

Chapter 6

Managerial Perspectives on Willingness to Pay for Green Marketing: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Green marketing meets the present needs of the consumer and business, while also preserving or enhancing the ability of the future generations to meet their needs. The chapter deals with customers' willingness to pay for green marketing initiatives. The chapter explores the managerial perspective using a qualitative inquiry using interpretative phenomenology approach. The customers are willing to pay for green initiatives provided 1) the green initiative does not cost a lot of inconvenience, 2) hotel has a good image, 3) customer profile environmental consciousness moderated the relationship between the customer profile and willingness to pay. Recommendations on how to implement the green strategy in hotels are discussed. The direction of future research sections important research areas in green marketing for an academic contribution.

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INTRODUCTION

Business activities are a part of the social fabric of society. Therefore, the survival and development of business activity are depended on the environment in which it operates. The business environment includes the ecological environment. Thus, it is our duty to protect the ecological environment so that economic activities are carried on without harming the environment. Economic well-being is not the only reason for preserving the environment, but it can also impact the existence of mankind. Thus, protecting the ecology is the societal obligations of both the individual and business. Marketing discipline being an important cog in business activities plays an important role in linking ecology with economic activities. It is well documented in Marketing literature that the strategic importance of two factors 1) customer retention and 2) long-term customer relationship. Both these are used to achieve the marketing performance. The concept of ecological sustainability which is the convergence of marketing thought process to coexist with economic activities. Such an important thought process calls for consideration of environmental issues in business domain, especially Marketing. The concept of Green marketing credited to the work of Lazer in the year 1969, wherein he addressed the issue of, the societal dimension of marketing (Lazer, 1969). It is here, where in he addressed three important issues 1) the constraint of environmental resources, 2) environmental impacts of conventional marketing and 3) greening of the different aspects of traditional marketing. In modern times, the key challenge for mankind is to find more sustainable and equitable ways to produce, consume and live. Sustainability was once a vision of the future shared by an environmentally-orientated few. However, with the publication of the Brundtland Report 'Our Common Future' in 1987 brought the issue into the mainstream (Brundtland, 1987).

The Brundtland Report and the subsequent discovery of the environment by marketing practitioners and academics were the important factors for the renewed interest of Green Marketing in early 2000. For marketing field to trigger this philosophy, the challenge was twofold. The first challenge was in the short term. The ecological and social issues had become significant external influences on companies and the markets within which they operate. In other words, ecology and society cast influence on the manner companies operated. Therefore, the companies are having to react to these new threats. In addition, marketer has to respond to changing customer needs, new regulations and a new social consciousness. This also reflects the increasing concern about the socio-environmental impacts of business. The second challenge was in the longer term. It is that the pursuit of sustainability that will demand fundamental changes to the management paradigm which ramparts marketing and the other business functions. It was in these years we saw much research and many product launches, campaigns, conferences, books etc on this subject. Green marketing

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