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THE ROLE OF DIGITAL MARKETING IN BUILDING CONSUMER AWARENESS OF SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTS

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Abstract

Recent developments in digital technology have transformed how businesses interact with customers, share information, and promote their products. In the realm of sustainability, digital marketing can be leveraged to disseminate information and raise public awareness about products that account for their environmental impact. This study examines how digital marketing helps the public become familiar with sustainable products, identifies the best practices for utilizing digital marketing toward this end, and analyzes the various factors that influence the effectiveness of such efforts. The research employs a literature review methodology, examining scholarly articles that address digital marketing, green marketing, brand awareness, and consumer behavior regarding the purchase of sustainable products. Data were analyzed by grouping similar concepts and subsequently synthesizing the findings in a structured and clear manner. Digital marketing can assist the public in understanding the characteristics of sustainable products by providing easy access to information, educational content, and opportunities for two-way communication. However, its success depends on the accuracy of the information, the extent to which companies are transparent about their sustainability initiatives, and the level of public trust in the brand. This research is intended to assist companies in designing more effective digital marketing strategies for informing consumers about environmentally friendly products.

Keywords: digital marketing, consumer awareness, sustainable products, green marketing, digital communication.

INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advancement is currently transforming every aspect of modern business marketing specifically how companies communicate with their customers, build long-term relationships, and develop and deliver added value to the broader commercial market. Digital marketing today differs significantly from the past; it is no longer merely an alternative method for advertising or promoting products and services to a passive audience. Instead, digital marketing has evolved into a critical strategic pillar. Technological progress has fundamentally altered the practice of marketing. The internet and social media have enabled companies to reach wider audiences, disseminate messages rapidly, and foster more engaging forms of communication. Marketing today is no longer reliant solely on traditional media; it leverages a diverse array of digital tools, including social media, websites, online advertisements, email, and various forms of digital content.

This shift has empowered companies to launch products centered on sustainability. In the context of this study, a sustainable product is one that accounts for its environmental and social impact throughout its entire life cycle—from manufacturing, sales, and usage, all the way to its disposal at the end of its life. Such products may feature recyclable packaging, be composed of eco-friendly materials, or hold recognized sustainability certifications.

Digital marketing serves as an effective medium to address the need for such information. Companies can articulate the materials used, the production process, proper packaging disposal, and the resulting environmental benefits through educational videos, infographics, social media campaigns, and other communication channels. By providing information via digital platforms, companies help consumers make more informed purchasing decisions by fostering a deeper understanding of the products before they are bought. Within the framework of sustainable development, digital marketing plays a vital role, as consumer perspectives on products have undergone a significant transformation. In 2025, Kontarya et al. examined how digital marketing strategies influence purchasing decisions, discovering that brand awareness plays a key role in linking these strategies to consumer choices. Their research

explores how digital marketing efforts shape the way consumers become aware of products or services. Meanwhile, in the same year, Amalia and Utami discussed sustainable palm oil certification and the factors Indonesian consumers look for when purchasing food products. Together, these two studies offer complementary perspectives on how to convey digital marketing messages and disseminate information regarding product sustainability.

From the perspective of sustainable marketing management, understanding consumer awareness is a crucial step in helping individuals develop more responsible consumption habits. People who possess a deep understanding of how a product impacts the environment and society are more likely to take these factors into account when making purchasing decisions. However, mere awareness does not automatically lead to a purchase; consumers also weigh considerations such as price, product accessibility, quality, daily habits, and the level of trust they place in sustainability claims. Therefore, when developing a digital marketing strategy, it is essential not only to promote the product but also to provide clear and accurate information that empowers people to make informed choices.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of digital technology and the internet in marketing facilitates the dissemination of information, the highlighting of product value, and the establishment of relationships between companies and consumers. This approach leverages social media, websites, search engines, email, e-commerce platforms, and other digital channels for communication. Unlike traditional marketing, which typically relies on one-way messaging, digital marketing enables two-way interaction between businesses and customers, allowing for faster feedback. Digital marketing involves the use of digital tools and online platforms to share information, connect with customers, and help companies achieve their objectives. It encompasses social media marketing, content creation, digital advertising, email campaigns, search engine visibility enhancement, and collaborations with content creators. Each method offers a unique way to reach audiences and share information about a product.

In the context of sustainable product marketing, digital media can be used to showcase a product's benefits, educate the public about its environmental impact, and provide details regarding the materials used, the manufacturing process, and any relevant certifications. Digital marketing serves not only as a marketing strategy but also as an educational tool that allows consumers to gain a better understanding of a product. Consumer awareness refers to an individual's ability to recognize, recall, and understand a product and its specific attributes. In the context of sustainable products, this awareness is reflected in a consumer's capacity to identify eco-friendly items, understand what makes them sustainable, grasp the benefits they offer, and verify whether the claims made by the company are genuine and supported by evidence.

It is important to distinguish awareness from trust and the intention to purchase. An individual may be knowledgeable about a product, yet not necessarily trust the information provided by the company. Furthermore, knowing the advantages of a sustainable product does not automatically lead to a purchase, as consumers also weigh factors such as cost, accessibility, their actual needs, and their established daily routines. Digital marketing can help build consumer awareness, as it allows information to be easily shared, disseminated, and adapted. Educational content is used to explain product characteristics to the public, while interactive features enable consumers to ask questions and receive further clarification.

In 2025, Kontarya and his colleagues examined how digital marketing strategies influence brand awareness and consumer purchasing choices. Although their research encompassed various types of products, the findings offer valuable insights into how digital marketing contributes to building brand awareness. When considering sustainable products, it is essential to pay close attention to the clarity of the information being presented.

METHOD

This study employs a literature review method, which involves searching for, examining, comparing, and synthesizing the results of previous research concerning digital marketing and consumer awareness of sustainable products. Research data were collected from scholarly articles published in nationally recognized journals indexed in SINTA 4. Data sources were identified via the SINTA and GARUDA portals, Google Scholar, and the official websites of the respective journals.

The search was conducted using various keywords, such as “digital marketing,” “consumer awareness,” “brand awareness,” “green marketing,” “sustainable products,” and “eco-friendly products.”

The analysis utilizes a narrative synthesis approach, in which articles meeting the inclusion criteria are categorized into themes—such as digital marketing strategies, consumer awareness, sustainability-related communication, and factors influencing marketing effectiveness. Subsequently, the content of each article was examined to identify commonalities, differences, and areas that have received limited attention in prior research. The

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findings from this comparison contribute to a deeper understanding of how digital marketing can enhance consumer awareness of sustainable products.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Contribution of Digital Marketing in Communicating Sustainable Products

Companies can leverage digital media to share information about their products through various channels that help reach the public. By utilizing social media, websites, videos, and educational materials, companies can provide details regarding product features and explain how these products meet sustainability standards.

Presenting information in a clear and organized manner makes it easier for customers to understand the products and the benefits they offer. For instance, companies can highlight aspects such as recyclable packaging, the origin of raw materials, or certifications that support the products' eco-friendly claims.

However, the effectiveness of digital marketing should not be judged solely by the frequency of ad views, the number of followers, or the level of engagement with social media posts. Companies must also assess how well customers truly understand the message being conveyed. Therefore, the content of the information—and how effectively it meets the audience's needs—is a crucial aspect of marketing eco-friendly products.

B. Digital Marketing Approaches That Can Be Used

Digital marketing aims to increase consumer awareness regarding sustainable products, as evidenced by the following:

1. Development of educational content

This type of content explains the nature, benefits, and uses of sustainable products. Information can be shared through articles, short videos, charts, or Q&A sessions. This method simplifies information that might otherwise be difficult to convey within a brief advertisement.

2. Leveraging social media

Social media serves as a platform for sharing information about sustainability while also providing a means to interact with consumers. Questions and feedback directed at a company can help identify specific aspects of a product that require further clarification.

3. Using digital advertising

Digital advertising allows businesses to reach the right audience—those most likely to be interested in their products or services. To ensure the message is truly meaningful, advertisements should focus on clear benefits and avoid making environmental claims that are not supported by concrete evidence.

4. Collaborating with content creators

Engaging in discussions with content creators is an excellent way to introduce products and educate audiences on how to use them. The information provided must be accurate, the commercial nature of the partnership should be clearly disclosed, and any claims regarding environmental friendliness must be verifiable.

C. Consumer Awareness and the Credibility of Sustainability Information

Having an awareness of sustainable products means that people are not only able to recognize such products but also understand the information that accompanies them. Consumers need to grasp the rationale behind a product's sustainability label, as well as the evidence supporting such claims.

A 2025 study by Amalia and Utami on sustainable palm oil certification sheds light on how information regarding sustainability influences the choices people make when purchasing products. While certifications can provide useful information, it remains a concern how much the general public truly knows about these labels and what they actually signify.

Companies can share more information about their certifications, their production processes, and the environmental practices they implement through online channels. Such information encourages consumers to conduct further verification before placing their trust in the claims being made.

Conversely, if claims are not clearly explained, it can lead to misunderstandings and cause customers to lose faith in a company. Therefore, honesty and clarity in communicating product information are essential when marketing sustainable products.

D. Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Digital Marketing

Both supporting and hindering factors play a role in increasing consumer awareness through digital marketing. Factors that enhance effectiveness include ease of access to information, high-quality content, message consistency, the use of simple and easily understood language, direct communication with consumers, and a credible brand image.

Supporting factors encompass elements such as the accessibility of information, the quality of content, the consistency of the message, the use of simple and accessible language, interaction with those engaging with the information, and the perceived trustworthiness of the information source. Marketing materials that are relevant to the public's needs also have the potential to increase interest in the products being offered.

Conversely, factors that may hinder consumer trust include the use of overly complex language, difficulty in accessing digital content, vague promises regarding sustainability, and discrepancies between the claims made in advertisements and the actual state of the product.

Furthermore, possessing more knowledge about a product does not always lead an individual to make a purchase. Factors such as product pricing, ease of access, consumption patterns, and perceptions regarding the product's value and benefits also influence such decisions. Therefore, companies must be able to distinguish between indicators that they have successfully raised public awareness of their brand and indicators that they have successfully increased sales.

E. Implications for Marketing Management

Companies should develop digital marketing plans that go beyond mere advertising. They ought to focus on educating the public and acting responsibly when sharing information. Several steps that can be taken include:

1. Explaining how a product is sustainable and the positive benefits it offers, in a clear and simple manner that is easily understood by everyone.
2. Providing educational material that helps consumers grasp the value and utility of the product.
3. Including evidence or sources of information that allow consumers to verify the accuracy of the claims being made.
4. Offering clear and consistent responses to customer inquiries.
5. Evaluating the level of consumer understanding, in addition to monitoring the reach of advertisements and the volume of engagement across digital media.

CONCLUSION

Digital marketing can help raise public awareness about eco-friendly products by disseminating information, organizing educational activities, and fostering dialogue with consumers. The use of educational materials, social media, online advertisements, and collaborations with content creators can assist the public in understanding a product's features and recognizing the benefits it offers. The success of these strategies depends not only on the reach of the marketing efforts but also on the clarity of the information provided, the honesty of claims regarding sustainability, and the level of consumer trust. Therefore, companies must ensure that all their marketing messages accurately represent their products and are supported by verifiable, factual evidence.

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