



GREEN FATIGUE

GREENWASHING

Going green is big business and sustainability talks. Every smart business is employing green marketing tactics and why wouldn't they as the State of Consumer Spending: Gen Z Shoppers Demand Sustainable Retail Report reveals that 62% of Gen Z shoppers prefer to buy from sustainable brands, and a staggering 73% are willing to pay more for sustainable products. Moreover, Gen Z and Millennials are the most likely to make purchase decisions based on personal, social, and environmental values. As torchbearers of conscious consumers, the younger generation offer a great opportunity for companies to show they care, protect future generations and make healthy profit margins.

Unfortunately, some businesses have exploited the genuinely good intentions of many companies by using the practice of greenwashing which has led to green fatigue where consumers have become disengaged and skeptical of the promises being made. Greenwashing is the process of conveying a false impression or misleading information about the sustainable credentials of a product, brand or service. The unsubstantiated claims are there to make you believe that products are more environmentally sound than they actually are; green coloured packaging, brand designed logos that are not accredited, claims of being made from recycled materials without the exact content being stated and ambiguous net zero pledges are just a few examples. We've all been duped by them and we are all victims.

For many businesses these misleading claims are inadvertent and are due to a

misunderstanding of how to promote their credentials correctly. Fortunately, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is clamping down on companies making inaccurate or false environmental claims and who gain an unfair advantage as a result. Their current Green Claims Code sets out six principles specifying that environmental claims must:

- Be truthful and accurate
- Be clear and unambiguous
- Not omit or hide material information
- Only make fair and meaningful comparisons
- Consider the full lifecycle of the product or their service
- Be substantiated

There are impending plans this year for the CMA to have the power to decide if an environmental claim is misleading and fine companies up to 10% of their global turnover without the need to go to court.

This is designed to promote transparency and authenticity in corporate sustainability to protect the future of our planet and to ensure consumers are able to make informed purchasing choices.

Greenwashing - inadvertent or not - may have been profitable in the past but could turn out to be very costly in the future. Now is the time to reassess your sustainable strategies and only make substantiated and verified claims. Your green marketing must be true and accountable to build trust in your sustainable products, brands and services. It is the correct and ethical practice to follow and will reshape the narrative around responsible products and businesses being held accountable for their true impact on the environment.