several international partners and has been proactive in assimilating international best practices in green financing.

The green is playing an important role in the Marketing management also. The Green Marketing and Green Advertising are the latest sensations in Marketing Management. The more number of Green Advertisements are showing the importance of Green for the organizations and are also creating social awareness in the minds of the people.

Green is the new treasure for the marketers. As the consumer are keen to use more eco-friendly products and are willing to pay a premium price for the green products, the marketers found the opportunity to grab the market with green marketing and green advertising strategies.

1.2). Green and its importance

Green is a colour which represents eco friendly. The Colour Green has lot of importance and is historically used in different diversified areas. Green is closely related to the Old English verb 'growan', which means "to grow" and in United States of America, green is a slang term for money. For some cultures green symbolizes hope and growth. Green is considered as the traditional color of Islam, as it expects paradise to be full of lush greenery. The perception of greenness is evoked by light which triggers the medium- wavelength M cone cells in the eye more than the long wavelength L cones. In areas that use the U.S. Dollar as currency, green carries a connotation of money, wealth, and capitalism, because green is the color of United States banknotes, giving rise to the slang term green back for cash. Several countries use green on their flags for symbolic or cultural reasons. Many flags of the Islamic world and several African countries are green in colour. And green is very common in nature, as many plants are green because of a complex chemical known as chlorophyll which is involved in photosynthesis.

1.3). Concept of Green Marketing and Green Advertising

Green Marketing is the latest concept which has gained momentum in the last few years. Green marketing connotes and underlying concern for preservation of the environment and planet and is viewed as a tool for sustainable development.



According to American Marketing Association, Green Marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. The green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. Environmental Marketing and Ecological Marketing are the other terms used to represent the Green Marketing. Green marketing is the strategy for the marketers to sell the products and/or services based on their environmental benefits. Normally such a product or service may be environmentally friendly in it or produced and or packaged in an environmentally friendly way.

The assumption of green marketing is that potential consumers will view a product or service's "greenness" as a benefit and base their buying decision accordingly. The concept of green marketing is rising rapidly and the acceptance from the point of view of consumers is highly increased in the recent past.

The marketers adopting Green Marketing strategy is mainly based on two important objectives.

They include:

1. Improved environmental quality
2. Customer Satisfaction.

The important promotional technique that is helping the marketers to implement or adopt Green Marketing is the promoting the goods or services through "Green Advertising.

1.4). Concept of Green Advertising

Green Advertising is one of the important tools in Green Marketing. Green Advertising is the process of promoting the company's goods and services showing the eco friendly usage and environmental consciousness about the company and as well as its products and services.

Green Advertising meets one or more of the following criteria:

- a). Explicitly or implicitly addresses the relationship between a product/service and the biophysical environment.
- b). Promotes a green lifestyle with or without highlighting a product/service.
- c). Presents a corporate image of environmental responsibility.

Green advertisements focus on the relationship between a product/service and its biophysical environment. The marketers concentrate on promoting green lifestyle and through the advertisements, the marketers promote the image of a company or its products as being environment-friendly. The green advertising is a rapidly implemented marketing strategy by the companies to persuade green message to the target consumers so as to create attention, awareness and interest about making a contribution towards protecting the environment. Through Green Advertising the companies are creating the brand image and at the same time the companies are also showing their consciousness on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by concentrating on planet through educating and inspiring the customers and viewers about the importance of environment protection and saving the planet.

2). Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the paper is to examine the importance and effectiveness of Green Advertising in the corporate world in India. The following objectives fulfill the primary objective.

1. To know the emergence and importance of Green Advertising
2. To examine the consumers perception on Green Advertisements
3. To study the companies implementing Green Advertising
4. To study the challenges of green Advertising.

And finally to provide conclusions and suggestions on the basis of the analysis made on the study.

3). Methodology of the Study

The required data for the Study is based on both the sources of the data. The primary data is collected from a sample of 50 consumers, who are the users of Green products and also the viewers of Green Advertisements. The analysis is made on the basis of the data obtained through a structured questionnaire. And the Secondary data is collected from News Papers, journals, magazines and internet.

4.1). Emergence of Green Advertising

The emergence of Green Advertising has a long history. The Earth Day which was first called on April 22, 1970 gave foundation for the Green Advertising. In US and in many other countries began to show their concern for commitment on



environmental issues. And after the incidents during 1980s further increased the environmental movement.

The Year 1984 considered to be one of the very bad days for India. The Bhopal disaster or Bhopal Gas Tragedy, the world's worst industrial catastrophe occurred on the night of December 2-3, 1984 at Union Carbide India Limited, Bhopal. The Bhopal Gas incident created the need of environmental concerns from the organizations. Apart from this Chernobyl and Exxon Valdez disasters happened in the different parts of the world resulted in environmental movement gained in strength. Companies started to build ecofriendly environment through maintenance of greenery and safe measures, green products which are created from the nature and the policies which they are implementing were done in green way. Green wash advertisements became more numerous and more sophisticated, peaking in 1990 on the 20th anniversary of Earth day. In response to the phenomenon, the corporate world went to great lengths to market and promotes itself and its products as the greenest of the green. Recyclable products and green advertising which is showing the importance of environmental concern is increased rapidly in the 21st century.

4.2). Importance of Green Advertising in the Corporate World

Consumers' interest at today is more focused on echo friendly things and activities. Many companies and industries are looking into the idea of going green which can help them to concentrate on consumer more as he is showing interest in everything that is green, in food, echo friendly appliances, organic food and even paying attention to greenery environment. The consumers are showing concern about environment as the green movement succeeded in influencing people to think on greenness. The green movement led by the public and government created forming of ideas to the marketers to think on green marketing. The green advertising is an important tool in the green marketing which created a strong image in the minds of consumers that the company's products are echo friendly and the green advertisements which are showing the company's products in a echo friendly backdrop and giving the advantage of a particular product contributing to the greenery or environment was heartfully accepted.

Now, many companies in India are successfully created a different type of image for their products through Green Advertising. They are showing their dedication through advertisements which are depicting greenery in the back drop ,farms and fields and even trees, animals are also became part in advertisements.

The companies' campaign through Green Advertising also created a belief in the minds of customers. The companies are mainly emphasizing on the following issues to influence the customers through green advertising. They are:

1. The company's products are echo friendly and are not been made great harm to the environment during process of bringing the output.
2. Their products are energy efficient
3. The company focus on giving publicity that they will reduce all the emissions like CO,CO₂ across all their manufacturing sites
4. The company is more dedicative in creating a green world with their products.
5. The advertising copy prepared by the companies will be mainly focused on Green backdrop in the form of Green Logos, messages appearing in Green colour and even, the ads will be focused on giving message that through their products, the protection can be possible.

5.1). Consumers' perception on Green Advertising

Perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information. It is the process by which physical sensations are selected, organized and interpreted to provide some meaning. Consumer's perception on Green advertising is about the consumers' consciousness about green advertisements, their views and imaginations and also includes selectivity.

Based on the field survey on 50 sample respondents, the following results were obtained.

Table:1,Awareness about Green Advertising

S.No.	Type of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1.	Yes	23	46%
2.	No	27	54%
	Total	50	100%

Source : Primary Data



From the survey on consumers perception on Green Advertising which is made on 50 consumers, the result is found to be 46% of the respondents were answered “Yes” which shows that they have the awareness about the concept of Green Advertising adopted by the companies and 54% of the respondents answered “No” which shows that they do not have the awareness about “Green Advertising”.

5.2). Consumers’ understandability of underlying concept of Green Advertisements

Table:2,Consumers’ understandability of Green Advertisements

S.No.	Type of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1.	Yes	31	62%
2.	No	19	38%
	Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that the majority of the respondents answered “Yes” to the understandability of underlying concept of Green Advertisements. This shows that the consumers are in a position to understand the usability of the company’s products from green advertisements.

5.3). Consumers believe in Green claims in advertisements

Table:3

S.No.	Type of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage(%)
1.	Always believe	12	24%
2.	Some times believe	32	64%
3.	Never believe	10	20%
	Total	50	100%

Source : Primary Data

5.4). Consumers’ perception on the themes of the Green Advertisements

Table No.4

S.No.	Type of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Recyclable	8	16%
2.	Environmental greenness	10	20%
3.	Purity and protection to the health	24	48%
4.	Social Well beingness	8	16
	Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

From the table & Graph, it is to be concluded 48% of the respondents favoured to the theme which gives the message of Purity and protection to the health .

5.5). Consumers perception on visual representation of Green Advertisements

Table No.5

S.No.	Type of Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Natural landscapes	24	48%
2.	Green backdrop in logos and fonts	6	12%
3.	Animals and Pets	16	48%
4.	Message appearing in Green	4	8%
	Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data



From the table & graph, it is observed that more sample respondents have opined that “natural landscapes” is the likable visual representation from Green Advertisements. The next important visual representation in the Green Advertisements is the “Animals and pets”.

5.6). Consumers’ perception on moral impact of Green Advertising

The following table shows the perception of consumers on different factors which include moral impact of Green Advertising.

Table No.6

S.No.	Factors considered	Yes	No	Can't Say	Total
1.	Green advertising exploiting the environmental issues	15 (30%)	20 (40%)	5 (10%)	50 (100%)
2.	Environmental concerns through advertisements persuade to buy products which they do not really need	38 (76%)	10 (20%)	2 (4%)	50 (100%)

S.No.	Factors considered	Yes	No	Can't Say	Total
3.	Green advertising is resulting in higher prices for products	35 (70%)	14 (28%)	1 (2%)	50 (100%)
4.	Always prefer to view green advertisements because of the message of environmentally-friendly objective in the advertisement	39 (78%)	10 (20%)	1 (2%)	50 (100%)
5.	Companies using green advertising are trustable	15 (30%)	25 (50%)	10 (20%)	50 (100%)
6.	Green advertising is for the benefit of people In knowing environmental problems	37 (74%)	11 (22%)	2 (4%)	50 (50%)
7.	Green advertising is a gimmick	36 (72%)	10 (20%)	4 (8%)	50 (100%)
8.	Green Marketing results in the effective growth in the Greenery in the environment	39 (78%)	8 (16%)	3 (6%)	50 (100%)

Source : Primary Data

6.Companies implementing Green Advertising

Companies implementing Green advertisements as a promotional strategy are increasing in India. The target for the companies is to create awareness in the minds of customers that the company’s products are eco friendly and are giving the message of going green to protect the environment.

The following is the list of some companies using the concept of Green in their Advertising.

Table No.7

S.No.	Name of the Company	Type of Product/Service	Slogan	Message
1.	Panasonic Company Limited	Air conditioner and eco ideas	Ideas for life	Eco friendly product capable of producing natural air
2.	Videocon Company Limited	Durable Electronic Goods	Experience change	Green movement and ecological drive that gives the feeling of living in the nature.



S.No.	Name of the Company	Type of Product/ Service	Slogan	Message
3.	Petroleum Conservation and Research Association (PCRA)	Research association	Save Fuel – Yaani save money	By implementing better consuming plans can result in saving oil conservation.
4.	Hindustan Unilever Limited	Bathing Soap – LifeBuoy	For Family health	By using the soap, the people can get the awareness of serving the society by having the protection of Lifebuoy soaps advantage.
5.	Hindustan UniLever Limited	Surf Excel – Detergent	It can save water	The detergent needs less consumption of water and protect from heavy usage for cleaning clothes.
6.	Idea Cellular Limited	Idea Sim Card	Use Mobile. Save paper	Using Idea connected mobile can help in sharing information and helps in less consumption of paper which will benefit the country for preserving the trees.
7.	Bisleri India Limited	Bisleri Water Bottle	The sweet taste of Purity	The water contains the purity minerals and taste which is a natural collection from origin of mountains.
8.	Samsung India Private Limited	Samsung Solar Guru #1107	World's first solar phone	1 hour of solar charging can give around 10 minutes of talk time
9.	Tata Tea Limited	Tata's Tetley Green Tea	Wellbeing in every sip	Tetley Green tea can bring all the joy of feeling the nature

7.Challenges of Green Advertising

Green Advertising is the emerging Advertising strategy adopted by the companies to market their products and services. Though the concept of Green advertising was accepted by the customers and consumers rapidly and at the same time, the Green Advertising is facing the challenges which will be soon or later create hurdles to the companies and marketers.

The important challenges for Green advertising are:

1. As the consumers' interest on environmental issues grown, the companies used it as the strategy to promote their products in an environmental friendly way. But, how long can the companies follow with these green advertising is a question mark for the companies.
2. The essence of the primary usage of a product is decreasing as the advertisements are blindly focusing on the usage of the product for ecological advantage.
3. The average public's understandability of green advertisements is also a challenge to the companies to create in such a way that the public can easily interpret it.
4. In India, some green advertisements showing the nature in the advertisements are of mainly graphical



representation. Such creations may not effectively influence the people who are very keen of greenness and nature.

5. If the Green Advertisements are not shown in accurate and defensible claims, it will result in misleading, inaccurate message which further leads to strong consumer dissatisfaction.
6. Being genuine, educating the customers and showing the features of a product or service with green advertising are often a big task for the advertisers.
7. Green advertising should show effectively about the company's responsibility to the nation. The company's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) can be successfully taught through Green Advertising but this is a big challenge to the companies.
8. Companies should not be trapped to the present boom of Green Marketing and Green Advertising. It may result in Green Marketing myopia.

Conclusions

From the study of "Consumers Perception on Green Advertising", the following conclusions are observed.

1. Green is the symbol of purity and ecofriendly. Increasing awareness in the recent past on environment protection has created a strong awareness in the minds of customers to think, observe and trust green advertising.
2. Being an important tool in the Green Marketing Strategy, companies are benefiting by the present boom as the consumers and people are more aware of ecological benefits.
3. The industrial disasters in 1970's and 80's resulted in companies showing importance on providing ecofriendly practices and thus the concept of Green marketing and Green Advertising was developed.
4. Consumers are well aware of the Green Advertisements and they sometimes believe in the originality showed in the advertisements. The companies were not reached upto the mark to influence with Green Advertisements.
5. Customers give more priority to purity and protection to the health from green advertising. And also customers are strongly supporting to the view that green advertising will benefit to solve the environmental problems and are trustable.
6. The number of companies showing or telecasting the Green Advertisements are increasing in India. Big companies like Videocon, HULL, and Idea are adopting Green Advertising as an effective promotional tool to market their products.
7. Green Advertising is also causing challenges to the companies. The consumers' interest is rising on eco friendly advertisements and at the same time the companies are concentrating more on graphical representations than the natural offering in the advertisements. This development is leading to an artificial atmosphere in the advertisements.
8. Public's understandability about the Green Advertisements is not reached up to the mark.
9. Educating and encouraging to purchase eco friendly goods and services are the main goals for good green advertising.

8.Suggestions

The following are the suggestions have been made from the analysis.

The Green Advertising is an instance success in the market and there is a strong relation between the environmental activities and the green advertising strategies. But the companies are still lacking the punch of creating high influence in the market with green advertising. Being genuine in the process of creating better brand awareness about the eco friendly usage is going to be the strong deciding factor in the long run.

The green color, green labels, raw material renewability, efficient production processes, recyclability and green life style creates perfect platform for green advertising and hence reduces the burden to the marketers. Higher number of advertising exposures can also lead to stronger persuasion effects. Effective innovative design in the advertisements will educate and motivate the customers to consciously work towards protecting the environment. And this practice will definitely benefit the companies to increase its sales. Hence, the green advertising initially creates a good brand image to the company's products and services but in the long run, the company's commitment and dedication to the green culture and customer's satisfaction & trust are the deciding factors which can decide the fate of green advertising and green strategies of the companies.

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