

# THE RESULTS OF CASE STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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***Abstract:** Marketing is an important tool for informing the general public. Its mission is to provide education in the questions of environment protection necessity and sustainable development. The objective of this contribution is to present the results of the case study of practical marketing application in the environment protection field. There is used a quantitative analysis of the regional press for finding out the data.*

***Keywords:** Ecology, Communication, Marketing, Environment*

## 1. Introduction

The objective of this contribution is to prove the impact of marketing as a communication tool for environment protection. The contribution contents practical examples of the negative and positive impact of marketing in the environmental field. A case study of the tool application of marketing communication of the hazardous waste incinerator plant, which is intended to be built by the Upper Austrian Company AVES CZ in Rybitví near Pardubice, is the part of the contribution.

Environment protection issues are now topic number one. On one hand, environment influences the life of people; on the other hand, however, it is the people who mainly influence the quality of environment around them. In a broader context we can say that environment protection does not only mean for the citizens to behave in accordance with the principles of environment protection in the place of their domicile and its vicinity. This is a comprehensive personal inner acceptance of responsibility and understanding of environment protection as a natural system of human behaviour toward nature. It is a total change in thinking, behaviour and the development of human society.

Environment protection does not only lie in sorting the waste produced by the consumption of society. It is a complex environment protection that may, for example, include the protection of water, air, nature, landscape, climate and waste management. The protection against industrial pollution, which is caused by chemical substances and preparations, eventually by genetically modified organisms, belongs here too. [BAŤA, OBRŠÁLOVÁ, COSTA JORDAO 2009]

At present, our society is cautioned by nature about its insensitive treatment. The problem of today`s life is the consuming way of life that brings satisfaction in some respects. However, let us take into account that this satisfaction is only relative and temporary. A number of human diseases, such as respiratory problems, allergies, eating disorders, obesity, hypertension, cancer, reproductive disorders etc., rise from excessive consumption and therefore the production of waste and pollution. Human

health is a gift; the sooner we realize this, the less pain and suffering we will experience. Let us consider the warnings of doctors and medical institutions that constantly appeal to the preventive behaviour of people. Likewise, it should be with the protection of the environment we live in.

It is necessary to realize the fact that natural disasters are not unreasonable. The cause of that is our everyday reckless behaviour to nature. The sooner we understand this, the less damage will be inflicted on the amount of loss of human lives and property. As well as we respect each other in our individualities, we have to understand the importance and uniqueness of the environment. Creating and maintaining harmony with other people, as well as with nature, should be an urgent challenge for human beings. It is therefore a meaningful sharing; it is impossible to get estranged individually, to separate from both society and environment; we are their inseparable part.

Environment protection has long been a hot topic not only in the context of behaviour of individuals. There are strong appeals from the side of government and environmentally oriented pressure groups on the behaviour of firms and companies corresponding to the principles of environment protection; not only primarily those which fall within the branches of chemical industry. Thus we are encouraged to communicate at all the levels that today society and the life on Earth offer. This also applies to the communication in the field of environment.

## **2. The Impact of Marketing on Environmental Aspects**

Nowadays, marketing is a widespread scientific discipline that is developed in many professional publications; it influences the behaviour of people and companies as well. With the general development of technologies and knowledge, the demands of people are growing too. However, people are not only focused on the mere satisfaction of their needs, they also look for such products and services that can solve their concrete problems directly. Today, people make choices on the base of irrational thoughts, feelings and hardly explainable stimuli.

### **2.1 Negative Impacts of Marketing on Environment**

From the professional point of view, however, marketing does not bring only positive assessment. Marketing supports and urges customers to consumption of such products that pollute environment, such as washing powders containing harmful phosphates, products packaged in plastic containers, etc. Also the consumption of today already scarce natural resources, such as oil or gas, is supported by marketing, too. Consuming these products, we should be aware of these facts.

### **2.2 Positive Impact of Marketing on Environment**

The role of marketing in the field of environment protection is difficult; it is harder on the fact that the target group can be a small group, but at the same time the environment protection relates to the whole society. Customers must be gently persuaded of the sense and necessity of environment protection, mainly from their

point of view. However, at the same time, the campaign must be thought out in the context of the whole society benefits.

People must be motivated to a particular behaviour; to the purchase and use of certain products that are, unlike the other products, as friendly to nature as possible. If marketing activities are well thought out and well-timed, high sums of money need not be inserted into marketing activities. Marketers use many tools of marketing communication to support ecological consumption of the population.

### **2.3 Marketing Communication and Environmental Reporting**

At present, environment protection should not be a legal obligation, but a moral obligation for companies. The respect to the environment, which we live in, should be supported by natural and responsible approach and reasonably promoted by marketing in media. Environment protection should be the cornerstone, the philosophy of the company.

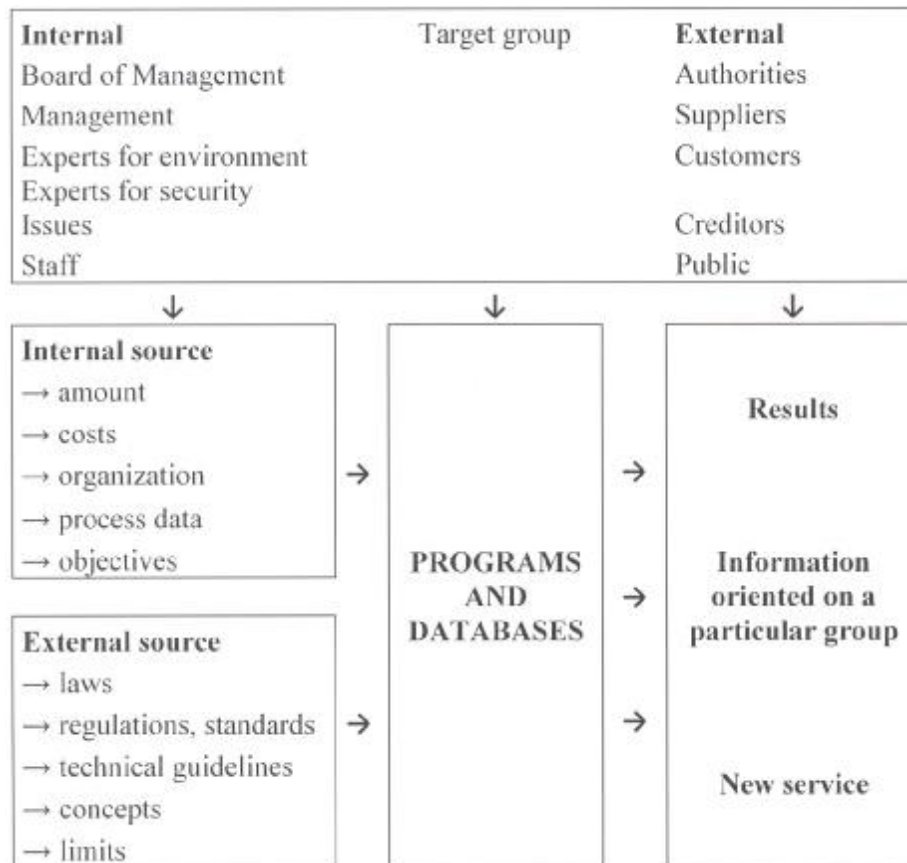
At first sight, the legislation in the field of environment protection can seem to exist only in the form of increased business costs. It can be true if the company behaves passively and only fulfils legislative regulations, e.g. it does not exceed the limits of air pollution. On the contrary, the companies, which behave actively and thus they try to harmonize environment protection and sustainable development with the objectives and policy of the company, can profit on this approach significantly.

By a positive approach to environment protection issues in production, a company can avoid, in the future, several inconveniences, such as hunger of the public for green products, eventually the fall of selling the production, which could permanently damage the company financially. On the contrary, a company can improve the image of the firm and gain a competitive advantage in comparison with the companies that do not find new ways and approaches. Not only from the practical, but also from the preventive point of view, the active approach is definitely more meaningful.

The essence of marketing is principally the same for different-sized and different-branched enterprises. Marketing communication tools, surveys and analyses are also used to achieve the same results, thus information that is the input data for future decision of the company management. The main task of marketing communication in the field of environment protection is to use marketing communication tools, thanks to them the general public, consuming products, understand the urgency of everyday responsibility for the state of environment, our health and the health of our children.

Information communication about the company behaviour towards environment (today environmental reporting), addressed to a company environment and, in a lesser extent, to its own staff, has been for years to calm down environmentalists, concerned citizens around the plant and its own staff. Environmental reporting is a reasonable basis for two-way communication between the firm and its surroundings. The surroundings gets qualified information, it can express their fears and doubts, and the firm responds to them – among others by pointing to proven gradual improvements. [VANĚČEK 2003]

An important and common element of marketing communication and environmental reporting is information. Nowadays, it is impossible to operate without information. Information must have a logical structure so that it can be possible to obtain data for key management decisions. The flow of information and its results must be responsibly, accurately and clearly recorded in the firm database. Then, these databases can provide such information that will partly serve for the management decision in the field of economics, but also marketing-oriented action on the public.



**Fig. 3: Information system of the company**

*Source: Fedorová 2004*

So that the management of the company can decide on a possible future development of the company, it is necessary to have a systematically created information system that includes key internal data. They are quantitative and qualitative data creating the basis for statistical analyses. The information system of the company should be well worked out, otherwise it can happen that the management will decide on the basis of irrelevant data.

### **3. Marketing Communication Tools Used in the Environmental Field**

The main tools of marketing communication are: an advertisement, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing. Individual tools are,

as shown by the following text, applicable to products that not only satisfy the needs of end customers, but also by their environmental focus help to their self-promotion.

### **3.1 Advertising**

Advertising is such a form of communication by means of that company does not communicate with its customers directly, but through various media. It is an intentional activity of the company. By this way, the company informs its potential customers on existing products and additional information (quality, advantages). In the field of advertising, environmentally oriented companies use traditional elements of advertising, such as informative advertisements in press, radio, television and on the Internet. Furthermore, information provided by the form of posters, leaflets, company brochures and catalogues belong here, too.

An outward appearance of the product package that no longer serves only as product protection is an important element of advertising. It is so called *marking*, in expert literature mentioned as *eco-labelling*. This is a voluntary deed of enterprises in labelling of their product that are, unlike competitive products, environmentally friendly.

Another element of advertising is so called eco-design. These are the products that can easily be recycled again, but they have, at the same time, a pleasant appearance, modern, practical form, etc.

### **3.2 Sales Promotion**

Sales promotions are time limited actions aimed at potential customers. Their objective is to prepare an attractive programme that will bring awareness of green products.

Trade fairs and exhibitions where the task of the company is not only to provide information, but also to tune potential customers positively to the consumption of green products, can be included into this category too. Samples of e.g. creams and shampoos, which potential customers can try in calm at home and only on the basis of satisfaction they can buy all product packaging, can be used at promotion as well.

The customers, who buy a so called green product, can subsequently be motivated to loyalty not only by the quality of the product, but also subsequent discounts, discount coupons for next purchase of the product, eventually by participation in lotteries and competitions.

### **3.3 Personal Selling**

Personal selling is, by some authors in expert literature, also marked as direct selling. Personal selling gives the company immediate feedback on whether its efforts are effective.

For example, a direct presentation of environmentally friendly products, when we not only show the products but we also provide information about them, can be included in personal selling. The aim is to convince potential customers not only of the

necessity of buying a particular product, but also to raise in them the feeling that if they buy the product, they will contribute to saving environment. The personality of a seller itself is very important at personal selling.

### **3.4 Direct marketing**

Direct marketing is such a form of communication when the company tries to address potential customers directly. For example, leaflets or samples delivered directly into post boxes, e-mails addressed to particular persons or telephone marketing belong to it. It is necessary to choose the right tactics according to a target group; new or regular customers.

### **3.5 Public relations**

Public relations (PR for short) = relations with public are one of the most important forms of company promotion. All of the above-mentioned tools of marketing communication have selling products as their priority. The essence of PR is good relation with the public, business partners, eventually with authorities of public administration. Positive influence – a good image, the action of the company in the public – is a very important.

If a company wants to be successful in the market, it must communicate with internal and external environment. Not only environmentally-oriented enterprises have to cooperate with media, i. e. to sell interviews, expressions, opinions. For the public, it is necessary to hold open days, excursions, seminars and lectures with topics on environment protection. Firm bulletins, eventually the separate newspaper release of events in the company are suitable too.

Nowadays, charity, sponsorship or lobbying is a common PR activity; however, it must be applied in a fully transparent, honest manner. In the opposite case, it is the damage to good relations, which are difficult to set right. Annual reports published on the website of the company are absolute obviosity. Enterprises also use the faces of “celebrities“from show business. In the case of using this possibility, it is necessary to keep in mind that making good relations with the public is a demanding long-time activity.

However, it is necessary so that the issue of environment protection can be concerned with enterprises themselves and at the same time this “education” can be communicated to the general public with the maximum support of the state. The Ministry of Environment itself is an example – it has on its websites both the section for journalists and the separate one for the public.

### **3.6 Ecological Marketing Communication Tools**

Some of the elements listed in this item are certain to be classed with, e. g. the PR. The reason for their separate introduction is their ecological specificity:

- *Ecological institutions, non-governmental organizations, movements and associations*

Institutions: the Ministry of Environment (next only ME), the Environment and Landscape Protection Agency and the State Environmental Fund. Non-governmental institutions: e.g., the Greenpeace, the Brontosaurus Movement, the Green Circle, the Children of the Earth, the EkoCentrum Brno, the Rainbow Movement, LEA –the League of Ecological Alternatives, the Association of Ecological Farmers of the Czech Republic, the Friends of Nature, and many others.

- *Programmes and Projects of the Ministry of Environment*

They are e. g., the programme Green Savings (a grant programme for insulation and ecological heating of houses from 2009 to 2012), the Operational Programme of Environment (a programme for improving the quality of the environment as a basic principle of sustainable development from 2007 to 2013), the Landscape Creation Programmes of ME, the Programmes of Land Associations and for supporting biodiversity, etc.

- *Environmental Management Systems*

Companies introduce these systems from the reasons of the increased interest of the public and business partners in environment protection issues. The environmental management systems (next only EMS) represent for the company an active approach to reducing negative impacts on the environment. In addition to reducing costs for energy and raw materials, EMS brings the opportunity of more opened communication and, last but not least, gaining a competitive advantage. EMS can be implemented according 1/ to the international standards of ISO 14000 or 2/ according to the system EMAS applied in the area of the European Union.

To be able to judge the behaviour of enterprises, with regard to the environment, the research, whose object was to find out the experience of enterprises in introduction and functioning of EMS in the Czech Republic, was carried out by the University of Pardubice in cooperation with the Agency EMAS. The results of the research: a statistical sample of 222 enterprises of different branches, 91% of which were holders of the certificate ISO 14001, 6% owns the certificate according to ISO 14001 and, at the same time, is registered in the programme EMAS, 3% of the respondents have introduced the system, but its certification has not been made yet. The importance of management system introduction can be demonstrated by the fact that 97% of the respondents have implemented the quality management system according to ISO 9001. [HYRŠLOVÁ, MÍSAŘOVÁ 2003]

Further research bringing more current data was carried out in 2005. [OBRŠÁLOVÁ et al. 2005]

- *Green purchasing*

This is the choice of customers to buy and consume green products, such as briquettes from wood waste, aqueous paints, paper instead of plastic bags, etc.

- *The Other Marketing Tools of Ecological Character*

This category includes tools and activities having an ecological alternative: eco-labelling and eco-design (see 3.1), eco-audit, eco-controlling, eco-risks and eco-qualification.

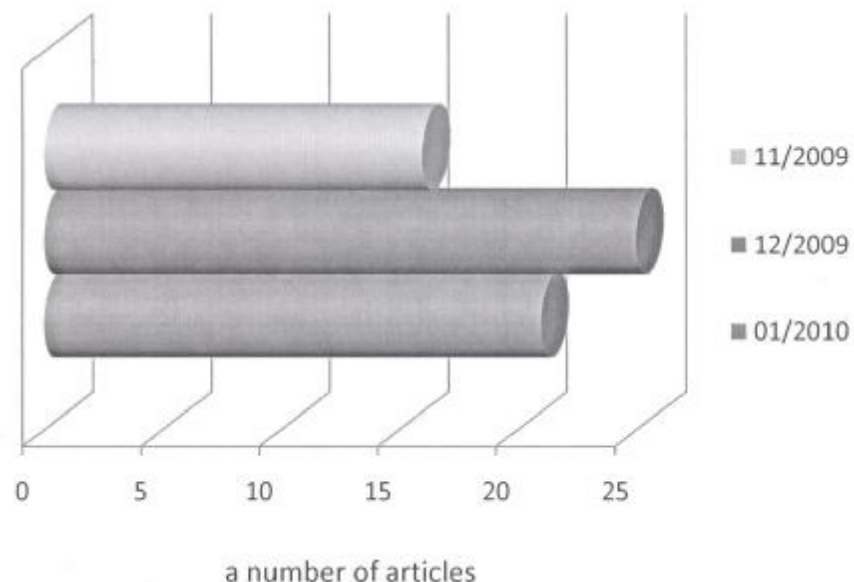
#### 4. The Case Study of Hazardous Waste Incineration Plant in Rybitví near Pardubice

This chapter contains the results of quantitative analysis of the application of marketing communication tools that were used to awaken the interest of the citizens of Pardubice and its surrounding in the topic of environment protection. The method of the analysis was active monitoring the regional newspaper MF Dnes and subsequent recording the results in the period of 1.11.2009 – 31.1.2010.

The public has known about the intention of the Upper Austrian Company AVE CZ to build a hazardous waste incineration plant in Rybitví near Pardubice since 2007. However, only now, in the period when the start of its functioning is being decided on, the issue has been released by media to the light of the world. Originally, the public debate on the incineration plant was planned on 10th November 2009. However, due to the capacity limitation of the ABC Club Na Olšinkách, the discussion was not realized. The public debate took place in the Pardubice ČEZ Arena on 9th December 2009, where about 7,000 citizens came to express their opinions.

##### 4.1 The Quantitative Analysis of the Regional Newspaper MF Dnes

In the period from 1st November 2009 to 31st January 2010, a number of current news relating to the incineration plant issues, and concerning both the development of the situation and the opinions of the public, were published by the MF Dnes. The views of opponents and proponents of this controversial construction were printed. The published articles informing on the public events were often accompanied by photos from the editors. The data shown in the following graph got out from the carried out analysis.



**Fig 4: The results of the quantitative analysis of the regional newspaper MF Dnes**

*Source: own solution*



As shown by the results of the analysis, the most reports on this issue were released in December, the fewest ones in November 2009. A little decrease in the reports at the beginning of 2010 is not dramatic.

Currently, it is clear that reports on the incinerator plant will be published in the following period, too. Just on 31st January 2010, the Ministry of Environment issued a dissenting opinion of assessing the impacts on environment to the project "The Modernization of the industrial waste incinerator, the establishment of Pardubice".

#### **4.2 The Analysis of the Other Marketing Communication Tools**

The information on holding the public debate was spread by *a car where the text was read into a megaphone*. At the public discussion, posters with a *text, Fig.s, slogan banners* and models were presented. About 2,000 written and *e-mail comments* by citizens were handed over. Other communication tools are posters containing *photos* stuck on hoardings and advertising columns. Informative leaflets in the size A6 were directly delivered to post boxes.

The editors of the *MF Dnes* also called upon readers to express their opinions of the incinerator by the action "Write to Us". The weekly newspaper Perštein published several articles.

Promotion on the media took place on the TV channel ČT 24 and on the radio station *Czech Radio*.

The opponents of the incinerator founded websites [www.proti-spalovne.cz](http://www.proti-spalovne.cz) where articles, opinions, photo gallery, a list of other incinerators, discussion forums, etc. can be found. On 4th January 2010, the websites [www.ekolist.cz](http://www.ekolist.cz) notified of the public debate about the incinerator, too.

More than 47,000 of citizens expressed their opinions of the incinerator in the petition against the construction.

The possibility to influence the public opinion was used by the independent ecologist Jiří Kučera, EngD, who sent a *mass e-mail* (9. 11. 2009 – "So for this you are fighting??"). Another one who joined the communication by means of e-mail is the Studio Press Ltd. Pardubice.

The Company AVE CZ released *an informative* leaflet about the incinerator. The company uses the service of the press agent Jan Nálezka to the presentation.

### **5. Conclusion**

The results of the carried out analysis are presented in the case study containing the list of specific marketing communication tools that were applied by both the part of the supporters and opponents of the construction of the hazardous waste incineration plant in Rybitvi near Pardubice. On the basis of the results of the carried out analysis it is possible to state that the issue of environment protection is presented in a marketing way and citizens are actively involved in environment protection issue.

Marketing is an essential tool that is crucial in the field of providing information to the general public. Due to the development of the market, information technologies,

management creativity and successful application of marketing communication tools, approaches to informing the general public are sure to be developed henceforth. Marketing incites us to think about the approach to nature, whose resources are exhaustible, and to think about human indifference, which brings destruction.

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