



GROW YOUR GREEN

*For many marketers,
environmentalism equals opportunity*

BY PIET LEVY//STAFF WRITER

LIKE A PLANT SPROUTING UP FROM THE SOIL, THE GREEN MOVEMENT IS GROWING. According to a survey of marketing and communication leaders completed this spring by St. Louis-based public relations firm Fleishman-Hillard Inc. and the American Marketing Association, 58% believe their companies will increase their environmental sustainability efforts in the months ahead. Further, 76% of U.S. consumers surveyed by Esty Environmental Partners, Landor Associates, Cohn & Wolfe, and Penn, Schoen & Berland for the 2009 Global Green Brands Survey said they will spend the same or more on green products in the next year.

Where there's growth, there's opportunity. As a marketer, that could mean establishing yourself as an environmental specialist within your company or agency, or perhaps setting up your own firm.

"It's absolutely a space marketers should consider investing in, with the caveat that it requires a different skill set and different sets of knowledge," says Scott McDougall, president of TerraChoice Environmental

Marketing Inc., based in Ottawa. "It's not just a question of 'same old thing, different client group.'"

"Think about where you were in 1994," says Aili Jokela, Fleishman-Hillard's sustainability co-chair and general manager at the public relations firm's Portland, Ore., office. "Everybody knew the Internet was coming. ... Here we are 15 years later and the Internet is literally pervasive. ... I think green will become as pervasive as the Internet is today. It will become a part of the way we live, the way we do business and how we function as a society."

If you go for green, develop a well-rounded understanding of the space and establish a long-term plan, experts advise. Other marketers will be jumping on the bandwagon, so to really stand out, you have to commit yourself to the movement. You must learn as much as you can through written resources and business partnerships and take action to live a green lifestyle.

"You can't understand why people pay a premium price for an organic tomato unless you do that as well," says Adam Werbach, global

CEO for sustainable marketing agency Saatchi and Saatchi S in San Francisco. Werbach is the author of *Strategy for Sustainability: A Business Manifesto* and is a former president of the Sierra Club. "Understanding the roots of this consumer trend is essential," he says.

For those establishing green marketing agencies, differentiate your shops from general practitioners by becoming more versed in green. For those wanting to launch eco-marketing departments within their companies, you have to talk green—as in greenbacks. Indicate the financial benefits to your superiors and get company buy-in to becoming a green organization.

Whichever path you start on, one of the first steps is to learn what being a green marketer entails. University classes can help. For example, McDougall's education in both biology and marketing guide him in his job. Jacquelyn A. Ottman, founder of environmental marketing firm J. Ottman Consulting Inc. in New York, and author of *Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation*, recommends getting a degree or certification from a school that offers courses on environmental issues and environmentally conscious business management.

If formal education is out of the question, educate yourself. Michelle Price, worldwide environmental marketing manager for Palo

Alto, Calif.-based Hewlett Packard Co.'s Imaging and Printing Group, suggests attending green networking conferences and reading analyst reports, blogs, books and newsletters.

Dan Cox, principal consultant for Chicago-based green marketing firm Greater Than, advises joining a professional network that you can

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— AILI JOKELA,
F-H SUSTAINABILITY CO-CHAIR



Green Marketing Resources

BOOKS

- *The Green Marketing Manifesto*
by John Grant
- *Climate Change: What's Your Business Strategy?*
by Andrew J. Hoffman and John G. Woody
- *Biomimicry: Innovation Inspired by Nature*
by Janine M. Benyus

- *Green to Gold: How Smart Companies Use Environmental Strategy to Innovate, Create Value, and Build Competitive Advantage*
by Daniel Esty and Andrew Winston
- *Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*
by Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins

WEB SITES

- GreenBiz.com
- Joel Makower's Two Steps Forward Blog
(http://makower.typepad.com/joel_makower/)
- TriplePundit.com
- EnvironmentalLeader.com
- The journal *Environment and Behavior*
(Details & articles at <http://eab.sagepub.com/>)

learn from, such as Net Impact, a nonprofit organization with chapters on six continents that promotes environmental sustainability in business.

Look out for educational opportunities on the job. Jokela says her technical understanding came from working closely with the nonprofit advocacy group Northwest Energy Efficiency Alliance Inc. in Portland, Ore. Since sustainability cuts across multiple industries and businesses, marketers can learn from a variety of clients, Jokela says.

You also can promote your green credentials by channeling them through your operations. If you need business cards, produce them on recycled paper at half the normal size, Cox suggests. Nix bottled water and Styrofoam in your work place, Ottman says.

BE GREEN, MAKE GREEN?

Knowing is one thing, but being is another. How do you ensure your environmentally sustainable marketing agency or department is financially sustainable?

If you're at a company, make sure the higher powers and other departments are on board and have made green central to the company's business model. To do that, show them how going green will improve the bottom line.

"Build an internal business case and show how this is going to drive more sales or close more deals," HP's Price suggests. "You do that by showing how important it is to customers by looking at a lot of data."

HP is dedicated to the green movement because, for instance, 75% of small- and medium-sized business owners say they take environmental factors into consideration when purchasing printing devices, according to an HP study.

In addition to saving money and attracting consumers, marketers should make clear to superiors that a green identity can improve internal morale and attract future employees whose environmental concern is part of their DNA, says Brian Richardson, vice president of brand marketing and communications for Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, a Toronto company acclaimed for partnerships with the National Geographic Society and the World Wildlife Fund.

If you're going out on your own, you'll face competition from other marketers capitalizing on the trend. Further still, you'll need to convince potential clients that your services are vital and distinguish yourself from general agencies. Self-promote and build your credentials via speaking engagements, published articles and white papers, Ottman says, and keep your business niche well-defined. For example, Greater Than's niche is targeting green-oriented Chicago businesses appealing to a super-conscious consumer set. TerraChoice focuses on the science side of environmentalism, so instead of competing with advertising or public relations, it often works with them and avoids competition from a marketplace overflowing with traditional agency options.

Like maintaining a garden, nurturing a green marketing career requires care, consideration, discipline and enlightenment. Some marketers may not have it in them to blossom into full-fledged experts. Nevertheless, green is growing, so there's still opportunity for all types of marketers to plant a seed for progress. **m**



EDUCATION

- **Yale University's** School of Forestry and Environmental Studies' environmental studies and management studies M.B.A. program
- **The University of Michigan's** Frederick A. and Barbara M. Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise's M.B.A./M.S. program
- **Columbia University's** Center for Environmental Research and Conservation's program in conservation biology
- **Bainbridge Graduate Institute's** sustainable business and sustainable entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship programs

GREEN MARKETING'S FUTURE

Q: As environmentalism becomes more mainstream in the years ahead, will there be a place for stand-alone green marketing agencies, or will green become just another tool in big agencies' toolboxes?

"A lot of agencies out there specialize in single things, like pharma advertising or nonprofit PR. As far as environmental marketing, one side of me thinks it's no different than those as far as chances for survival."

— Dan Cox

Principal Consultant, Greater Than

"A traditional agency will be more versed within green areas than [it is] today. ... But there's always a place for both [traditional marketing specialists and green marketing specialists] to co-exist."

— Steve French

Managing Partner, Natural Marketing Institute Inc.

"Marketers in the green space now can ensure long-term viability [by making] sure their expertise stays current not just with the issues of the day but with the issues of the next decade; so as issues of environmental sustainability change and evolve, [marketers] change and evolve. We recognize that mainstreaming is probably a good thing and, indeed, many small marketing agencies should expect and hope to be acquired by larger agencies."

— Scott McDougall

President, TerraChoice Environmental Marketing Inc.

"Give it another 20 years, and there's not going to be a need for green marketing consultants. Hopefully, it will be integrated into a brand management function so that everyone knows green."

— Jacquelyn A. Ottman

Founder of J. Ottman Consulting Inc.

Author of Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation

"I'm not sure if we're going to see more dedicated specialists as it relates to environmental marketing. But [we'll] certainly see the profile of the environmental platform grow bigger within our company and, generally speaking, for all companies."

— Brian Richardson

Vice President of Brand Marketing and Communications, Fairmont Hotels and Resorts

"If you sell solar panels or if you're [marketing] the pure version of a product, that tends to [apply to] 1 to 2% of the general audience. That's still billions of dollars. So there'll still be a role for environmental marketing agencies for a long time to come."

— Adam Werbach

Global CEO, Saatchi and Saatchi S

Author of Strategy for Sustainability: A Business Manifesto