Green Marketing Information System

Rekha K G

Lecturer in Management, Government Law College, Thrissur, Kerala, India

Abstract: *The term green marketing refers to the strategies to promote products by employing environmental claims either about their attributes or about the systems, policies and processes of the firms that manufacture or sell them (Prakash, 2002). A Marketing Information System (MkIS) is intended to bring together disparate items of data into a coherent body of information. An MkIS is more than raw data or information suitable for the purposes of decision making. Essentially the concept of MkIS is wide and has its impact on all the levels of management right from strategic level to supervisory level (Kotni, 2011). Decision Support Systems (DSSs) have been developed to assist with the formulation of marketing strategy using quantitative models and analytical techniques (Wilson, 1994)Efforts have also been made to apply Expert Systems (ESs) in supporting strategic marketing by offering domain knowledge and intelligent advice (McDonald, 1989)The study aims to propose a model for a firm to collect, update and apply an information system to implement green marketing and make decisions continue to support the green marketing principle adopted by the firm. The model may be utilized by any firm may it be a production firm or a service provider.*

Keywords: green marketing, marketing information system, marketing intelligence, strategic information system, decision making system

1. Introduction

According to (Ginsberg, (2004)) the first step is to gain rich understanding on consumer preferences towards green marketing i.e., whether the development of product that has green attributes is better selling point to target consumers. Various studies have showed that to know the target green market segment better, there is need for appropriate individual consumer tendencies towards green marketing.

(Armstrong, 2003)define MKIS as: "A marketing information system is a continuing and interacting structure of people, equipment and procedures designed to gather, sort, analyze, evaluate and distribute pertinent, timely and accurate information for use by marketing decision makers to improve their marketing planning, execution and control".

An information system is a systematic placement of external and internal elements which result in best decisions by making use all the available information in the environment of the organization. The information system consist of basically three parts, the sources of data , the processing mechanism and the outputs or information supporting the decision making. Marketing Information system is a popular concept widely discussed and used by organizations. The Green Marketing Information system is an extension of this concept. A firm may have an established system of collecting and using required marketing data. Green marketing is a new addition or adoption into the regular process of marketing of a firm.

The concept of green marketing has a very wide scope and angles. A production firm may claim its products to be green on the basis of the raw materials being extracted without any harm to the nature, the production technology used being eco-friendly and emitting less to no waste compared to the technology used by the competitor, the packaging used being disposable or recycled or recyclable, the product being disposable or recycled or recyclable etc. The service firm may use paper free offices or recycling all the wastes etc. When a firm adopts green marketing it is to be ensured that all the promises and claims made are actually adopted. This can be ensured only by making proper decisions. So it is

necessary to add elements in the information system which provides necessary information.

2. Literature Survey

Models" are tools which allow management to structure a problem, identify and evaluate its determinants and solution options, and select the best solution. Models vary in their objectives, structures, assumptions, complexities, required inputs, algorithms (such as estimation or optimization procedures), and outputs. Even a simple model, such as a model to establish the relative effectiveness of advertising versus sales promotion, can take a variety of forms. It can be Structured as a nonlinear regression model requiring the input of historical data on advertising, sales promotion, and sales; this results in the relative effectiveness coefficients for advertising and sales promotion as well as a measure of how much of the variability in sales is explained by advertising and sales promotion (Yorum).
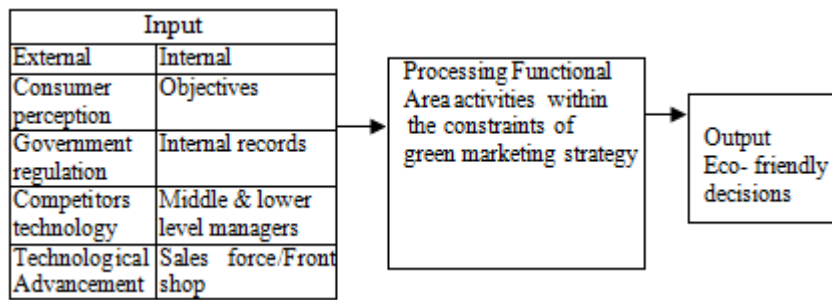
Besides the information about the forces in the market the marketer has to have at his/her disposal information on the factors which he may not influence. This category names information ranging from a) demographic trends (e.g. number or age of inhabitants), b) socio-economic trends (connected to culture, un/employment, and leisure time), c) ecological trends, d) technological factors (fast progress in production) up to e) political factors (restructuring programs, taxation). Although these qualitative information items are less convenient for entry into the system, it may include legislation norms, information resources and secondary resources of information (Brunda).

MkIS systems are designed to be comprehensive and flexible in nature and to integrate with each other functionally. They are formal, forward looking and essential to the organization's ability to create competitive advantage. The MkIS is the firm's "window on the world" and, increasingly, it is the primary customer interface (Harmon, 2003).

A data mart is a scaled-down version of a data warehouse. It is more focused, less complex, and holds a subset of the

entire data, often in summary form. It is usually designed for a smaller number of users. They provide fast, specialized access and applications. They are sometimes call departmental data warehouses (Harmon, 2003).

3. Proposed Model

Input	
External	Internal
Consumer perception	Objectives
Government regulation	Internal records
Competitors technology	Middle & lower level managers
Technological Advancement	Sales force/Front shop

Processing Functional Area activities within the constraints of green marketing strategy

→ Output Eco- friendly decisions

External Information Sources

Consumer Perception
When a firm markets a product or service as green, the consumers have an understanding or assumption about it. This may be different from the actual activities done by the firm. It is necessary that the consumer perception and the intensions of the firm are the same otherwise there may b incidents of misunderstanding and mistrust among the customers. The firm must try to assess the consumer perception of the firm's green image and take decisions to communicate the actual intensions and objectives.

Government Regulations
The government regulations are changing in such a way that no one's rights are violated. As the technology proves itself to benefitting every institution related (the sellers, the middlemen, the employees, the consumers etc.), government make it compulsory or obligatory to use it. So the firm going green must consider what is legal or beneficial while making an eco- friendly decision.

Competitors
Competitive advantage is one of the main benefits of green marketing. A firm which is preserving or supporting the welfare of the nature is always more appealing to consumer. The firm while making a decision as part of green marketing must study the positioning strategy of the competitor thoroughly, otherwise it may be seen as a weaker brand or a copycat.

Technology Advancement
The technology is a tool which can be used according to the requirements of the firm. It is always advisable to invest in technology which is eco-friendly if the firm wants to adopt green marketing ways.

Internal Information Sources

Objectives
The objectives are formulated and updated according to the changes in the organization. They act as guides to the decision makers. When an organization decides to adopt green marketing significant changes are made in the objective statements. For example- if the earlier objective was to reduce cost while making a sales transaction, with the introduction of green marketing it may be communication

environment protecting nature of the packaging used for the product. In a service organization if the earlier objective was to collect maximum data about future reference from the customer, with the introduction of green marketing it may be communicating the changes in the service features for supporting the environment.

Internal Records/reports
The internal records or reports are the documented during the day to day activities of the business. This is an important source of information. It helps to identify changes and patterns in the actions. It helps a firm to identify the effectiveness of decisions previously made.

Middle or lower level managers
The middle and lower level are the source of information as they get the first results of decisions made by the top management. They also implement the decisions and therefore are able to point out the hindrances if any exist.

Sales force or front shop
The sales force or front shop is the source of information about the response of the customers as they interact directly with the customers.

Processing
The practice of processing the available data requires creating the constraints which restricts the flow of resources outside the control of the management. The boundaries are set according to the strength of the firm and resource availability. The scarce resources must be preserved so that there is no shortage. This requires a clear understanding of all the functional departments and their influence on the achieving the "green objectives" set by the firm. The functional actions take determines the outcome of the policies. Therefore it is necessary to design the step by actions to achieve the objectives

Output
The output of this system will be eco-friendly or environment friendly decisions. The prospective of being green or eco friendly may vary from one organization to another. There may be active and passive decisions or output of the green marketing information system. The active decisions will be preventive as well as proactive in nature. These decisions will intervene and try to improve environmental decisions. The passive decision will make

Paper ID: 06051502

786

sure the functioning of the firm is not harmful to the environment or society.

4. Conclusion

The concept of green marketing is gaining popularity. The number of companies implementing the technique is increasing day by day. As it is part of the marketing strategy and huge investment may be needed to shift in technology, it is important that there are no failures. Important decisions have to be made by managers to ensure that the investment is not being wasted. Thus "Green Marketing Information System" is necessary.

5. Future Research

The concept of "Green Marketing Information System" was not found in much literature reviewed. The concept requires technical and practical implementation. Therefore future studies are required.

References

[1] Kotler Philip and Gary Armstrong K. P (2003) *Principles of Marketing* NJ: Prentice Hall,Edition 10,.
[2] Brunda, P. (n.d.). MARKETING INFORMATION SYSTEM. *Silesian University in Opava* .
[3] Ginsberg, M. &. ((2004)). Choosing the Right Green-Marketing Strategy. . *MIT Sloan Management Review, 46(1)* , 79-88.
[4] Harmon, R. R. (2003). Marketing Information Systems. *Encyclopedia of Information Systems, Vol. 3* , 137-151.
[5] Kotni, V. D. (2011). A Study on Internal Mechanism of Marketing Information Systems. *International Journal of Computer Science and Technology* , 64-67.
[6] McDonald, M. (1989). Marketing planning and expert systems: An epistemology of practice. *Market. Intel. Plann* , 16-23.
[7] Prakash, A. (2002). GREEN MARKETING, PUBLIC POLICY AND MANAGERIAL POLICY AND MANAGERIAL. *Business Strategy and the Environment* , 285–297.
[8] Wilson, H. a. (1994). Critical problems in marketing planning: The potential of decision support systems. *J. Strat. Market* , 249-269.
[9] Yorum, W. *Models for Marketing Planning and Decision Making*. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: The Wharton School University of Pennsylvania.