

---

# Green Marketing Practices Prevailing In Hotel Industry

---

DR. A.B. MISHRA<sup>1</sup>, DR. TRIPTI SAHU<sup>2</sup>, DR. NITIN RANJAN<sup>3</sup>, PROF. ANIL VARMA<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, International Institute of Management Studies (IIMS), Pune

<sup>2</sup>Professor, International Institute of Management Studies (IIMS), Pune

<sup>3</sup>Associate Professor, International Institute of Management Studies (IIMS), Pune

<sup>4</sup>Assistant Professor, International Institute of Management Studies (IIMS), Pune

---

**Abstract:** Hospitality industry has always the forerunner in its responsibility towards environment and has been recognized for greening efforts. It gives an added advantage in attracting global traveler and has been an appealing feature of this industry. The industry has taken green efforts in planning and design of green products, creating and delivering green services, distributed and priced the products and services without harming environment, created environment friendly infrastructure and reduced carbon emissions. This paper is an empirical study of green marketing practices the hospitality has adopted over a period of time and has explored the way green practices are communicated to consumers. The innovative techniques of emotional message and visual communication about environmental characteristics of hotels are investigated in the study.

**Keywords:** Green marketing, Environmental characteristic, green products and services.

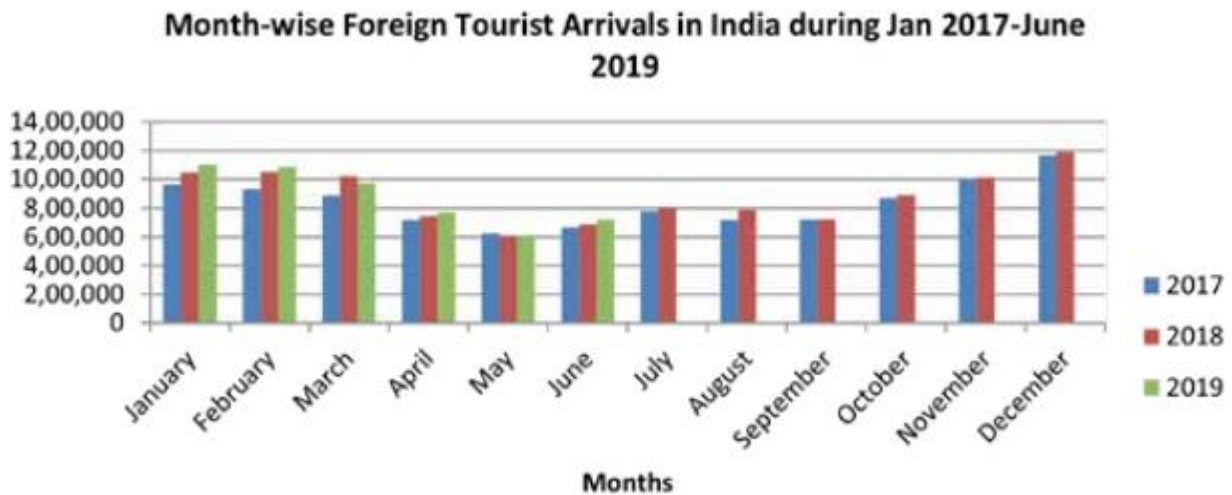
---

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism and hospitality is supposed to be the green industry at large had been turned into one of the prolific polluting industry in last century. Industrial revolution and rapid growth of manufacturing activities all across the world increased the emission of green house gases. The simultaneous requirement of transport and hospitality services fueled the growth of tourism and hospitality industry. Tourism to natural attractions, increased business activities and urbanization called for growth and development of hotel industry. Consumption of fuels, use of resources including water increased manifold. The hotel industry eventually had become one of the significant contributors to visual, air, water polluting industry.

The tourism and hotel industry has been growing significantly over last couple of years and has significant inbound tourist to various tourist destinations in India. (Indian Tourism statistics at a glance 2019) However, the increased awareness about environment and growing concerns about the detrimental effects on overall ecosystem brought in novel thought process. All governments, industries and enterprises adopted the greening measures and started reducing the carbon foot prints through different measure. Being global industry and having apprehensive guests; Hotel industry sped up with greening efforts and stood to be the frontrunner in this regards. Hotel industry had overhaul of its operations. Hotel industry en-block began with new initiatives and made it a point to communicate it through marketing tools. This research examines empirical data from reliable resources for understanding the specific green marketing practices that are widely used for hospitality industry.

According to Indian Tourism statistics at a glance (2019), tourism industry is growing gradually add creating an impact on ecosystem of the country. This calls for immediate attention towards all the effects of increased tourism activity and resultant pollution of natural resources. Visiting to greener countries, destinations and especially the greener hotels is on priority list of the global consumer. This made hoteliers and tourism stakeholders to make the operations environment oriented.



**Image 1: Inbound tourism at a glance**

The study is an attempt to understand the noteworthy green marketing strategies prevalent in industry and analyzing its significance in influencing consumer behavior through qualitative discussion and quantitative research. The specific objectives of the study are:

- a. Explore the prevalent green marketing practices in Indian hospitality industry.
- b. Scrutinize the green marketing strategies that are significant to different set of consumer.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study is carried out to understand the significant green marketing strategies adopted by hotel industry and its effects on overall marketing function. It is a descriptive study and an exclusive analysis of empirical data is carried out to determine the most common strategies. The prevalent practices are summarized to understand the significance in the entire marketing function. A quantitative research through purposive sample survey is conducted to analyze the effects of green marketing on consumer behavior. The data collected through the questionnaires were processed systematically for investigation, which includes organizing, coding, categorization, tabulation, and graphical presentation for interpretation and subsequently drawing the inferences.

**Data analysis and results**

The sample was drawn from number of customers who have patronized green hotels and are conscious about environment in general. The purposive sampling method is utilized and responses on pretested questionnaire are received from 135 respondents. Out of 135 responses; a total of 118 responses are found to be valid. General profile of the respondents is presented as below:

**Table 1: Age Group**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-40	35	29.66	29.66
	41-60	66	55.93	85.59
	60 and Above	17	14.41	100.00
	Total	118	100	

**Table 2: Education of the respondents**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Post Graduate & above	65	55.08	55.08
	Graduate	50	42.37	97.46
	High school	3	2.54	100.00
	Total	118	100	

**Table 3: Frequency of Travel**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Once in a quarter	32	27.12	27.12
	Twice in a quarter	64	54.24	81.36
	Thrice in a quarter	22	18.64	100.00
	Total	118	100	

**Table 4: Level of Stay**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Three Star	19	16.10	16.10
	Four Star	58	49.15	65.25
	Five Star	41	34.75	100.00
	Total	118	100	

**Table 5: Tourist type**

		Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Leisure & Relaxation	28	23.73	23.73
	Sports & Adventure	47	39.83	63.56
	Study & Business	43	36.44	100.00
	Total	118	100	

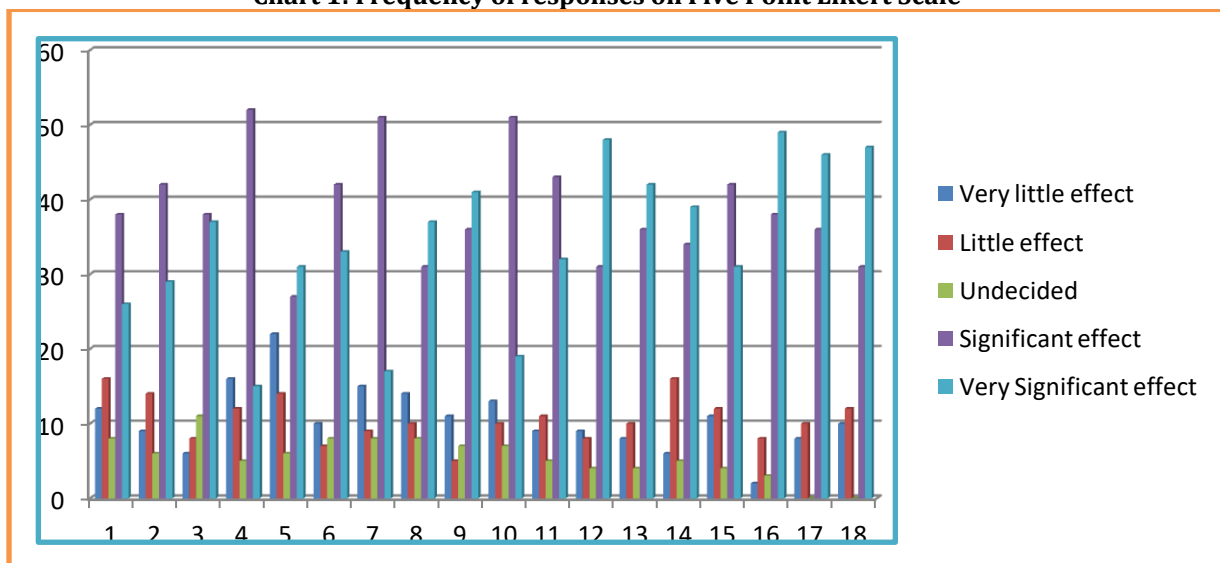
Out of total responses, 118 are found to be valid. The general profile of respondents as per the age group, it is found that 55% of respondents belongs to 41 to 60 age group, whereas 29.66% belong to age of 21 to 40 and 14.41% belong to age group of 60 and above. An outstanding number of 55% respondents have qualification of post graduate & above, whereas 42% are Graduate and only 2.54% have studies up to high school. This shows a large number of qualified respondents. The travel frequency is found be one in quarter for 27%, twice in quarter for 54% and thrice in quarter for 18.64%. This shows quite a good amount travelling exposure to respondents. Out of total respondents, about 34.75% have used five star hotels for stay, 49.15% have used four star and 16.10% have used three star hotel facilities. On analysis of travel purpose, it is found that 23.73% respondents travel for Leisure and relaxation, over 39.83% for Sports & Adventure and 36.44% for the purpose of study and business. This gives a blend of respondents for analysis of responses.

The responses on effectiveness of strategies are collected against twenty two significant strategies given by Chang (2013). The ordinate date of responses collected on Five Point Likert scale as Very little effect to Very Significant effect. The frequency analysis is carried out to know the significance of each strategy as below:

**Table 6: Frequency of responses on Five Point Likert Scale**

Strategies	Very little effect	Little effect	Undecided	Significant effect	Very Significant effect	Total
Offering Green products and services	12	16	8	38	26	100
Internet marketing channel	9	14	6	42	29	100
Communicating to green-conscious customers	6	8	11	38	37	100
Saving resources and conserving ecosystem	16	12	5	52	15	100
Green-certification	22	14	6	27	31	100
Differentiation by green products and services	10	7	8	42	33	100
Environmentally-friendly groups	15	9	8	51	17	100
Environmentally-friendly distribution channels	14	10	8	31	37	100
Influencing green marketing Practices	11	5	7	36	41	100
Joining green marketing associations	13	10	7	51	19	100
Adopting to environmentally-friendly regulations	9	11	5	43	32	100
Green pricing	9	8	4	31	48	100
Environmental labeling	8	10	4	36	42	100
Eco-labels on websites	6	16	5	34	39	100
Communicate success of greening efforts	11	12	4	42	31	100
Conformation to perception of commercial partners	2	8	3	38	49	100
Convincing the customers to pay higher prices for green products and services	8	10	0	36	46	100
Remove doubt about green marketing	10	12	0	31	47	100

**Chart 1: Frequency of responses on Five Point Likert Scale**



The frequency tables above shows significant number of responses have endorsed the strategies of green marketing. Over 64% of respondents believe that offering green products and services is a major influencer whereas 71% believe that internet marketing channel is more effective. 75% trust that saving resources and conserving ecosystem is effective and 67% believe that green certification has equal effect. A convincing figure of 87% believe that conforming to perceptions of commercial partner would prove more effective and 77% trust that influencing green marketing is more effective. Environment friendly labeling, Green pricing and eco labeling also found a favor from over 75% respondents.

The Chi-square analysis against the demographic profile of respondents suggests that there is no significant difference between the opinions of respondents belonging to any category of age and frequency of travel. Whereas the guests frequently using the Five star level accommodation believe that green practices and provision of green products and services have most significant effects on prospective consumers. Guests having graduation and above education strongly believe that internet is a most effective medium of communication and joining environment friendly groups would have maximum effect. The business travelers believe that adopting environment friendly regulations, green pricing and using environment friendly distribution channels are more effective. The sports and adventure tourist believe that removing doubts about green practices and eco labeling on website serves the best purpose whereas leisure and relaxation tourist believe that convincing the customer to pay higher prices, differentiating on basis of green practices and communicating success of green practices is more effective.

## DISCUSSION

According to Chen & Chen (2012), the growing concerns about hospitality industry related pollution made the management to think over the consumption pattern and it is found that over 75% of the emissions were the outcome of over use of energy in different forms. The construction of hotels requires large amount of material and water. The hotel operations requires large amount of water, fuels, electricity and other materials. It produces large quantities of solid waste, waste water, smoke and fumes. To control the pollution, it requires a well structured and well placed policies and strategies. It should be implemented with its spirit and should yield appropriate results. The integrated efforts with a, aim of environment protection and savings of energy is known as Green Management. Since hotel industry by large is found to be concerned, it's because it has to cater to large number of customers who are more specific about using green services. Green management in hotels attracts likeminded customers who value ecology and environment over other benefits.

In particular to hotel and tourism industry, Gockeritz et al (2009) have proved that expressive normative attitudes about environment have significant co-relation with consumer behavior. Their individual green outlook plays vital role in buying behavior. Similar findings are produced by Berezan (2013) has mentioned that pro-environment attitude may be expressed in normative and distributed norms.

Ashrafi (2014) has concluded that even though the green marketing is the newest term and being used frequently by hoteliers. However, some managers and even guests are skeptical about using this particular term for a specific service as organization, the reason behind this is that the practices in those organizations simply do not comply with the basic requirements of being green. This calls for green initiatives and sustained practice of green measures for sustainability and as a commitment towards environment. This requires the management of hospitality sector to develop the overall environment friendly culture in the organization and support it through actions. It involves the investments in training the staff and modifying the operations to make it suitable for green efforts.

The novel concept of green marketing emerged in year 1980. Chan (2013) has mentioned that green marketing is described as the enterprise attempt in "designing, promoting, implementing and facilitating services and products that are not leave any damaging effects on environment." It also involves the course of recognizing, anticipating and complying to the needs of prospective customers, other stake holders and society at large.

As rightly mentioned [www.environmentalleader.com](http://www.environmentalleader.com) (2012), the hotels are trying their best to attract the green conscious consumers by using different advertising and promotional tools. Few tools that are commonly used by hotels are showing pictures and videos of green initiatives on their respective websites. Hoardings at strategic locations depicting the green efforts, placing images in leading newspapers and magazines and communicating to the consumers has become the regular practice. Since it is quite difficult to find the green consumers, they can be targeted through effective communication on green efforts of hotels. As it is found that a significant chunk of customers prefer to stay at green hotels and use green services and this trend is growing over couple of years. These customers are more concerned about environment and contribute on their own by not buying environment harming services. This segment of market can be targeted by exclusive campaigning and projecting the functional images of hotel services. An emotional message with respect to environment and hotels commitment towards sustainability also creates strong impression. The hotels should promote its certifications such as LEED, energy saving and recycling certificates. This adds credibility to the hotels green practice claims and has

strongest effect on consumer behavior. Buying organic and locally grown produce is one of the practices that are appreciated by global tourists.

Xue&Muralidharan (2015) have posted that pro-environmental approach of hoteliers coupled with effective communication through verbal and visual tools proves to be considerable. The similar findings in other sectors of manufacturing and service industry are produced by the studies of Kim et al (2016). The green marketing strategies advocated in the study of Chan (2013) suggest that the hotels have to adapt to green practices and also communicate it effectively to consumers. Out of twenty two strategies suggested, eighteen are considered to be suitable for present context and taken for collecting responses from consumers. The proposed strategies are offering green products and services, Internet marketing channel, Green-certification, Environmentally-friendly distribution channels, Joining green marketing associations, Internet marketing channel, Eco-labels on websites, Green pricing, Environmental labeling, Environmentally-friendly groups, Saving resources and conserving ecosystem, Communicating to green-conscious customers, Adopting to environmentally-friendly regulations, Differentiation by green products and services, Influencing green marketing Practices, Remove doubt about green marketing, Conformation to perception of commercial partners, Convincing the customers to pay higher prices for green products and services and Communicate success of greening efforts.

### CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

The study of green marketing practices in hotel and tourism industry shows that the strategies are effective in influencing the consumer behavior of guest from different demographic profiles. Multiple strategies work together to influence the customer and adapting to green practices has significant effect on buying decisions. The younger travelers frequently travelling for adventure, sports and business purpose suggests that green certifications, communicating the green practices and use of internet is more useful in promoting green marketing. The other strategies are equally effective in creating a differentiator on basis of green practices and certifications. This would encourage the other hoteliers and Indian hospitality and tourism industry at large to adopt green marketing practices.

This study makes us understand the strategies having significance to different set of consumers. Though these strategies are mutually exclusive for various consumers but essentially provide insight into the strategies to be used for target segment of market. The study suggests that instead of using the marketing strategies randomly, it must be customer centric and serve the interest of individual segment. It is also recommended that specific strategies to be highlighted for making marketing communication further effective in bringing customer to hotels. Based on the outcomes of this study; further research is proposed in various geographic locations and services provided.

### REFERENCES

1. Ashrafi M (2014) Green Marketing in Hospitality Industry, *Journal of Appl. Environ. Biol. Sci.*, 4(4)42-46, 2014
2. Berezan, O., Raab, C., Yoo, M., & Love, C. (2013). Sustainable hotel practices and nationality: The impact on guest satisfaction and guest intention to return. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 34, 227-233
3. Chan E.S.W. (2013) Managing green marketing: Hong Kong hotel managers' perspective; *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 34, p. 442– 461
4. Chen Y.C., Chen Y.T. (2012) The Advantages of Green Management for Hotel Competitiveness in Taiwan: In the Viewpoint of Senior Hotel Managers; *Journal of Management and Sustainability*; Vol. 2, No. 2, p. 211-218
5. Gockeritz, S., Schultz, W., Rendon, T., Cialdini, R. Goldstein, N., &Griskevicius, V. (2009).
6. Descriptive normative beliefs and conservation behavior: The moderating roles of personal involvement and injunctive normative beliefs. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 40, 514-523
7. Indian Tourism statistics at a glance (2019)
8. Kim, S., Lee, K., &Fairhurst, A. (2017). The review of “green” research in hospitality, 2000-
9. 2014: Current trends and future research directions. *International Journal of*
10. *Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(1), 226-247.
11. [www.environmentalleader.com](http://www.environmentalleader.com) Analysis: Hotels Must Use Targeted Marketing to Attract Green Consumers (2012) Retrieved on 02/23/2014
12. Xue, F., &Muralidharan, S. (2015). A Green picture is worth a thousand words? Effects of visual and textual environmental appeals in advertising and the moderating role of product involvement. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 21(1), 82-106