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Electronic Green Journal

Title

Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2294d5mf>

Journal

Electronic Green Journal, 1(10)

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Publication Date

1999

DOI

10.5070/G311010346

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Review: *Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation*

by Jacquelyn Ottman

Reviewed by DeMond Shondell Miller

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Ottman, Jacquelyn. *Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation*. 2nd edition. Chicago: NTC/Contemporary Publishing Company, 1998. 270pp. US\$24.95 hard cover ISBN: 0-8442-3239-4. Recycled paper, soy ink.

Marketing ecologically sound products to consumers at a premium price represents green marketing's ultimate challenge. Ottman begins the book by presenting consumer and industrial trends that illustrate the "greening" of the current marketplace, while predicting that the marketplace of the 21st century will be "greener than ever." In defining "green," she explains that consumers are demanding non-toxic products that are recyclable and environmentally friendly. Furthermore, she notes that there is a lucrative market for products that are responsive to the growing number of individuals with lifestyle concerns as environmentalism emerges as a social value. After the preliminary statements regarding former and present market strategies, Ottman explains the new marketing paradigm.

The structure of the book is based on the primary assumption of this new paradigm, which asserts that products are no longer designed in a "cradle to grave" manner (47). Rather, manufacturers are designing goods in a "cradle to crave" manner. By using a "cradle-to-crave" approach, manufacturers reify abstract environmental concepts such as recycling and reuse to ensure customer loyalty and improve financial holdings. Consumers are demanding that: "Ecologically responsive corporations consider themselves to be like nature's processes -- interdependent. These corporations join with corporate environmental stakeholders in cooperative, positive alliances, and they work hand in hand with suppliers and retailers to manage environmental issues throughout the value chain" (47). In essence, teams converge to find the best holistic solution to environmental problems where the ultimate goal is to establish two bottom lines, one for profit and the other to reflect their contribution to society.

After introducing the new marketing paradigm, Ottman provides several case studies to illustrate how successful application of green marketing

strategies is profitable. Although the material is useful and sheds insight on marketing strategies and effective communication, Ottman fails to provide examples of industries that defy the paradigm she clearly defines. Thomas Kuhn, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), discusses anomalies as the existence of examples that fail to satisfy the laws of science. One would likewise expect to find anomalies to green marketing strategies that cannot be explained by the green marketing paradigm. This book would be enhanced if companies not only knew what would happen when these strategies work, but also how to create a contingency plan if the green marketing strategies did not work as they have for other companies.

Green Marketing: Opportunities for Innovation is an excellent resource for companies, students and consumers. This book is organized in a way that facilitates an understanding of the subject matter. The author combines theory with real world examples from well-known companies in their pursuit of "zero" environmental impact from their products and processes. The strength of the book is Ottman's use of examples to illustrate how concepts can be employed in a cost-effective manner. After years of confusion over the use of marketing strategies and the ensuing backlash from skeptical consumers, some marketers are finally getting their green marketing efforts right. At the end of each chapter, an "Ideas for Action" section structures an action-oriented agenda that extends from product design (Green by Design, Chapter 4) to establishing corporate partners (Team up for Success, Chapter 6).

The goal of this work emphasizes the holistic nature of the marketplace. The author encourages industry to be proactive and anticipate emerging environmental issues and address them before community stakeholders are forced to do so. Moreover, these corporate leaders must be willing to take chances and team up with other corporate stakeholders to create optional solutions to pressing environmental problems by questioning current market assumptions and constantly assessing consumer opinion.

Included with the text is a forward by William Riley, former Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and two appendices for further reading, as well as a listing of companies described in the text along with their addresses. Appendix A contains the CERES Principles (Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies) and Appendix B lists the Federal Trade Commission Guide for the use of Environmental Marketing Claims. Ottman provides a convincing argument that is well researched. This book is considered an authority in the area and is a must have for media or environmental consultants,

eco-entrepreneurs and businesses trying to "greenen" their image.

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