

# Exploring the Go Green Mantra in India

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## Abstract

Ecological concerns are evolving and diffusing throughout society. People are becoming highly aware about the environment and are changing their behavior patterns. Consumers are sending out strong environmental signals through their purchase patterns. As a result, Green Consumerism is on the rise all over the globe. New Green marketing techniques are being undertaken by the "Eco-Marketers" in smoothening the transition towards a more 'Green' mindset. GOING GREEN has become the mantra of marketing. Green Marketing is being adopted on a continuum - On one hand it is being adopted by companies as a holistic concept in each and every aspect of their business; on the other hand Green Washing is being practiced by many companies who are only using it to portray a more environmentally conscious image. This paper presents an overview of green marketing concepts, explores various drivers of green brand equity, motivations behind green product innovation and scrutinize the sustainability of various key green marketing initiatives undertaken all over the country. We find out the various opportunities and threats for Green Marketing by comparing the Indian example with the rest of the world. We also link the concept of green marketing with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

**Keywords:** Go Green, Green Brand Equity, Green Marketing, Green Products

## 1. Introduction

Like, Greenpeace says - We exist because this fragile earth deserves a voice. It needs solutions. It needs change. It needs action! Environmental problems such as climate change, scarcity of resources, destruction of habitats, ozone depletion, alarming levels of pollution across the globe are exceeding the worst case scenarios and given the state of our empathies and concern to the size of task we have at hand - it seems like that we are watching a tsunami coming and our global leaders are discussing which type of swimming costume to try on. Al Gore's documentary - An Inconvenient Truth - along the series of global and national environmental disasters like BP Oil Spill, Japan Tsunami, Uttarakhand Floods, frequent Droughts in various parts of India etc - brought forth a level of public disclosure and interest that it re-molded the role of environmental protection in every citizen's life : from an infrequent conversation to a moral obligation. This has put pressure on corporations all over

the world as they have been identified as one of the key causes of climate change and environmental problems. From the various responsible quarters all over the world, same message are being resonated - POLLUTER PAYS! The time for change is here. Go Green Movement is here. And it is here to stay. Consumers all over the world have spoken and they are becoming increasingly concerned about the environment and are changing their behavior and are expecting companies to do the same. There is an ever mounting research and data showcasing a tectonic shift in consumer mindset from conventional to sustainable products and services. As a consequence of this shift green marketing has transpired, which is addressing the growing market for sustainable and socially responsible product offerings. Defining green marketing is not a straightforward task due to the intersection and contradiction of many meanings attached to this term. United Nations Environment Programme defines it as a "marketing which encompasses all communication operation undertaken to promote a product on the basis of its environmental properties or all its social qualities it is about

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selling products on an ethical platform". While the shift to providing green market offerings as well as buying green market offerings might appear expensive in the short term, it will give various benefits over an extended period of time. Nowadays more companies, embracing a proactive approach, have turned their regard towards environmental sustainability. As a result, green marketing is becoming a widespread feature of advertising communique such as "eco", "environmentally friendly", "green", "sustainability", "reducing footprint", "energy efficient", "earth friendly", etc. Growing number of companies have recognized that all the outputs of the production process whether product, by-product or waste as well as the process itself needs to be managed with utmost efficiency in order to reduce costs as well as their footprint. They need to make the product green through innovation, find out the use of some by-products which would reduce their footprints on the environment and aim to manage 100% of the waste produced, either by reducing it, reusing it or recycling it.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

Following are the objectives of the study:

- 1 To provide an understanding of the concept of green marketing.
- 2 To understand the opportunities and barriers for green marketing in India.
- 3 To understand the current scenario of Green Marketing in India by studying the various examples of companies on a green continuum.
- 4 To understand the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and studying various green initiatives taken by corporates under CSR.
- 5 To point out certain easy to implement ways for corporates for "greening" their businesses.

## 3. Methodology/Approach

The paper presents a conceptual framework of Green Marketing in India. It explains the various opportunities and barriers for green marketing in India. By citing various examples of green initiatives and green washing by companies, paper explains how green marketing concept is being adopted by the companies on a continuum.

## 4. Literature Review

Chase<sup>11</sup> says that that many consumers express general concerns about the environment and that some purchase decisions are influenced by perceptions of the environmental friendliness of the product. One of the pioneers of green marketing literature, Jacquelyn Ottman in her book titled "Green Marketing: Challenges and Opportunities for the New Marketing Age" states that environmentally conscious consumers can be defined "as those who actively seek out products perceived as having relatively minimal impact on the environment,... they are educated, affluent, mainstream and represent the most desirable of consumer target markets". Marketers should seek out these consumers which are shaping a new trend called "environmental consumerism," where individuals attempt to "safeguard" themselves and the planet by purchasing "environmentally friendly" products and leaving non-green products on the shelves<sup>5,7</sup>. Recently as well (Ken Peattie, 2010) sought to identify, analyze and understand the "green consumer" and tries to provide a more holistic picture of the green consumption as a process.<sup>13,14</sup> Have conducted multitudes of research on green marketing, drivers of Green Brand Equity, Green product Development as well as Green wash and it's perceived risk. Their research is aimed at combining all the marketing, branding and strategic management concepts with "Green" and develops a comprehensive research framework in the field of Green Marketing<sup>13,14,15,17</sup>. Papista and Krystallis<sup>4</sup> Provides an understanding on the factors that determine the relationship development process between a consumer and a green brand, thus fulfilling an identified gap in the green consumer behavior literature. In context of India, there is a dearth of research on the topic. (Thakar et al., 2009) Concluded that green marketing of automobiles is attracting consumers from both urban as well as rural segment. They also appear to be ready, to pay a marginal extra price for obtaining a green automobile. Mishra and Sharma<sup>6</sup> Mention that the development of green marketing has opened the door of opportunity for companies to co-brand their products into separate line, lauding the green-friendliness of some while ignoring that of others. As a result of this businesses have increased their rate of targeting consumers who are concerned about the environment. Chaudhary<sup>2</sup> Concluded that Green marketing should not neglect the economic aspect of marketing and by widening and deepening the meaning of green, relevant factors will have an economic incentive to pursue

green product development. We try to bridge the literature gap in various areas, introducing new topics like green brand equity, green product innovation and linking green marketing with CSR as well as providing “greening” ideas for the businesses.

## 5. Green Marketing: Basic Concept

American Marketing Association defines Green Marketing as ‘marketing of products that are considered to be environmentally safe.’ But that is not it. According to our views it is better explained by Polonsky<sup>10</sup> - Green or environmental marketing consists of all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment<sup>10</sup>. If we go in and try to develop Green Marketing Mix for Companies, it would look a little bit like this:

### 5.1 Green Products

Green products are “those that use recyclable materials, minimal wastage, and reduce the use of water, save energy, have minimal packaging, and emit less toxic substances.” defined by Nimse<sup>8</sup>. Simply stated, these products should benefit the environment and not harm it. In scrutinizing the sustainability of a product, the consumer should adopt a threefold approach- how the raw materials were sourced, components used and how the product was manufactured. Firstly, products can be using all genuine, organic inputs or more environmentally friendly materials. Secondly, components or raw materials should be sourced from local or fair trade suppliers. Starbucks and Ben and Jerry’s are known worldwide for sourcing their ingredients through Fair Trade. Thirdly, employing lean manufacturing and disbursement techniques which will reduce company’s ecological footprint as well as result in cost savings. A unique example of green design creativity is of Levi’s waste less jeans which repurposes over 3.5 million recycled pet plastic bottles to manufacture jeans. By enticing the consumers to recycle or purchase and use eco-friendly products, consumers can become part of this green cycle. This phenomenon is called Green Consumerism. Consumers are the ones who have the ultimate power to accept or reject an effort, which can either be towards or away from a green future.

Ogilvy Earth in their study titled “Mainstream Green”, divided and subdivided the green consumers on the level of their “green intensity”. They found that around 66% of the Americans had medium green intensity which serves as a huge potential for marketers<sup>21</sup>.

If we try to apply this in the Indian Scenario, there are no widespread surveys conducted so far to survey and segment the Indian Green consumers but given the recent trends shown by Google for Internet searches relating to Green Marketing, India is at the top.

### 5.2 Green Pricing

Green product offerings are generally on the premium side of the pricing continuum. This situation can be attributed to the higher priced raw materials being used in the product or higher labor costs being incurred in the manufacture of the product. This creates a price gap between prevailing products and those that are sustainable, which is often referred to as the ‘Green pricing gap’.

What is necessary to induce customers to buy and use greener products is – to show them some benefits which can be derived from their use – like they can save money by using energy efficient lighting or by driving a hybrid or electric car they can save their fuel bill, saving on their electricity bill by using solar powered appliances, etc— which will go a long way in reducing this gap.

### 5.3 Green Place

Place in marketing refers to a brick and mortar store or virtual store which is present for customers to access. Amazon is probably one of the best examples in this area with practically no physical presence it is green in its origin. However this virtual model cannot be adopted by every business to in order to seem more sustainable, some retailers, like Walmart are building more energy efficient buildings, using substitute fuels in transportation, cutting back on their packaging, etc.

### 5.4 Green Promotion

This aspect is most often and rigorously used by companies to project a sustainable image onto the consumers. However, they should tread carefully while adopting various green promotion tactics as if any false claims are made it can have adverse effect for the organization. In recent times, Nike made a novel attempt by making a 100% recycled television advertisement as part of their “Better World” campaign using footage from earlier

campaigns. This not only saved them millions of dollars but earned them brownie points with the consumers. A successful public relation study can be of Toyota's launch of its hybrid model Prius. They sought ratifications from ecological organizations like United Nations, National Wildlife Federation, the Sierra Club. This act not only established its green image but did so at a diminished cost<sup>1</sup>.

## 6. Opportunities

As the number of consumers who are interested in associating themselves with environmental friendly products are increasing, it becomes important for the companies to go green in their businesses because of the growing focus on social responsibility, governmental pressures and increased competition. Thus, it is better for the firms to paint themselves green as early as possible to have the first mover advantage. Various opportunities for green marketing are explained as follows:

### 6.1 Environmental Advantages

The business firms by producing green products have a positive impact on the environment. They assume their moral responsibility to reduce their carbon footprints and activities that are detrimental to the environment. Green marketing and CSR ensures that the companies estimate their carbon footprints and come out with abatement and carbon management strategies. It also enables the companies to formulate policies that can deal effectively with issues that impact climate changes.

### 6.2 Reputation Building

Green marketing promotes a more thoughtful, responsible corporate image of the businesses. It also gives the company's marketing materials a wider range of talking points besides conventional claims about low prices, durability and style, all of which customers have heard many times before. Companies can build up their reputation and an environmental conscious image to the society.

### 6.3 Sustained Long Term Growth with Profitability

Green Marketing helps the corporates to achieve a sustainable long term growth and also earn profits at the same time. In the coming times green marketing will become mandatory for the corporates to survive, grow and be successful.

### 6.4 Cost Reduction

Initial cost for producing environmental friendly products may require huge investments but in the long run it leads to cost reduction and cost saving. Less amount of waste will reduce the operating costs and give more savings. For example the eco-friendly business equipment and practices such as LED lights, use of natural lighting, water conservation policies, mandatory recycling and hybrid company vehicles save money on utilities, fuel and office supplies. This generates instant cash flow and offsets the cost of going green. For example, IndusInd bank has invested Rs.7 lakhs for setting up the solar ATM as against Rs.5 lakhs for a standard ATM. However, this system has enabled the bank to save the electricity costs by Rs. 20,000 a year.

### 6.5 Innovation

Corporate morality can be ensured only when the companies come up with the innovative products on regular basis. With intense competition in today's world, the company will have to stand out in the crowd with innovative products that it produces. It provides an opportunity to the business firms to come up with innovative products to attract the customers. Companies which develop innovative products and services with innovative qualities at affordable rates are successful in the market.

### 6.6 Competitive Advantage

Green Marketing provides a competitive edge to the business firms. It provides them with an opportunity to stand out from among a crowded field of competitors. By going green in their approach, they send out signals to the customers about their environmentally conscious behavior and provide them with environmental friendly products to satisfy their needs. It helps corporates to get an edge over their competitors who are still are not adopting the green marketing strategies<sup>3</sup>.

## 7. Barriers for Green Marketing

Although Green Marketing is gaining importance in India, there are still some barriers for green marketing that can be divided into two categories:

- 1 Consumer related barriers.
- 2 Firm related barriers.

### 7.1 Consumer Related Barriers

### 7.1.1 Lack of Awareness

There is a lack of awareness among the consumers about the green products. Either consumer does not know what green products are, how these products are environmentally safe or where they can get these products. Many consumers do not show any kind of inclination towards the green products and even if they do, they do not want to spend much time and effort for exploring the greener options available.

### 7.1.2 Price

Price is the most important barrier for consumers going green. Green products are usually higher priced because of the innovative green technologies used; large amount of money spent on research and development and also for the unique features that makes it a green product. Consumers find sense in paying a premium for the green product only if it will give them cash savings in future, otherwise they end up buying the non-green cheaper substitutes.

### 7.1.3 Perceptions and Beliefs

Consumers usually have perceptions that the green products are not as efficient as the conventional products in use. For example, Reva car launched by Mahindra and Mahindra was a failure and misfit in India selling only 300 cars in its first year against a target of 1500. The main reason for its failure was that it could not be perceived by the consumers as a convenient car as it lacked comfort, style, speed and safety. The consumers could opt for better option in the same price at which the Reva (the green low operating electric car) was offered for. Thus, "just Green cannot sell".

### 7.1.4 Distrust between the Companies and Consumers

Companies usually promote their products as green and indulge in green washing. Consumers expect the green brands to deliver the promised reductions in the environmental impact and when they don't, often the consumers are left disappointed and distrust between the companies and consumers is created. Consumers then end up buying the cheaper non-green substitutes instead of paying a premium for green products.

## 7.2 Firm Related Barriers

### 7.2.1 Lack of Technology and Research and Development

The development of the green products requires innovative technology which requires huge investments by the firm. The firm may lack such innovative green technology to come up with green products which are environmentally safe. Huge investments in research and development are also needed for the same.

### 7.2.2 Costly Raw Materials

Green products are usually made of recycled and renewable materials which come out to be very costly. The business firms do not invest in production of the green products because costly raw material only adds to the cost of the products for which consumers do not prefer to pay a premium.

### 7.2.3 Competition from Cheaper Non-Green Substitutes

Increased competition from the non-green cheaper substitutes act as a barrier for the firms to take green initiatives which may be costlier than the substitutes. Consumers still prefer to buy the cheaper substitutes either because of the high prices of green products or lack of awareness and therefore this leads to the failure of the green products.

### 7.2.4 Green Washing

Today, we see that each and every company tries to paint itself with a green brush. Most of these self proclaimed green companies spend more time and money claiming to be green through advertising and marketing than actually implementing business practices that minimize environmental impacts. Consumers are often left with the confusion between what is green and what is green washed. Companies do less to take green initiatives rather they try to present a greener image of them to the consumers and the society.

### 7.2.5 Certification

In order to market the company's product as a green product the company may need to go through an expensive and lengthy process of getting environmental certification. This would require the products to meet certain standards for energy use, efficiency or recyclability. Meeting these standards may be difficult while keeping prices low.

However, without an official certification, customers have no way of gauging the truth behind “green” claims.

## 8. Green Initiatives

### 8.1 Godrej

Godrej with their Good& Green strategic vision aspire to create a greener India by 2020 :

Riveted efforts are being undertaken aiming to create “carbon neutral”, “zero waste” and “water and energy positive” business. Platinum LEED awarded CII-Sohrabji Green Business Center and Mangrove Belt in Mumbai preserved by Godrej Foundation serve as jewels in their “Sustainability Crown”.

They have shown prolonged intent of earning atleast a third of its portfolio returns from good/green product offerings. On a Green Continuum, Godrej is adopting a holistic approach which is set to benefit them in the near future as well<sup>41</sup>

### 8.2 HUL

HUL is also moving leaps and bounds in terms of adopting environmentally friendly and green practices. Zealous goals of curtailing carbon emissions by 22%, trimming water use by 29% and scaling down the amount of waste produced by 77% per manufactured product<sup>40</sup>.

### 8.3 Wipro

Wipro won top-most position in the Greenpeace International’s Guide to Greener Electronics. This was awarded taking in view of their continued commitment to cut short their outright GHG emissions by an ambitious 44%, out of which 85% of its emissions will be curtailed through renewable energy use. Their entire new product range meets latest energy Star compliance, with 52% products surpassing them.

### 8.4 Suzlon

Suzlon Foundation has played a crucial role in reformation of over 3,000 hectares of desolate land in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and other areas surrounding its wind farms. They have been avid practitioners of Rain Water Harvesting saving up to 30,00,000 cubic meters. Suzlon helped SBI in reducing its ecological footprint by commissioning 15MW wind power plant<sup>35</sup>.

### 8.5 Amul

Amul was concurred with the Green Globe Foundation award in the manufacturing category at the 12th Delhi Sustainable Development Summit 2012. This was attributable to the crowd tree plantation drive with 312 lakh trees seeded over a span of 5 years in 15,000 villages.

## 9. Green Washing: The Dark Side of Green

With more and more corporations around the world paying heed towards environmental sustainability, it is becoming clearly evident to the world that many of these “green” claims are ambiguous and deceptive. As so aptly captured John Grant aptly captures this thought in his book, *The Green Marketing Manifesto* - “You can’t put a lettuce in the window of a butcher’s shop and declare that you are now ‘turning vegetarian.’”

Green Wash is defined as “the act of misleading consumers regarding the environmental practices of a company or the environmental benefits of a product or a service”<sup>9</sup>. Some examples are as follows:

1. Coca Cola had made a huge contribution to World Wide Fund and also took an oath that it will go “Water Neutral”. This does not mean that it will not use water instead, they promised to “replenish every drop of water they use”. However, if go over the claim with a fine tooth comb we will find that they are not planning to offset these huge water usages locally. This is a particularly distressing situation for all the Indian Villages for example who are facing severe water shortages and depletion of Ground water sources due to this exploitative use.

2. British Petroleum (BP), in 2000 went with the tagline “beyond petroleum “to showcase its greener side. In a bid to seem, pro-environment BP pledged \$8 billion to develop alternative energy sources and promised to scale down their emissions by 10% below 1990 levels. Nevertheless, what they failed to mention was that now they have increased their production by almost 24%, so carbon dioxide discharge savings which were accumulated over a period of 8 long years actually are getting wiped out by BP in just a matter of 5 days. The list of these green washing examples is endless. However, consumers are getting better on calling out corporations on these bogus claims. Moreover, when they do, the reputation of companies, trust and brand equity they enjoy takes a big hit, which is harder to get back<sup>18,19,20,27,28,45,54</sup>.

## 10. Linking Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) with Green Marketing

Business houses are held as trustees of the resources they use from the society and are expected to return them back manifold. A business firm can no longer act an independent entity and have to realize that it is a member of a wide community and is dependent on its social environment.

### 10.1 Understanding CSR

CSR refers to the company's sense of responsibility towards community and environment (both ecological and social) in which it operates. It refers to the initiatives taken by the companies to assess and take responsibility for its effect on the environment and the impact on social welfare. Corporate social responsibility is also called corporate conscious, corporate citizenship, social performance or sustainable business. It is corporate self regulation integrated into a business model.

According to United Nations Industrial Development organization (UNIDO), corporate social responsibility is a management concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR is generally understood as being the way through which a company achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives (Triple-Bottom-Line- Approach), while at the same time addressing the expectations of shareholders and stakeholders<sup>51</sup>.

In this sense, it is important to draw a distinction between CSR, which can be a strategic business management concept, and charity, sponsorships or philanthropy. Even though the latter can also make a valuable contribution to poverty reduction, will directly enhance the reputation of a company and strengthen its brand.

In other words, it can be said that CSR is integration of business operations with the society and environment and to be responsible towards it.

## 11. Socially Responsible Behavior by Corporates

Businesses and society are interdependent therefore it becomes imperative for the corporates to behave in a

socially responsible manner. CSR helps companies to live up to their responsibilities of global citizens and local neighbors in this world.

The corporates integrate socially responsible behavior with its corporate culture in two ways:

- Firstly, they can use their environmentally responsible image as a marketing tool to achieve a competitive advantage by offering green products, green packaging and undertaking green promotional activities.
- Secondly, they can undertake various activities to promote their responsible behavior towards the society.

Some corporates try to adopt both these strategies to exhibit a social and environmental conscious image to the society.

Under section 135 of the Companies Act 2013, CSR gets the due importance that it deserves. It requires every company having net worth of rupees five hundred crore or more, or turnover of rupees one thousand crore or more or net profit of rupees five crore or more during any financial year to constitute a corporate social responsibility committee that shall ensure that the company spends in every financial year atleast two percent of its average net profits of the company made during three immediately preceding financial years in pursuance of its corporate social responsibility Policy<sup>50</sup>.

Thus, we can say that it has become binding for corporates to inculcate a socially responsible behavior in them.

## 12. Green Marketing meets CSR

### 12.1 Vodafone

Vodafone has undertaken various green initiatives such as -

- "Goodbye paper, hello trees" to encourage all the customers to switch to paperless billing.
- "Top -up online" to save paper by not printing a paper receipt.
- Set up recycling containers in more than 100 stores where old mobile phones can be disposed off in an environmentally safe manner.

### 12.2 Tata

- Tata companies has spent Rs. 660 crores in 2013-14 in CSR activities, which includes a wide range of programmes in, livelihoods, education, health and nutrition,

skill development ,bio-diversity and disaster relief.

- Taj chain is in the process of creating eco- rooms which will have energy-efficient mini bars, organic bed linen and napkins made from recycled paper and CFLs/ LEDs.
- Tata Motors is working towards developing alternative fuel engine technologies<sup>52</sup>.

### 12.3 ITC

ITC has adopted a triple bottom line strategy –

➤ Adopting low carbon growth path and a cleaner environment approach.

- Embedding sustainability in business.
- Investing in social development.
- With e-choupals and social and farm forestry, ITC integrates CSR with business models.

➤ Integrated Water shed development programme, women empowerment programmes, primary education programme and livestock and animal husbandry programmes launched by ITC help in the social development in India<sup>39</sup>.

### 12.4 Philips

- Philips has made various investments in generation of green technologies and green products.
- It is working to reduce the environmental impact of their operations and reduced their Co2 emissions from non -industrial sites in 2013 by 20 %.
- It also engages itself in product recycling and chemical management in order to reduce their carbon footprints<sup>53</sup>

## 13. Steps involved in Green Marketing Model

### 13.1 Identify needs of the customers

A business firm should identify and understand the needs and wants of their prospective customers. It is important for the business to know what customers desire and how can they fulfill their needs by offering them a green product. Often Green products fail because they fail to satisfy the basic needs of customers even if they are environmentally safe. Only “green” cannot sell. The green product offering should fully satisfy the needs and wants of the target market.

### 13.2 Set the Green Objectives

The first step for adopting Green Marketing model is to set the green objectives for the business firm..Clear goals and objectives should be set which should focus on environmental issues demonstrating social and moral responsibility of the firm.

### 13.3 Comply with Legislation

It is essential for a business firm to comply with the legislations while proactively embracing Green Marketing .Governmental pressures and checks make it mandatory for the firms to comply with legislations and disclose all information of the environmental effects of their activities.

### 13.4 Analyze competitors’ Green initiatives

Business firms should also recognize and analyze the green initiatives undertaken by their competitors. This will help them to modify their own environmental behavior and come up with something better that can help them beat their competitors. For example , Body Shop followed an ethical approach in producing cosmetic products and it has caused various other companies in the cosmetic industry to modify their actions.

### 13.5 Green product offerings

Business firms should focus on producing a wide variety of green products which includes products made of reusable material , recycled , products having an environmentally safe packaging , products made with green technologies, organic products etc.

Product Development Process should take into consideration the environmental issues and focus on sustainability.

### 13.6 Focus on Green Packaging

Packaging is very important component of the green product. Any unnecessary packaging should be eliminated as it is a major part of domestic waste. Less packaging will not only save cost for the companies but also reduce waste. Innovative green packaging of the products should be focused by the businesses.

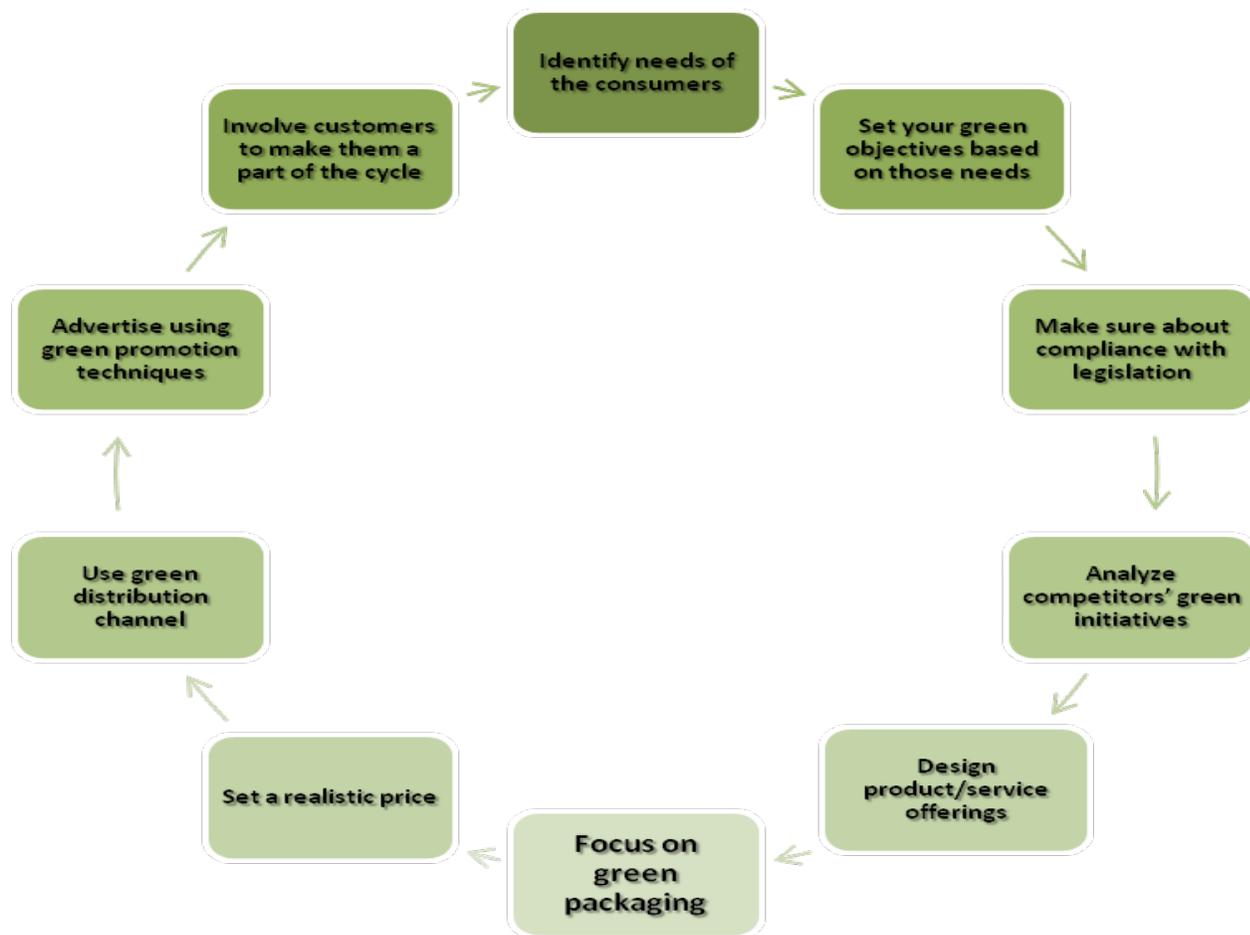


Figure 1. Steps involved in Green Marketing Model.

### 13.7 Set a realistic Green price

Customers may not be willing to pay a premium for only the environmental benefits of the products. Customers pay a premium only when they feel that it has some potential cash savings for them or has an additional value attached to it in terms of better performance, design or benefits. Firms should set a realistic price and convey to the customers the reason for charging a premium.

### 13.8 Practise Green Distribution

Customers do not spend much time and effort to locate a greener option. Thus, it is the business firm that will have to make the green products available easily through mainstream outlets. Businesses should try to find out ways for distribution which have minimum impact on the environment.

### 13.9 Practise Green Promotion

Companies spend a huge amount of money to promote their product as green. They should never overstate or make fake environmental claims. Any unrealistic expectations created by companies about their products shall create distrust between the company and its customers. Companies should come up with innovative green ways to promote their products instead of spending money to show their commitment to environmental environment.

### 13.10 Make customers Go Green

Business firms should make efforts to make it easier for the customers to Go Green in their approach. It is possible when companies fully disclose the environmental benefits of their products clearly and accurately to customers, make green products available to them at a reasonable price at nearby locations, and promote products through

innovative ways without making any false claims about going green.

## 14. Green Marketing: Ideas for Greening your business

As it is said that “small steps lead to big changes”, operating a green business is not only good for the environment but also good for business’s bottom line because by conserving resources, reducing waste and adopting the Go Green Mantra can reduce costs and give your business a greener image in this competitive world.

We discuss certain easy-to-implement ideas to be environmentally responsible by reducing the carbon footprints and operate a green business.

### 14.1 Reduce paper usage

- Companies should encourage employees to communicate by e-mails and read e-mail messages onscreen to check whether it’s necessary to print them or not.
- Using double-sided documents whenever possible.
- Using recycled paper and recycle scrap that the companies otherwise throw away.

### 14.2 Energy conservation

- Companies should start with an energy audit and analyze the amount of energy they are using and at what cost.
- Then an analysis of their energy needs should be done and comparisons should be made with that of similar businesses in the industry.
- Switch to energy efficient lighting such as LEDs and CFLs and turn off appliances when not in use.
- Grow office plants to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and use them as natural filters.

### 14.3 Reduce and Recycle

- Companies should use reusable bags over plastic or paper bags.
- Retailers can also help change the habits of their customers by promoting reusable cloth or canvas bags.
- Encourage employees to use reusable bags and bottles.

- Recycle empty ink and toner cartridges.
- Companies should also choose the suppliers that can take back packaging for reuse.

### 14.4 Encourage alternate forms of commuting

- Companies can encourage their employees to use public transport or car pool by offering them incentives for the same and setting up “buddy systems”.

### 14.5 Green promotion

- Companies can use social media marketing and e-mail marketing (paperless marketing) to communicate with the customers and promote their products.

### 14.6 Shop Green

- Companies should purchase IT products that perform several functions instead of one. They should purchase energy efficient electronic items that are easier to manage, use less power and costs less as compared to many single-purpose electronic items.

### 14.7 Encourage research for green products

- Encourage their employees to come up with new ideas for green products by rewarding their suggestions.

### 14.8 Making employees and customers environmentally conscious

- Educate them about the activities that can be detrimental to the environment and asking them to adopt a greener lifestyle at home as well.

## 15. Conclusions

1. The research paper concludes that green marketing concept is gaining importance in a developing country like India as many companies have taken green initiatives and come up with innovative green products.
2. Corporate success has essentially become linked with the environment. Subjects like climate change, socio-moral responsibility and sustainable development are fast becoming constituents of the corporate handbook.

3. Most of the companies are advancing towards green marketing because of possibilities for value addition, pressure from authorities, cost reduction in the long run and potential competitive advantage to the businesses.
4. However, it can also be concluded that a lot can still be done as many examples of green washing have come up. Consumers have to be made aware about how can they differentiate between green marketing and green washing.
5. The business firms have to devise and carry out research to find out how reasonable it is for the firm to go green.
6. Consumers have the green consumerism in them and prefer to buy the green products but they want the companies to take the lead. If the business leaders recognize the vast potential that green businesses have and decide to invest time, money and effort the world would be better.
7. The business firms have to modify their psyche from long established marketing strategies to green marketing strategies.
8. The businesses should know the customer's needs and invest in research and development to provide them with green options.
9. Green marketing elements such as eco-design of the product, green labeling and packaging, green logos should be used by the firm in order to withstand competition and have a positive effect on the environment.
10. Companies have to undertake great efforts in order to make the consumers aware about use of the products that are damaging to the environment. Lack of cognizance regarding the same serves as the main barrier.
11. Consumers prefer to pay a premium for the green products only when they know that it will give them cash savings in the future. For example, the demand for CFLs has increased because it gives the consumers savings in future. Consumers are less concerned about the positive environmental impact of green products.
12. "Only green cannot sell". The firms should aim at providing a product that is able to serve the needs and wants of the customers. A green product which is not able to satisfy the customer's needs efficiently will definitely fail and therefore it is important for firm's to concentrate on other features of the product too.

13. The businesses should come up with a green product for a niche market first to check the feasibility of the product. By concentrating on a niche market, the business firms can easily check on the features that the product lacks and then make improvements to serve the customers in a better way. For example, coming up with solar bikes for employees of courier companies or home delivery food outlets.
14. Concerned regulatory authorities and media can play a significant role in order to keep a check on Green washing by companies.
15. Tax holidays and tax exemptions should be given to companies which undertake genuine green initiatives and come up with innovative green products to have positive impact on the environment and society.

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