

**FROM TREE HUGGER TO TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE:
BRINGING SUSTAINABILITY INTO THE MARKETING CURRICULUM**

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ABSTRACT

We believe that we are in the midst of a Sustainability Revolution and that it is very important that we, as marketing educators, begin to integrate sustainability concepts and practices into our courses. As added incentives, AACSB guidelines are calling for more emphasis on teaching ethics and corporate social responsibility. Many firms, realizing that sustainable practices are in fact business opportunities, are operating sustainably now (e.g. Royal Dutch/Shell, Ikea, Apple, Nike and Patagonia). Further, there are at least 50 million "cultural creatives" in the U.S. alone that can be considered sustainability advocates, a market segment worth \$230 billion and growing rapidly worldwide (Ray and Anderson 2000). We can't afford NOT to be teaching our students about sustainable business practices!

The concept of sustainability dates back to the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, and gained prominence in the 1987 Brundtland report, "Our Common Future." Though including aspects of social movements, sustainability is more akin to a revolution because it has wider objectives, is led by a large and diverse number of individuals and has a new value system, consciousness and worldview. What are these values? They include: (1) Environmental sustainability, or the long-term health and viability of our ecosystem; (2) Economic sustainability or the provision of secure, long-term employment without jeopardizing ecosystem health; and (3) Equitable distribution of resources (food, affordable housing, health care, education, job training) for ensuring the long-term viability and well-being of a community or society.

This special session is conducted as an interactive workshop in which presenters share their syllabi, classroom experiences and other resources they have used when teaching undergraduate and MBA courses on Marketing and Its Environment, Environmental Marketing and Non-Profit Marketing. Case-based, service-learning and project-based approaches are discussed and specific resources

shared with the audience. We also provide an overview of U.S. business school courses and concentrations that focus on sustainable marketing practices

Empirical findings from a survey of marketing students regarding their knowledge of sustainability concepts like "ecological footprint" and "triple bottom line" are also presented. Students' knowledge and comprehension of such concepts is low, perhaps because there is more academic research in sustainability within the management discipline (e.g., Prahalad 2005). Another potential obstacle explored in a session presentation is how war metaphors, such as target, guerilla marketing, frontal assault, flanking strategy and others put students into a mindset that makes it very difficult to think about doing business as a means to sustaining life on the planet. Alternative metaphorical formulations for the business of marketing that encourage students to think in terms of cooperation and sustainability are explored.

REFERENCES

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