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Green marketing and its exploitation in Slovak companies

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Abstract

A socially responsible company is not only oriented to maximize its profit, but an integral part of its philosophy is a social and environmental orientation and itself social and environmental interests of the society. Consumers' satisfaction and over-all educational process in these areas nowadays are seen as the important step to company success. Based on this, following paper deals with fundamentals of the conception of green marketing, which represents environmentally-oriented approach (eco-approach) and responsible management process. The green marketing includes more than just a simple building of corporate image. It becomes a modern mean of the enforcement of actual environmental trends to a broad spectrum of business activities. The field of action of green marketing tools is relatively extensive, starting with the protection of environment, production and sale of products and services with ecological conditions and requirements, through the final consumption of environmentally friendly products, which affects the quality of life and health of the whole society. The paper in brief presents the results of the marketing survey that was focused on finding how chosen Slovak companies applied principles of green marketing and used green marketing tools within their business activities, if ever. Based on the results of the survey, in the end of the presented article there are mentioned proposals and measures for the implementation of the green marketing principles in Slovak companies.

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1. Introduction

Natural environment is the initial part of marketing environment; therefore, the protection of environment became a significant part of modern marketing strategy that is named "green". The aim of green marketing is to build long-term oriented relationship with customer that is based on trust. This is followed by three main principles as quality, integrity, honesty (Gogolova, Majerova, 2014). Quality means to provide the best that is company able to do for customer. Integrity means to run business in line with company's values. In other words, there is no difference between company's communication, advertising and promotion and the real business practice. Honesty is explicitness and truthfulness to the customer even there is no suitable solution for him (Masarova, Stefanikova, 2014). Green marketing is understood as full orientation on all business processes that have possible negative environmental aspects with a flow of corporate social responsibility. Principles of green marketing allow changing attitudes and values of companies while meeting the customers' requirements and being environmental friendly (Lee, 2007; Ottman, 2011) There is a proof, that customers feel the responsibility of the state of the environment more than ever before. Therefore, it is assumed, that companies that involved environmental responsibility to daily business practice and decrease negative impact on the environment, will gain competitive advantage in near future.

2. Environmental policy in Slovakia

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio Summit, Rio Conference, and Earth Summit, was held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. It dealt particularly about possibility that would prevent the emergence of global development crisis (Krivanova, Rypakova, 2013). The concept of sustainable development has been proposed as a possible solution that could optimize the relationship between social, economic and environmental dimensions of development. In this period, Slovak Republic was undergoing many changes related to political, economic and social issues. These changes had a detrimental impact on the environment. Particularly we are talking about technology used, indiscriminate interventions into the country, the nature of the waste management, depletion of natural resources and pollution (Krivanova, Majerova, 2013)

Due to these reasons, the Government of the Slovak Republic created the conceptual framework that should solve environmental problems. It was approved by resolution n. 619/1993. The title of this document is The Environmental Policy Strategy and its principles and priorities.

The document has its origins in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic. The Constitution imposes duties for the country to use natural resources wisely, care about the environment effectively and ensure the overall ecological balance. The Environmental Policy Strategy analyses the state of the environment and tries to increase the level of protection by using economic and legal tools, innovative technologies and treaties at the international level.

Moreover, it formulates objectives with long-term, medium-term to short-term horizon; it lays down the environmental principles of the national economy and determines the priority problems areas to ensure sustainable development and environmental safety.

National Action Programme (NEAP I., NEAP II. a NEAP III.) and National Programme for the Adoption acquis communautaire (NPAA) are followed by The Environmental Policy Strategy.

As the Slovak Republic became a member of the European Union in 2004, it was necessary to unify priorities in the environmental field with the requirements that have been contained in the Sixth Environmental Action Programme of the European Union on the environment for the years 2002 to 2012 (Lizbetinova, 2012)

Reconciliation was implemented through the NEAP III. It focuses on global climate change, improving the quality of life, conservation of nature and biodiversity and management of natural resources and waste. In next year's, the Slovak Republic will focus to improve energy efficiency and the amount of renewable energy sources, but also to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This will follow the strategy "Europe 2020" - A strategy for smart, green and inclusive growth.

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