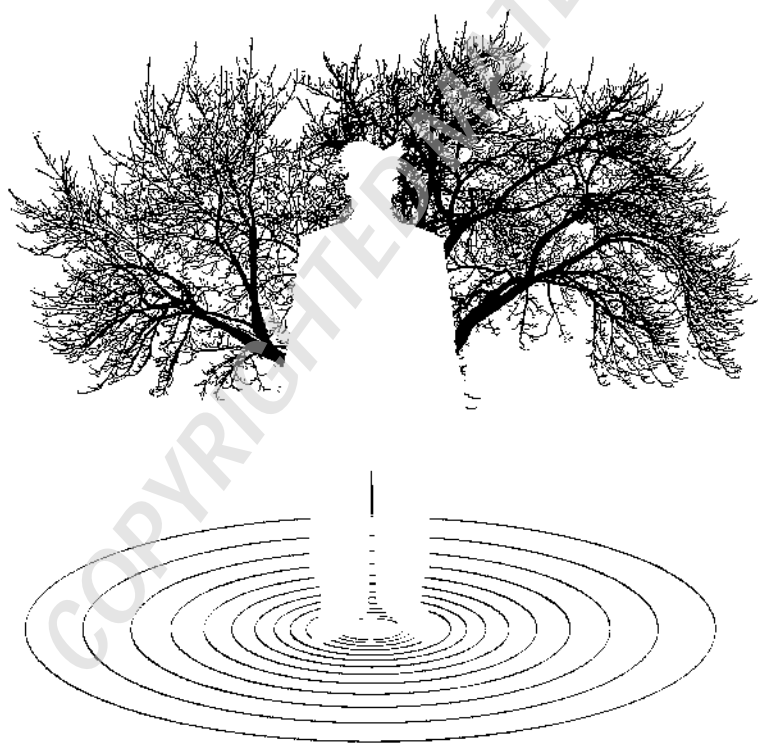


I

INTRODUCTION



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Although green issues have been with us for several decades it's only recently that brands have started to take them seriously. But rather than exercise carefully considered marketing many have jumped on the green bandwagon. Now millions of dollars and pounds of marketing spend are being spent on campaigns to make brands look more ethical, sadly most are a waste of money. Phrases like 'greenwash' and 'ethicalwash' are an apt way to describe most marketing activity. There seems to be little communication between CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and marketing departments and little understanding of consumer attitudes. Call it lazy, ignorant, poorly advised or just that too many brands have fallen into a process of just churning ads out – and green is just another brief – but there really isn't much good eco-ethical marketing about.

On one level this book should help marketing and brand managers avoid becoming a victim of greenwash or worse, damaging the reputation of their brand. For eco-ethical businesses it will provide useful marketing guidance. And for students, it will offer some challenging ideas.

This book seeks to explore new ideas, provide a better understanding of the eco-ethical or 'new' consumer and turn a few ideas upside down and even inside out. There are already a few myths that need exploding and as for any rules which you've been told, ignore them. One thing you'll discover is that maybe green isn't the best way forward if you want to be seen as an ethical brand. When we started the People versus Planet debate we challenged a lot of people to think about people messages against environmental ones. The outcome of our research was both illuminating and surprising to many.

The book will also show you how using traditional advertising techniques may be less effective than you thought. Or that you probably need to start with a different strategy than the one you first thought if you want to communicate the ethical values of a brand.

Advertising and marketing are not a science and there are no rules, just learning. It's an area full of well argued opinions and debate and as soon as someone thinks they have discovered a rule everything changes. I always compare it to music and fashion, what's in one year is out the next. The consumer is constantly changing and we've seen a dramatic change over the last few years. Combined with a recession, the world of marketing is being shaken up.

This book isn't a rule book, a guide maybe but more than anything it's been written to get you thinking, to challenge conventional ideas and explore new areas. When people ask me what I do for a living I say I make people think and help them solve problems, hopefully this book will do exactly that. Marketing is an adventure, a journey of the unexplored, which is why it's such an exciting area to work in. But the moment it becomes a process it's usually not good marketing. Think of any great campaign and great marketing idea and almost all of them broke with tradition. New ideas equal new opportunities. But this also requires people to be brave, 'there's no success in the comfort zone' was a quote from of one very successful entrepreneur I know. Another entrepreneur who I worked with, Simon Woodroffe (Yo!) said, 'If you follow conventional thinking, all you'll ever be is conventional'. Worse, and this is my addition, you could be out of business.

One key thing that I've learnt over the years is that too many brands start in the wrong place. They make assumptions, base decisions on wrong information and then write briefs that end up sending everyone in the wrong direction. The tools that you'll find in this book such the R&E Line, the

Ethical Sphere and a few other ideas will provide you with very powerful weapons to improve your marketing. There are sections that will help give you a greater insight into consumers. We haven't filled the book with case studies, but we are inviting any business to submit their own case studies on the website <http://www.ecoethicalmarketing.info>. There will also be room for discussion and debate, and in this area there's a lot of it. In time we hope that it will become a hub of ideas and information for brands, students and small businesses working within the eco-ethical arena.

THE STRUCTURE

When Wiley first asked me to write this book (and it took longer than planned with so much material), as a creative marketing consultant I asked a few questions about readers, distribution and statistics about reading.

One fact that was hardly surprising is that a large percentage of business books that are bought are never read properly. Of those books that are read few are read cover to cover, most are dipped in and out of. How many of us have shelves of books that we mean to read one day? Many of which have travelled thousands of miles in our hand luggage without ever being opened?

To 'eat the elephant whole' is something most of us don't do, we live in an age of bite size media, in a world where we seek out information in fast to digest forms. Time is one thing few of us have to spare. We no longer think in a linear way but within a chaotic 'fuzzy' world. Thanks to the internet to start at the beginning and end at the end is now a very outdated idea. We like to drop in and drop out, zig zag about, gathering up those nuggets of relevant information as we go along. Time is too short and precious a commodity to waste on waffle or irrelevance. A hundred

words of insight or vision are worth more than 10000 words of rubbish. We are all in search of knowledge and leadership.

Rather than write a book that linked one chapter to another this book is designed to be read in any order, you decide. There is a structure but there is no reason to start at the beginning and read to the end. It's not really a unique or original model, many education books are written this way, as are magazines.

THANKS

There are many people who have helped in putting this book together, too many to list – they know who they are. My apologies to those whose case studies, interviews, brands or thoughts have not been included – we had to cut over 20% of the original manuscript. But we have launched a website where case studies and deleted chapters will be posted (see the final chapter). However, my greatest thanks go to Sarah Eden, an eco-writer who has helped with research, processing a great deal of information and doing the first edit. A green star if there ever was one.

