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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Ashley Castle

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Walden University
2017

Abstract

Strategies for Implementing Advertisements in the Green Industry

by

Ashley Castle

MBA, Strayer University, 2011

BSBA, Western Carolina University, 2004

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

October 2017

Abstract

After a growth in sales of 30% from 2007 to 2010, green product market sales declined 2% from 2010 to 2014 in the United States. Business leaders need to incorporate sustainable business practices and use green messaging within advertisements and marketing campaigns to assure that present needs do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This qualitative case study explored marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry use to increase the sale of green products. The social cognitive theory was the conceptual framework used in this study. In-depth interviews with 5 purposively selected business leaders with experience in advertising green products were supplemented with a review of documentation. Yin's 5-step analysis guided the coding process of participants' responses, and member checking was used to validate the transcribed data. The major themes of the study revealed strategies used in green advertising. The themes that emerged from the research include usage of social media, understanding behaviors of green consumers, and expectations of the emerging millennial generation. The implication for positive social change is the potential for increased environmental awareness that could positively affect the environment and improve effectiveness for companies that sell green products.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this to my supportive family. No matter what endeavors I take on and attempt to accomplish, they are always supportive. To the most understanding husband in the world, Elijah, you have been supportive and have been patient with my consistently growing goals over the years. From a sophomore in high school to doctoral graduation, from the mountains to the beach, and everywhere in between as our lives have grown together, you have been always encouraged me to attempt anything that I want to accomplish and gracefully accepting the time that those endeavors take. To the most amazing son that anyone could ever have, Dalton. As you enter into the Marines this year, I think about how I have been a student for the majority of your life, yet I have never felt we missed any great times together. Early in my graduate work, my homework time was the only time you were allowed to play video games, so you looked forward to it. As both of our careers advance, I now see that was time well spent for the both of us.

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I would like to acknowledge my doctoral committee that helped shape the study to what it has become today. I feel honored to be one of the last of thousands of doctoral students to be shaped and influenced by Dr. Marilyn Simon. She is like a light always reminding me of the “big rocks” and always encouraging when I take on more rocks than my jar could even fit. There is no way that I could have made this journey without her and my dedicated committee.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Going green is a popular term referring to the process of changing one's lifestyle for the safety and benefit of the environment. Environmentally consciousness consumers continue to demand more green products and services. Environmentally conscious consumers also check labels and look for green products. Companies can tap into this market by offering more green products and services and by effective advertisement. The successful implementation of understanding how to improve the sale of green products may allow business leaders to focus on successful marketing and advertising strategies to that could be used to increase the sales of green products. The problem that I addressed in this study is that some business leaders in the green advertising industry lack the knowledge regarding successful strategies for targeting advertisements for their green products.

Two major components to going green are recycling and buying environmentally friendly products. Green consumers' orientation has increased interest in the link between marketing, consumer behavior, and the environment (Do Paco & Ries, 2012). The number of environmentally friendly products available for consumer purchase increased from approximately 2,700 to 4,700 between 2009 and 2010, a growth rate of more than 73% (Royne, Martinez, Oakley, & Fox, 2012).

Background of the Problem

The American Marketing Association (AMA) presented the first workshop on ecological marketing in 1975. The proceeding of this workshop resulted in one of the first

books on green marketing entitled *Ecological Marketing* (Choufhary & Gokarn, 2013).

The term *green marketing* was formed in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014).

Green advertising can contain words such as *CO2*, *carbon*, *environmental*, *emissions*, or *recycle*. From September 2006 to August 2007, \$26.9 million was spent on advertising using those keywords (Royne et. al, 2012). The growth in green products and green advertising indicated that consumption of those products reached record high levels. Although a significant number of U.S. consumers claimed their concern for the environment, Royne et.al. (2012) found that a seeming minority, 41% of consumers, indicate they do not buy green products.

Even with the progression of green marketing, a lack of understanding regarding green communication exists (Do Paco & Reis, 2012). A gap of awareness exists regarding consumer response to ecologically themed ad appeals because academic research has not increased at the same speed as industry interest (Tucker, Rifron, Lee, & Reece, 2012). This shortcoming could result in the lack of knowledge by business leaders within the green advertising industry regarding successful strategies for targeting advertisements for their green products.

Problem Statement

After a growth in sales of 30% from 2007 to 2010, green product market sales declined 2% from 2010 to 2014 in the United States (Granderson, 2015). More than 75% of advertising practitioners use, or plan to use, green messages in their advertisement and

marketing campaigns (Sheehan & Atkinson, 2013). Despite the increase in green advertising, many consumers are suspicious of these advertisements (Alniacik, 2013). The general problem that I addressed in this study is inadequate knowledge among business leaders in advertising regarding strategies market their green products. The specific problem that I addressed in this study is that some business leaders in the green advertising industry lack strategies to effectively target advertising for their green products.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry use to increase the sale of green products. The target population included successful business leaders in the green advertising industry. The sales of green products were more than \$100 million in 2008 but dropped to less than \$60 million in 2011 (Clifford & Martin, 2011). As environmental concerns increase among consumers, business leaders need to understand why the sales of green products have declined. Business leaders look for prospects to increase sales success or learn how better to express the value of their products (Hanssens, Pauwels, Srinivason, & Vanhuele, 2010). A better understanding of what strategies have been successful and not successful by business leaders in the green advertising industry in the sales of green products could positively affect sales. The implication for positive social change is the potential for increased environmental awareness that could positively affect the environment and improve effectiveness for companies that sell green products.

Nature of the Study

Three types of research methods are available to researchers: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Monette, Sullivan, & DeJong, 2013). The decision of which research method to use depends on the nature of the problems or issues (Thomson, Petty, Ramage, & Moore, 2011). Qualitative researchers explore and refine concepts and can develop new insights into the decision process (Malina, Norreklit, & Selto, 2011). Researchers using a qualitative method can contextualize a research study and reveal the direction of causation (Doherty & Chadwick, 2009). I used a qualitative method for this study. The goal of quantitative research was to measure results and to examine the relationship between factors and variables (Thomson et al., 2011). Because time and resources are not unlimited, I did not select mixed-methods research that includes the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). A quantitative or mixed method was not suitable for this study because there was no relationship to examine between factors and variables. Therefore, I selected a qualitative method to reach the objectives of my study.

I used a qualitative case study method to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry can use to increase the sale of green products. Five potential designs in qualitative research are phenomenology, narrative research, case study, grounded theory, and ethnography (Petty et al., 2012). A case study design was used to come to a better understanding of which marketing strategies and advertising appeals are used by successful green advertisers. Grounded theory, narrative

research, phenomenological, and ethnography were not suitable for this research study. Narrative research consists of constructing a story of the lives of a group of people who are often unrepresented (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Phenomenological research design helps the researcher to discover the meaning of an experience and to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena when participants share their experiences (Goulding, 2005). Grounded theory involves developing a theory from gathered data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Ethnography allows a researcher to examine an entire cultural group in an in-depth analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Ethnography was not appropriate for this study because the participants were specifically advertisers in the green industry.

To gain insights into which marketing strategies and advertising appeals that are used by successful green advertisers, the case study design was appropriate for this research study. Case study research is preferred in examining contemporary events (Yin, 2014). Business leaders in the green advertising industry shared marketing strategies and valuable experience in the green advertising industry that could assist other professionals within the industry to better target advertising efforts. A case study is ideal when the researcher's goal is to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth (Yin, 2013). Performing case study research enables the researcher to obtain characteristics of real-life events and is preferred when the researcher cannot manipulate behaviors within the study (Yin, 2009). A process, system, classroom, or clinic is often studied in a case study (Petty et al., 2012). Case study research uses in-depth data collected from multiple sources and the case-based themes reported (Merriam, 2009).

Research Question

The main research question in my study was: What strategies can advertisers use to increase sales of green products?

Interview Questions

The following semistructured interview questions allowed participants the opportunity to explain the strategies they use to increase sales and better target advertisements.

1. What consumer behaviors encourage green behavior?
2. What are the benefits of selling/purchasing green products?
3. What consumer behaviors increase sales of green products?
4. What are the anticipated outcomes that consumers need to feel in buying green products?
5. What are the positive and adverse effects of the use of appeals (sad, funny, fear, and negative) within advertising messaging that assist in attracting the proper target market?
6. What are other strategic marketing tools that marketers should possess to outperform their competitors other than advertising?
7. What are the most effective marketing strategies and approaches on which green advertisers need to focus in addition to traditional advertising, such as electronic word-of-mouth (WOM), consumer reviews, trust, satisfaction, and brand loyalty?

8. What are the trends and best practices in the green advertising industry to attract consumers to use green products?

Conceptual Framework

Social cognitive theory is used to predict behavior (Bandura, 1997). Social cognitive theory can be used to support how mass communications, such as advertising and the appeals within them, could affect consumer behavior (Prieler & Centeno, 2013). This effect on consumer behavior and consumer demand could result in a better understanding of the strategies needed to increase demand and sales for green products. To acquire social change, innovative achievements need a large amount of purposed effectiveness because innovations require a large investment spread across a long period with indeterminate outcomes (Bandura, 1995). The growing globalization and cultural pluralization of societies can show on how domestic and foreign forces interrelate to form the landscape of culture (Bandura, 2002).

Behavior is affected cognitively by external influences rather than directly, and cognitive factors also determine which environmental situations will be observed (Bandura, 2012). A person's knowledge and understanding are derived from operating symbolically on personal and vicarious experiences (Bandura, 2001). The social cognitive theory includes description of behavior change regarding rewards associated with observed behaviors that, in turn, becomes motivators. For observational learning to be effective, the reader must be attentive to the advertisement and associate a positive image. In addition, the ad must exhibit the same realities of the reader. Thus, social

cognitive theory ties back to this study in that advertisers often apply social cognitive theory to understand the behavior of consumers, generally allowing advertisers to encourage green behavior and increase sales of green products.

Operational Definitions

Attitude toward the advertisement: Attitude toward advertisement is defined as a predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989).

Brand attitude: Brand attitude is the overall evaluation of a brand (Olsen, Slotegraaf, & Chandukala, 2014).

Green: Green is used interchangeably with *environmentally friendly*, *eco-friendly*, and *sustainable*. For example, a green supermarket is a supermarket that helps shoppers make eco-friendly choices and commits to protecting the environment (Gershoff & Frels, 2015).

Green advertisement: Green advertisement reflects the following characteristics:

- (a) an advertisement that directly or indirectly addressed the relationship between a product, the physical environment, and the biological life forms within the environment;
- (b) an advertisement that promoted a green living lifestyle with or without emphasizing a product/service; and
- (c) an advertisement that presented a corporate image or activity of environmental responsibility (Banerjee et al., 1995).

Green advertising: Green advertising is any advertising that promotes an awareness of environmental issues and/or suggests behaviors useful in minimizing or correcting these environmental issues (Fowler & Close, 2012).

Green marketing: According to the AMA (2016), green marketing may be defined in three ways: (a) the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe; (b) the development/marketing of products designed to minimize negative effects on the physical environment or to improve its quality; or (c) the efforts by organizations to produce, promote, package, and reclaim products in a manner that it is sensitive or responsive to ecological concerns.

Green product: A green product is a product created to be ecofriendly and causes less damage to the environment (Mishra & Sharma, 2014).

Greenwashing: Greenwashing is green marketing that is deceptively portrayed to support awareness that an organization's products, goals, or policies are environmentally friendly (Xie & Kronrod, 2012).

Purchase intention: Purchase intention is when there is an assumption of a pending transaction and is considered an important indicator of an actual purchase (Chang & Wildt, 1994).

Sustainability: Sustainability has the capacity to meet the demands of the current consumers without conceding the capability to meet the needs for future generations (Lampikoski et al., 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are realistic expectations of the researcher and statements of beliefs. Assumptions assist the researcher develop results and interpretations valuable to the research (Shugan, 2007). A fundamental assumption in this study was that experienced green product advertiser participants would provide honest and truthful answers during the interviews without personal agendas. Because participation was voluntary and confidentiality was assured, this assumption was likely met. Another assumption was that participants would have a basic familiarity with marketing, advertising, and green marketing terms, to ensure understanding of the responses made by the participants and they will understand the concepts in the questions to answer them. Purposive sampling assured that this assumption was likely met.

Limitations

Limitations are factors in the design or methodology of a study that limit the study scope and affect the presentation or understanding of the results of the study, and they could be a potential weakness of the study (Yin, 2014). Small sample size is a limitation; research findings may not apply to a broader population. The participants volunteered for the study, and I selected them through a purposive sample. The participants' bias responses to interview questions and researcher's bias interpretation of the data may affect research findings (Yin, 2014). I used bracketing to reserve predetermined insights to mitigate bias. A final limitation was the results of the study may not be transferable to

other products. Qualitative study findings do not apply to the general population. Certain limitations in place for this study are out of the researcher's control, such as time, convenience, and the ability to take a broad view of the findings based on the chosen population and sample.

Delimitations

Delimitations are parts of the study that the researcher chooses to set to define the range and limits of the study in answering the research question (Yin, 2013).

Delimitations of the study include specific criteria or variables purposely omitted from the study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). This study was delimited to business leaders in the green advertising industry in Virginia Beach, Virginia. The population size, data collection process, and time constraints bound the scope of the study. The findings of the study may apply to business leaders in marketing, advertising, green industry, and scholars. The study participants were selected on a volunteer basis and were employed in the green marketing/advertising industry. No monetary compensation was provided to respond to questions and no information that could be viewed as specific trade secrets of their particular organization was obtained. By selecting interviewees who fit delimitations, I gained an understanding of the narrow segment of green advertising professionals.

Significance of the Study

This qualitative case study involved business leaders in the green advertising industry. I used a case study design and secondary data to determine the strategies for

implementing advertisements in the green industry. The remainder of the study consisted of two parts. Section 2 includes the development of the research for the study, and Section 3 includes the application for professional use and inferences for social change.

Contribution to Business Practice

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry use to increase the sale of green products. Many industries can profit from research exploring marketing and advertising strategies to increase sales of green products because some of the strategies could be as effective in industries in which a change is needed in consumer behavior. Even though many types of companies and products can use the information to create the right messaging for an environmentally friendly message, companies with environmentally friendly only products may understand a better way to attract consumers that currently do not purchase green products because of the supposed inferiority of those products (Xie & Kronrod, 2012).

Implications for Social Change

The results of the study may encourage positive social change. Using my study's findings, green marketing leaders may gain new insights into the buying habits of their consumers. Green marketing is a philosophy that primarily advocates sustainable development (Choudhary & Gokarn, 2013). Advertising has a significant influence on our lives and society. Advertising informs and guide consumers' important decisions. The way advertisements are affecting and shaping consumers' attitudes, lifestyles, and

culture is immense. When business leaders are aware of factors that affect their consumers buying habits, there can be an improved degree of flexibility to respond to changing customer requirements, thus affecting the bottom line.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

In this qualitative case study, my goal was to explore the strategies for implementing advertising in the green industry. Literature reviews provide a deeper understanding of the subject matter, and my literature review helped determine whether environmental changes and increasing consumer demand support sustainability for green products. My literature review consists of a means to understand the environmental concerns, changes in consumer behavior, green marketing, advertising effect on consumer behavior, and the use of social cognitive theory in consumer behavior. Understanding the components of these concepts may provide a better understanding of the marketing environment and the marketplace, allowing green advertisers to increase environmental awareness that could positively affect the environment and improve effectiveness for companies that sell green products.

The strategy for the review consisted of a broad and focused search of various sources across multiple disciplines: scholarly journals articles, books, and electronic media. Principal sources from search engines on the Walden University Library research databases included Business Source Complete, ABI/INFORM Complete, ProQuest, SAGE Premier, and Science Direct. The literature review consisted of a search list of keywords of process improvement: *green marketing, green advertising, ecological*

marketing, environmental concerns, environmental sustainability, sustainable business practices, corporate social responsibility, advertising appeals, consumer behavior, innovation, social media marketing, advertising channels, social cognitive theory, green products, environmental skepticism, trends in green marketing, marketing research, and greenwashing. I identified and evaluated more than 268 articles in a 24-month period and used 129 relevant articles in this literature review. The extensive review of articles included 110 peer reviewed articles published from 2012 to 2016 and 19 published in 2011 or earlier. In addition, the review contained four book references. The percentage of peer-reviewed articles published within 5 years of the anticipated graduation date is 85%.

Environmental Concerns and Consciousness

The Copenhagen Report (2009) determined that if global emission rates were to stabilize at the current rate of carbon emissions, warming will exceed 2°C by 2030 by a probability of 25%. In the United States, the total cost of controlling pollution gradually increased the percentage of the gross national product (GNP); it was 1.5% in 1971 and 2.3% in 1990, and it is expected to be 5.2% of GNP by the year 2020 (Rezaee et al., 1995). Environmental expenditures are steadily increasing as the amount of laws and regulations to address the environmental issues are increasing.

People use more resources than the earth can create, so businesses must understand how to respond to environmental issues and assist consumers to adopt new environmental habits in the midst of sustainable development. During the past 2 decades, media coverage of environmental disasters transformed them into public issues in the

mind of consumers. Changes in law and regulation can potentially produce significant environmental benefits by reducing energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and toxic waste (Hardaway, 2014). However, significant policy changes affecting climate change take time, and it could be decades before going green is mandated. Individuals adopting a green lifestyle have a small but positive influence on the environment. However, a large-scale green movement could have a major effect on climate change. This increased environmental concern also has a profound effect on consumer behavior, and consumers continue to buy natural products.

Environmental consciousness is considered an appropriate personal characteristic for two main reasons. First, compared with socioeconomic indicators, psychographic differences provide more value in relation to profiling proenvironmental purchasing behavior following the institution of environmental protection as a social norm. Second, environmental consciousness is an influential factor affecting consumer responses to green advertisements and determining advertising theme selection (Chun-Tuan, 2012). Environmental consciousness is a psychological tendency to engage in proenvironmental behaviors that reflect the individual's recognition of, value judgments, and behavior intentions toward environmental issues (Zheng, 2010). Consumers can be separated into market segments directly related to environmental consciousness. Consumers with low levels of environmental consciousness are those whose purchasing behaviors are minimally influenced by environmental concerns. Consumers with high levels of environmental consciousness engage in a wide range of environmental behavior while

holding certain values and attitudes (Chun-Tuan, 2012). These consumers purchase products and services that they deem to have a progressive influence on the environment and they are worried about more than only the purchasing and consuming processes. They are also concerned about the product disposal issues, such as recycling (Zinkhan & Carlson, 1995). These concepts have been used in what is now commonly known as the three Rs of environmentalism: reduce, reuse, and recycle.

Environment Sustainability

World leaders have encouraged green practices, sustainable environmental management, and conservation of biodiversity. Environmental degradation factors such as global warming, pollution, climate change, and deforestation have increased awareness in the manufacturing industry, giving reasons to practice sustainable manufacturing and environmentally friendly management (Rezai, Sumin, Mohammed, Shamsudin, & Sharifuddin, 2016). Consumers are demanding products that are made from natural resources, instead of chemical-based products. Sustainability encourages business leaders to move toward green practices, but it also increases demand for natural products that are produced with sustainability in mind (Kim, Baek, & Coi, 2012).

The marketplace emphasizes environmental sustainability and companies seek different ways to respond. The focus has been on environmental sustainability has concentrated on profiling a typical green consumer, understanding the motivation behind acquiring green products, designing marketing tactics to increase green product purchase (Kronrod, Grinstein, & Wathieu, 2012) and identifying consumption behavior of green

products after purchase. Corporations have become more environmentally responsible through the cleaner manufacturing process and green promotion. By the end of 2017, the amount that U.S. companies will spend on green projects is expected to reach \$44 billion (Verdantix, 2013).

Trends in Sustainable Business Practices

Small businesses are important in job creation and provide the government with revenue from taxes created from marketing (Karanja et al., 2013). New small businesses are significant to the economy because they create salary growth and responsible for 60% to 70% of job creation (Wiid, Cant, & Roux, 2016). Marketing experts and managers experience many challenges when developing marketing strategies with some companies reacting to marketing challenges more usefully than others (Civic, 2013). Marketing challenges research comprised of innovation, entrepreneurship, and sustainability (Wilson & Grant, 2013). Environmental sustainability is a large focus on businesses around the world. The majority of firms have eco-friendly strategies and a corporate board dedicated to the issue. Identifying trends can reveal the increasing importance of understanding the implications of introducing environmentally sustainable or green practices (Olsen et al., 2014).

Sustainability is associated with attributes of traditional societies, including wealth, rising materialistic tendencies, and technology, but short-term profit is limited with the possibility of threats to the ecosystem with the use of inadequate marketing efforts (Mohamed, 2013). Marketing leaders are challenged with an endless supply and a

diminishing value in marketing due to the global sustainability crisis because of mistaken initiatives (Baker, 2013). The concept of the triple bottom line combines the idea of social responsibility to cover the company's profit and longevity in addition to the earth and humans: profit, planet, people (Zak, 2015). Companies must create objectives economically justified, ecologically acceptable, and socially expected. The practice of ecological sustainability has two business strategies: transitional strategies before moving toward a transformational strategy (Borland & Lindgreen, 2013). Organizations will need to redefine product value and create innovative ways to use natural resources during ongoing environment changes. Organizations have no course of actions to guide their focus of sustainability (Lampikoski et al., 2014)

Corporate Social Responsibility

Sustainable environmental concerns are a building awareness for consumers. Because environmental concerns are increasing concerns for consumers, businesses need to respond to be viewed favorably by current and potential consumers. Environmental efforts are an essential part of corporate social responsibility (CSR), reflecting a commitment to the welfare of society, economy, and the environment. In addition to favorable consumer views, environmental sustainability strategies focusing on the reduction of pollution, energy consumption, and water conservation can influence profitability, such as cutting manufacturing costs and expenses at commercial sites (Lampikoski et al., 2014.) A company's investments and performance in environmental impact factors, such as (a) greenhouse emissions, (b) solid-waste disposal, and (c) water

usage, divulge the company's commitment to sustainability and create environmental legitimacy for the company (Crespin-Mazet & Dontenwill, 2012). Companies that do not invest in environmental impact factors could be seen as negligent to potential and current consumers. Companies that invest more in environmental impact factors gain environmental legitimacy to potential and current consumers. Using green strategies has proven advantageous and cost effective in the long run even though the strategies can be expensive in the short term (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). In addition to the financial benefits of increased environmental efforts, green strategies can protect company reputation and prevent corporate scandals. Socially irresponsible behavior can influence consumers' attitudes more than CSR activities. Social irresponsible behaviors from companies are a focus of negative publicity and consumer boycotts (Green & Peloza, 2014).

CSR positively influences customer's trust in the company, creating a reliable and honest reputation that conveys integrity and trustworthiness (Homburg, Stierl, & Bornemann, 2013). Consumers support for a companies' CSR is influenced by many factors including purchase quality, perceived effort by the company, a companies' motive, and rippling effects in the company's industry. Consumers tend to trust small firms more while not expecting low CSR activity. As the size of the firm increases, so does lack of trust along with increased anticipations of high CSR activity (Green & Peloza, 2014). Consumers tend to view CSR initiatives at the brand level to be out of a larger concern for society rather than other motivations such as greater profits or more efficient operations.

Green Effect on Environmental Consumption

Most consumers support the idea of buying environmental goods (Zaharia & Zaharia, 2015). Consumers review the environmental product characteristics but are often confused. The value of product features that influence buying decisions and which consumers are most likely to focus on the self-serving product features initially with accompanied by environmental product features can be a tradeoff (Zaharia & Zaharia, 2015). Making environmental product choices involves purchasing goods that are the least damaging to the natural world and society overall. The brands that are recognized by a consumer have a direct link with buying behavior plans. An environmental conscious consumer's behavior includes green awareness (Nica, 2015). The increased costs of those green goods could be a hurdle in participating in environmental consumerism. Consumers that observe peers preferring and purchasing environmental products may be more likely to act similarly. Environmental consumerism is affected by social criteria (Ștefănescu-Mihăilă, 2015).

History of Green Marketing

According to the AMA (2016), green marketing is the marketing of products that are acknowledged to be environmentally safe. From its first appearance in the 1980s, the concept of green marketing has experienced an incredible revolution as a business strategy. Green marketing can be used to gain a competitive advantage over competitors in their particular industry. Consumers' environmental consciousness has caused business leaders to react to the changing needs of the market through green marketing

(Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2014). Environmental or green marketing includes all the activities used to bring about additional exchanges intended to meet human demands (Serban, 2014).

Firms have initiated to change their behaviors as consumers are more environmentally conscious. The green movement is a serious social movement with the result of environmental concerns becoming a large global issue (Jui-Che, Tsai-Feng, & Yi-Chan, 2013). Companies have started to change many aspects of their operations, products, and marketing techniques. Green marketing is a result of these environmental concerns and defined in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Two published books by Ottman from the United States and Peattie from the United Kingdom became the seminal work for green marketing as it is known today (Choufhary & Gokarn, 2013).

In 1975, the AMA first acknowledged an environmental concern with the first organized workshop on *ecological marketing* leading to the first book dedicated to the topic called *Ecological Marketing* (Choufhary & Gokarn, 2013). In the beginning, ecological marketing focused to provide cures for environmental problems. Later, environmental marketing shifted the focus to designing innovative new products, using clean technology to decrease pollution and waste problems. Ecological marketing or environmental marketing has most recently transformed into the concept of sustainable or green marketing. Business leaders and consumers have begun to identify the need to shift to green products and services. The term of green marketing refers to the holistic marketing concept that the production, marketing, consumption, and disposal of products

happen occur in a way that is less damaging to the environment with increased awareness about the ramifications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful effect or pollutants (Mishra & Sharma, 2014).

Importance of Green Marketing

Marketing is one of the major decisions that management makes. Marketing includes management of customer/market selection, pricing, brands, new products, and product portfolios (Roberts, Kayande, & Stemersch, 2014). Marketing is the method that the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion) is used to react to the needs and wants of customers while achieving business objectives. Green marketing includes the elements of Porter's marketing mix consisting of product, price, place, and promotion (Yan & Yazdanifard, 2014). Marketing strategies can provide advantages for businesses seeking better understanding of current and potential consumers' needs (Ritter, 2016). Marketing strategies can help managers in evaluating business needs and influence purchases of consumers (Woo, Ahn, Lee, & Koo, 2015). In developing a successful marketing strategy, business leaders should focus on developing knowledge of consumer demands and lifestyles (Nica, 2013).

Green marketing is a way of satisfying consumer needs under the same marketing mix. The concept of green marketing can show a difference that has altered the traditional marketing and consumer's thinking (Davari, & Strutton, 2014). Marketers use strategies to address business goals and concerns by surveying and assessing organizational knowledge, effectiveness, threats, and opportunities (Lipnicka & Dad'o, 2013). Green

and traditional marketing mixes can be differentiated by expansion of ideals intended at satisfying pro-environmental and societal needs considered more heavily in green marketing mixes (Chan, He, & Wang, 2012).

Environmental issues impact the global community, so marketers have responded to these issues by addressing them in the concept of consumption. Consumers' demands are unlimited, while natural resources are limited. The key for business leaders is to achieve organizational goals while using resources efficiently and reducing waste (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). As green marketing has become better defined, companies have been finding ways to better be receptive to environmental concerns and ensuring that marketing activities are addressing the need minimize environmental hazards.

Green marketing is increasingly important in the current marketplace. Green marketing has facilitated existing products that meet green guidelines to be re-branded and re-packaged to increase the rate of targeting consumers who are concerned about the environment (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). Green marketing utilizes marketing concepts including: production process changes, product modification, packaging changes, and advertising transformation. Green pricing practices take environmental costs of production along with creating value for customers and leaving a reasonable profit for the company. An advantage of green marketing to a business would be the consumer brand loyalty. Customers attach less importance to brand loyalty to products that carry intrinsic benefits (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2013). Because of the contribution to the environment, green products can be held an altered perception, creating a spiritual

relationship between customers and the green products. Green products have a high brand loyalty and less price sensitive, so during economic downturns, consumers are still willing to purchase products at a premium.

Green marketing can be used as a differentiation competitive marketing strategy. The purpose of a marketing strategy is to assess the need of businesses by evaluating consumer demands and developing relevant procedures to positively influence consumer purchasing decisions (Woo et al., 2015). Differentiation strategies focus on fulfilling consumer demand, product positioning in niche markets, brand development, promotions, and customer satisfaction. Marketers of green products need a better understanding of how consumer demographic factors can impact consumer attitudes to various green advertising appeals. This is based on the increased consciousness of environmental concerns in governments, businesses, and consumers. In understanding what factors impact attitudes to different types of green advertising appeals, business marketers may better match environmentally-friendly messaging and environmentally-friendly products to the right consumer. In a consumer driven market, the use of a green marketing strategy can attract consumers demanding eco-friendly products that minimize environmental detriment. Eco-friendly consumers have particular behavior patterns, so there can be a gap in actual buying behavior and the consumer's attitude for consuming green products. Business leaders in the green advertising industry need to understand to decrease the gap between a consumer's attitude and the consumer's actual use of environmentally friendly products.

Successful green marketing could have a positive affect on the environment by increasing environmental awareness by leading to an increased usage of environmentally-friendly products. Some characteristics of marketing include public relations, advocacy, and promoting of products and services (Brown & Albright, 2013). As consumers are exposed to green marketing communication/green packaging, those exposures will generate learning in the consumer; therefore, educating and potentially creating new expectations for products and consumer's future buying behavior. Increasing knowledge of green concepts in labeling and packaging strategies is a good start in affecting habits and giving consumers' incentives to make more sustainable preferences (Zaharia & Zaharia, 2015).

History of Green Advertising

The impact of advertising is critical in marketing since the reach of marketing communication has quickly enlarged. The Journal of Advertising first devoted a special issue to green advertising in the summer of 1995. The guest editor of that issue, Easwar Iyer, indicated that the use of the word *green* in describing this particular type of advertising was meant to connote pre-environmental behaviors on behalf of both companies and consumers (Sheehan & Atkinson, 2012).

Defining Green Advertising

Marketing mix is a business concept that consists of product, price, place, and promotion (Islam, Yang, Hu, & Hsu, 2013). Green advertising was further defined as a message promoting environmentally oriented consumption behavior (Kilbourne 1995); as

a promotional message targeted to environmentally concerned consumers (Zinkhan and Carlson, 1995); and as a message that features an environmental attribute for a product or service (Schuhwerk and Lefkoff-Hagius 1995). Hartmann and Apaolaza-Ibáñez (2012) stated that green advertising focuses on a product or brand with environmental claims. In the changing environment of business and advertising, more companies have the potential to minimize or correct environmental issues, so there is a more stringent definition of green advertising. Fowler & Close (2012) suggested that a corporate image of being green or targeting eco-friendly consumers does not make a company or organization green. Green advertising is any advertising that promotes an awareness of environmental issues and/or suggests behaviors to minimize environmental issues.

Advertising is a marketing strategy to promote products/services to a specific market so a business can increase profits, (Calderwood & Wellington, 2013). Green advertising can be associated with various companies, including non-profit initiatives and for-profit commercial enterprises. While that definition allows for green issues as a minimization of environmental wastefulness, it allows for a for-profit and nonprofit approach. Green advertising can help build a green image, but having an eco-friendly related image in the ad or campaign alone does not constitute authentic green advertising. There has been a rise in green advertising with attributes that affect efficacy within those campaigns (Chun-Tuan, 2012). Advertising can be reflected in viewers' attitudes towards a product and their behavioral intentions. Perceptual ratings on attitudinal and intentional measures are indicators of the effectiveness of green advertising.

Communicating Green Innovations and Brands through Messaging

Understanding human psychological motives and behavior is key in increasing public environmentally-friendly behavior (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). A major task of business leaders is to decide how to articulate the value of green innovations to consumers without being unintentionally deceptive and communicate environmental environment claims. Advertising communication is messaging influencing consumer attitudes with certain types of products being more or less impressionable given current findings that consumer responses to one form of green product can vary by product type (Bezawada & Pauwels, 2013). Business leaders targeting to create or enhance an environmentally sustainable brand identity will introduce green new products and communicate how the products are green by highlighting the green-specific attributes within all messaging to potential consumers. The quality and number of green attributes influence messaging efficacy (Arceneaux, 2012). Business leaders attempting to communicate the environmental value of green products may present multiple claims to reinforce the product's particular green characteristics, using those multiple claims to solidify changes in brand attitude and consumer acceptance of that brand.

Green Advertising Effect on Consumer Behavior

The national press influences what the majority of the public believe (Liu & McConnell, 2013). Internal motives are valued in environmental actions. Demands in society can cause consumers to increase their intentions to save energy such as the trend in consumer behavior to engage in green consumption. Attention should be paid to the

psychological benefit for the consumer in order to increase their green energy need in addition to promoting the benefits and environmental issues (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). A solution for promoting green awareness and environmental protection is to create green product marketing (Jui-Che et al., 2013). Green advertising can lead a consumer to be interested in the environment show the positive attributes from purchase behavior and the environment. Green advertising represents distinct approaches to communicating how products and services could satisfy customer wants and needs in environmentally friendly ways. Attitude toward the ad allows for an understanding of the inferences that consumers generate and how those assumptions can affect behaviors and purchase intentions. Consumers in the environmentally-friendly segmentation can be targeted successfully with the use of green characteristics, such as labels and product packaging.

Positive and negative appeals can influence a consumers' reaction toward green messaging (Jui-Che et al., 2013). Green advertising is encouraging consumers to have positive environmental behaviors by focusing on humanity motivations, which are the key factors in green consumption (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibáñez, 2012). Providing environmental research data and presenting it in an informational appeal will assist in consumer's understanding of the situation and better influence environmental behaviors.

Shift of Advertising Channels

Advertising affects the vehicles individuals drive, the clothes they wear, the vacation they take, and the votes they cast (Kay & Furnham, 2013). The extent of the

influence of popular culture may vary. In 1948, the most popular advertising medium was newspapers, which received \$1.745 billion in advertising revenue, compared to \$562 million spent on radio advertising. In 1948, the total amount spent on advertising was \$2.784 billion, of which television received 0%, radio 20%, magazines 17%, and newspapers 62.7%. In comparison, in 1994, the advertising expenditures totaled \$88.2 billion, of which 40% was spent on television advertising, 39% on newspapers, 12% on radio, and 9% on magazines. Therefore, over the 50-year period ending in 1994, advertising expenditures continued to increase, with the most popular medium changing from newspapers to television (Cusic, 2001). With the popularity of the Internet, a shift in the popular medium may have changed again.

Cusic (2001) discussed several possible reasons for the changes in advertising channels. One theory suggests that newspaper and television advertising are at-home activities, whereas radio penetration is primarily outside of the home. These so-called in-home activities have a larger chance of being used. The penetration of radio advertising may; therefore, be limited by the reduced amount of time in which listeners engage in this type of activity. A second assumption to explain medium changes explored the number of radio stations compared to the number of daily newspapers in a market. In a given market, there is often only one newspaper, but several radio stations. Advertising in one medium than on several radio stations is more economical. Cusic reported that the number of U.S. households with cable television increased to 62.4% in 1995, up from 6.7% in 1970. The application of these economic findings has an effect on the production

of movies, music, products, and advertising (Cusic, 2001). The maximum effectiveness from an advertising investment is obtained when business leaders use promotional campaigns as a form of communication (Ahmed, Ting, & Johl, 2015).

Consumers can absorb advertising through a vast array of media to include print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (radio and TV advertisements), network media (telephone, cable, satellite, wireless), electronic media (CD, DVD, web page), and display media (billboards, signs, posters). The digitalization of media content on the Internet has steered to a sharp increase in the media sources available to consumers. Marketing research knowledge had significantly increased in response to an increase in disruptive innovation including the internet and technology development (Yadav & Pavlou, 2014). The classic problem of how to appropriately target and reach consumers in a multichannel environment has intensified by the growing demand of new digital outlets, which has increased the number of consumers who receive information through multiple outlets (Xu, et. al., 2014). Audience fragmentation and ideological segmentation in online media is complementarity is stronger among groups of consumers with more focused preference in media consumption assists for selective exposure. Marketers are beginning to recognize the implications of the ideological tendency on online consumer behavior and media strategy (Yildirim, Gal-Or, & Geylani, 2013). Digital marketing helps organizations reach more potential customers at a lower cost than other traditional marketing options (Hendrix, 2014). When consumers view online content, their reaction to the advertising content and the embedded brand are important to

understanding the effectiveness of the advertisement (Huang, Su, Zhou, & Liu, 2013).

The development of the internet has shifted toward electronic frameworks that depend on the internet (Xiang, Wang, O'Leary, & Fesenmaier, 2014).

Qualitative Case Study

Researchers use one of three research methods: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method) for studying phenomena. A researcher uncovers the thoughts of the consumer by focusing how the consumer thinks. Qualitative research does not entail generalizations but explores a given experience in detail to build further knowledge. The researcher of narrative analysis probes how people chronicle their lives and seek to understand the diversity and various levels included in the stories (Flick & Rohnsch, 2014). Case study offers methodological flexibility through the integration of diverse paradigms, study designs, and methods (Hyett, Kenny, & Kickson-Swift, 2014). The reasoning of the participants can be better understood by the use of open-ended questions (Roberts et al., 2014). The quantitative research method was not appropriate for the study because the how and why questions of qualitative research are more important to research than how much. Mixed methods design is a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods. Mixed methods research is performing two (qualitative and quantitative) small studies sequentially or concurrently. Considering the three research methods, quantitative and mixed-method did not align with the objective of the study. Qualitative research is the most beneficial because participants can share experiences in advertising strategies in the green industry. I used the case study method because case

study will allow the researcher to develop common factors among the multiple sources of data.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social cognitive theory (SCT) is used to predict behavior, into two distinct types: self-efficacy and outcome (Cheng & Chu, 2014). Both self-efficacy and outcome expectancy significantly affect behavioral intentions. Social cognitive theory suggested that individuals hold beliefs about their ability to make things happen through their actions or better known as self-efficacy (Ng & Lucianetti, 2016). Self-efficacy beliefs are excellent predictors associated with goal-related effort, persistence, and resilience (Bandura, 1997). The influence of mass media on society is substantial, requiring an explanation of the psychosocial role of communication and human behavior. Theorists of social cognitive theory believed that a person's learning of a subject can be done while observing social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences. Social cognitive theory (SCT) presents that parts of a person's memory can be directly related to noticing other people during social interactions and media influences. People will notice the sequence of events between particular behaviors and consequences of that behavior and use that behavior as a gauge for behavior going forward.

Albert Bandura (2001) described psychosocial functioning using a triadic reciprocal causation model that consists of personal, behavioral, and environmental determinants. Human nature is shaped or molded by direct and observational experiences within biological limits. When a person sees someone performing a particular behavior

along the consequences, the sequence of those behaviors is used as a guide for future behaviors (Cheng & Chu, 2014). Social cognitive theory can be used to support how mass communications, like advertising and the appeals within them, could affect the consumer behavior. This influence in consumer behavior and consumer demand could result in a give a better understanding of the strategies needed to increase demand and sales for green products.

According to SCT, observational learning of novel behaviors or skills is dependent on four inter-related processes involving attention, retention, production, and motivation (Denler, Wolters, & Benzon, 2013). Social cognitive theory can be used in many applications of behavior change but it is most common in the controlling of prolonged health conditions like asthma, arthritis, weight loss, and cardiac rehabilitation (Tougas, Hayden, Mcgrath, & Rozario, 2015).

According to the SCT, observational learning behaviors depend on four processes involving (a) attention, (b) retention, (c) production, and (d) motivation (Denler, Wolters, & Benzon, 2013). Television and other forms of media often glamorize representations that may cause internal discord (Bandura, 2001). This portrayal may work as a motivational element to influence a person's behavior. Bandura (2001) argued that the media can both create and alter personal attributes. Technological advances contributed to communicating to scores of individuals in a single transmission. Another process presented by Bandura is adoption, which relates to the many factors that determine if a person will act or engage in a learned behavior. Self-regulation can be a foundation for

behavior change, broken down by: self-monitoring, self-judgement, and self-evaluation (Bandura, 1991). Self-monitoring is the first step to begin self-regulation and to change behavior. In exploring the strategies for implementing advertisements in the green industry, it is important to understand how social cognitive theory can change of consumers' green behavior by the use of advertising.

Social cognitive theory suggests that individuals who experience increases in anxiety and fear are unlikely to experience growth in self-efficacy because of negative emotions signal to them that they are vulnerable to poor performance (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura (2001), television and other forms of media often glamorize representations that may cause internal discord. This portrayal may work as a motivational element to influence a person's behavior. Bandura (2001) argued that the media can both create and alter personal attributes. Technological advances have contributed to communicating to large numbers of people in a single transmission. Another process presented by Bandura (2001) is adoption, which relates to the many factors that determine if a person will act or engage in a learned behavior. Consumers can operate within the broader network of sociostructural influences, and self-efficacy effects may depend on the degree to which and individual values the collective goals (Bandura, 2012).

Social cognitive theory can be used to view behavior changes and intervention characteristics of green conscious consumers. The majority of social behavior is learned through direct and secondary observation, like watching television (Prieler & Centeno,

2013). Television and online transactions include a few media sources that cross barriers (e.g., geographic and time) in the transmission of innovations. The role of mass communication plays an important role in learning. A consumer's judgment can be clouded by a positive affect, but biased product assessments are more likely when paired with little advertising knowledge (Connell et al., 2014). Advertising has multifaceted intentions; including making money from product sales by promoting the product to highlight product advantages, not disadvantages. Advertising concepts can lead to behavioral changes in consumers. The social cognitive theory describes behavior change regarding rewards associated with observed behaviors that, in turn, becomes motivators. For observational learning to be effective, the reader must be attentive to the advertisement and associate a positive image. Additionally, the ad must exhibit the same realities of the reader. Social cognitive theory adopts human development, adaptation, and change. Thus, social cognitive theory ties back to this study in that advertisers often apply social cognitive theory to understand the behavior of consumers, generally allowing advertisers to encourage green behavior and increase sales of green products.

Advertising Appeals

Consumers' attitudes and buying behaviors are affected by advertising (Terkan, 2014). Advertisers use different appeals to portray their product or service and persuade consumers to purchase them, though advertising tends to combine many types of appeals into two main categories: emotional and informational (Grewal & Levy, 2015). An emotional appeal aims to satisfy consumers' emotional desires rather than their utilitarian

needs. Informational appeals help consumers make purchase decisions by offering factual information that encourages consumers to evaluate brand favorably on the basis of key benefits the product provides. Understanding advertising appeals that are effective for certain product or service is crucial to brand promotion.

Emotional Appeal

An emotional appeal uses emotion to build a connection between the consumer and the brand. The most common types of emotional appeals include but not limited to: fear, guilt, safety, humor, happiness, love, comfort, and nostalgia. Emotional advertising appeals can heighten a consumer's attention, cause a reaction, and affect attitude to the brand (Panda, Panda, & Mishra, 2013). Emotional appeals are widely used to increase awareness and help the messages to stand out in a cluttered media environment (Chun-Tuan, 2012). Advertisers using a promotional campaign involving an emotional story can communicate a message that transforms consumer purchase behavior through direct and indirect marketing (Ahmed et al., 2015). Emotional appeals consist of a plethora of emotions such as humor, eroticism, fear, and love. These emotional appeals can lead to feelings related to the advertisement and cause consumers to form an attitude towards (a) the advertisement and brand recognition leading to purchase intention (Panda et al., 2013).

Emotional advertising appeals could be used by advertisers to dramatically trigger emotions and make consumers consider the brand. High influence emotional appeals can create positive emotions (Panda et al., 2013). Emotional appeals in advertising can make

the consumer have a positive opinion product, therefore, creating advantageous brand associations. Emotional appeals can create negative or positive emotions that lead to purchase motivation. Positive emotional appeals like love, patriotism, affection, nostalgia, humor, pride, and joy can develop a positive attitude towards the brand. Negative emotional appeals have been used against drug abuse, child trafficking, life insurance, prostitution, and healthcare institutions. Emotional appeals like fear, guilt, and shame appeals can motivate consumers to behave in ways they should and should do. There is an increased interest in understanding emotional appeals in consumer behavior (Panda et al., 2013).

In a fear appeal, the message will persuade a consumer when there is a strong perceived threat and an effective solution to that threat. Fear appeals are processed cognitively to access danger and processed emotionally to control fear of the danger. Fear appeals have more effectiveness when used regularly compared to sporadic use. Guilt is a complex emotional reaction on the part of individuals and can be seen as a combination of negative emotions, such as regret, remorse, and self-blame. Guilt appeals are used in advertising to influence consumer attentions, attitudes to a product, and purchase intentions. Green advertisers frequently use guilt appeals to arouse pro-environmental consumer behaviors. Guilt appeals are used in 1 of 20 advertisements. Consumer guilt is when a consumer has violated a moral or social standard in using a particular product or service (Lee-Wingate, Moon, & Bose, 2014). Guilt advertising appeals can intend to manipulate guilt in an attempt to increase guilt and transversely to reduce guilt. Guilt

appeals can use environmental conscious to influence a consumer's behavior. Consumers with a weak environmental consciousness may be directed to focus on advertising messages and to heuristically process that information. Egoistic appeals are more effective in changing behavior than humane appeals and should increase when people experience guilt (Chang, 2014). In contrast, a high level of environmental consciousness can provoke elaborate thought processes. Consumers who are environmentally conscious are intrinsically motivated to process the environmental information.

Humor has a constant presence in popular culture through all forms of entertainment. Current Worldwide advertising spent per year is \$470 billion, with at least 24% including humor appeals (Crawford & Gregory, 2011). Humor as a communication element is an important component of advertising globally. Humor can convince an audience by attracting attention, improving attitude toward the message and the brand, building purchase intention. The concepts of humorous messages are: humor memorization and purchase intention, humor effect in the repetition of the message, and persuasion based on humor. When humor is directly linked to an advertising message, the humor ad appeal is more effective (Capelli, Sabadie, & Trendel, 2012).

Informative Appeal

Informative appeal is based on rational thoughts, not emotion, and best suited for products in which consumer attitude is predominantly cognitive. Rational content is defined as the degree to which the publicity focuses on practical, functional or utilitarian needs of the consumer regarding the product (Marin, Pizznatto, & Giuliani, 2014).

Receiving different levels of information, consumers can make smart purchasing decisions, choosing between alternatives. Providing information that differentiates a brand from competitors tends to increase the process of remembrance. Information content in advertising is an important influence on consumers in response to advertisements and brand awareness.

Scarcity appeals are effective persuasive influences on consumer behavior in scarcity areas of supply and demand (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2013). Advertisers often tout that a new product is available only while supplies last or that its availability is limited due to popular demand. Scarcity appeals can induce product purchase by triggering consumer inferences about product quality and desirability, uniqueness, desire for status, or psychological reactance motivation (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2013). Marketers often find success communicating product scarcity in association with new product launches, price promotions and limited edition/quantity items. Not all scarcity appeals are equally effective. High demand causing limited availability is more favorable than a scarcity appeal based on accidental unavailability. The consumer awareness of scarcity appeals as a persuasion tactic can have an impact on the effectiveness of those appeals in various channels of marketing communication. Scarcity appeals have a positive effect when expectation of scarcity is high (Mukherjee & Lee, 2016). Consumer competitiveness and/or desire for social approval drive consumers toward products scarce due to popular demand.

An important characteristic of environmental or green advertising is the association with scientific research findings. High green involvement in advertising appeals and high green involvement increase brand attitudes only for functional appeals, as opposed to emotional appeals (Matthes, Wonneberger, and Schmuck, 2014). Green advertising claims are authenticated with numerical information because of the quantitative measurement of the effect of human's actions on the environment. Numerical information may be particularly pertinent to claims about pro-environmental product attributes because of the specificity about the quantifiable environmental benefits and the scientific connotations (Xie & Kronrod, 2012). Using a numerical precision could distract consumers from focusing on the claim and reduce positive attitude toward the advertised product because of the lack of processing fluency. Many advertisers advocate numerical precision in contexts that may use less familiar terms, such as environmentally friendly product attributes. The reason could be because consumers can be skeptical about advertisers' intentions and the truthfulness of advertising claims.

Ecologically Themed Advertising Claim Types

Green marketing should be used in a business's integrated marketing communication strategy. Messaging of being green can be communicated to consumers through sales promotions, direct marketing, public relations and advertising. Public relations and advertising are the most commonly used communication to showcase a company's green attitude. Going green initiatives can enhance public relations by bridging the gap between the business and the community. Green advertising can be used

to announce products, communicating price and product features (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). There are some consumer and message characteristics that influence the persuasiveness of ecologically themed advertising. Ecologically themed advertising has evolved from categorizing claims and profiling target consumers to a comprehensive approach that integrates individual consumer traits with organizational goals (Xie & Kronrod, 2012).

Consumers do rely on communication indications in advertising when they do not have adequate information to evaluate product attributes before purchase. Consumers can make ideas about product quality based of the messages within advertising (Do Paco & Reis, 2012). Advertising can be seen as an information source to consumers about the product, company and current issues that may be reflected. Magazine advertisements are suitable for conveying prevailing attitudes (Zayer & Coleman, 2014). Given that some consumers see green product attributes as inferior and the mix signal of claims, companies should formulate advertising messages cautiously. Green advertising sometimes present claims about ingredients or features of a product using different types of numerical information (Xie & Kronrod, 2012). Advertisers who plan to emphasize a green attribute of a product face the choice of what messaging to use. Most advertisers use a simple and clear message to achieve a presence.

Challenges of Green Marketing

There are many challenges in green marketing that include: (a) need for standardization, (b) new concept, (c) perseverance, and (d) avoiding green myopia

(Mishra & Sharma, 2014). Lack of standardization to authenticate claims of green campaigns exists with only 5% of all marketing messages from *green* campaigns are entirely true, due to the lack of standardization (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). A need for a regulatory board to verify and regulate industry standards and labeling practices exists. While the ecological marketing movement began in the United States in 1975, the green lifestyle is still a somewhat new concept in some areas of the world. The investment for some companies to generate and create green practices and products can be a quite substantial one. As with any long-term investment, perseverance is required to capture the return on investment and create an elevated value to consumers. Green myopia is the misjudging or over emphasizing the quality of the green product leading to customer dissatisfaction. In the early days of green products and marketing, there were some inferior products being disclosed as equal to non-green similar type products. Companies have made great advances to prevent these practices and change the minds of skeptical consumers.

Green Products

Market research is optimal for repositioning business and product advancement, along with the distribution of repositioning across configurations (Bjerrisgarrd & Kjeldgaard, 2013). Product design creativity and attractiveness to attract potential buyers are important aspects within a product offering (Abdullah, Hamali, & Abdullah, 2015). The green product marketplace has grown in the last decade (Lee, 2014). Interest in developing sustainable lifestyles creates demand for green consumption (Jui-Che et al.,

2013). A green product is a product that is produced in an eco-friendly process and is less damaging to the environment. Promotion of green technology and green products are essential for the conservation of natural resources and sustainable development (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). Sustainable companies minimize environmental pollution in production and raw materials are extracted to preserve natural resources. Companies selling green products present eco-friendly design with packaging that minimize pollution and hazards and use a proper method of waste management in making the complete product. Green products are defined by the following attributes:

- Products that are originally grown,
- Products that are recyclable, reusable, and biodegradable,
- Products with natural ingredients,
- Products containing recycled contents and nontoxic chemicals,
- Product contents under approved chemical limits,
- Products that do not harm or pollute the environment,
- Products that will not be tested on animals,
- Products that have eco-friendly packaging such as refillable containers. (Mishra & Sharma, 2014).

Green attributes of a product/service have a positive influence on attitudes toward other attributes and on a judgment of the advertised brand. To reduce potential concern of consumer uncertainty, businesses should display consumer reviews publicly to assist in improving the value of perception (See-To & Ho, 2014). The effect of green claims may

not always be a positive one, as some consumers may associate a green attribute to inferiority (Xie & Kronrod, 2012). Some consumers can view green products as a lesser version of products that are currently on the market not currently branded as environmentally friendly. (Do Paco & Reis, 2012). Some green products available in the marketplace cannot fulfill consumers' expectations because gaps exist between consumers' expectations and their perceptions of those products (Tseng & Hung, 2013). Environmental benefits associated with defining characteristics of the product concept or category will lead to a greater perception of the overall greenness of the product compared with equal environmental benefits associated with less central product attributes (Gershoff & Frels, 2015).

Sustainable environmental concerns are a building awareness for consumers. From a business perspective, the implications of introducing green new products are less clear, especially regarding the consequences for a product's brand itself (Olsen et al., 2014). Various opinions on whether specific marketing efforts deplete a brand rather than build it exist. Demand for new product development research is centered on brand-level implications and how green marketing strategies and environmental efforts shape customer attitudes. New green products highlight commitment to the environment and related effects on brand attitude (Gershoff & Frels, 2015). Brand attitude is frequently influenced by new product introductions. Brand extensions and line extensions can change attitudes toward a parent brand. Brand managers intentionally emphasize specific product attributes and engage in marketing efforts to reinforce desired brand associations

(Olsen et al., 2014). Brand associations or the use of brand identity through brand extensions can influence whether new products can shift brand attitude. Communication of the attributes and brand association of the green new products determine a consumer's acceptance of the product. A company's CSR activities should be transparent to improve influence on a consumer's reaction to the new green product (Torres et al. 2012).

Environmental Product Effectiveness and Skepticism

There are two fields of thought about product effectiveness and skepticism. A positive image can be created by companies using green branding and green products. A company can gain recognition and increase consumer interest by being green (Arseculeratne & Yazdanifard, 2013). Promotional activities for green product companies can be more successful since the company has acceptance from regulators and the public. The green positioning of a product is strategic because most green products are easily recalled by potential customers. Green product positioning is a competitive advantage allowing the company to stand out among competitors. Environmental characteristics typically have a function in consumers' buying plans, but their effect is much more powerful when a consumer's good is acceptable on a separate level (Schuitema & de Groot, 2015).

Mainstream market products have improved their quality, reducing the effect on the environment. Green products could not appear to be superior or preferred by the customer since there are so many green products in the marketplace. On the other side of the issue, growing skepticism of customer perception has increased in green products.

Companies that produce inferior green products can decrease the demand for quality green products by negatively affecting consumer's views of products in the green industry (Xie & Kronrod, 2012). Since there are so many products in the marketplace having green claims, customers are starting to doubt the legitimacy of those claims. An obstacle to stimulating consumer purchasing decisions is a lack of trust (Do Paco & Reis, 2012). Green products can be perceived as no longer being unique because customers believe that the industry as a whole has become green.

Trends in Green Marketing

Since the 1990s, the environment is a highly charged topic among consumers, corporations, and policymakers. Businesses have increasingly used green marketing to capture consumers' attention and transition consumers' behavior toward more environmentally friendly practices. As consumers grow more concerned about environmental sustainability, companies are forced to look at the benefits of making the approach to the marketing mix greener to stay competitive (Leonidou, Katsikeas, & Morgan, 2013). Marketing managers use market research to discover marketing opportunities and expand market shares through various conveyance channels (Pisano, 2015). Advertising practitioners indicated that more than 75% of surveyed practitioners planned to increase their advertising and marketing spending on green messages in the future (Sheehan & Atkinson, 2012). An increased number of companies are targeting the teenage and young adult population growing concerns for the environment and the need to affect purchasing decisions in the future (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). Companies that

adopt green marketing programs show evidence of significant performance payoff. A product's performance in the market can positively be impacted by green product and green distribution programs, while a return on assets is directly related to green pricing and green promotion practices (Leonidou et al., 2013). This concern for the environment and increasing the change in consumer behavior has created demand for the green marketing of socially responsible products and services.

Levels of Green Advertising

There are different levels of green advertising ranging from corporate based suggestions to *save the planet* to the end consumer to minimize waste in their household. Fowler and Close (2012) suggested three levels of green advertising: (a) *macro-level advertisers* who are attempting to convey an all-encompassing or *save-the-planet*, broad green message to consumers, (b) *meso-level advertisers* who may flirt with both macro and micro concerns, but are primarily focused on advertising a product or service about those concerns, and, (c) *micro-level consumers* are attempting to consume conscientiously in their small part of a world that has incredibly large and overwhelming issues.

At the macro-level, the green advertiser attempts to communicate the importance of saving the planet, promoting a green agenda as a large-scale, global endeavor. The effort is usually about preventing or correcting global issues in a not-for-profit manner. In the meso-level, the for-profit advertiser has a distinct agenda to promote the greenness of their good and how that same good can allow the consumer to be greener in his or her

endeavors. At the micro-level, individual consumers respond to those advertisements within the context of their lives and realities.

Gap in Green Attitude and Consumer Behavior

There has been an increase in consumer research related to green decision making and explored identity-related aspects of consumer to determine who is more likely to choose a green product or comply with a request to behave in an environmentally friendly manner (Baca-Motes et al., 2013; Haws, Winterich, & Naylor 2014). A consumer's commitment to the preservation of the environment is consistent if the consumer has the belief and attitude that green products create positive outcomes. These attitudes include expressing concerns about ecological issues and a willingness to adapt behavior to pursue an ecologically friendly manner (Anvar & Venter, 2014). A small behavior change can increase the likeliness of more significant environmental activities in the future. The approach of green consumer behavior should be expanded for the purpose of comprising social, economic, and green limitations (Sachdeva et al., 2015). As in social cognitive theory, both self-efficacy and outcome expectancy significantly affect behavioral intentions. The more consumers that have the knowledge and understanding of environmental concerns, the more those consumers can embrace ways to show sustainable behavior by purchasing green products and living to reduce their carbon footprint. Living a green lifestyle requires much time and space in a consumer's life that may not be continuously achievable in an active everyday life (Zahira & Zahira, 2015).

The green gap is an issue that advertising and marketing must recognize, manage, and work toward joining. A consumers' green intent does not always convert into actual green purchase behaviors. In a 2011 study by Nielsen, reported that half of Americans say they prefer eco-friendly products, but only 12% of consumers are willing to pay more for them. According to the Global Online Environmental and Sustainability Survey (as cited in Nielson, 2011), although nearly 83% of global consumers say that it is important to implement a variety of programs that protect the environment, only 22% would pay more for eco-friendly products. Consumers' mistrust to corporate entities for asking consumers to use less of their products, such as energy producers, for the good of the environment exist. Consumers not truly understanding why it is advantageous to companies to send messages to decrease usage can also be seen as a green gap. It can be difficult as a consumer to understand why a company, when having no financial motivation, would convince consumers to use less of their product and make less money but for the company but it is a social responsibility. This attitude - behavior gap reveals a discrepancy between consumers' environmentally friendly, socially desirable orientations and their real-world marketplace choices (Sheehan & Atkinson, 2012). The green advertising environment can be complicated by ethical questions and the amount of conflicting and possibly misleading messages in green advertising.

The green gap is traditionally thought of as the gap between what consumer believes should be done to help the environment and how the consumer lives sustainable, including how they behave to protect and improve the environment. There is a mistrust

gap that exists in green advertising. Advertisers should consider focusing messages on specific consumer needs and concerns instead of just promoting their brand as green (Fowler & Close, 2012). Advertisers suggest that instead of framing the green commitment as the joint desire of the brand and the consumer to *save the planet*; brands should be much more specific with how they can help individuals to make small yet meaningful changes.

The original green gap comes about as a difference between one's self and one's perceived stance on the environment. This helps define one's intentions, and those may misalign with consumer behaviors more than usual in the context of green actions (e.g., recycling, minimizing power/water, water/coffee canister use, carpooling, biking, noting eco-friendly packaging, going out of the way to buy eco-friendly products). A perceived misalignment may especially occur when a consumer (or company) does not take a solid stance on the environment (Fowler & Close, 2012). A company can manage and reinforce a brand identity through two central elements in cultivating an environmentally sustainable identity. A brand's social environment influences its tendency to introduce green products and industry categories that increase the number of green new product introductions are more likely to cultivate green new products (Olsen et al., 2014). Research on social identity indicates that people strive to verify their identification, especially when it becomes threatened (Avery, 2012).

Consumers' Green Behavior

Understanding consumer behavior will assist in developing a strategy based on identified behaviors by consumers (Barnes & Jacobsen, 2014). Consumer perception is a significant predictor of consumer purchasing intentions (Lim, 2013). Consumers make decisions by integrating two qualitatively distinct types of thinking (Aydinli, Bertini, & Lambrecht, 2014): the first being automatic and affect-laden, the second being controlled and deliberate. The principal characteristic of the product that distinguishes these two mental faculties is the way the working memory is engaged (Dhar & Gorlin, 2013; Evans & Stanovich, 2013). Affective responses are effortless and are chosen by default whenever a behavioral opportunity presents itself since they only make a nominal burden on memory. Conversely, deliberation uses scarce processing resources, playing a secondary role since deliberation loads heavily on working memory. The deliberation memory is more of a corrective role by factors in the environment that cue the motivation to exert mental effort (Evans & Stanovich, 2013).

Successful marketing strategies begin with an examination and cognizance of consumer behavior and variables that influence consumer behavior (Sarrgunani & Bruce, 2015). Green consumers have become a large and feasible market segment. Understanding consumer behavior is the key to developing successful marketing strategies (Griskevicius & Kenrick, 2013). There is a high propensity for individuals to suffer guilt as a result of failing to meet their supposed social obligations, such as adopting a greener lifestyle. A person's image of the natural world may be arranged into

a cognitive, social order comprising values, positions/standards, goals, and conducts. A consumer's perception and comprehension of quality and value influenced purchase intentions (Jussila, Karkkainen, & Aramo-Immonen, 2014). Even though consumers need to fulfill their interests, many people embrace a more dynamic function in the maintenance of the natural world. (Do Paco et al., 2013). Personal values have a significant influence on consumer behaviors (Vincent & Selvarani, 2013). As environmental consumerism gains popularity, there is a big effect within the market by the use of social networks. Consumer perception of purchasing processes influences online social media consumer reviews, business reputations, and sales (Chuang, Lin, & Wu, 2014). Observing other consumers' values and conduct can assist in altering a consumer's green behavior. Advertisers often show that such retribution can be achieved through the purchase and use of a green product. Even though consumers will ignore and not mentally process the vast majority of advertisements, they will internally process many of the advertisements (Tian, 2015). Most people think that being green is the right thing to do but some consumers do not consume ethically, with actual purchasing behavior being disconnected between their beliefs and behavior.

Consumer attitudes toward green advertising have not always been the most favorable (Fowler & Close, 2012). Consumers evaluate green advertising as vague or misleading, while many consumers address green advertising with a great deal of skepticism (Zinkhan and Carlson, 1995). As more information is available over the last decade about the environmental issues and a plethora of environmentally friendly

products available, there has become a larger shift in consumers expecting or demanding socially responsible companies and environmentally friendly products (Gershoff & Frels, 2015). Consumers around the world want to drink fresh water and breathe clean air, making the planet a place where future generations can also have the same experiences.

Environmental protection has become a growing interest among the consumers of the world. Worldwide evidence shows that concern for the environment encourages consumers to change their behavior (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). Fifty-six percent of consumers worldwide describe themselves as green, or a consumer that avoids environmentally harmful products, minimizes waste, tries to save energy, and chooses environmentally friendly products as often as possible. This leads to another 30% expect to describe themselves as green in the next five years (Gershoff & Frels, 2015). The theoretical framework of social cognitive theory can be used to show that self-efficacy and outcome expectancy can serve as predictors in explaining consumers' intentions to purchase green products and live a greener lifestyle. Environmentally-friendly products can be used by consumers to exhibit their environmentally friendly behavior (Hartmann & Apaolaza-Ibañez, 2012). Consumers that are concerned with the environment are usually interested in their integrating environmental issues into their purchase decisions (Mishra & Sharma, 2014).

By enabling fundamental concepts of the consumer's demands into the development of products along with the reinforcers they reveal, the more effective manner to examine consumer choices appears (Zaharia & Zaharia, 2015). Consumers

turn to the possibility of new kinds of products and services that allow them a more significant level of choices in altering features of the consumption activity or are better matched to the most sophisticated condition of the consumer's knowledge and preferences (Shubert & Chai, 2012). The options of green products and green attribute options on traditional products allow consumers to support and live a green lifestyle (Olsen, 2013). Understanding traits in green products and marketing strategies that could be used to focus this segmentation of the market that will allow business leaders to offer products and messaging that will allow consumers to fulfill a greener lifestyle. There is a significant difference in purchase behaviors for green and non-green consumers. Consumers with positive care for the environment and having green self-identity are more likely to purchase green products over negative ego-centric consumers (Barbarossa & Pelsmacker, 2016). Positive care for the environment reaches to tangible green products but the support of a green lifestyle can cause to choose environmentally friendly services, including green resorts while traveling (Tanford & Montgomery, 2015). Consumer participation and showing green traits are significant for sustainability preferences and for characterizing environmental consumer segments (Zaharia & Zaharia, 2015). Green marketing strategies in electricity is a competitive advantage, as consumers are ready to pay a 16% premium for electricity from renewable sources (Kaenzig, Heinzle, & Wüstenhagen, 2013).

Effective brand communication is one of the most crucial strategic considerations within the visually cluttered marketplace (Ryu & Swinney, 2013). Green marketing mix

elements have an effect on consumers' brand loyalty (Safari, Rashidpour, & Zadeh, 2014). A challenge for business leaders is to communicate the brand's personality while maintaining appeal is how to best design the product packaging so as to not give up one for the other (Sundar & Noseworthy, 2014). On average consumers take five to seven seconds to evaluate a package on a shelf. Marketers can position a brand in an advertisement to influence how consumers perceive the brand's social standing (Huang, Li, & Zhang, 2013). In the green product industry, key positioning would be ecological-friendly and environmental sustainability. Branding can influence a consumer's expectations because a consumer will be satisfied the expectations of the brand are met. Repurchase intention is a direct result of consumer satisfaction increasing brand trust, value, and loyalty (Thaichon & Quach, 2015).

Understanding how the needs and level of a green attitude of the consumer are just as important as understanding the use of consumer behavior at the time of purchase. Without understanding a consumer's behavior at the time of purchase, the research for consumers wants, needs, and green attitude will be a moot point for the sale of green products and green attributes. Retailers are strongly interested in managing the in-store experience to influence purchase behavior including (a) in-store displays; (b) shelf facings; and (c) atmospheric factors such as lighting, music, and color (Madzharov, Block & Morrin, 2014). Understanding all the ways that firms and retailers attract consumers in advertising and at point-of-purchase will assist in a better understanding of how to market green products to the target market consumers.

Social Media Influence

The internet has become a critical source of communication for consumers and businesses (Pomirleanu, Schibrowsky, Peltier, & Nill, 2013). The way in which consumers obtain information can alter the consumer behavior decision-making process. Trends affected by consumer choices, the internet, social media, and technology have a greater influence on consumer behavior than conventional advertising (Richard & Habibi, 2016). Social media can regularly be used as a way of obtaining information for consumers and in a consumer's decision-making process. The use of social media provides benefits for organizations attempting to cultivate relationships and identify areas concerning consumer decision making (Vinerean, Cetina, Dumitrescu, & Tichindelean, 2013). The explosion of social media network communities and online review websites has become a vibrant media form: an estimated 2.3 billion pieces of content is shared on Facebook daily, 190 million tweets are sent on Twitter, and 1 million hours of videos are uploaded to YouTube each day (Tang, Fang, & Wang, 2014). Through increased usage of social media, customers are more able to express and share their opinions, thoughts, and perceptions towards brands, products, and firms through online reviews, blogs, Tweets, and Facebook posts, referred to as user-generated content (Nam & Kannan, 2014). Researchers found that 49% of consumers trusted online reviews more than other sources (Flanagin, Metzger, Pure, Markov, & Hartsell, 2014). Consumer reviews have become an area of interest for marketing managers seeking to increase brand awareness and profits (Malbon, 2013).

User-generated content is an indicator of customer's brand knowledge and perceptions that help marketing managers predict product sales, understand firm valuation (Tirunillai & Tellis, 2012). Marketers can use this user-generated content to uncover and access customers' thoughts, perceptions, and additional needs to be met about a brand. This information can be used as secondary research to get a better idea of what current and potential consumers find important and what attributes they are looking for products including but not limited to green categorizations. Marketing business leaders develop strategies incorporating knowledge of trends and areas identifying technology, internet, innovation, and social media (Sotiriadis & Van Zyl, 2013).

Positive user-generated content can generate higher product sales by enhancing customer's quality expectations and attitudes toward a product. Positive, neutral, and negative social media comments can be used to get a better understanding consumer's needs. While neutral social comments have no effect on product sales (Tang, Fang, & Wang, 2014), there is still information to be learned about the consumers because such a large number of social media comments are neutral. Forty-nine percent of YouTube comments and 79% of online chats are about technological products (McAlister, Sonnier, & Shively, 2012). Consumers rely on consumer reviews more than any other medium when evaluating commercial information and making purchases (Flanagin et al., 2014).

Skepticism Toward Green Communication

Ad skepticism is a tendency to disbelieve the informational claims of advertising in general and is a stable individual difference that can influence trust toward advertising

(Xie & Kronrod, 2012). Highly skeptical consumers tend to discredit informative claims in advertising. Ad skepticism reflects general suspicion toward advertising. The key to green marketing communication is to understand the difference between environmental concern and transforming environmental concern into a purchase decision. Market research shows the fact that consumer's value conserving the environment and prefer environmentally friendly products. An occurrence associated with consumer behavior, consumer purchase decisions are not only ruled by their environmental concerns.

Do Paco and Reis (2012) state that environmentally friendly brands are facing significant barriers communicating to current leery, skeptical, and cynical public and this can discourage the development/production of green products. If consumers do not believe in the environmental benefits stated in the ads and labels, the efforts in developing green communication will be lost. If a consumer becomes skeptical, they may unconsciously give up the chance to help the environment by not buying truly environmentally friendly products.

In all the variety of labels, packaging, and environmental appeals is confusing rather than informative to the consumers that want to be part of the green movement. Xie and Kronrod (2012) speculated that topic knowledge might interact with general ad skepticism. Topic knowledge could reinforce distrust to advertising claims, but inversely the lack of topic knowledge may diminish the effect of ad skepticism. For example, although many consumers understand what sodium is, it is the less common knowledge that reduced usage of sodium citrate in detergent helps to protect the environment. If an

advertising claim accentuates a certain percentage of reduced sodium citrate, less knowledgeable consumers are less likely to reject the claim as false immediately after the moment of exposure (Xie & Kronrod, 2012). This difficulty in consumers being able to determine the truth in environmental claims by companies has created a generalized skepticism around green advertising.

Do Paco & Reis (2012) built on this knowledge of attitude by examining the role of consumer skepticism in message processing. While consumers are indeed skeptical of green claims, Do Paco and Reis found that skepticism does not negatively affect behaviors. Consumers still perform and participate in green activities and buy environmentally friendly products regardless of skepticism. Xie and Kronrod (2012) found that a large level of numerical accuracy in advertising could be persuasive to highly skeptical individuals. When presented with precise numbers, which can be seen as informative and scientific, less skeptical consumers identify the advertised company as more competent while skeptical consumers are not as likely to be affected precise numbers. The less a consumer knows about environmental issues; the less a consumer is skeptical toward green advertising.

Greenwashing

In Greenwashing, advertisers occasionally use ambiguous and misleading numbers that exaggerate environmental benefits. An indicator that an organization is greenwashing comes from the spending differences within the company, with more money is being spent on advertising of being green rather than actual money spent on

environmentally sound practices or product development. Socially conscious consumers and investors can be concerned with corporate greenwashing (Stecker, 2016).

Greenwashing efforts can range from changing the label of a product to have an environmentally-friendly design on a product that contains harmful chemicals to expensive advertising campaigns portraying highly polluting companies as eco-friendly. Xie and Kronrod (2012) used an example of a claim on a package label that reads 50% more recycled content than before; suggesting an increase of recycled goods by one-half. If the previously recycled content for that product was only 2% for that product, the manufacturer's total increase of recycled content has increased by 2% to 3%. Even though the message is technically true, the advertisement could be deceptive if it creates false impressions. Business leaders should devote more effort in utilizing comprehensive green programs and make true green claims to prevent potential consequences of greenwashing (Rahman, Park, & Chi, 2015).

Sustainable Development

Sustainability is commonly used within every area of business practices including (a) economic, (b) environmental, (c) social, (d) ecological, (e) corporate, (f) financial, (g) global, (h) human, and (i) organizational (DesJardins, 2016). The introduction of sustainable development can be a positive instrument in guiding business practice. A few business practices for sustainable development include: using previous experiences, true environmental sustainable packing practices, and use of social media.

Learning from a company's previous experiences is valuable because those lessons learned can explain the different decisions made by that firm to be sustainable for future generations. Companies learn from not only the own experiences but also from the manager's personal experiences at other companies, and accessing other company's best practices (Challagalla, Murtha, & Jaworski, 2014). Obtaining knowledge in the internal and external marketing environment allows decision makers to create the best strategy to position them in the best manner to attract the proper segment of the market for their product offerings. The knowledge grounded in a company's history can represent the shared knowledge of the organizational members (Nag & Gioia, 2012). Compiling knowledge in a company and access increasing green consumer behaviors can better allow company decision makers to make operational changes that lead to a higher level of sustainable development.

The soft drink industry has moved toward fully recyclable plant-based polyethylene terephthalate bottles (Euromonitor International 2012). Many U.S. consumer goods companies including Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, General Mills, Proctor & Gamble, and PepsiCo have joined forces to promote more environmentally friendly product packaging (Ameripen, 2012). For example, Xerox presented a 100% recycled paper product in 2012 to introduce green marketing of photocopier paper called Revive (Yan & Yazdanifard, 2014). Sustainability objectives of Kimberly-Clark focus on the water footprint of the organizations' manufacturing sites, creating a program called Water for Life, providing 200 million gallons of water per year in regions that have

limited clean water (Mizera, 2013). Companies are taking environmental concerns and increased consumer environment awareness seriously by using more environmentally friendly products and production methods into mainstream products.

Business leaders have paid growing consideration to consumer's social media generated content because of its significant impact on products sales and obtaining additional information of consumer's wants and needs. Even though social media activity is largely out of the company's control, it can be influenced by social media marketing and traditional advertising (Tang et al., 2014). Businesses that use traditional marketing techniques and advertising methods has seen a decrease in revenue (Caniels, Lenaerts, & Gelderman, 2015). Businesses without a viable marketing strategy embracing the internet witnessed a lack of marketing effectiveness, product sales, and brand awareness (Xun, 2014). Many companies are had user-generated content metrics to measure effects on various business performance measures including (a) customer engagement (Sashi, 2012), (b) customer acquisition and retention (Stephen and Galak, 2012), (c) the firm value in the stock market (Tirunillai & Tellis, 2012), or (d) sales (Sun, 2012).

Transition

Section 1 is an introduction to the foundation of the research study. I provided detailed explanations of the study (a) background of the problem, (b) the problem and purpose of this research study, and (c) the nature of the study that included the research method and design. Further discussions were the main research question with seven interview questions and the conceptual framework based on social cognitive theory.

Additional topics were assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the research study, significance of the study, implications for social change, contribution of this research study to the business practice, and a review of the professional and academic literature.

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry can use to increase the sale of green products. A better understanding of what strategies had been successful and not successful by business leaders in the green advertising industry in the sales of green products could have a positive effect on sales.

Section 2 includes a detailed discussion of the project. Topics of discussion in Section 2 includes the purpose statement, the role of the researcher, participants, method and design, population and sampling, and ethical research. Other topics are data collection and organization techniques, data analyses, and reliability and validity of the research study.

Section 3 of the research includes an overview of the study. The subsections in Section 3 contain a presentation of the findings, the applications to professional practice, and the implications for social change. Additionally, Section 3 includes the recommendations for further study, reflections learned during the doctoral study journey, and the conclusion.

Section 2: The Project

In Section 2, I address the purpose statement, role of the researcher, participants in the study, research method and design, population sampling, and the research ethics. In addition, I discuss data collection, data organization techniques, data analysis techniques, reliability, and validity followed by a summary and transition. Section 3 includes a brief overview of the study and a presentation of the findings.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry use to increase the sale of green products. The target population includes successful business leaders in the green advertising industry. The sales of green products were more \$100 million in 2008 but dropped to less than \$60 million in 2011 (Clifford & Martin, 2011). Business leaders seek opportunities to increase sales effectiveness or learn how better to convey the value of their products (Hanssens et al., 2010). A better understanding of what strategies have been successful and not successful by business leaders in the green advertising industry in the sales of green products could positively affect sales. This study may promote positive social change by increasing environmental awareness that could positively affect the environment and improve profitability for companies that sell green products.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is to act as the prime instrument for the data collection process and to maintain stringent adherence to ethical guidelines. In this role, I

interviewed business leaders in the green advertising industry to gain a better understanding of what strategies have been successful and not successful in the sales of green products. The role of a qualitative researcher is to explore contextual understanding through inductive reasoning, which is applied by gathering an understanding of the professional experiences of the participants (Yilmaz, 2013). I collected nonbiased qualitative data to get a better understanding of whether business leaders could use this information to increase sales of green products. I collected the study data through my personal interaction with the participants. In addition to conducting semistructured interviews with business leaders in the green industry, I reviewed supplemental data including peer-reviewed articles along advertisements and digital/social media messaging of the participants' company. Researchers should use robust data collection methods to ensure validity and reliability (Zhou, 2013).

Researcher bias may taint the phases of research, including research design, data collection, data analysis, and findings. Understanding personal experiences, attitudes, and assumptions before starting the study was essential to limiting researcher bias (Yin, 2014). I had previously created strategies in integrated marketing communication, including advertising and promotions, and can access the current state of advertising activities and performance for business. In addition to my work experience in the field, I have been employed as a marketing professor for more than 3 years. My marketing experience has been beneficial for my study, but the experience could allow for preconceptions and assumptions. To prevent research findings to align with my personal

beliefs, I was aware of my personal and professional background when designing my study, creating questions, and analyzing results.

To prevent researcher bias, I used bracketing methods that include (a) writing notes during data collection and analysis, (b) asking open-ended questions that invited interviewees to tell the story about their experience, (c) asking study participants to review my interpretations for accuracy, and (d) following rather than lead during the interview process as recommended by Thomas and Magilvy (2011). Bracketing can increase the accuracy of a study, improving data analysis and findings (Chan et al., 2013).

The ethical actions included obtaining informed consent, protecting the participants' rights to privacy, ensuring confidentiality, and maintaining honesty in collaborating with other professional colleagues (Stiles, Epstein, Poythress, & Edens, 2012). I adhered to the ethical principles and guidelines in the Belmont Report and the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). Ethical guidelines in the Belmont report include respecting of personal autonomy and diminished autonomy, following the principles of beneficence and justice, gaining informed consent, assessing risks and benefits, and selecting subjects fairly (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Participants in this study were not vulnerable, and all participants signed a consent form before participating (see Appendix A). I used an interview protocol (see Appendix B) as a procedural guide for the interview process. The benefits of an interview protocol include the following: the researcher (a) has a guide to achieve a well-planned interview (Doody & Doody, 2015), (b) adheres to ethical guidelines, and (c) collects relevant data.

Participants

The eligibility requirement for participants in this study was at least 1 year of experience in advertising green products. To increase the understanding of a phenomenon, a purposeful sample provides a range of perspectives and ideas (Petty et al., 2012). I performed a purposeful sample to personally select participants. The sample participants were able to provide answers distinctive to the selected population (Price & Murnan, 2004). As a member of the AMA of Hampton Roads, I can network with business leaders in the green advertising industry. I have established relationships with multiple leaders and managers to enhance the trust and increase data collection (McDermid et al., 2014). I invited business leaders from this professional association to participate in this research study. I contacted potential participants via e-mail and phone. When a potential participant expressed interest in participating in the study, I explained the confidentiality of information. Building trust and establishing a positive relationship are imperative because the participant needs to be at ease responding to questions truthfully (Doody & Noonan, 2013). The interviews were conducted in person or by phone, lasting approximately 45 minutes. I established a working relationship with the participants to set clear expectations of ethical standards to allow the participants to feel more comfortable sharing their professional experiences.

Research Method and Design

The research problem and research questions are primary components to contemplate when shaping the research method and design (Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods are three types of research methods (Harrison & Reilly, 2011). Based on the purpose of the study, a qualitative method was appropriate for collecting and interpreting data on the phenomenon of creating advertising strategies in the green industry.

Research Method

Qualitative was the method used for this research. Qualitative research allows for a descriptive and explanatory method of inquiry (Bluhn et al, 2010). The choice of a research method depends on the nature of the problems or issues (Thomson et al., 2011). Qualitative research explores and refines concepts and can develop new insights into the decision process (Malina et al., 2011). A qualitative research study can contextualize a research study and reveal the direction of causality (Doherty & Chadwick, 2009). The goal of quantitative research is to measure results and to examine the relationship between factors and variables (Thomson et al., 2011). The use of a quantitative or mixed method would not be appropriate for this study because there is not a relationship to examine between factors and variables and would not allow me to reach the objectives of the research study. Quantitative research creates a generalization of numeric results and survey data from various data points but would not have allowed for in-depth information about the specific phenomenon (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The mixed methods research combines qualitative and quantitative data (Metcalf et al., 2012), thus it is not an appropriate method for this study because using the combination of two methods will not help the research study. Quantitative research methods require reconstructed responses

from participants, which would not allow for an understanding of the variety of experiences of the participants (Yilmaz, 2013).

Research Design

Five potential designs in qualitative research are phenomenology, narrative research, case study, grounded theory, and ethnography (Petty et al., 2012). Narrative research, phenomenological, grounded theory, and ethnography are not suitable to resolve the problem framed. In reviewing the different types of qualitative designs, I used a case study design for this study. A case study design can help reveal which marketing strategies and advertising appeals are used by successful green advertisers.

A case study is ideal when the aim is to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth (Yin, 2013). An individual, a process, a system, a classroom, or a clinic is considered in a case study (Petty et al., 2012). Case study research uses in-depth data collected from multiple sources and the case-based themes reported (Merriam, 2009). Semi-structured interviews are ideal for gathering data from a small quantity of participants (Anyan, 2013).

Narrative research consists of constructing a story of the lives of a group of people often unrepresented (Marshall & Rossman, 2011); this approach is unrelated to the research problem. Phenomenological research design helps the researcher to discover the meaning of an experience and to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena when participants share their experiences (Goulding, 2005). Grounded Theory involves developing a theory from gathered data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Ethnography allows a

researcher to examine an entire cultural group in an in-depth analysis (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). Ethnography is not appropriate for this study because the participants are specifically advertisers in the green industry.

To gain insights of which marketing strategies and advertising appeals are used by successful green advertisers, the case study design is appropriate for this research study. Case study research is preferred in examining contemporary events (Yin, 2014). A case study design is particularly valuable for exploring real world situations and helps explore strategies based on those real-world circumstances (Lewis, 2015). The case study method allowed identified business leaders in the green advertising industry to share marketing strategies and valuable experience in the green advertising industry that could other assist other professionals within the industry to better target advertising efforts. Performing case study research enables the researcher to obtain characteristics of real-life events and is preferred when the researcher cannot manipulate. I conducted interviews in the United States; the generalizability of these research findings does not apply to other countries. The case study design included multiple sources: peer-reviewed journal articles, in-depth interviews along with review of supplemental data of advertisements and digital/social media messaging of the participants' company.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was advertising professionals in the green industry. In a qualitative study, the researcher must decide who and the amount of participants that will be included in a study based upon what information that the researcher is trying to

understand (Cleary, Horsfall, & Hayter, 2014). Participants chosen for this study have allowed a deeper understanding of advertising strategies used in the green industry. Participants were selected based on the purposive sampling, as purposive sampling is selection of participants based on knowledge of phenome (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers use purposive sampling to ensure the study addresses the business problem (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015). Participants (a) were employed as advertising professionals in the green industry; (b) have a minimum of 1 year of experience in advertising in the green industry; and (c) hold positions of influence in the decision-making process of advertising campaigns.

Ethical Research

Research ethics is essential for the protection of participants' rights, safety, dignity, and wellbeing (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Ethical procedures constitute principles for research ethical protocols and standards: informed consent, the privacy of participants, avoiding harm, cognizance of vulnerable groups, participants' right, data restriction, data storage, and conflicts of interest (Stiles et al., 2012; Stacey & Stacey, 2013). The Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) must grant ethical approval before conducting the research and interviewing participants. The IRB is responsible for developing, adopting, and enforcing guidelines for safety and ethical practices to protect study participants (Wilson, Kiebertz, Holloway, & Kim, 2014).

I assigned a pseudonym to each participant, such as P1, P2, or P3 (Brady, 2011). Each participant will receive a consent form by e-mail to sign before completing the

interview. This consent form showed and helped them understand what their rights and protections are as participants. Informed consent is a manner of obtaining approval from an individual to participate in a research study (Schrems, 2014). All participation is voluntary, confidential, and have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants were able to withdraw with notification by email or through telephone communication. No participants withdrew from this study. Limiting participant risks is imperative in research studies (Johnson, 2014). There were no incentives used to entice participation. Ethics in research, which result in the protection of human participants, are recognized both by government and professional regulations (Stiles et al., 2012).

The data obtained in the study from participants were treated as confidential information and maintained in a safe, locked file cabinet for 5 years to protect rights of participants. However, if the participant revealed any illegal activities, the law obligated me to report such activities to the appropriate authorities. No illegal activities were reported and the consent form included a disclosure of this statement. I will keep electronic files, such as interview transcripts and research data, in my password protected personal computer for 5 years. At the end of the 5 years, interview data, transcripts, and research files go into a shredder for destruction. All electronic data from my hard drive and recycle bin will end up deleted at the end of the 5 years.

All participants in the study were required to agree to a consent form. The form contained my contact information, contact information for a representative of Walden University, and a description of the background and purpose of the study. I will provide

allowances for the participants to withdraw from the study at any point through the conclusion of the study.

Data Collection Instruments

In a qualitative study, the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting and analyzing data in the research project (Cane et al., 2010). Interviews are effective methods for researchers seeking to collect data (Hedlund, Borjesson, & Osterberg, 2015). The researcher is the instrument to be used to understand experiences of green advertising professionals (Lasch et al., 2010). The instrument will have validity because one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on instruments. As the instrument, a researcher must use proper judgement to gather and analyze collected research data (Pezalla et al., 2012).

Data collection took place through in-depth semi-structured qualitative interviews with advertising professionals in the green industry. To collect data, researchers should develop trust from participants to influence comfort for sharing data and resources (Denzin, 2013). As the data collection instrument, researchers can establish relationships with participants while actively observing phenomena (Mansfield, 2013). The most commonly used method for qualitative data collection is the individual interview, from which data can be collected using notes, audio recording, or video recording (Noble & Smith, 2014). Since the researcher is the instrument, knowing how to respond to collected data and personal bias are vital because personal sentiments can subliminally influence the results of the study (Pezalla et al., 2012). Depending on the availability of

participants, the interviews took place in person or over the phone. I recorded and transcribed the interviews, uploaded, and saved onto my secure hard drive. A good interviewer should have knowledge in the areas of technical and interaction competence (Yin, 2014).

Data Collection Technique

In case study research, interviews are used to understand the participants' point of view of the phenomenon to establish meaning (Yin, 2013). One characteristic of case study research is that it is not limited to a single source of data, as in the use of questionnaires for carrying out a survey of interviews with stakeholders. In addition to the interviews, I collected and analyzed peer reviewed articles along with review of supplemental data of advertisements and digital/social media messaging of the participant's company.

Business leader participants of the qualitative study were asked a series of questions face to face and over the phone. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes in length and was recorded and transcribed verbatim. Researchers can use interview to help generate trustworthy and valid results from collected data (Kallio et al., 2016). I recorded the interviews with permission of the participants so I could transcribe the interviews in their entirety to ensure that the data did not become fragmented as recommended by Noble and Smith (2014). In depth interviews were used to prevent self-presentation concerns that can occur in focus groups. A standardized interview format was followed for the interviews. A semi structured interview guide was created along

with the review of the existing literature to get a better understanding of this underexplored topic. Since advertising, digital, and social media messaging are all public information, the supplemental data of advertisements and digital/social media messaging of the participant's company were found through an internet search. I found the company's messaging by internet source instead of collecting from the participants to prevent bias from the participants. I prevented biases by using quality assurance processes such as bracketing to assist in ensuring an accurate representation of participants' views. The researcher puts aside their own knowledge and experience to help minimize bias throughout the research process (Chan et al., 2013).

Data Organization Technique

I recorded the interviews as well as made notes of the respondent's nonverbal communication, vocal inflection, and tone. The interviews were transcribed into an MS Word document, and then the data were entered and maintained within an MS Excel spreadsheet and catalog/labeling systems. The interview transcripts were coded across a number of themes including (a) social media, (b) understanding behaviors of green consumers, (c) millennial generation, (d) appeals, (e) integration of communications with consistent message, and (f) educating consumers on green issues. The advantage of using codes is that it enables researchers to organize raw data for understanding a phenomenon (Pierre & Jackson, 2014). I used codebook, NVivo 11 software, and a research log to organize and track the evidence to support the analysis of data.

A computer thumb drive was the means for filing participants' transcribed interviews. I stored data for maintaining integrity of the transcribed interviews, recordings, and backup copies of collected data (Anyan, 2013). A locked file cabinet is an appropriate storage location for safeguarding data, the audio tapes, thumb drive, and the backup disc of the separate Microsoft Word files of each participant. As required by Walden University, I will store all data in the securely encrypted folders for a period of 5 years. Participants received a copy of the interview transcript to authenticate the interview transcript.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis is a systematic review of data components encompassing data interpretation to discover essential significance (Yin, 2014). The interviews were transcribed into an MS Word document, and then the data were entered and maintained within an MS Excel spreadsheet and catalog/labeling systems. The interview transcripts were color coded across a number of themes. I then used computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software method for data analysis by using NVivo 11 to assist in coding the themes for the interview. I coded the interviews by using NVivo to help place text into categories (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013). The interview transcripts were coded across a number of themes including (a) social media, (b) understanding behaviors of green consumers, (c) millennial generation, (d) appeals, (e) integration of communications with consistent message, and (f) educating consumers on green issues. By completing this analysis, I made sense of the information to be able to report to the reader. I reread the

interviews and draw a list of concepts, then list, analyze, and check for accuracy as recommended by Dierckx de Casterle, Gastmans, Bryon, and Denier (2012).

The participants responded to the interview questions regarding their experiences working in advertising in the green industry. The interview questions were developed to understand how the participants can answer the central research question: What strategies can advertisers use to increase sales of green products? The participants' response to the following interview questions will be the primary source for data analysis:

1. What consumer behaviors do you believe encourage green behavior?
2. What are the benefits of selling/purchasing green products?
3. What consumer behaviors do you believe increase sales of green products?
4. What are the anticipated outcomes that consumers need to feel in buying green products?
5. What are the positive and adverse effects of the use of appeals (sad, funny, fear, negative, humor) within advertising messaging assist in attracting the proper target market?
6. What are other strategic marketing tools that marketers should possess to outperform their competitors other than advertising?
7. What are the most effective marketing strategies and approaches on which green advertisers need to focus in addition to traditional advertising, such as electronic word-of-mouth, consumer reviews, trust, satisfaction, and brand loyalty?

8. What are the trends and best practices in the green advertising industry to attract consumers to use green products?

The data collection and analysis process supports the conceptual framework of the study by integrating the concept of social cognitive theory as it is used to predict behavior as both consumer self-efficacy and outcome expectancy significantly affect behavioral intentions. Preparing and organizing the data for analysis and identifying themes are the primary duties of data analysis (Yin, 2014). Combining data sources to study the same social phenomenon is a data analysis process called triangulation (Denzin, 2014). Triangulation is a strategy to ensure data interpretations are credible (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Data triangulation, investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological are four types of triangulation (Denzin, 1978).

The use of a variety of data sources, data triangulation, was used in this study. Triangulation is a method that encourages developing a through comprehension of data (Heale & Forbes, 2013). The use of multiple sources of semi structured interviews, archival data, and documentation is a way to reduce bias and improve the complexity of study (Yin, 2012). The case study design included multiple sources. The primary source of data was in-depth interviews with five green marketers in Virginia. I also reviewed advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company. My review of peer reviewed journals served as the groundwork to connect the research question with the theoretical framework along with in depth interviews and the review of the supplemental data of company advertisements and digital/social media

messaging. Analyzing interviews, peer reviewed journal articles, and secondary documentation of advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company assisted in triangulating the data.

There are five steps to data analysis (Yin, 2012): (a) Collect the data, (b) Separate the data into grouping, (c) Group the data into themes, (d) Assess the material, and (e) Develop conclusion. After completing the review of data and interviews, I performed an analysis of data, including interview recordings along with the peer-reviewed articles, and the review advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company. The manual coding process began with a review of the data and bracketing in order to eliminate biases (Elo et al., 2014). Preliminary coding procedures include highlighting substantial criteria on the interview transcript and color-coded statements (Edward-Jones, 2014).

I considered the theoretical implications involved in interpreting the findings regarding the conceptual framework and research question. Data analysis involves categorizing, testing evidence, determining a conclusion, and analyzing collected data (Yin, 2014). In this study, open-coding techniques were suitable to structure the transcribed interviews along with the use of qualitative software, NVivo11. Within the transcribed interviews, I looked for recurring words, phrases, or sentences to form categories regarding relevance to the research question. Open-coding techniques were suitable to organize the transcribed interview and advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company. Coding data enables

researchers to organize text into categories (Pierre & Jackson, 2014). Researchers use labels or other indicators to highlight different segments of relevant text (Dasgupta, 2015). Therefore, using codes facilitates researchers indexing raw data for understanding a phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Keyword frequencies assist researchers in creating themes that reveal successful advertising strategies in the green industry (Glaser & Laudel, 2013). I analyzed themes from the interviews and compare codes with components from the conceptual framework. Theme development should ensue without manipulation or bias by a researcher (Dasgupta, 2015). To make sure that theme developed naturally, I took further actions. In addition to an initial color coding review, NVivo 11 was used to complete the coding process. This content analysis software is appropriate for theme development because data processing involves retrieving themes from interview data and document data (Woods, Paulus, Atkis, & Macklin, 2015). Iterative tests were conducted first by using each participant's responses to observe the themes that emerged. I then used the same coding with all five participants to see if emergent themes replicated the data analysis results of each participant and to see if any new data appeared. If there is no new information after coding, data saturation has occurred (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity in qualitative research assist in establishing trust and confidence in the results of a researcher's study (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Reliability in semi structured interviews is dependent on protocols for assuring dependability and

consistency (Foley & O'Conner, 2013). Creating and applying reliability/validity approaches are significant foundations to legitimize the research findings (Yin, 2012). Demonstrating credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability are criteria for assuring validity in qualitative research studies (Kim & Li, 2013).

Reliability

Reliability allows for replication of results (White, Oelke, & Friesen, 2012). Attention to the reliability of qualitative research is essential for the critique and development of overall academic process (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Research strategies to achieve credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability can be used by the researcher to create reliability and validity in qualitative research (Houghton et al., 2013). Conditions can change during the research process, so creditability ensures reliability in conducting the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Researchers found that there are connections between dependability and reliability (Munn, Porritt, Lockwood, Aromataris, & Pearson, 2014). Dependability occurs when a researcher can follow and duplicate the results of a previous study and dependability of a study requires another researcher to follow the decisions of the original researcher (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Reliability in semi structured interviews is dependent on protocols for developing validity and dependability (Foley & O'Conner, 2013).

A case study database increases the reliability of my study and allows other researchers to review collected evidence directly (Yin, 2014). All data collected through notes and narratives were included in case study database. To ensure reliability, I

recorded and transcribe interviews. After transcription, the researcher sent transcripts for the participants to review data to validate the information provided. Participant checking assists with establishing the reliability of the data retrieved from participant responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The researcher should demonstrate transparency in the research process (Noble & Smith, 2015). Researchers should use member checking to reduce the probability of unreliable data in a study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). The process of member checking is beneficial for developing trust between researchers and study participants by assuring both reliability and validity (Milosevic et al., 2015). During member checking, I involved the participant in transcript review and in verifying the emerging themes.

Validity

In qualitative research studies, (a) credibility, (b) transferability, and (c) confirmability are criteria for assuring a study's validity (Kim & Li, 2013). Validity links honesty and genuineness to the research data (Anderson, 2010). Validity involves justifying the claim outcomes of a research study (Yue, 2010). Emphasis on the criteria for selecting participants for the study addresses the validity (Nakkeeran & Zodpey, 2012). The marketing professional participants in this study had at least one year of experience of advertising experience in the green industry and have held a position of influence in the decision-making process of the marketing campaigns. The researcher conducted all the interviews within the same week to prevent a changing marketplace to influence the findings.

In this qualitative multiple case study, I incorporated methodological triangulation by using multiple data types and member checking to demonstrate data saturation. I used a variety of data sources, data triangulation, in this study. Developing a thorough comprehension of data can be encouraged by the use a triangulation method (Heale & Forbes, 2013). Member checking confirms the accuracy of the data by allowing participants to review the interview transcripts and the preliminary data analysis to validate the precision of the interpretation of their interview (Yilmaz, 2013).

Transferability is the capability to transfer findings from one group to another (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). Transferability is a transfer of knowledge beneficial for future researchers' use and assessment (Yin, 2013). Confirmability demonstrates value and credibility within participant reports and epistemological analysis (Yilmaz, 2013). I will use confirmability to assist in preventing bias. Researchers should use confirmability to compare results from related studies using similar protocols (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013).

Data saturation is also a determinate of validity in qualitative research. Data saturation occurs in research when no new information or substantial contributions to the research occurs (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The method to obtain data saturation is a two-step process (Francis et al., 2010). To apply this method, I selected a minimum sample size of 3 participants. Data saturation was reached, so I went to the second step and conducted two more interviews. When no new ideas emerge, then the interviewing

ceased at the time. Data saturation was confirmed by the reviewing advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company.

Transition and Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry can use to increase the sale of green products. A better understanding of what strategies had been successful and not successful by business leaders in the green advertising industry in the sales of green products could have a positive effect on sales. In Section 3, I will present the findings of the study.

The contents of this section include (a) an overview of the study, (b) presentation of findings, (c) applications to professional practice, (d) implication for social change, (e) recommendations for action, (f) recommendations for further study, (g) reflections, and (h) conclusion. In Section 3, I also provide a discussion on how study themes relate to the conceptual frameworks and the findings.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore marketing strategies that business leaders in the green advertising industry use to increase the sale of green products. The central research question of the study was: What strategies do advertisers use to increase sales of green products? Identifying trends can reveal the increasing importance of understanding the implications of introducing environmentally sustainable or green practices (Olsen et al., 2014).

I collected data through in-depth, semistructured qualitative interviews with five participants, reviewing peer-reviewed articles, along with advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company. The findings revealed the themes that emerged from the research include social media, understanding behaviors of green consumers, and emergence of the millennial generation.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching research question guiding the study was: What strategies can advertisers use to increase sales of green products? The case study design included multiple sources. The primary source of data was in-depth interviews with five green

marketers in Virginia. I also reviewed peer-reviewed articles along with advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants' company. Peer-reviewed journals served as the groundwork to connect the research question with the theoretical framework along and in development of the interview questions. After transcribing the qualitative interviews, I grouped the significant statements into themes and presented descriptions of what the participants experienced in relations to those themes. The themes were related to the central research question as well as the conceptual framework, existing literature, and supplemental data. Six themes emerged from the research: (a) social media, (b) understanding behaviors of green consumers, (c) millennial generation (d) appeals, (e) integration of communications with consistent messaging, and (f) educating consumers on green issues.

The study sample for this qualitative case study consisted of five marketers within the green industry. I used pseudonyms (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2) to preserve the confidentiality of the participants. Three participants (60%) worked with small companies and two participants (40%) worked with large companies. Three participants (60%) were female, whereas two participants (40%) were male. Table 1 includes the number of years of experience each participant had in the green industry.

Table 1

Demographic Data for Marketers in the Green Industry

Participant	Location	Years of green business experience
P1	Virginia	10+
P2	Virginia	2
P3	Virginia	15+
P4	Virginia	20+
P5	Virginia	2

I asked all participants the same eight open-ended interview questions to gain an understanding of their experiences related to the central research question. The format of the semistructured qualitative interviews allowed participants to share their understanding of the phenomenon. The average interview time was 30 minutes.

I transcribed the interviews into a Microsoft Word document, and then entered and maintained the data within a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and catalog/labeling systems. I coded the interview transcripts across a number of themes. Using codes enables researchers to organize raw data for understanding a phenomenon (Pierre & Jackson, 2014). I analyzed each participant's response to each interview question separately and coded it for the recurring themes, and then I conducted a secondary analysis reviewing the entire participant responses combined. In addition, I conducted an analysis that included the most common word count. Grouping code words allowed theme relationships to be built. Table 2 includes keywords presented to create thematic formation.

*Table 2**Top Six Frequently Occurring Words and Groups Related to Content and Context*

No.	Groups and keywords	Theoretic ideas	Theme	<i>n</i>
1	Messaging	Appeals	4	25
2	Behaviors	Understanding green behavior	2	22
3	Social	Social and digital media	1	19
4	Branding	Green branding	5	17
5	Technology	Green technologies	6	16
6	Generation	Millennial generation	3	12

The secondary data I collected and analyzed included documentation of advertising material from digital/social media messaging of the participants'. Six themes emerged from these data: (a) social media, (b) understanding behaviors of green consumers, (c) millennial generation (d) appeals, (e) integration of communications with consistent messaging, and (f) educating consumers on green issues.

A Review of the Thematic Creation

I found that six themes emerged from the verbatim interview transcripts developed through the eight interview questions. The first theme, social media, consisted of statements regarding practices in the use of social media. The second theme, understanding behaviors of green consumers, was composed of statements addressing lifestyle behavior and motivations of green consumers. The third theme, millennial generation, stemmed from comments expressing how the millennial generation is excited about making a difference. The fourth theme, appeals, combined responses on preference of emotional versus informational appeals. The fifth theme, integration of communication

with consistent messaging, contained statements reflecting consistent messaging within a variety of communication disciplines including traditional and digital advertising. The final theme, educating consumers on green issues, was made up of participants' statements on educating consumers and business individuals through business reporting, environmental panels, and attending green consortiums. Table 3 shows the coded frequency by participants for Themes 1 through 6.

Table 3

Themes Mentioned Most Frequently by Participants

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	Frequency	Theme
Social media	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5	1
Consumer green behavior	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5	2
Millennial generation			Y	Y	Y	3	3
Appeals	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5	4
Integration of communication	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	5	5
Educating consumers			Y		Y	2	6

Theme 1: Social Media

P4 stated “It is real important that companies jump on the digital age. Digital is huge! I think that the companies that embrace digital and jump on board with it and learn to talk to their consumers via digital are going to have a step ahead of their competitors.” All of the participants shared the importance of social media within advertising strategies in the green industry. Each participant stated that there was no way to market green products without social media. Traditional and emerging media differ mainly due to

social media's ability to lower cost, develop higher quantity and quality of messages, provide a real-time response, and reach a larger target base (Katona & Savary, 2014).

P4 stated that, "Companies that embrace digital and learn to talk to their customers via digital are going to have a step above their competitors." The six groups of social media include: (a) collective projects, (b) blogs, (c) content communities, (d) social networks, (e) massively multiplayer role-playing games, and (f) social virtual worlds (Peters, Chen, Kaplan, and Ognibeni, & Pauwels, 2013). Many of social media reviews and comments exist on an organization's environmental practices. Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Facebook, and other social media sites provide opportunities for organizations to facilitate the building of relationships and stakeholder engagement (Guo & Saxton, 2013). In the review of the supplemental advertising material, I found that all the participant companies have an active presence on social media. As environmental consumerism gains popularity, a big effect exists within the market by the use of social networks. Consumer perception of purchasing processes influences online social media consumer reviews, business reputations, and sales (Chuang et al., 2014). P2 stated, "we are pretty much tapping into any modern technology. Using Facebook/Instagram/and recently Snapchat and Messenger. The video postings over the voice approach have better open rates because the social media videos break the algorithms." The coded frequency of Theme 1 appears in Table 4.

Table 4

Theme 1 Analysis

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
19 (Social media)	19	5

P1 posited “that you have to have social media, there are so many ways to tell stories by adding videos, by adding photos along with your message, in this day and age, digital is almost everything.” Timing of ads and messaging is important in social media and the effectiveness of social media ads changes with the time of the day (Goodrich, 2013). Advertisements were more effective when there was functional information while they are being entertained and companies that utilize social networking should reduce any content that would irritate their customers (Saxena Khanna, 2013). Brand communities that are created through social media platforms positively affect the relationship between consumer and the product as well as the consumer and the brand (Laroche, Habibi, & Richard, 2013).

P5 stated “The use of social media allows quick and creative ways to stay in contact with customers, really creating a relationship and share about the good and unique things about the company and brand.” The use of social media increases the amount of knowledge and reach in a shorter timeframe, therefore the ability to grow the company faster and communicate with more consumers. In using digital marketing, organizations can reach more prospective customers at a lower cost than traditional marketing (Hendrix, 2014).

The rise and effectiveness of social media in green advertising is aligned with the peer reviewed articles within the literature review. The use of social media provides an understanding of what really makes the product unique, this will show how the product is different than other products and competitors in the market. Social media marketing is best used when it targets the right segment and caters to the attitudes, lifestyles, and behaviors of that segment. P2 stated, “Consumers can watch me on social media and will come back around to ask more about the product.” Marketing professionals can use social media to collect data from their customers and build a trustworthy image with their target market to achieve maximum profitability (Ming & Yazdinifard, 2014). Digital media resonates with the millennial customers. Social media users become more sophisticated in reviewing, sharing, and analyzing in social formats within the impacts of a company’s green initiatives. P4 shared “I think that the companies that embrace digital and jump on board with it and learn to talk to their consumers via digital are going to have a step ahead of their competitors.”

Theme 2: Understanding behaviors of green consumers

P1 shared information about consumers behavior that encourage green behaviors, “It is people that are setting goals, people that like eat healthy and have a healthy lifestyle, it kind of goes hand in hand with that. I think living a natural lifestyle, maybe even people that use holistic alternatives for food, for medical reasons, and people that try to go natural and people that to recycle.” All the participants noted the role that behavior and motivation entered into their advertising strategies to make a difference in this world,

giving the consumer a “feel good” feeling of doing the right thing. Participants shared that consumers that use green products tend to project some of the following behaviors: goal setting, eat healthy, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, interest in fitness/yoga, live a natural/holistic lifestyle, spiritual lifestyle, take pride in themselves, and minimize waste.

P3 shared “The biggest thing for consumers is that they feel they are making a positive impact towards a socially responsible organization. Consumers and businesses are willing to pay a premium for products and services that are environmentally conscious. If they feel that the impact is significant enough for their efforts.” Personal values have a significant influence on consumer behaviors (Vincent & Selvarani, 2013). The increase in consumers with these behaviors will result in the increase of consumers interested in green products. Fifty-six percent of consumers worldwide describe themselves as green, or a consumer that avoids environmentally harmful products, minimizes waste, tries to save energy, and chooses environmentally friendly products as often as possible. This leads to another 30% expect to describe themselves as green in the next five years (Gershoff & Frels, 2015).

P2 stated: “The benefits for purchasing green products are that they provide income, jobs, and things that are beneficial for society as well as ourselves in order to promote healthier and longer lives.” P1 shared: “for a potential customer to make a new purchase or be a loyal customer, they “buy” into an influencer person’s lifestyle first. An influencer can be someone the consumer knows personally or could be a celebrity pushing environmental/green ideas new ideas and ways to live a green lifestyle.” P2

explained the behaviors of green consumers by stating: “Consumers need to feel better about themselves, feel inspired, and feel they are making themselves healthier and making a difference in their health, heart, soul, community, and planet. Spending more time on the planet to make it a better place for future generations.” The coded frequency of Theme 2 appears in Table 5.

Table 5

Theme 2 Analysis

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
16 (Behaviors)	22	5

P5 indicated, “I think that educated people that care about how they leave the planet for their family are more likely to spend the extra money for green products. I also think the customers are able to educate themselves more than ever before and have a better understanding of the environmental issues we face. The more they understand environmental issues the more likely they are to use green products. Consumers need to feel they are making a positive impact towards a socially responsible organization.” Consumers and businesses are willing to pay a premium for products and services that are environmentally conscious; willing to make the investment if they feel the impact to the environment is significant enough. In business markets, opinions on an organization’s environmental practice can be influential on how an organization’s brand is perceived. P3 shared that “companies that have green initiatives are more likely to choose a supplier that is also concerned with their own environmental footprint. This advantage allows for some organizations to increase the amount of B2B contracts.” Within companies,

communications to employees that highlight green initiatives allow employees to understand the tangible difference that the company is making with their green initiative efforts.

Theme 3: Millennial Generation

P4 shared: “There is a difference between generations, and the most important generation right now is the millennial generation, generation Y group. They are changing the landscape now, the way people shop and how people buy things, it is really quite amazing. I think the millennial consumer is the one you really have to speak to.”

Millennials are the second largest generation and the most technologically savvy due to growing up with the access to the internet (Schewe et al., 2013). They can be entrepreneurial, self-reliant, and have a stronger acceptance to workplace diversity than previous generations. Millennials are idealistic and social-cause oriented, wanting a purpose greater than achieving the bottom line (Raymond, 2010). Participants reflected the same viewpoint of the literature review that green consumers are made up of more millennials than any of generation. An increased number of companies are targeting the teenage and young adult population growing concerns for the environment and the need to affect purchasing decisions in the future (Mishra & Sharma, 2014).

From a business perspective, companies want to attract millennial employees. P3 shared: “ecologically friendly companies can attract millennial employees and those employees that are conscious about the organization’s environmental commitment and what the organization is doing to minimize the negative impact to the environment.” Part

of a company's reputation is their ability to attract, hire, and retain younger employees and be able to represent their firm as taking steps to being environmentally conscious. P5 stated "Gen Y folks are more ecologically friendly and are accustomed to getting their information online." Millennials are more social cause oriented than other generations, so it is an internal benefit to companies to retain this workforce, as it is one of the major factors that businesses are adopting green technologies. Millennials are excited about making a difference, so it is important to express the impact of a company's green initiatives. This practice can be quantified in different communications including the amount of sheets of paper recycled and hundreds of trees saved to help save the planet. The coded frequency of Theme 3 appears in Table 6.

Table 6

Theme 3 Analysis

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
21 (Generation)	12	3

Generation Y, the millennial generation, is digital natives and are the first generation to have grown up with the use of digital technology (Bolton et al., 2013) . If managers of organizations can improve their use of social media and become more open with their employees, they can connect, and increase their potential for employee retention within this generation (Naim, 2014). Millennials access social media on daily basis and have a direct impact on social media marketing. Millennials are more likely to express love or positive feelings on social networks instead of negative behaviors, likes to

socialize, and share their feelings regarding activities in which they are interested (Jenssen et al., 2014). Millennials are 74% more likely to pay attention to the message of the company if they believe the organization has a deep commitment to a cause (Furlow, 2012). Millennials need to be connected, collaborate and share information with one another, making them far more peer oriented than other generations. Millennials are more skeptical of advertising and media than any other generation (Noble, Haytko, & Phillips, 2009).

P5 explained: “The largest demand for our products is with millennials, we have to use social media and digital sources.” In review of the supplemental advertising materials including digital/social messaging of participants’ company, reflected a targeted messaging to millennials and a substantial following millennial customers on social media sites. Millennials prefer companies that integrate a social issue of cause into the organizations’ brand equity. P3 explained: “That type of expression really helps the stakeholders that are sustainability champions or green teams within an organization, to express the impact they are having in ways the really get millennial employees excited about making a difference.” This generation is motivated by the desire to make the world a better place. Increased attention on broad worldwide issues like global warming and other ecological issues is evidence of this socially oriented generation, ranking social responsibility as a higher priority than any other generation (Berkowitz & Schewe, 2011).

Theme 4: Appeals

Participants in the study revealed that consumer markets react more favorably to emotional appeals while business markets react more favorably to informational appeals. P2 shared “The more inspiring the message, the more people inquire about the products.” Consumers with green behavior are motivated by the feel-good feeling, to do the right thing, and make a difference along with having lifestyles that encourage healthy living. Participants indicated that consumers within this target market respond better to emotional appeals, with the appeals having a positive approach instead of portraying a negative or fear appeal.

The use of emotional appeals and messaging within an advertising promotion can influence consumer purchase behavior through direct and indirect marketing (Ahmed et al., 2015). P1 shared “Consumers that are more willing to use green products and care about the environment are more susceptible, more responsive to an emotional appeal as opposed to an informational appeal.” In identifying with the target market, one participant didn’t even see it as advertising or marketing but see it as sharing information to help others in an emotional and inspiring way. Negative appeals actually detract consumers with green behavior. As in alignment with the literature review, emotional advertising appeals can be used by advertisers to dramatically trigger emotions and make consumers consider the brand. In review of the supplemental advertising material that included digital social media messaging of the participant companies, I found that the appeals went aligned with the participants’ statements. Messaging for green products that

targeted direct consumers reflected the positive emotional appeals and the messaging for green products that targeted business consumers, reflected informational appeals. High influence emotional appeals can create positive emotions (Panda, Panda, & Mishra, 2013). The coded frequency of Theme 4 appears in Table 7.

Table 7

Theme 4 Analysis

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
14 (Messaging)	25	5

P3 explained “Since my company primarily focuses on business consumers, we really look at informational appeals so we try to quantify the environmental impact of decisions in very tangible metrics that an organization can share with their users and employees.” Business markets respond better to informational appeals. Informative appeal is based on rational thoughts, not emotion, and best suited for products in which consumer attitude is predominantly cognitive. Rational content is defined as the degree to which the publicity focuses on practical, functional or utilitarian needs of the consumer regarding the product (Marin, Pizzatto, & Giuliani, 2014). The use of informational appeals can quantify the environmental impact decisions in very tangible metrics that an organization can share with their users and employees. P3 added, “When we adopt green technology with an organization we quantify for them the number of trees that saves per year, the amount of power as expressed in the number of homes that would power per year.” A common metric used for eliminating paper is that 15,000 sheets of paper saved,

saves a tree. Businesses incorporating green technologies into their processes can then quantify the number of hundreds of trees that in turn saves the planet. An important characteristic of environmental or green advertising is the association with scientific research findings.

P4 posited, “How you increase your sales with that group [millennials] is again be targeting them, packaging, green manufacturing and more green initiatives. That is how you increase your sales with the millennial group, you just talk to them.” High green involvement in advertising appeals and high green involvement increase brand attitudes only for functional appeals, as opposed to emotional appeals (Matthes, Wonneberger, and Schmuck, 2014). Green advertising claims are authenticated with numerical information because of the quantitative measurement of the effect of human’s actions on the environment. In addition to informational appeals, businesses also use third party analysts and consultants to write reviews on the impact of green technology. This practice allows for information to be received by potential business consumers to message the value to various stakeholders within the organization but not viewed as an advertising or marketing message. The green company can then distribute the third-party paper and socialize the information within the organization and it doesn’t come across as a sales or a marketing piece but it is an educational workshop to help them to be aware of trends in the industry.

P1 shared “Consumers that are more willing to use green products and care about the environment are more susceptible, more responsive to an emotional appeal as

opposed to an informational appeal.” While P3 explained “We really look at informational appeals so we try to quantify the environmental impact of decisions in very tangible metrics.” The peer reviewed articles within the literature review did not differentiate between consumer and business markets so the interview analysis gives further detail into which appeals to better suites not only within the green industry but also the markets by end users: consumer vs. business markets.

Theme 5: Integration of communications with consistent messaging

P1 explained: “Multiple methods complement each other to have a consistent message across all channels.” P4 shared “attract the green consumer that just wants the all-natural manufacturing process that is clean, easy, and what we are doing, so we communicate that.” Companies must consider moving towards integrated marketing communication plans that interact with consumers allowing them to be active in building marketing messages (Bacile et al., 2014). Strong campaigns include traditional advertising and digital advertising, there has to be a mix of multiple methods to get a message out clearly. P4 shared: “People really have to speak to these consumers in ways aside from traditional print advertising. It ties back to whole green initiative”. It is important for a company to clearly explain how and what their green practices are because *green* can be a generic, overused word to the consumer. That communication can be portrayed to the consumer in various ways: recycling programs, planting trees based on sales, portion of proceeds go to ecological cause, less operational waste, trees saved, waste water saved, less emissions, etc. The branding of a product consists of integrated

marketing messages, so without integration of messaging across all media, the branding would lose effectiveness. The coded frequency of Theme 5 appears in Table 8.

Table 8

Theme 5 Analysis

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
18 (Branding)	17	5

P1 shared: “I am a strong believer in campaigns that include traditional advertising and digital advertising; you kind of have to have both to get your message out there clearly. They really complement each other to have a consistent message across all your channels.” In review of the supplemental advertising material that included digital/social media messaging of the participants’ company, I found that all the companies reflected integrated marketing messages among all forms of communication. Consumers with a strong relationship with social networking show that electronic word of mouth is a strong predictor of purchase intentions. Consumers more frequently purchased products that were liked by their friends on social networking sites and products that a favorable celebrity endorsed (Pate & Adams, 2013). P5 explained “In person word of mouth is the best, of course, but electronic word of mouth and consumer review sites reach so many more people and at any time the potential customer may want to access the information.” Word-of-Mouth marketing is the best source of referral that you can have, one consumer seeing the product’s impact on another consumer’s life, creates other people to be interested in the product. When people love a product, they tell

everybody, make a great product, and loyal customers will assist in marketing the product. Word-of-Mouth marketing is the ability for individuals to influence others based upon their personal views and is the intentional influencing of consumer to consumer communications. The product category can influence the amount of attention that consumers respond to word-of-mouth influences (Chen et al., 2013). Consumers with similar beliefs and interest influence each other and are part of a community. P2 added, “The community embraces each other, like strength in numbers. Healthy living and being green is contagious.” Members of the company can ignite word-of-mouth marketing becoming their own walking billboard with branded clothing to encourage potential consumers to inquiry about the products.

Theme 6: Educating consumers on green issues

P3 shared “On the business to business side, it is really more of an educational impact.” Educating the consumer about environmental issues and positive influence of using green products or having sustainable business practices is important. It is impossible to make decisions on behaviors, lifestyles, and purchases without having the accurate information to make the most appropriate decision. A distinct reputation allows for organizations to set themselves apart and create a competitive advantage by distinguishing their work from those in the same industry, which is valuable in the current competitive environment (Meijer, 2009). An organization’s reputation exists through direct experiences and also as a result of subjective perceptions such as other people’s shared impressions or through media reports. From a business-to-business

perspective, companies that have the environmental challenges in their core business area, the more those companies want to make up for it to potentially off-set some of those concerns, like reduction in paper, power, or water consumption. P3 explained “When we put in place a technology that will eliminate a paper process for an organization, every 15,000 sheets of paper that is saved, saves a tree. We will look at many of these processes save billions of sheets of paper a year. We will quantify in the number of hundreds of trees that saves the planet.” There is a cost saving that organizations get when they adopt green initiatives, so typically a green initiative is not only good for the internal and external branding but it does make sense. There is a good return on investment in the adoption of technology that helps businesses be greener so there is cost savings that deliver value to shareholders.

Participant responses are aligned to peer reviewed articles within the literature review. There is a large focus on businesses around the world for environmental sustainability. The majority of firms have eco-friendly strategies and a corporate board dedicated to the issue. Identifying trends can reveal the increasing importance of understanding the implications of introducing environmentally sustainable or green practices (Olsen et al., 2014). The coded frequency of Theme 6 appears in Table 9.

Table 9

Theme 6 Analysis

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
24 (Green Technologies)	16	2

Participant P3 shared that the company participates in panels and consortiums that are working across a broader industry of technology to drive environmental impact. From a business-to-business perspective, these events can enable networking of environmentally conscious business leaders as P3 added: “This gives networking access to stakeholders that are frequently within the large corporations that we do business with, there is a sustainability champion, a green team that is responsible for environmental initiatives and by participating in these conferences and consortiums, we are able to network with these stakeholders and really socialize the value that our technologies can really have on green initiatives and it helps to connect within the broader stakeholders.”

Educating consumers and businesses on environmental concerns and how green initiatives can impact operations and the environment as a whole is key. P3 explained “Sustainability will open the door for the conversation to the organization but often sustainability doesn’t have the political, capital, or budget to drive the initiative on their own. So you have to pull in other lines of business stakeholders into the conversation to get a green initiative completed. That is where you pull in from technology, facilities, finance to build the total business case around why you are driving the green initiatives. I think the sustainability and green initiatives on the business side are ways to access and open the conversation but you really need networking within the organization to make that appeal to all of the stakeholders that are going to have to be involved to get that done.”

Presenting an educational environment workshop can support business leaders to be aware of trends in the industry. Another way to educate businesses in what their current green footprint is would be to create a personalized ecological report, targeting a business segment and the impact that a green technology would reduce. This personalized snapshot can help the company leaders understand what environmental changes a small investment could make and is a good entry point to getting the attention of stakeholders within the company. The information could be many different ways: number of trees saved, number of gallons of waste water saved, number of power hours saved. In alignment with the literature review, providing environmental research data and presenting it in an informational appeal will assist in consumer's understanding of the situation and better influence environmental behaviors.

Analysis of Social Cognitive Theory

The peer-reviewed studies within the literature review along with the interview findings indicate strategies that advertisers can use to increase the sales of green products and are in alignment with the conceptual framework of social cognitive theory. Social cognitive theory supports the premise that advertising can impact consumer behavior (Bandura, 2001; Connell et al, 2014; Ng & Lucianetti, 2016; Prieler & Centeno, 2013). Social cognitive theory (SCT) is used to predict behavior, into two distinct types: self-efficacy and outcome (Cheng & Chu, 2014). The influence of mass media on society is substantial, requiring an explanation of the psychosocial role of communication and human behavior. Theorists of social cognitive theory believed that a person's learning of

a subject can be done while observing social interactions, experiences, and outside media influences. Social cognitive theory can be used to support how mass communications, like advertising and the appeals within them, could affect the consumer behavior. This influence in consumer behavior and consumer demand results in a better understanding of the strategies needed to increase demand and sales for green products. The more consumers are exposed to green marketing/advertising messaging the more consumers will better understand the ecological issues, changing their green behavior.

Findings Related to Marketing Strategies and Green Industry Literature

During the supplemental data review of participants' company advertisements and digital/social media presence, successful business practice strategies were revealed. All participants provided concepts that other marketers in the green industry can use to be successful. The participants clarified the concepts found in the literature review and focused on the concepts (a) social media, (b) understanding behaviors of green consumers, (c) millennial generation (d) appeals, (e) integration of communications with consistent messaging. (f) educating consumers on green issues.

Applications to Professional Practice

Business leaders in green product industry might apply the findings from this study as successful professional practices. When business leaders are aware of factors that affect their consumers buying habits, there can be an improved degree of flexibility to respond to changing customer requirements, thus affecting the bottom line. Business leaders and marketers for green products and/or industries might apply the findings for

this study as successful business practices. The concepts learned that were provided by the participants on strategies to attract green consumers and market green products enhance business researcher's ability to have a better understanding of successful green marketing initiatives and communications.

Business professionals can apply the findings from this study to their practices to attracting and retaining consumers for green products. The findings from this study suggest that using social media and targeting the millennial generation are the primary strategies for successful advertising in the green industry. The perceived marketer-dominated information quality and perceived service content quality in social media were positively related to the perceived customer retention of the green retailer (Kang & Kim, 2017). Millennials prefer interpersonal sources in elevating environmental concerns and promoting green buying behavior than mass media. (Muralidharan, Rejón-Guardia, & Xue, 2016). All of the participants clarified the importance of social media, consumer green behavior, correct appeal use, integrated communication, and educating consumer on green practices when marketing to potential green consumers.

As environmental concerns increase among consumers, business leaders need to understand why the sales of green products have declined and how to attract consumers and meet the needs of those consumers. Business leaders look for prospects to increase sales success or learn how better to express the value of their products (Hanssens et al., 2010). A better understanding of what strategies have been successful and not successful by business leaders in the green advertising industry in the sales of green products could

have a positive effect on sales. Many different industries can profit from research exploring marketing and advertising strategies to increase sales of green products because some of the strategies could be as effective in industries in which there needs to be a change in consumer behavior.

Implications for Social Change

Demands in society can cause consumers to increase their intentions to save energy such as the trend in consumer behavior to engage in green consumption. Successful green marketing could have a positive effect on the environment by increasing environmental awareness by leading to an increased usage of environmentally-friendly products. Promoting of products/services, advocacy, and public relations are also concepts of marketing (Brown & Albright, 2013). As consumers are exposed to green marketing communication/green packaging, those exposures will generate learning in the consumer; therefore, educating and potentially creating new expectations for products and consumer's future buying behavior. Increasing knowledge of green concepts in labeling and packaging strategies is a good start in affecting habits and giving consumers' incentives to make more sustainable preferences (Zaharia & Zaharia, 2015).

Another way that this study could contribute to social change is by creating social/ecological responsibility through understanding consumer needs via various marketing strategies. There is a need to transform the markets into green markets by replacing inefficient processes with green, sustainable processes (Chang & Fong, 2010). These practices could help promote environmentally responsible behavior by consumers.

The implication for positive social change is the potential for increased environmental awareness that could have a positive effect on the environment and improve effectiveness for companies that sell green products.

Recommendations for Action

The qualitative case study involved exploring strategies that experienced marketers have used in the green industry to attract consumers and increase sales. The number of environmentally friendly products available for consumer purchase increased from about 2,700 to 4,700 between 2009 and 2010, a growth rate of more than 73% (Royne et al., 2012). More than 75% of advertising practitioners use or plan to use, green messages in their advertisement and marketing campaigns (Sheehan & Atkinson, 2013). As more companies plan to use green initiatives and green messaging within their marketing campaigns, marketers must understand successful methods to best use marketing budgets to attract and retain customers. I plan to distribute this study's findings at association meetings, conferences, trainings, and seminars in person and online, including doctoral research based publications. I will provide all participants with a copy of the entire study, including results and findings.

Recommendation 1: Target the Millennial Generation

Millennials are idealistic and social-cause oriented, wanting a purpose greater than achieving the bottom line (Raymond, 2010). As the millennial generation grows older, becoming a large portion of the green market, companies need to focus marketing strategies and communications to this idealistic and social-cause oriented part of the

marketplace. Finding effective communication methods for Millennials is critical due to millennials' skepticism of traditional advertising (Lazarevic, 2012). An increased number of companies are targeting the teenage and young adult population growing concerns for the environment and the need to affect purchasing decisions in the future (Mishra & Sharma, 2014). The millennial generation wants to know what is going on with the organization. Millennials are 74% more likely to pay attention to the message of the company if they believe the organization has a deep commitment to a cause (Furlow, 2012).

Recommendation 2: Adopt and Communicate Operational Green Practices

Business leaders need to communicate the environmental and social impacts associated with product use to their customers. Companies that adopt green marketing programs show evidence of significant performance payoff. Businesses have increasingly used green marketing to capture consumers' attention and transition consumers' behavior toward more environmentally friendly practices. As consumers grow more concerned about environmental sustainability, companies are forced to look at the benefits of making the approach to the marketing mix greener to stay competitive (Leonidou, Katsikeas, & Morgan, 2013). There are so many companies that claim green practices, it is important for a company to explain exactly what practices the company uses within the sustainable business practices. Increasing consumer trust in green-labeled goods and services is a concerted effort on the part of corporations to provide the green goods and

services they advertise are needed. A product's performance in the market can positively be impacted by green product and green distribution programs, while a return on assets is directly related to green pricing and green promotion practices. Companies should focus on brand awareness to inform their consumers of the benefits of using their products. The consumer needs to know how those green practices impact the product and the environment to foster customer loyalty to the brand.

Recommendation 3: Integrate Social Media in Marketing Strategies

In the current marketing environment, a deep commitment to using social media properly is imperative. Consumers communicate, interact, and obtain information in much differently than was used prior to the inception of social media. All of the participants shared the importance of social media within advertising strategies in the green industry, sharing that there is no way to market green products to the correct consumers without social media. Traditional and emerging media differ mainly due to social media's ability to lower cost, develop higher quantity and quality of messages, provide a real-time response, and reach a larger target base (Katona & Savary, 2014). The use of social media increases the amount of knowledge and reach in a shorter timeframe, therefore the ability to grow the company faster and communicate with more consumers. Increasingly prospective customers can be attracted at a lower cost than traditional marketing through digital marketing (Hendrix, 2014). Social media marketing is best used when it targets the right segment and caters to the attitudes, lifestyles, and behaviors of that segment.

Recommendation 4: Understanding the behaviors of the green consumers

To ensure that the messaging within the marketing communications can properly attract green consumers, it is important to understand the behaviors, lifestyles, and motivations of green consumers. Fifty-six percent of consumers worldwide describe themselves as green, or a consumer that avoids environmentally harmful products, minimizes waste, tries to save energy, and chooses environmentally friendly products as often as possible. This leads to another 30% expect to describe themselves as green in the next five years (Gershoff & Frels, 2015). With the rise in green consumers, understanding the behaviors of the consumer will assist in proper segmentation, targeting, and positioning of green products to the target market. Cross-checking potential green consumers with interest in other areas will allow for a more effective communication to correct target market, therefore saving marketing dollars.

Recommendations for Further Research

I conducted this study to explore the marketing strategies used by business professionals in the green industry. Additional research is needed to discover how the extensive use of social media from the millennial generation can influence firms. Finding effective communication methods for millennials is critical due to the millennial's skepticism of traditional advertising and since there are more green consumers in the millennial generation than other generations. Understanding the needs, wants, and behaviors of the millennial generation is imperative for the future of the green products but this population is still understudied.

All the participants shared that green consumers share the behavior and motivation to make a difference in this world, giving the consumer a “feel-good” feeling of doing the right thing. Additional research is needed to get a better understanding of what other activities or interest a green consumer may also have interest. Getting an understanding of common interest or activities will assist in better segmentation of the market and the potential of co-branding opportunities.

During the study, four of the participants worked with products/companies that target the final consumer and one participant worked within business-to-business green markets. The findings showed that consumer markets react better to positive emotional appeals with green products but the business markets react better with the informational appeals. Additional research needs to be completed to explore the best appeals and marketing strategies within business-to-business supplier markets.

Within this study, a green industry product could be any product or company that met the requirement attributes of being green, to include recyclable, natural ingredients, nontoxic chemicals, does not pollute the environment, or has eco-friendly packaging. The study participants strategically had marketing experience in various overall market industries. Additional research could be completed to compare successful marketing strategies into deeper niche industry green markets.

Limitations Related to this Study

I limited the study to the Virginia Beach, Virginia area and the findings may not apply to other geographic areas. I acknowledged that a small sample size is a limitation

so targeting a different geographic area with more active green companies could foster different results with a broader population. The researcher's bias interpretation of the data may have an effect on the research findings but I found that my previous marketing experience assisted in a better understanding the concepts mentioned within the interviews.

Certain limitations in place for this study are out of the researcher's control, such as time, convenience, and the ability to take a broad view of the findings based on the chosen population and sample. As technology increases and behaviors change within consumers, findings could differ in years to come.

Reflections

I believe a doctoral journey can best be compared to an emotional rollercoaster because so much time and energy is invested in the concepts but the work is never complete as revisions always need to be done to make the best possible work. This doctoral work and research is never complete with consistent updates needed as time elapses. My doctoral committee was essential as this study formed and transitioned into what it has become today. During this experience, I have become increased in my time management skills and became an expert at compartmentalizing my life, finding that the concept work-life balance does not really exist but it is really more like a revolving circle of synergy to accomplish what you want scholastically, professionally, and personally.

I believe that this process has not only made me a better member of academia but has made me a better member of society overall. Participating in this research has

increased my critical thinking skills and I pay more attention to marketing communication and messaging within any ecological claims. Meeting with professionals that are so passionate about their green products offerings actually reignited my interest and urge for living a green lifestyle. During this process, I have been exposed to other concepts that I would like to explore during post-doctoral research.

Conclusion

As business leaders and consumers become more aware of ecological and environmental concerns, there is growing conscious to limit the effects of consumerism on the environment. There is an increasing trend that consumers feel-good about their environment behavior and make our planet a better place for future generations. As the increase in green consumer behavior rise along with the demand for green products, business leaders must have a better understanding of how to target and to communicate those consumers. The more consumers that are aware, use, and expect green products can influence society's overall environment behaviors and have a positive impact on the environment for future generations. The trends identified within this study to attract green consumers and increase green product sales include: (a) social media, (b) understanding behaviors of green consumers, (c) millennial generation (d) appeals, (e) integration of communications with consistent messaging. (f) educating consumers on green issues.

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Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol	
What you will do	What you will say—script
<p>Introduce the interview and set the stage—often over a meal or coffee</p>	<p>Good Morning or Afternoon,</p> <p>Thank you for agreeing to help me with this Doctoral Study, I appreciate your time and transparency as we discuss your business, background, culture, personal skills and professional skills. This interview is completely confidential and voluntary, you may end participation in the study at any time and I will stop recording this interview. The interview should take 35 to 45 minutes. Did you receive the list of interview questions that I emailed? Let me tell you a little bit about this study: The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore the strategies for implementing advertisements in the green industry in the Virginia Beach area.</p> <p>Do you have any additional questions about the confidential procedures, purpose of the study or anything about the study? If not, let's proceed with the first question.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for non-verbal queues • Paraphrase as needed • Ask follow-up probing questions to get more indepth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What consumer behaviors encourage green behavior? 2. What are the benefits of selling/purchasing green products? 3. What consumer behaviors increase sales of green products? 4. What are the anticipated outcomes that consumers need to feel in buying green products? 5. What are the positive and adverse effects of the use of appeals (sad, funny, fear, and negative) within advertising messaging that assist in attracting the proper target market? 6. What are other strategic marketing tools that marketers should possess to outperform their competitors other than advertising? 7. What are the most effective marketing strategies and approaches on which green advertisers need to focus in addition to traditional advertising, such as electronic word-of-mouth (WOM), consumer reviews, trust,

	satisfaction, and brand loyalty?
	8. What are the trends and best practices in the green advertising industry to attract consumers to use green products?
Wrap up interview thanking participant	<p>Before we wrap things up and talk about next steps, are there any last comments you have regarding this Doctoral Study?</p> <p>Thank you for your participation. As I mentioned earlier, the purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore the strategies for implementing advertisements in the green industry in the Virginia Beach area. Your willingness to talk about your experience will provide an accurate assessment of successful advertisers in the green industry in the Virginia Beach area.</p>
Schedule follow-up member checking interview	<p>To make certain of accurate interpretation, a follow-up interview is administered for member checking to validate that your lived experiences were correctly captured during transcription of the recorded interviews. This process will give you a chance to correct errors, challenge any perceived wrong interpretations and view the summarized preliminary findings. The interview should last approximately 20 to 30 minutes.</p> <p>What date and time frame would you like to be scheduled?</p>
Follow-up Member Checking Interview	
Introduce follow-up interview and set the stage	Thank you for this follow-up member checking meeting to evaluate for validity that the synthesized data represent the accurate responses. If I missed anything or you like to add anything, please feel free to add that information as we review.
Share a copy of the succinct synthesis for each individual question	Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation
Bring in probing questions related to other information that you may have found—note the	1. What consumer behaviors encourage green behavior? Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed
	2. What are the benefits of selling/purchasing green

<p>information must be related so that you are probing and adhering to the IRB approval. Walk through each question, read the interpretation and ask: Did I miss anything? Or, What would you like to add?</p>	<p>products?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>
	<p>3. What consumer behaviors increase sales of green products?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>
	<p>4. What are the anticipated outcomes that consumers need to feel in buying green products?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>
	<p>5. What are the positive and adverse effects of the use of appeals (sad, funny, fear, and negative) within advertising messaging that assist in attracting the proper target market?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>
	<p>6. What are other strategic marketing tools that marketers should possess to outperform their competitors other than advertising?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>
	<p>7. What are the most effective marketing strategies and approaches on which green advertisers need to focus in addition to traditional advertising, such as electronic word-of-mouth (WOM), consumer reviews, trust, satisfaction, and brand loyalty?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>
	<p>8. What are the trends and best practices in the green advertising industry to attract consumers to use green products?</p> <p>Question and succinct synthesis of the interpretation—perhaps one paragraph or as needed</p>

Appendix B: Invitation to Participate in the Study

<Date>

<Address Block>

Dear Sir/Madam,

As part of my doctoral study research at Walden University, I would like to invite you to participate in a research study that I am conducting to explore the strategies for implementing advertisements in the green industry. I contacted you to participate because you are a marketer in the green industry in the Virginia Beach area. Participation in the research study is voluntary and confidential. Please read the attached consent form carefully and ask any questions that you may have. If you would like to participate, please follow the instructions at the end of the consent form. If you satisfy these criteria and have agreed to participate in the study, please reply to this email with the completed consent form. I will contact you within 48 hours to schedule the personal interview. I anticipate that the total time required for each interview will last approximately 35 to 45 minutes. The interviews will be audio recorded and participants will have the opportunity to review the transcribed interview for truthfulness prior to inclusion in the study. I genuinely appreciate your interest to participate in the study and valuable time.

Sincerely,

Ashley Castle