

# MARKETING *Benchmarks*

## 4 proven ways to promote your outfit's green good

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*"Price is what  
you pay. Value is  
what you get."*

— Warren Buffett

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**Y**ou have a right to be proud if your company has adopted environmentally responsible ways of doing business. But if bragging rights are all you derive from ecological awareness, your customers probably will not award you sales-generating Brownie points for your enlightened policies — because nobody likes a braggart.

Here are four recommendations from marketing consultant Serenity Edwards that point to how to boost your sales and profits by doing right to keep Mother Earth green:

### ■ **If you walk the walk, talk the walk, without breast-beating.**

If your business is a good corporate citizen, say so. But make it soft-sell. For instance, Samsung adds the Energy Star symbol to its documents, plus copy that states that by buying one of the company's products:

"... you are assured that your Samsung model is helping the environment by using less energy while saving you money. Energy Star is a joint program of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy, promoting energy efficiency."

### ■ **Make your contacts feel part of the action.**

Use the power of team psychology to spark and cement interest in and loyalty to your brands. It always feels nice to bask in the warmth of an admiring audience. But it's better for business when prospective buyers sense that you and they are comrades in a great cause.

For example, urge your readers to recycle mailing pieces instead of junking after reading them, to print links to green programs on their outgoing business correspondence, and to display good-practice logos from the Forest Stewardship Council and other "green" outfits.

### ■ **Mail smart to minimize wasteful list redundancies.**

A scrupulously (and frequently) cleaned mailing list does more than save you production and postage expenses. It also reduces your business's carbon footprint and use of irreplaceable natural resources.

Enlist in the Direct Marketing Association's Commitment To Consumer Choice program, whose member companies provide sales prospects with the opportunity to opt out of mailings for product categories that currently, for whatever reason, do not interest them.

The program saves you unnecessary paper, printing, and postage costs. On top of that, by putting your customers in the driver's seat you earn their good will — which can translate into sales in the future — by not wasting their time and attention in the present.

Do not delete opt-outs from your data base. Shift them to a "Try Later" file. Then contact them again after X months to see what needs they have developed in the interim.

### ■ **Specifics earn customer respect.**

Noble motives matter. But your current and future buyers will be far more impressed by detailed case histories of exactly how aware environmental practices have benefited you and them.

For example, in 2007 UPS rejiggered its package-delivery routes to eliminate left turns. Since, The New York Times reports that the company has cut 28.5 million costly miles out of its routes, saved 3 million gallons of gasoline, and sliced 31,000 cubic tons out of its carbon emissions.

UPS has let its customers know precisely what it has done and the results it has achieved. The company is tying its brand image to efficiency and environmental savings, Ms. Edwards notes.

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