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WEBSITE USAGE FOR IMPROVED GREEN MARKETING COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

This study aims at understanding websites usage for improving green marketing communication in Indian context. Methodologically, secondary data was collected by accessing corporate websites of companies operating in India drawn from a purposeful sampling of 14 companies ranked among 1000 companies in India by Business Today in 2011 according to their market values. The data was used to develop 22 caselets to understand how websites are used for an improved green marketing communication. Analysis of these caselets revealed several approaches of website usage for green marketing communication and the communication practices identified as (i) engaging consumers' emotions with green product offerings, (ii) Engaging with innovative mobile applications, (iii) Communicating environmental attributes of green products, (iv) Communicating pricing, (v) Enabling two-way communication, (vi) Facilitating retailing, and (vii) Creating future consumers. The study limited for its sample size and secondary data though contributes towards developing an understanding on website usage for improved green marketing communication.

KEYWORDS

website usage, green marketing.

INTRODUCTION

With the increased level of public awareness and regulatory pressure on environmental issues, the number of companies disclosing information related to their environmental actions has increased significantly. For this, internet has emerged as a prominent medium of communication as it offers a number of advantages over other modes of communication. It enables companies to offer greater accessibility and all-time availability of information to their users, communicate with them, converse and thus, build a relationship with them. Also, internet and website are preferred over printed annual reports and printed sustainability reports for communicating for this because of their cheaper cost and greater scope for disclosing a wide range of information (Chatterjee and Mir, 2008). Hence, environmental reporting on the internet has gained greater significance over recent years (Biloslavo and Trnavcevic, 2009; Isenmann et al., 2007).

Website is found to be a major application of internet technology. Almost all the companies have developed their corporate websites which are being used as a major source of disseminating information, for online selling, and interactivity with the internet users (Adams and Frost, 2003). The use of websites in green marketing communication has been witnessed by a number of authors over the last few years for the purpose of reporting information, simulating customer interaction, and managing impression of environmental performance (Adam and Frost, 2006; Haddock, 2005). Consistent efforts have been made by the researchers in the domain of green marketing communication to understand the applications and implications of internet and websites in green marketing, and their usage for marketing purposes. Most of the studies have made attempt to understand advantages/ disadvantage of web-based reporting, the nature of information produced on the websites, gradual development of amount of information disclosed, the use of websites for communicating to stakeholders, and how website is greening corporate identity (using messages, facts etc.) (Herzig and Godemann, 2010; Biloslavo and Trnavcevic, 2009; Rolland and Bazzoni, 2009; Chatterjee and Mir, 2008; Adams and Frost, 2006). From these studies, a major direction for future research has emerged to understand how websites usage can improve green marketing communication by engaging users and developing two-way communication with them. This study intends to address this gap for the green products in selected sectors, to understand how companies are engaging website users with their green products and thus, to identify prevailing green marketing communication practices.

The paper has been divided in six parts. First part discusses about the literature available and the gaps identified. Second part describes the methodology adopted for the study. Third part illustrates various caselets developed for the study. Fourth part highlights upon the green marketing communication practices emerging from the study. Fifth part presents discussion, and further conclusion, limitations and direction for future research are mentioned in the last part.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Before internet era, the marketing communication followed either (i) 'push' approach, through media of communication such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, brochures and leaflets, or (ii) direct marketing and it followed a scripted flow in a one-to-many communication model without the scope of feedback in any form (Rowley, 2004). Internet has opened a new chapter in marketing communication as it is a very low cost communication medium and it has ample ways to exchange information between companies and consumers on a one-to-one or many-to-many basis (Bauer et al., 2002). Internet offers several advantages over other tools of communication. It offers countless possibilities to serve up data in digital format, and opportunity for almost unlimited dissemination of information – either in the form of ongoing, additional or updated information (Herzig and Godemann, 2010). It is also beneficial in terms of an efficient transfer and transmission of unlimited electronic information across the countries in very less time duration, all time availability of information, multimedia capabilities of internet for information presentation, information search facility (using Search functions etc.), accessibility to all internet-using consumers, transaction facility and its ability to foster dialogues (Simmons, 2007). These capabilities of internet enables companies to respond to the greater demands for sustainability information, and offers communication regardless of time and place to convey a more complete vision of their sustainability performance (Herzig and Godemann, 2010). Hence, the internet is broadly used for (Samiee, 1998):

- (1) Communication (including contract negotiations), information access (including product specification and technical data), and advertising;
- (2) Direct sales of existing products and services;
- (3) Sales of internet-based products and/or services in which the internet is integrated in the offerings itself; and
- (4) On-line distribution of digital information/ data (e.g., software, music, process-related information, and market[ing] research).

Internet offers the features for mass as well as individual communication that can trigger short term as well as long-term responses (Herzig and Godemann, 2010). Through email, online survey, discussion forums and chat-enabled services etc., internet presents an opportunity to develop dialogue-based communication with its users. Hence, the companies are developing interactive platforms on their websites so that they can develop innovative promotional strategies and products offerings in accordance with the customers' conditions and preferences of consumption (Bauer et al., 2002). Thus, it results in an optimum product quality, a better offer and a quality service.

Websites usage for green marketing communication

For sustainability communication, website is found to be the most accepted form of internet applications. Companies are using websites to respond to emerging demands for sustainability information and to convey a more complete vision of their sustainability performance (Adams and Frost, 2006; Isenmann et al., 2007). There are many reasons for this. Company websites act as an ideal medium for swift and cost effective environmental disclosures (Malarvizhi and Yadav, 2009). Another reason for the website to be the most popular among internet applications is its usability which is related to user friendliness i.e. appearance of the web site, visual design, readability/comprehension/clarity, search facilities and ease of navigation (Chatterjee and Mir, 2008). So, most of the companies own a website which is equipped with sustainability related links on homepage, search function, sustainability indexes as navigation alternatives, an archive

function and offers download services for sustainability reports (Herzig and Godemann, 2010). Companies have been designing their websites so as to offer environmental information with easy access, better navigation alternatives, and improved comprehensibility (Herzig and Godemann, 2010). Websites provide links to relevant sources, tailored or customised information through search engines, the move toward "live" data streams, increased content, improved verification, and a mechanism for feedback (Adams and Frost, 2006). An effective use of graphics, image and multimedia messages improves information presentation and quality of communication (Rolland and Bazzoni, 2009).

TGI report on 12 international markets witnessed that internet has fast become an essential medium for communicating and gathering information for the current generation of online consumers. So, most of the organizations are successfully using websites to reach environmentally conscious consumers, to report environmental aspects (issues related to product development and supply chains) of their business and to assist them for making their purchase decisions (Herzig and Godemann, 2010; Adams and Frost, 2006). Companies use websites to convey organizational message that lead to shaping, enhancing or maintaining a company's corporate environmental identity, and to provide a mechanism for communicating with stakeholders (Rolland and Bazzoni, 2009; Adams and Frost, 2006). Utilizing the potential of websites to offer an interactive communication, companies are also enabling effective communication mechanism so that customers can learn more about goods or services, share and discuss about them (Biloslavo and Trnavcevic, 2009). So, companies now publish online reports and information on sustainability and request specific feedback. Key areas for communication include are related to product itself, packaging, manufacturing process, environmental impact of corporate operations, and effects of company's products on consumer health and safety and environmental related promotion (Chakrabarti, 2010; Boesso and Kumar, 2009; D'Souza, 2005). For effective two-way communication, companies are also developing a dialogue-based 'online-relationship' with the stakeholders which includes response to feedback (e.g. mail-to-functions, guest books and online surveys) and long-term and continuous dialogue (e.g. discussion forums and bulletin boards) and using the tools such as e-mail contact possibility, dialogue provision (chats, forums) and feedback possibility (surveys) (Eljido-Ten, 2010; Herzig and Godemann, 2010). This helps companies to develop a greater insight into the needs and wants of their customers, their attitudes and information requirements, to contribute to target-group oriented communication methods and lead to better communication of sustainability issues (Herzig and Godemann, 2010; Biloslavo and Trnavcevic, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

The objective of the study is to understand website usage by the companies for green marketing communication in Indian context. So, this study focuses on the companies operating in India which are ranked among 1000 companies in India by Business Today in 2011 according to their market values. The study draws a purposeful sample of 14 companies from the ranking list. Purposive sampling is found appropriate for such kinds of studies (Suri, 2011; Biloslavo and Trnavcevic, 2009). The companies selected belong to the following sectors:

Fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) – 4 companies

Oil & Gas – 2 companies

Automobile – 2 companies

Consumer electronics – 6 companies

And, the green products identified on these corporate websites are washing powder, shampoo, paint, lubricant, electric car, scooter, lighting products (CFL and LED lights), home appliances, mobile phone, refrigerator, air-conditioner, television, projector and camera.

To conduct the study, corporate websites of the sample companies are accessed to identify how these websites being are used for innovative products offerings for green products. A short description for each caselet was developed to illustrate the development of interactive platform on the websites which consumers can use to learn about products, share and discuss about them, and to recognize how companies are building an online-relationship with the consumers for short term responses as well as long-term and continuous dialogue.

CASELETS OF WEBSITE USAGE FOR 'INNOVATIVE GREEN PRODUCT OFFERINGS'

Caselet 1: Panasonic 'Viera' television

Panasonic connects consumers with its environmentally friendly 'Viera' television using recently launched bollywood movie 'Barfi'. It launches a 'Viera Barfi Contest' to engage the consumers with the product. Hyperlinked with Facebook (a social networking website), the contest enables consumers to send their wishes to the lead actor of the movie, Ranbir. The wishes can be sent in the discussion board facilitated by Facebook. The contest requires consumers to make their 'Viera Barfi' collage and to post them on their timelines on Facebook. For making the collage, galleries for the stills from the movie and for the latest Viera are available on the website. And, the contest offers two of the lucky participants of the contest to meet the actor and to win Panasonic Smart Viera.

The product is eco-friendly as its panel is free from Mercury and Lead, and has longer life (Up to 100,000 Hours).

Caselet 2: Panasonic Projector

On the homepage of the corporate website of Panasonic, a hyperlink connects the consumers with Panasonic projector through a Facebook page.

Panasonic Projector: Our latest info on Facebook.

Using the Facebook page, company enables them to share their experiences about the product in form of pictures of product, text, comments and videos on their interviews. Also, the company posts experts' interviews, and information related to product usage in grand events such as 2012 London Olympic Games etc, and the eco-conscious design of the product. Eco-design of product includes the details about recyclability of materials used, low power consumption, and not using banned materials under RoHS such as lead (Pb), mercury (Hg), cadmium (Cd), hexavalent chromium (CrVI), polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE). Also the details include on minimizing environmental impact in production and delivery processes.

Caselet 3: 'Club Panasonic'

The website has a link that connects visitors with 'Club Panasonic' where they can register with the club to receive updates about the latest range of products, to earn points on the product purchased, to enjoy special promotions on selected products, to participate in fun quizzes with gifts and points, and to send feedbacks.

'Join CLUB Panasonic today to earn points, get exclusive access to product updates, and receive special promotions on the latest Panasonic products that are changing people's lifestyles around the globe.'

The link provides all the details on member benefits and the reasons to join 'Club Panasonic', and also the instructions in forms of 'How to use' and 'Frequently asked questions'. Company also sends members invitations to attend product launches and special events.

This is a way to engage consumers with LUMIX G Series cameras. The 'Fun Stuff' section describes about product usage for different purposes, and product description. The product description includes the details related to material saving, lesser weight, and low power consumption while improving the product as a whole by using leading technologies.

Caselet 4: Nokia Asha 311

Nokia website engages consumers who are passionate for gaming features in mobile phones. Using the website, the company introduces smartphone, Nokia Asha 311, for superfast gaming with specific set of popular games installed without any additional price to be paid by the buyer. There are links on the website that connect users to pages of the product on social networking websites (such as Facebook, Twitter etc.). This is an innovative way to engage consumers for this environmentally friendly product. The link leads the consumers to the details about the product that also include environmental features such as up to 60% recycled materials in packaging, 100 % recyclable packaging, materials free from BFR, rFR, PVC and Nickel, use of bio plastics, 100% recoverable material, and user guide (green tips page). The website also connects the consumers to its online shopping portal (www.nokia.indiatimes.com) to let them know the price of the product and offers 7% discount on the maximum retail price. The website also facilitates customers to write reviews and feedbacks on the website as well as online shopping portal.

Caselet 5: Nokia Lumia 900

Nokia website engages consumers who are passionate for speed of connectivity in mobile phones. Using the website, the company introduces them to WindowsPhone, Nokia Lumia 900, for its connectivity related features such as high performance (voice quality, slick design, visibility etc.), and connectivity (speedy updates, creating groups, quick photo sharing) etc. There are links that connect users to pages of the product on social networking websites (such as Facebook, Twitter etc.) to effectively engage consumers with this environmentally friendly product. The link leads the consumers to the details about the product that also include environmental features such as up to 60% recycled materials in packaging, 100 % recyclable packaging, materials free from BFR, rFR, PVC and Nickel, use of bio plastics, 100% recoverable material, and user guide (green tips page). The website also connects the consumers to its online shopping portal (www.nokia.indiatimes.com) for the pricing of the product and offers 4% discount on the minimum retail price. The website also facilitates customers to write reviews and feedbacks on the website as well as online shopping portal.

Caselet 6: Philips lighting systems

'Philips Pon Onam Offer' promotes its wide range of CFL and LED light products with chances to get free gifts and to win exciting gifts. These light products save power consumption in their usage. So, consumers are engaged for these green products with the tag line, '*On the auspicious occasion of Onam, enjoy with energy saving and affordable range of Philips lighting products*'. The website also provides links to find a local store, to subscribe to its newsletter, and to register for the products.

Caselet 7: Samsung air-conditioners

Samsung's promotional deal for its eco-friendly air-conditioners offers easy payment options in forms of EMIs (down payments and instalments); with 0% interest, no processing fees and no verification charges.

The corporate website of Samsung also encourages users to submit their reviews about the products, to view reviews written by other users and ratings marked by others, and to email the webpage to friends. It also offers the facility to locate the dealers, to view commercial advertisements in form of videos and to connect the webpage with social networking websites (such as Facebook, Twitter etc.) to receive regular updates. The website also informs about price of each model and their comparison with other models in terms of features, technical specifications, pictures and reviews.

The environmentally friendly features of the product include Bio sleep mode (ensures that the most comfortable temperature is maintained for a good sleep by automatically changing room temperature as per the body's requirement), and longer lifespan and durable material of compressor. Bio sleep mode offers effective sleep efficiency (eases you into sleep by dropping the temperature), pleasant skin temperature (pleasant skin temperature is maintained to make body more relaxed and comfortable), and energy saving (reduces up to 36% of electricity consumption compared with a normal cooling mode).

Caselet 8: Samsung home appliance products

Another promotion by Samsung for its home appliance products is connected with the feelings of enjoying freedom in true sense on Independence Day in India with its long-term durable products. The promotion engages 'freedom' emotions of the consumers with its products (refrigerator and washing machine) and highlights their environmental features. Samsung Refrigerator is 94% more energy efficient than its conventional models, has reduced wall width, and uses LED lighting. And, washing machine uses Eco Bubble technology that reduces wash temperatures without compromising on cleaning results and thus, uses only 40% of the energy of a normal wash 40° wash cycle.

Caselet 9: Samsung televisions

Another promotion by Samsung for its televisions is connected with the celebration of freedom on Independence Day in India by choosing from five exciting offers on its diverse range of televisions (Plasma and LED TVs). The promotion engages 'celebration of freedom' emotions of the consumers with its televisions by offering various pricing offers for the products such as special price offers, special finance offers, discounts on price, free gifts, and extended warranty.

Caselet 10: Samsung players

Another promotion of Samsung connects consumers with a new dimension in its 3D Blu-ray player. It has tag line – '*Add a new dimension to your entertainment*' that connects the product with consumers who are passionate about entertainment.

Caselet 11: Godrej home appliances

Godrej offers consumers a 'Green Bonus' offer to upgrade from their energy guzzling appliances (refrigerators, washing machines, air-conditioners etc.) to energy efficient and green Godrej products. By availing this offer, consumers can receive up to INR 10000 and Godrej product owners can receive up to INR 1000 more. This way Godrej motivates consumers to upgrade their lifestyles while contributing towards a greener planet.

Caselet 12: Godrej MuziPlay refrigerator

Those who wish to listen to music while cooking, Godrej offers them MuziPlay refrigerator that has FM radio, MP3 player, speaker, mobile charger and equalizer. This is claimed by the company to be 100% Green (Environment Friendly- 100% CFC, HCFC and HFC Free, Protects Ozone Layer). Thus, the company engages consumers in a green lifestyle.

Caselet 13: Sony BRAVIA Television

Using an attractive bundle offer on the purchase of BRAVIA television, the company makes the green product affordable for the consumer. In other words, consumer gets more value than its price. This product offers eco-friendliness in terms of energy saving.

Caselet 14: HUL SurfExcel

Ganesh Chaturthi is one of the popular festivals in India which is celebrated with idols of Lord Ganesh. HUL motivates consumers to go green this season by creating their own eco-idols. The company encourages them to post the pictures of their idols on SurfExcel page of facebook and the best decorated entries would be awarded with exciting prizes. This way, the company connects consumers with the tag line of the product, '*daag achche hein*' and promotes its environmentally friendly detergent powder that reduces water consumption by 50%.

Caselet 15: P&G Ariel

Involving teens and kids at home in laundry can be fun and related tips are provided on the website of P&G Ariel. These tips help mothers save their time, and also to involve teens and kids. This is how the company promotes its eco-friendly detergent that enables washing at lower temperature (to lower our CO₂ emissions), has reduced packaging, and use safe and biodegradable ingredients.

Our cold-water washing campaigns such as 'Ariel Turn To 30°C' have helped reduce 58,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions by educating consumers to save energy. The launch of Ariel Excel Gel has also helped reduce the overall environmental impact through less energy, water, packaging and waste.

Caselet 16: P&G Pantene

Buying of P&G Pantene products helps cancer patients and the buyers get discounts on saloon services in Pantene saloons. This green product is made up of naturally derived ingredients and has green packaging (up to 59% plant-based plastic (renewable sugarcane vs. petroleum), excluding cap).

Caselet 17: Asian Decorative Paints

To promote its eco-friendly range of decorative paints, Asian Paints has launched 'Colour SCHEME PRO' for Android mobile phone owners. It enables users to choose the colour by browsing through the Asian Paints Colour Spectra fandeck, or by clicking a new picture and choosing favorite colour. It also offers users to build a combination with the colour picked from the image. These colours are matched to Asian Paint Colour Spectra range which offers three combination roots (Monochromatic, Complimentary, and Analogous) to build a unique colour combination. It also encourages saving the palette by giving it a unique name and tagging keywords related to the combination. Also, it is encouraged to share it on Facebook and get views on it, or email it to friends and peer groups.

The decorative range of products does not contain any added Lead, Mercury, Arsenic and Chromium.

Caselet 18: Nerolac Healthy Home Paints

Event 'Kuch change karein, Chalo tune badlein!' encourages consumer to create a Jingle for Nerolac and to win exciting prizes (Rs.1,00,000, for winning entry, Rs.25,000 each for up to four Runners-up and Rs.25,000 for most Voted Entry). This event is facilitated by Facebook where entries can be uploaded, users can vote, and can tweet their thoughts on Twitter about their ideas, thoughts and opinions.

The Healthy Home Paints are Lead-free and have low Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC). VOC in paints pollutes the indoor as well as outdoor air, water and soil and in turn has adverse effects on human health. The low VOC range of paints conforms to the strictest of International Standards and has the National Test House certification (NTH certification).

Caselet 19: Castrol products

Castrol engages consumers by sponsoring international sports events (Cricket and Footballs), sports awards (such as Castrol Awards for Cricketing Excellence), and rankings of players and sports teams. These sports and events have been passion in the country. So, users can bond with the endorsers or spokespeople and the product image.

Castrol has addressed environmental issues in all the range of its products which do not contain harmful ingredients (i.e. free from Chlorine, Secondary amine, Formaldehyde, Boron, Barium, and Zinc etc.), have low VOC, use biodegradable base oils, and produce low odour.

Caselet 20: Shell INSIDE ENERGY innovation app

Shell's technological innovations have proved its success in terms of enhancing performance of standard motorcycles, underbones and mopeds. The environmental benefits of the usage of its products include lesser wastage, high efficiency and reliable performance.

The company engages consumers through 'INSIDE ENERGY innovation app' for iPad to explore interactive stories on innovation to explore the role innovation plays in producing energy to power and sustain our lives, to discover new ways of finding energy, to learn about advances in technology, to meet the people involved in making it happen and to receive new stories and interactive features added regularly.

Caselet 21: Mahindra REVA

The environmental benefits of electric cars include the use of electric source of energy that has lesser impact on the environment. The company engages students of schools with its electric car brand REVA. The company partnered with the event – The Times NIE 'My Green Earth' – for school children in 2012 and the winners of the event were given 'Reva' for a week so that they, with their families, could spend a some time in petrol free world.

Caselet 22: TVS Electric Scooters

TVS connects singing talent of girls with its electric scooty range of products under the event 'Super Singer 2012' in which the best singer receives a cash prize of INR 1,00,000 and a TVS WEGO/ SCOOTY.

The environmental attributes of the product include 85% recyclability and operation on electric source of power which is perceived to be a cleaner source of energy.

DISCUSSION

Emerging green marketing communication practices

(i) ENGAGING CONSUMERS' EMOTIONS WITH GREEN PRODUCT OFFERINGS

The companies are engaging consumers with their emotions related to entertainment, religious festivals and events. By participating in contests and public events, and winning exciting prizes, consumers are able to associate themselves with the company, its product, and its attributes, and to create a unique identity of the product in their minds. Engaging in celebrating festivals and national days (such as Independence Day etc.) is a prevailing practice for this. Also, emotions related to passion such as passion for games on mobile phones, international sports events etc. also enable companies to engage consumers with their products. Companies such as Nokia (offering popular gaming for free) and Castrol (sponsoring international sports events) are the examples.

(ii) ENGAGING WITH INNOVATIVE MOBILE APPLICATIONS

A number of innovations are witnessed in the study to increase and improve interaction with consumers. Developing innovative applications for mobile phones is an example. For Android mobile phone users, Asian Paints has launched 'Colour SCHEME PRO' which enables them to customize their products. Similarly, Shell's 'INSIDE ENERGY innovation app' for iPad enables the users to interact with Shell for its innovation and development.

(iii) COMMUNICATING GREEN PRODUCTS ATTRIBUTES

While communicating about the green products, the main focus has been to integrate functional and emotional benefits of products with their environmental benefits. Thus, it is contrary to the perception that green marketing is about marketing 'green' about the product. For example, companies elaborate about the product as longer life, low power consumption, and lesser weight in consumer electronics products. Also, green product benefits are explained as improving the performance of engine (for lubricants), and living in a petrol-free world and improved lifestyle (for electric vehicles). On the contrary, banning use of harmful substances, low VOC, reusability, and recyclability are not highlighted in the product offerings. Thus, the need of emphasizing on functional and emotional benefits of green products is supported (Hartmann *et al.*, 2005).

(iv) COMMUNICATING PRICING

Pricing is identified in the literature as one of the most important variable to influence consumer behavior towards green products. The study has witnessed a number of pricing practices for green products. These practices aim at offering (i) More value for a given price, (ii) Discount pricing, and (iii) Easy payment options. Out of these, more value for a given price is adopted by a number of product offerings. For example, it includes more benefits without additional price, free gifts, attractive bundle offer, exchange offer and extended warranty. Thus, it increases affordability and develops a feeling of getting more value at the same price. Discount pricing include a percentage reduction in price, and special prize offer. Easy payment option means payments in forms of EMIs (down payments and instalments); with 0% interest, no processing fees and no verification charges, and special finance offers.

(v) FACILITATING RETAILING

The use of online shopping portals has emerged as a unique practice in green marketing communication. The portals communicate about attractive pricing offers for the green products, their availability and facilitate their purchase. Also, it is facilitated to read and write reviews about green products on the online shopping portals. This enables consumers to learn from experience and opinion of other users about the green products for their usage, and performance etc. Thus, it helps in better decision making for those who intend to buy them.

(vi) ENABLING TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Facilitating consumers to write reviews, comments, feedback, to email the web page, to use discussion board and to use platforms of social networking websites cater to developing two-way and interactive communication. Use of social networking websites has been identified as a leading practice in green marketing communication. A number of companies are found to have their availability on social networking websites such Facebook and Twitter, which enable companies to disseminate information about the products as well as to interact with a large number of users available on these websites. It also enables group chats, moderated group chats (moderated by company representatives) and discussion groups between users and company representatives, as well as among users. These initiatives supported by multi-media i.e. pictures, videos, graphics, and image maps make presentation of information attractive and discussion interactive.

(vii) CREATING FUTURE CONSUMERS

Along with catering to the present consumers, there are efforts to create future consumers as well. Offering tips to positively engage kids and teens in laundry and offering to use electric vehicle to the school children (winners of an event) with their families are some examples of such initiatives that are aimed at creating future consumers.

CONCLUSION

The study has been able to describe the website usage for green marketing communication and has highlighted the emerging green marketing communication practices in Indian context. It can be witnessed from the study that the companies are moving beyond just communicating about the green products, and are now using product offerings to engage consumers with the product for its benefits and social value. Thus, when consumers are engaged with the green products and their offerings, it intends to influence their attitude towards the product and it may result in purchase and usage behavior in future. Thus, consumers intend to enter in a greener lifestyle.

Using websites for green marketing communication can result in a number of outcomes. It not only communicates about the green products, their pricing and retailing, but also enables the companies to build up a platform for long-term and continuous dialogue with the consumers about the product and its related aspects. Thus, it generates involvement, interaction and discussion of several consumer clusters among themselves as well as with the marketing personnel, and develops an online relationship with each other. Marketing personnel can use these interactions and discussions to raise awareness about the product, improve understanding of consumers about its features and performance, and to clarify misconceptions about the product. By actively participating in the discussions, marketing personnel can listen to the voice of consumers, can learn about the nature of consumer segments, and accordingly can shape their marketing decisions. Some of the companies such as Godrej and Asian Paints etc. are encouraging consumers to participate in product design and customization of their products as per their choices and preferences. Such initiatives can lead to developing a 'partnership' and a trust-based collaboration between consumers and companies. These initiatives can guide companies to realize their environmental goals and to develop a sustainable marketplace.

The study is limited in terms of its sample size and developing an understanding of green marketing communication for websites from organizational perspective only. Other media of communication were not considered in the study, thus it was not an integrated marketing communication approach. Future research can look into the development and outcome of dialogue-based communication and discussions, and their impact on shaping marketing decisions. Future work can also develop insights on green consumer segmentation emerging from the dialogue-based platforms.

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