

Abstracts

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**CONSIDERING GREEN ISSUES IN MARKETING  
RETHINKING MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE LIGHT OF  
POSSIBLE FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

Chantal Wouters

Erasmus Center for Environmental Studies  
Erasmus University Rotterdam  
P.O. Box 1738  
3000 DR Rotterdam  
The Netherlands  
Tel no: - (31) 10 4082050/ 20 5254163  
Fax no: - (31) 10 2120834/ 20 5254182  
E-mail: wouters@fee.uva.nl

**Introduction**

What is the relevance to research the integration of environmental issues in marketing? One can answer this question from two perspectives: a marketing perspective and a 'sustainability' perspective. Let's start with the sustainability perspective .

According to Hart (1997) there are three stages of environmental strategy. Stage one is the Pollution Prevention stage. In this stage companies shift from pollution control (cleaning up waste after it has been created) to pollution prevention (minimizing or eliminating waste before it is created). In this stage some links with marketing can be found when for example pollution prevention means using other ingredients or raw materials, which can lead to changes in products. More clear links with marketing can be found in Stage two: Product Stewardship. In this stage the focus is not only on minimizing pollution from manufacturing but also on all environmental impact associated with the full live cycle of a product. Creating products that are easier to recover, reuse, or recycle, also called Design for Environment (DFE), is becoming increasingly important. In the end these new products have to be sold and bought in the market, so one can say that the role of marketing becomes increasingly important too. This role can be negative, by blocking 'green' innovation, as well as positive, by stimulating 'green' innovation. Stage three is the stage towards sustainability: Clean Technology. In this stage companies are looking for radically different ways of doing business and providing value to customers. They are replacing current products and processes with new and cleaner ones.

Considering the stages above one can say that, from a sustainability point of view, the role of marketing becomes increasingly important in the shift of companies from stage one towards stage three, but can the same be said when you look at it from a marketing perspective? Why should a marketing practitioner bother about environmental issues? Maybe because he or she considers it as good business practice, an opportunity to

differentiate the products and improve the image of the company, maybe also because of a feeling of social responsibility. But in the end one has to keep in mind the (traditional) core responsibilities of the marketing practitioner in the company, with or without more environmental friendly products and services.

Most literature about environmental issues in marketing until now is dominated by prescriptive 'green marketing' literature (Coddington 1993, Looman 1996, Charter 1992, Ottman 1993). Furthermore it focuses on consumer behaviour (Van Raaij 1995, Kinnear et al. 1974, Balderjahn 1988, Tucker et al. 1981) and the marketing mix (Prothero et al. 1997, Pudjari and Wright 1996, Welford and Gouldson 1993). Most of this literature is written from a sustainability or environmental perspective. Less attention has been paid to look at it from a marketing perspective, taking the 'daily marketing reality' into account as perceived by the marketing practitioner. The aim of this research is to gain empirical knowledge to fill this gap.

"Instead of asking whether it pays to be green, we ought to be asking about the circumstances under which it might pay. A business behavior with respect to the environment, like any other aspect of strategy or management, should be considered in the light of the basic economic situation of the business: the structure of the industry in which it competes, its own position within that industry, and its organizational capabilities" (Reinhardt, 1998, p 44)

This paper serves as a tool for discussion. It consists of three parts. The first part is the problem definition. The second part is a description of the methodology. In the third part the choice for the sector(s) of industry and the preliminary research procedure are explained.