

## **GREEN MARKETING MYOPIA**

**Dr.P.Parimaladevi,**

Assistant Professor of Commerce (CA),  
Vellalar College For Women(Autonomous),Erode-12,  
Tamilnadu.

### **Marketing myopia**

The marketing myopia theory was originally proposed in 1960 by American economist [Theodore Levitt](#). According to Levitt marketers should not overlook the importance of company potential and product attributes at the expenses of market needs; catering for market needs should receive first priority. Marketing Myopia suggests *that businesses will do better in the end if they concentrate on meeting customers' needs rather than on selling products.*

Marketing myopia is a business term that refers to the emphasis placed on marketing strategies that focus on the immediate primary needs of consumers.

The consequence of marketing myopia is a diminished customer relationship resulting in poorer results in advertising messages and sales processes. It is resulted due to lack of proper.

A company, besides being technically sound and product oriented, also needs to be customer oriented in order to successfully cater for a market. Knowledge of customer needs and of innovations that can be implemented to maintain customer interest, as well as of how to adapt to the changing business market is crucial. Green marketing and Green marketing myopia

Green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. In order to be successful, green marketing must fulfill two objectives: improved environmental quality and customer satisfaction. Misjudging either or overemphasizing the former at the expense of the latter can be defined as green marketing myopia.

The marketing discipline has long argued that innovation must consider an intimate understanding of the customer and a close look at green marketing practices over time reveals that green products must be positioned on a consumer value sought by targeted consumers.

As such, successful green products are able to appeal to mainstream consumers or lucrative market niches and frequently command price premiums by offering “non-green” consumer value

(such as convenience and performance). When consumers are convinced of the desirable “non-green” benefits of environmental products, they are more inclined to adopt them.

Aside from offering environmental benefits that do not meet consumer preferences, green marketing myopia can also occur when green products fail to provide credible, substantive environmental benefits.

### **The Green Marketing Mix**

**A model of a green marketing mix should, of course, contain all 4P’s:**

- **Product:** A producer should offer ecological products which not only must not contaminate the environment but should protect it and even liquidate existing environmental damages.
- **Price:** Prices for such products may be a little higher than conventional alternatives. But target groups like for example LOHAS are willing to pay extra for green products.
- **Place:** A distribution logistics is of crucial importance; main focus is on ecological packaging. Marketing local and seasonal products e.g. vegetables from regional farms is more easy to be marketed “green” than products imported.
- **Promotion:** A communication with the market should put stress on environmental aspects, for example that the company possesses a CP certificate or is ISO 14000 certified. This may be publicized to improve a firm’s image. Furthermore, the fact that a company spends expenditures on environmental protection should be advertised. Third, sponsoring the natural environment is also very important. And last but not least, ecological products will probably require special sales promotions.

Additional Social Marketing "P's" that are used in this process are as followed:

- **Publics--** Effective Social Marketing knows its audience, and can appeal to multiple groups of people. "Public" is the external and internal groups involved in the program. External publics include the target audience, secondary audiences, policymakers, and gatekeepers, while the internal publics are those who are involved in some way with either approval or implementation of the program.

- **Partnership**-- Most social change issues, including "green" initiatives, are too complex for one person or group to handle. Associating with other groups and initiatives to team up strengthens the chance of efficacy.
- **Policy**--Social marketing programs can do well in motivating individual behavior change, but that is difficult to sustain unless the environment they're in supports that change for the long run. Often, policy change is needed, and media advocacy programs can be an effective complement to a social marketing program.
- **Purse Strings**-- How much will this strategic effort cost? Who is funding the effort?
- The level of greening-strategic, quasi-strategic, or tactical dictates exactly what activities should be under-taken by a company. Strategic greening in one area may or may not be leveraged effectively in others. A firm could make substantial changes in production processes but opt not to leverage them by positioning itself as an environmental leader. So although strategic greening is not necessarily strategically integrated into all marketing activities, it is nevertheless strategic in the product area.

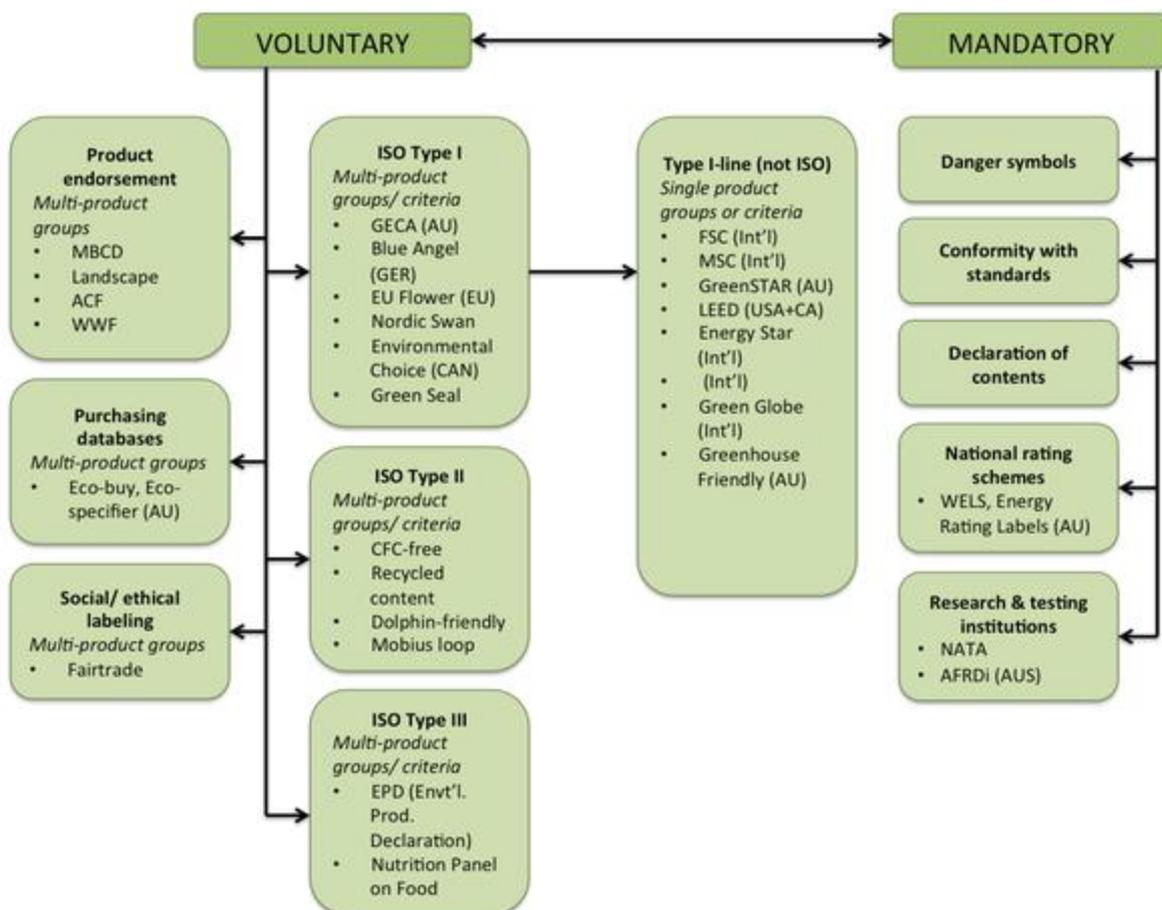
	<b>Tactical greening</b>	<b>Quasi-strategic greening</b>	<b>Strategic greening</b>
<b>Targeting</b>	Ads mentioning green features are run in green-focused media	A firm develops a green brand in addition to its other brands.	A firm launches a new Strategic Business Unit (SBU) aimed at the green market.
<b>Green design</b>	A firm switches from one raw material supplier to another with more eco-friendly processes.	Life-cycle analysis is incorporated into the eco-design process to minimize eco-harm.	E.g. <b>FUJI XEROX</b> develop its Green Wrap paper to be more eco-friendly from the ground up.
<b>Green positioning</b>	E.g. a mining company runs a Public Relations (PR) campaign to highlight its green aspects and practices.	E.g. <b>British Petroleum (BP) AMOCO</b> redesigns its logo to a sun-based emblem to reflect its view to a hydrogen/solar-based future of the energy industry.	E.g. the <b>BODY SHOP</b> pursues environmental and social change improvements and encourages its consumers to do so as well.
<b>Green pricing</b>	Cost-savings due to existing energy-efficiency features are highlighted for a product.	E.g. a water company switches its pricing policy from a flat monthly rate to a per- unit-of-water-used basis.	A company rents its products rather than selling; consumers now pay only for use of the product.

<b>Green logistics</b>	A firm changes to a more concentrated detergent, which.	Packaging minimization is incorporated as a part of a firm's manufacturing review process.	A reverse logistics system is put into place by FUJI XEROX to reprocess and remanufacture copiers.
<b>Marketing waste</b>	A firm improves the efficiency of its manufacturing process, which lowers its waste output.	E.g. <b>TELSTRA</b> (a phone company) has internal processes so that old telephone directories (waste) are collected and turned into cat litter products by other companies.	E.g. a Queensland sugar-cane facility is rebuilt to be cogeneration based, using sugar-cane waste to power the operation.
<b>Green promotion</b>	An oil company runs a PR campaign to highlight its green practices in order to counter an oil spill getting bad press coverage.	A company sets a policy that realistic product eco-benefits should always be mentioned in promotional materials.	As a part of its philosophy the <b>BODY SHOP</b> co-promotes one or more social/eco campaigns each year with in-shop and promotional materials.
<b>Green alliance</b>	A company funds a competition (one-off basis) run by an environmental group to heighten community awareness on storm water quality issues.	E.g. <b>SOUTHCORP</b> (a wine producer forms a long-term alliance with the Australian Conservation Foundation to help combat land-salinity issues.	A company invites a representative of an environmental group to join its board of directors.

**Green marketing activities**

**Eco Labels**

An individual's belief that an environmental claim lacks honesty can have a negative effect on attitude toward a brand. If, on the other side, the consumer grants credibility to the claim, the individual will behave more respectfully toward the environment. The problem in extending that credibility to a brand is that consumers interested in ecological products generally are skeptical of commercial advertisements. This skepticism is due to various factors such as lack of language, the absence of scientific knowledge necessary to interpret advertising meaning, and, in particular, the falsehoods and exaggeration of some advertising techniques. To resolve this problem, independent organizations may choose to guarantee messages on the environmental benefits of brands with environmental labeling systems sponsored by independent organizations. This practice tries to diminish perceived biases in environmental information by promoting standardization of the information with the aim of improving confidence in the evaluation of environmental benefits of products—all of which should positively affect the purchase intention.





Overview of the different type In 1960, Theodore Levitt introduced the concept of "marketing myopia" in a famous *Harvard Business Review* article that is still studied by business students. In it, he characterized the common pitfall of companies' tunnel focus on "managing products" (i.e., product features, functions, and efficient production) rather than "meeting customers' needs" (i.e., adapting to consumer expectations, anticipating future desires).

Levitt warned that a corporate preoccupation with products rather than consumer needs was doomed to failure because consumers select products and new innovations that offer benefits they desire.

Similarly, many green products have failed because of marketers' myopic focus on their products' "greenness" over the broader expectations of consumers or other market players (such as regulators or activists).

Another example: In 1994 Whirlpool launched the "Energy Wise" refrigerator, the first cooler free of ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) chemicals and more efficient than the US Department of Energy's highest standard by 30%. For its innovation, Whirlpool won the "Golden Carrot," a \$30 million award package of consumer rebates from the Super-Efficient Refrigerator Program, sponsored by the Natural Resources Defense Council and funded by 24 electric utilities.

Unfortunately, sales languished because the CFC-free benefit and energy-savings did not offset its \$100-\$150 price premium, particularly in markets outside the rebate program, and the refrigerators didn't offer additional features or new styles that consumers desired.

Green marketing myopia can also occur when products fail to provide credible environmental benefits. Introduced in 1989, packages for Mobil's Hefty photodegradable trash bags prominently displayed the term "degradable," with the explanation that a special ingredient promoted its decomposition into harmless particles in landfills, "activated by exposure to the elements" such as sun and rain.

Because most garbage is buried in landfills allowing limited exposure to the elements, the claim enraged environmentalists. Ultimately, seven state attorneys general sued Mobil on charges of

deceptive advertising and consumer fraud, and the company withdrew the product from the market.

Green product fiascos such as Energy Wise and Hefty bags have convinced many consumers to associate green products with inconvenience, higher costs, and lower performance. However, ironically, many consumers are in fact buying green products, sometimes at a higher price! How to explain this?

When consumers are convinced of "non-green" benefits, they are more inclined to adopt green products (whether promoted as such or not). The Marathon bulbs and widely successful Toyota Prius are two outstanding examples. Others are energy-saving Tide Coldwater laundry detergent, nontoxic Method cleaning products, recycled paper products, "shade grown" coffees, and organic food.

Add these to the list: super energy-efficient appliances that bear the US EPA's "Energy Star" label, super energy- and resource-efficient "healthy" building products for LEED certified buildings, passive solar heating, and heat reflective windows, certified sustainably harvested lumber, natural fertilizers, and mold-resistant drywall.

### **Strategies for Success**

The strategies of successful green products shows that their marketers have avoided "green marketing myopia" by following three important principles that can be called "The Three Cs":

1. Consumer value positioning
2. Calibration of consumer knowledge
3. Credibility of product claims

### **Consumer Value Positioning**

- Design environmental products to perform as well as (or better than) alternatives.
- Promote and deliver the consumer-desired value of environmental products and target relevant consumer market segments (e.g., target money savings benefits to cost-conscious consumers).
- Broaden mainstream appeal by bundling (or adding) consumer-desired value into environmental products (such as fixed pricing for subscribers of renewable energy).

### **Calibration of Consumer Knowledge**

- Educate consumers with marketing messages that connect environmental product attributes with desired consumer value (for example, "pesticide-free produce is healthier," "energy-efficiency saves money," or "solar power is convenient").
- Frame environmental product attributes as "solutions" for consumer needs, for example, "rechargeable batteries offer longer performance." With indoor air quality a growing concern and fumes from paints, carpets, and furniture now linked to headaches, eye, nose, and throat irritation, dizziness, and fatigue, Sherwin Williams offers "Harmony," a line of interior paints that is low-odor, zero-VOC, and silica-free.
- Create engaging and educational Web sites about environmental products' desired value: e.g., Tide Coldwater's interactive Web site allows visitors to calculate their likely annual money savings based on their laundry habits, utility source (gas or electricity), and ZIP code location.

### **Credibility of Product Claims**

- Make sure that environmental product and consumer claims are specific, meaningful, and qualified. Compare with comparable alternatives or likely usage scenarios. Recognizing the ambiguity of the term green, Toyota dismissed a slogan for Prius, "Drive Green, breathe Blue" in favor of "Less gas in. Less gasses out."
- Underscore credibility with product endorsements or eco-certifications from trustworthy third parties, and educate consumers about the meaning behind those endorsements and eco-certifications. Over 40 product categories can now bear the Energy Star seal.

Encourage positive word of mouth via consumers' social and internet communication networks with compelling, interesting, or entertaining information about environmental products. Increasingly, consumers have grown skeptical of commercial messages, and they're turning to friends and peers for advice.

The Internet, through email and its vast and accessible repository of information via Web sites, search engines, blogs, product-ratings sites, podcasts, and other digital platforms, has opened

significant opportunities for tapping consumers' social and communication networks to diffuse credible "word-of-mouth" (buzz facilitated by the Internet) about green products. For example, the Web site for Tide's Coldwater Challenge includes a map of the United States so visitors may track and watch their personal influence spread when their friends request a free sample.

### **Conclusion**

Myopia means short-sightedness and Levitt claims most failures of firms are due to short-sighted lack of vision in top management. Marketing is long-range vision, anticipation of change, and planning for the future. There are numbers of companies and whole industries that went bankrupt or nearly failed due to lack of vision. Things are always changing, and the good marketer needs the vision to be on top of changes and trends.

**REFERENCES**

1. J.A Ottman,. et al, "Avoiding Green Marketing Myopia", Environment, Vol-48, June-2006
2. [www.greenmarketing.net/stratergic.html](http://www.greenmarketing.net/stratergic.html)
3. [www.epa.qld.gov.au/sustainable\\_ industries](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/sustainable_industries)
4. [www.greenpeace.org/international](http://www.greenpeace.org/international)
5. [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)
6. <http://www.iocl.com/AboutUs/environment%28GFA%29.aspx>
7. Davis, Joel J. 1992. "Ethics and Green Marketing." Journal of Business Ethics 11 (2): 81-87.