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From Hippie To Hip

June 29, 2007: 04:46 PM EST

[\(Billboard.biz\)](#) -- Al Gore was ahead of his time. The presidential hopeful was discussing environmental issues for 20 some years-long before his documentary on global warming, "An Inconvenient Truth," picked up a couple of Academy Awards and long before Wal-Mart (NYSE:WMT) came along and pushed its concept of an eco-friendly approach to doing business into the mainstream.

Unlikely bookends, both have had a powerful ripple effect. Green marketing has, without question, gone from crunchy to mainstream, from hippie to hip.

"As green products become more prevalent, consumers are more likely to select them, especially if they achieve value parity," says Drew Neisser, CEO of Renegade Marketing Group in New York. To illustrate, Neisser points to the Method brand of eco-friendly home-care products. "Method is more expensive than other liquid soaps, but the sleek design makes Method a premium product."

Whether we're talking Method, Body Shop, Aveda, Stonyfield Farms or Ben & Jerry's, green brands distinguish themselves on a variety of levels-including ingredients, processing and packaging. "Every step of the life cycle attempts to minimize environmental impact," says Jacquelyn Ottman, founder of eco-innovation/green marketing firm J. Ottman Consulting and author of "Green Marketing: Opportunity for Innovation." Once this happens, green brands "start to attract environmentally conscious and aware consumers." Which can increase market share and help businesses take advantage of new markets.

[Click here to read more of 'green's' impact on brand marketing, including Wal-Mart's initiative's, how the music industry is part of the equation and more.](#)

Newstex ID: VNU-0007-17830766

Originally published in the June 14, 2007 version of Billboard.

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