

Sustainability and Ethical Marketing in a Global Context

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Global brands are increasingly adapting their marketing strategies to emphasize sustainability and ethical practices, driven by rising consumer demand for responsible business practices. This shift is not just a response to consumer preferences but also a strategic move to align with global regulatory trends and to enhance brand reputation. Here's how global brands are evolving their strategies across different regions.

1. Localized Ethical Messaging

- **Unilever:** In India, Unilever's brand Lifebuoy launched the "Help a Child Reach 5" campaign, focusing on improving hygiene through handwashing in rural areas, directly addressing local health challenges.

<https://youtu.be/a-JKX25HFpQ?si=aVOUh4oaFn81KvdR>

- **Nestlé:** In Brazil, Nestlé emphasizes the sourcing of coffee beans from local, sustainable farms, with campaigns that highlight the benefits to local communities and the environment.
- **Tata Tea (India):** Tata Tea's "Jaago Re" campaign in India encourages consumers to wake up to social issues, blending sustainability with social activism. The brand has focused on issues such as water conservation and ethical sourcing of tea leaves

[.https://youtu.be/88_TfiR5hrg?si=sQRMihCPOcMhzkgf](https://youtu.be/88_TfiR5hrg?si=sQRMihCPOcMhzkgf)

- **Danone:** In Mexico, Danone's Bonafont brand promotes water conservation by aligning its brand message with local concerns about water scarcity and supporting community projects for sustainable water management. Danone has created strong messages for nature conservation in many countries.

<https://youtu.be/nWXBfCTAp0?si=KVviTlE99e9vsR->

2. Transparent Supply Chains

- **Walmart and IBM:** In China, Walmart uses IBM's blockchain technology to track the supply chain of pork, ensuring transparency from farm to table and promoting sustainable practices in the food industry. They do for other foods too in global markets.

<https://youtu.be/nbcjk4TZUP4?si=fnarmlmG3ejuJbN7>

- **Fabindia (India):** Fabindia promotes transparency by connecting consumers directly with the artisans who make their products. The brand emphasizes ethical sourcing and fair trade, particularly in its textiles and home decor. It focuses on sustainable fashion.

<https://youtu.be/Sdoh0z4cbqc?si=6r6o8nnmtKBGwdSK>

- **Starbucks:** Through its C.A.F.E. Practices program, Starbucks ensures that its coffee is ethically sourced, with a strong emphasis on environmental responsibility and fair wages for farmers, particularly in Latin American countries.

<https://youtu.be/X9g6Z0FYTn8?si=1VsaMKKLYBZpHlHZ>

- **H&M:** H&M's transparency initiative includes detailed disclosure of its suppliers, enabling consumers to see where and how their clothes are made, with a focus on sustainable and ethical production practices.

3. Global Partnerships for Local Impact

- **Coca-Cola and WWF:** Coca-Cola's global partnership with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) focuses on water conservation, with initiatives in India like the replenishment of water resources in rural areas. Coca-Cola has outlined a water conservation strategy.

<https://youtu.be/cfAHAiTE63E?si=CQNpS4zq828HcUYt>

- **IKEA and Save the Children (India):** IKEA has partnered with Save the Children to support education and child protection initiatives in India, integrating sustainability with social impact.

https://youtu.be/4NHF8HLG0as?si=ZO7xvxD211s9_gWq

- **PepsiCo and WaterAid:** PepsiCo's collaboration with WaterAid aims to improve water access and sanitation in water-stressed regions like India and Sub-Saharan Africa, addressing a critical sustainability issue.

<https://youtu.be/brlfvkE7KG0?si=WYyd33F1rfbL-f3A>

- **Mahindra & Mahindra (India):** Mahindra's "Rise for Good" initiative in India includes partnerships with local NGOs to promote rural education, healthcare, and environmental sustainability, particularly in water management.

<https://youtu.be/032gZPCfT0Y?si=zaV97FuISQZ-yXEZ>

4. Product Innovation

- **Adidas:** Adidas has introduced sneakers made from recycled ocean plastic, a global initiative that appeals to environmentally conscious consumers worldwide.

https://youtu.be/EJMCq3MjCxw?si=yc3v6oIvCNWx_yA8

- **Patanjali (India):** Patanjali, an Indian FMCG brand, emphasizes the use of natural, organic ingredients in its products, appealing to consumers seeking sustainable and ethically produced goods.

<https://youtu.be/AvPvhQVfjzo?si=Y4M6TqR4iUEkE9Np>

- **Apple:** Apple has focused on making its products more sustainable by using recycled materials and renewable energy in its production processes, with a global reach and impact.

<https://youtu.be/66XwG1CLHuU?si=2P50tSFAOdv-CG8N>

- **Godrej (India):** Godrej's "Good & Green" initiative includes the development of eco-friendly products like Ezee liquid detergent, which is biodegradable and promotes environmental responsibility.

<https://youtu.be/OLXWse7iXqI?feature=shared>

5. Ethical Marketing Communications

- **Patagonia:** Patagonia's "Don't Buy This Jacket" campaign in the U.S. encouraged consumers to think critically about their purchasing decisions, promoting a sustainable, anti-consumerist message.

<https://youtu.be/FaK3koLyChE?si=frpbvJfAOn4bU9Zj>

- **Amul (India):** Amul, one of India's largest dairy brands, has launched campaigns highlighting its commitment to ethical dairy farming practices and supporting local farmers, often using the iconic "Amul Girl" in socially conscious ads.

<https://youtu.be/ZA8DOH07aSo?si=hLOez5SIZEFwYt9k>

- **Ben & Jerry's:** Ben & Jerry's uses its platform to advocate causes, such as climate action, through honest and impactful marketing campaigns.

<https://youtu.be/80NLPNHpm0k?si=543X3IqlBePPh-F>

- **Tata Salt (India):** Tata Salt's "Desh Ka Namak" campaign promotes the brand as a symbol of purity and ethical practices, tying its messaging to national pride and trustworthiness.

<https://youtu.be/6Erm0L6QRq8?si=pzWiuyiEgPsGq7II>

6. Education and Advocacy

- **Procter & Gamble:** Tide's "Turn to Cold" campaign educates consumers about the environmental benefits of washing clothes in cold water, reducing energy consumption.

https://youtu.be/ebeEOFGyhq8?si=5VBknAi8q5cD_u5W

- **ITC Limited (India):** ITC's "Classmate" brand runs campaigns focused on environmental education, promoting the use of eco-friendly school supplies and encouraging students to be environmentally conscious.

<https://youtu.be/yml8xrM5qCE?si=FekUuG8lxLcZW0Co>

- **Ben & Jerry's:** Ben & Jerry's also engages in advocacy for climate justice, educating consumers on the impact of climate change and urging them to take action.

https://youtu.be/qdFU5FZ5P4M?si=gGVJe_DXMEzo5xrX

- **Dabur (India):** Dabur's "#BreakTheMask" campaign educates consumers about the importance of natural ingredients and sustainable living, promoting Ayurvedic products as a healthier, eco-friendly choice.

https://youtu.be/qdFU5FZ5P4M?si=gGVJe_DXMEzo5xrX

7. Challenges and Regional Differences

- Nestlé: Nestlé faces challenges in adapting its packaging innovations to different regional recycling capabilities. In India, the company is focusing on the collection and recycling of plastic waste, while in Europe, it is moving towards more advanced biodegradable packaging.

<https://youtu.be/TF2B1SZ4MOI?si=sCA3LxIZSaQGaLN9>

- Hindustan Unilever (India): Hindustan Unilever's Project Shakti empowers rural women as micro-entrepreneurs, but faces challenges related to scalability and adapting the model to diverse rural contexts across India.

<https://youtu.be/dwF5YYjoHi4?si=TycrlQC7YN180hMn>

- Coca-Cola: Coca-Cola's water replenishment initiatives in India highlight the challenge of balancing business interests with local water needs, particularly in water-stressed regions.

https://youtu.be/EGSB5r3v_2U?si=nqWCflS9UMCZaJcc

- Tata Motors (India): Tata Motors is working on electrifying its vehicle lineup, but faces the challenge of promoting electric vehicles in a market where infrastructure and consumer awareness are still developing.

<https://youtu.be/Qrqm4x3KsYw?si=UII3G7TTZR7Ub6M6>

Case Study: Patagonia's Groundbreaking Business Model Based on Sustainability and Values

Introduction

Patagonia, the outdoor clothing and gear company, is widely recognized not just for its high-quality products but for its pioneering business model centered around sustainability. Founded in 1973 by Yvon Chouinard, Patagonia has consistently prioritized environmental and social responsibility, often at the expense of short-term profits. This commitment to sustainability is not just a marketing strategy but the very core of Patagonia's business philosophy.

Business Model Overview

Patagonia's business model is unique in the sense that it challenges the traditional profit-driven approach. Instead, the company focuses on creating long-term value for both the environment and its customers. Key aspects of Patagonia's sustainability-driven business model include:

1. Environmental Responsibility and Activism

- **The 1% for the Planet Pledge:** Patagonia is a founding member of the 1% for the Planet movement, pledging 1% of its sales to environmental causes. This commitment has resulted in donations exceeding \$140 million to grassroots environmental organizations since its inception.

More information on this initiative can be found at <https://www.patagonia.com/one-percent-for-the-planet.html>.

- **Environmental Campaigns:** Patagonia has been at the forefront of numerous environmental campaigns. The company's "Don't Buy This Jacket" campaign, which urged consumers to think twice before purchasing new products, was groundbreaking in promoting conscious consumption over rampant consumerism.

You can watch more about this campaign at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vdw0b1p6PdA>.

2. Sustainable Product Design and Innovation

- **Use of Recycled and Organic Materials:** Patagonia has been a pioneer in using recycled materials. The company introduced fleece made from recycled plastic bottles as early as 1993. Additionally, Patagonia has been committed to using organic cotton, which is grown without synthetic chemicals, since the 1990s.

- **Worn Wear Program:** This initiative encourages customers to repair, reuse, and recycle their gear. Patagonia has gone as far as to provide repair services and even launched a platform for buying and selling used Patagonia gear, reinforcing the idea that the most sustainable product is the one that already exists.

More details about the Worn Wear Program are available at <https://wornwear.patagonia.com/>. You can also watch a video about it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fI8Xg6smyhA>.

3. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

- **B Corporation Certification:** Patagonia is certified as a B Corporation, a designation awarded to companies that meet high standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency. This certification underscores Patagonia's commitment to balancing profit with purpose.

Learn more about Patagonia's B Corporation status at <https://bcorporation.net/directory/patagonia-inc>. A related video can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGHrY1XYa14>.

- **Fair Trade Certified:** Many of Patagonia's products are Fair Trade Certified, ensuring that workers involved in the production of these items receive fair wages and work in safe conditions. This aligns with the company's broader commitment to ethical production practices.

Further details are available at <https://www.patagonia.com/fair-trade-certified.html>.

4. Community Engagement and Advocacy

- **Environmental Grants and Activism:** Beyond its own initiatives, Patagonia supports environmental activism by providing grants to grassroots organizations. The company actively encourages its employees to engage in environmental activism by offering them time off to participate in protests and other activities.
- **Patagonia Action Works:** This platform connects individuals with environmental causes they care about, further strengthening the company's role as a leader in environmental advocacy.

Explore Patagonia Action Works at <https://www.patagonia.com/actionworks/>.

A video about this initiative can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LV9L1nG2GD4>.

Impact and Results

Patagonia's commitment to sustainability has had a profound impact, not only on the environment but also on the business world. The company's approach has demonstrated that it is possible to be profitable while being deeply committed to environmental and social responsibility. Patagonia has set a new standard in the industry, inspiring other companies to adopt more sustainable practices.

- **Financial Performance:** Despite its non-traditional approach, Patagonia has seen consistent growth, with annual revenues exceeding \$1 billion (2017). The company's customer base is fiercely loyal, drawn to Patagonia not just for its products, but for its values.
- **Industry Influence:** Patagonia's model has influenced a broader movement within the industry. More companies are now incorporating sustainability into their business models, recognizing that consumers are increasingly making purchasing decisions based on environmental and social considerations.

Challenges and Future Directions

While Patagonia's business model has been widely successful, it is not without challenges. The company must navigate the complexities of scaling sustainability while maintaining its core values. Additionally, as

consumer demand for sustainable products grows, Patagonia faces increased competition from both established brands and new entrants.

Looking ahead, Patagonia is likely to continue pushing the boundaries of what it means to be a sustainable company. This includes exploring new materials, advocating for stronger environmental protections, and continuing to lead by example in the fight against climate change.

Conclusion

Patagonia's groundbreaking business model based on sustainability is a powerful example of how businesses can operate in a way that is not only profitable but also socially and environmentally responsible. By prioritizing the planet and people over short-term profits, Patagonia has created a loyal customer base and set a new standard in the business world. The company's success demonstrates that sustainability is not just a trend, but a viable business strategy that can lead to long-term success.

As more companies follow Patagonia's lead, the potential for positive environmental and social change within the business sector is immense. Patagonia has shown that it is possible to build a successful business that truly makes a difference in the world.

Links Mentioned in the above Case Study

1. Patagonia - "Don't Buy This Jacket" Campaign Explained
 - YouTube Link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vdw0b1p6PdA>
2. Patagonia's Worn Wear Program
 - YouTube Link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl8Xg6smyhA>
3. Why Patagonia is a B Corp
 - YouTube Link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGHRy1XYa14>
4. Patagonia Action Works
 - YouTube Link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LV9L1nG2GD4>
5. Patagonia's 1% for the Planet
 - Web Link: <https://www.patagonia.com/one-percent-for-the-planet.html>

6. Worn Wear Program
 - Web Link: <https://wornwear.patagonia.com/>
7. B Corporation Certification
 - Web Link: <https://bcorporation.net/directory/patagonia-inc>
8. Fair Trade Certified Products
 - Web Link: <https://www.patagonia.com/fair-trade-certified.html>
9. Patagonia Action Works
 - Web Link: <https://www.patagonia.com/actionworks/>

Detailed References for the Article

1. Unilever Lifebuoy Campaign -
<https://www.unilever.com/brands/our-brands/lifebuoy.html>
2. Nestlé Sustainable Sourcing -
<https://www.nestle.com/csv/raw-materials/coffee>
3. Tata Tea Jaago Re Campaign -
<https://www.tatatea.com/jagore/>
4. Danone Bonafont -
<https://www.danone.com/impact/water.html>
5. Walmart and IBM Blockchain -
<https://www.ibm.com/blockchain/solutions/food-trust>
6. Fabindia Ethical Sourcing - <https://www.fabindia.com>
7. Starbucks C.A.F.E Practices -
<https://www.starbucks.com/responsibility/sourcing/coffee>
8. H&M Transparency Initiative -
<https://hmgroupp.com/sustainability/transparency/>
9. Coca-Cola WWF Partnership -
<https://www.worldwildlife.org/partnerships/coca-cola>
10. IKEA and Save the Children India -
<https://www.ikea.com/in/en/this-is-ikea/sustainable-everyday/ikea-foundation-save-the-children-pubdb44a30a>
11. PepsiCo WaterAid -
<https://www.pepsico.com/sustainability/water>
12. Mahindra Rise for Good -
<https://www.mahindra.com/sustainability>
13. Adidas Ocean Plastic Sneakers -
<https://www.adidas.com/sustainability>
14. Patanjali Products - <https://www.patanjaliayurved.net/>
15. Apple Recycling - <https://www.apple.com/environment/>

16. Godrej Good & Green - <https://www.godrej.com/good-and-green>
17. Patagonia Marketing Campaign - <https://www.patagonia.com/stories/dont-buy-this-jacket/story-18615.html>
18. Amul Advertising - <https://amul.com/m/amul-hits>
19. Ben & Jerry's Climate Justice - <https://www.benjerry.com/values/issues-we-care-about/climate-justice>
20. Tata Salt Desh Ka Namak - <https://www.tatasalt.com>
21. Procter & Gamble Tide Campaign - <https://www.tide.com/en-us/our-commitment/tide-coldwater-clean>
22. ITC Classmate - <https://www.itcportal.com/sustainability/sustainability-report-2022/classmate-sustainable-paper-products.aspx>
23. Ben & Jerry's Advocacy - <https://www.benjerry.com/values/issues-we-care-about>
24. Dabur #BreakTheMask Campaign - <https://www.dabur.com/>
25. Nestlé Packaging Challenges - <https://www.nestle.com/ask-nestle/environment/answers/commitment-reduce-plastic-waste>
26. Hindustan Unilever Project Shakti - <https://www.hul.co.in/about/project-shakti/>
27. Coca-Cola India Water Initiatives - <https://www.coca-colaindia.com/our-priorities/sustainable-water-management>
28. Tata Motors Electric Vehicles - <https://www.tatamotors.com/innovation/electric-vehicles/>