

EKOMARKETING IN UKRAINE: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

Nowadays in Ukraine and worldwide more prevalent is so-called “green marketing” or eco-marketing. The main reason for this process is the development of environmental consciousness of humanity and its own responsibility for saving the Planet. One more reason is our fear for ourselves, because we all want to live a healthy lifestyle, eat healthy products, wear natural clothing etc.

Ecological marketing is a specific type of marketing that involves targeting the entire enterprise (product development, its production, packaging, transportation, sale, promotion, recycling and disposal) to form and meet environmentally-oriented demand for profits, environmental protection and people’s health [1].

It would seem that such aspirations are only positive, but the environmental theme in marketing has long ceased to be a whim of some supporters of a healthy lifestyle and turned into a powerful consumer trend. Currently, ecological branding includes a major shift in consumer psychology, and virtually no sphere of life is left behind. Ecological lifestyle and environment-oriented thinking became an important part of traditional Western culture of consumption. But if we investigate this issue, we can see that most of it is about the people’s illusion for a better quality of life. And most manufacturers, marketing specialists and brand- makers are interested in creating and nurturing this kind of illusion. After all, products with the prefix "eco", as practice shows, are more expensive for 30-40% and, therefore, they provide greater profits [2].

At the time of massive “greening” of enterprises more products position themselves as “eco-friendly”, but experts estimate that only 4.5 % of them are eligible for this grandiose name. In the West, where “green marketing” is much more common, they began to use a special notion of “green washing” - ecological positioning of the product or service without sufficient grounds for it [3]. The American company Terra Choice regularly publishes a report on this activity in the U.S. (Green washing Report). In one of them, the company has allocated seven “sins” of “green washing”:

- Sin of the Hidden Trade-Off: If a product claims to be green in one sense, but ignores other significant impacts. The product is marketed as “eco-friendly” because it has one or several advantages, but marketers hide its important weaknesses;

- Sin of No Proof: If you can't prove it with reputable third-party verification, you can't claim it. Environmental positioning is built on the basis of statements which are difficult or impossible to prove and, especially, certify by third-party;

- Sin of Vagueness: Terms such as “all-natural”, “environmentally friendly” and other vague or unregulated descriptors can mislead consumers.

- The (new) Sin of Worshiping False Labels: Often, a product has an official-looking seal, but the seal is meaningless because it is dreamed up by the product marketers themselves, without any application of third-party standards.

- Sin of Irrelevance: If a claim is true, but doesn't distinguish the product in any meaningful way, marketers have sinned.

- Sin of the Lesser of Two Evils: The manufacturer can focus on certain characteristics of the product, which really give the right to consider this product more “environmentally friendly” than counterparts. But the damage to the environment of use it is still high.

- Sin of Fibbing: Simple. It's a lie. Some companies will go as far as claiming to be certified organic or Energy Star-certified, but cannot back up the certification [4].

Currently in our country market of ecological products is still poorly developed. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the standards of “environmental” or “environmentally friendly” products do not exist in Ukraine. Thus, the barrier of entry to the market is practically absent. And now, we can find some cases of speculative green marketing.

Thus, we can conclude that we should not run to extremes, and believe that environmental products are absolutely necessary, because, in general, "green" trend in marketing is very positive. They demonstrate a minimum positive shift in public opinion. However, looking for goods with the prefix "organic", "eco" or "bio", you should analyze the product which is in front of you, what is its origin and you should also think whether its "ecological friendliness" is simply a tool of influence on the minds of consumers.

References:

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