

## Review of Book: "Green Marketing Concepts-How to Cash in with Ecological Niche Marketing"

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### Introduction

In today's world, when the environment is deteriorating at an exponential rate, the concept of Green Marketing is inescapable. In the book, Green Marketing Concepts, the author provides several concepts which can be used by businesses in becoming ecologically friendly while still being profitable. This book is practical in its approach as it focuses on exactly what things are necessary for a business to become "green". In present times, most of the consumers are savvy enough to realize that they can choose between a product that is environmentally safe and one that is not. Thus, creating an environmental niche market would lead not only to a healthier environment, but will help businesses to cash in on this concept.

The book is divided into three chapters: the first chapter is an introduction to green marketing concepts-the rationale, potential and principles behind ecological niche marketing. The second chapter deals with greening up businesses-simple things that can be done by business owners, making changes, business shifts, and standing against the competition. The last chapter deals with marketing the green brand created by business owners, re-branding products and services, fostering loyalty amongst the customer base, and reaching out to potential customers.

In the first chapter the author provides an insight of what exactly "greening" means and where it all came from. The green movement had begun with the advent of the chemical agriculture in the early 20th century, but the first natural products came to the market only in the 1970s. There was no national distribution chain of natural products so they were only available locally. In 1980s the demand for chemical free or organic products skyrocketed, but the producers were not prepared for it. Therefore, substandard goods came into the market, which gave a bad impression to the consumers regarding natural products. It was only in the early 90s that marketers began to realize the importance of the market for recycled materials, chemical free products, and goods that were not detrimental to the environment.

Larger companies began to realize the new market and that they needed to deliver a product that was superior to its conventional counterpart. The question before them was how to move towards sustainability without harming the business economically. The "green" consumer segment has provided an answer as can be seen from the fact that green products have been doubling their sales, while other segments have been lagging. It is important for businesses to understand that not all the benefit is directly economic. Portraying one's business as ecologically friendly carries the connotation that the business has an uncommon integrity.

The author suggests that making exaggerated claims can be more harmful than lying about the sustainability of the business. When products don't perform as expected they not only risk to turn away consumers from that particular product but also from other green products. Businesses must be really committed to make changes in their operations and strategies. Once the decision has been made to follow the green path, considerable action must be taken. The first and foremost task is to define the mission statement in case of a start-up and for an already existing business defining what changes can be made. The next important step is to get the support and cooperation of the employees. Some employees may support new ideas instantly but others may need convincing. Getting everyone on the same page is invaluable in making everything operate smoothly. Some of the simplest things that can be done include recycling. Recycling is a business where money can be made for the recovered materials.

The author has also proposed some innovative ideas such as the use of shredded paper as packing material. Reducing waste by Carpooling is another idea to reduce carbon from the atmosphere. Some companies offer employees a free pass for mass transit in order to encourage them. Other ideas include saving energy by turning off monitors when not using, using LED bulbs, using laptops instead of desktops which use less power. Notable actions that the business owner can take include opting for renewable power options like hydroelectricity, solar power, wind energy, using

delivery vehicles that are operated on electricity instead of carbon producing fuels. The author seems to be a bit preachy at times and could have included certain real-life examples to show the effectiveness of these strategies.

Further the book deals with the fact that these changes cannot be made overnight but they take some time. Industries which rely on toxic substances can also find ways to change their products and processes. In the age of Internet, a business can convey a great deal of information easily. They can put up their ecological innovations on the company's website to make their presence felt. Fundamental business shifts require refocusing of product line or services into the environmental sector. One of the great way to do this is to forgo traditional marketing strategies for low impact alternatives.

Additionally, the author offers that before marketing a business's green initiatives, it is best to assess the competition. For this market research is required, to know how widely the competition is scattered. Some companies have the advantage of being the only green alternative in a segment. Therefore, businesses need to demonstrate the superiority of their product in order to come into focus. The last chapter of this book deals with the marketing of the green brand. The first step is to identify the audience in order to get the message across clearly and efficiently. Some consumers dedicated greens and they make their purchasing decisions after judging the sustainability of the product. Companies that want to show their ecological inclination can do so by re-branding their products and services to get noticed.

People want to be sure about a product or service before using it. In order to promote green products, the companies can provide trial versions. This can provide an affordable entry into the market. They can also hold up demonstrations to showcase their products. Fostering loyalty in the customer base can lead to a successful business. Loyal customers help in promoting products through word of mouth. With the advent of Internet other opportunities like viral and online marketing also help in spreading the word at a faster pace. Lastly, holding trade shows where people with ideas or products get together to showcase their goods to interested consumers.

Through this book the author has tried to give a unique perspective to Green Marketing Concepts. Although several techniques provided in this book already have individual books on the subject, this book in particular intends to provide an overview for those setting up their own organization or greening their business. At the end the author has provided certain useful links for the readers if they want to delve further into a topic. The language of the book is simple and would appeal to readers at all stages whether they are beginning their venture or they are at a stage of revamping it into a green business.

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