

Youth Corner

Sustainable Marketing Strategies in Ogilvy's Advertisements

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Global warming, deforestation, air pollution, and endangered species make up a few of numerous environmental concerns today. All of these concerns in our world are largely attributed to human activities, and multinational companies have recently used these to their advantage.

Environmental issues have become a way of marketing for companies to showcase brand values and engage and persuade audiences termed sustainable marketing. Since newer generations like Millennials and Generation Z demonstrate an interest in environmentally responsible brands, large corporations like Apple and Amazon have begun using sustainable marketing strategies to stand out among competitors (Newman). Ogilvy is a multinational advertising agency that produces ads for brands like Dove, Unilever, WWF, and Nestle. Ogilvy utilizes sustainable marketing strategies in unique ways by using emotional appeals, invoking a sense of responsibility, utilizing inclusive language, images of ecosystems in advertisements, and effective statistics to convey brands' sustainable practices and products.

The use of emotional appeals in Ogilvy's ads is effective in sustainable marketing to the audience. In "The Girl with the Whale," a young girl extends her hand to a blue whale that swims with her and wakes her up to continue innovating a solution to plastic (see fig. 1). The physical touch between the young girl and the whale is charming and implies an emotional connection between the two, which explains why the girl is working towards her goal of eliminating the beach's plastic waste.



Fig. 1. Ogilvy. "Charoen Pokphand Group: The Girl with the Whale." 1 June 2020, www.adsoftheworld.com/media/film/charoen_pokphand_group_the_girl_with_the_wha

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Especially since the girl is young, viewers are likely to feel a sense of joy and amusement seeing the inspiration for her ambitious innovation and feel sympathetic towards her intentions. Furthermore, the audience's emotions towards their relationship and her ambition make the brand's advertisement more memorable. Another example of an emotional appeal to fear is in "NESCAU #JOGAJUNTO Safira," where various images throughout Safira's life contrast with that of a plastic straw (see fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Ogilvy Brazil. "NESCAU #JOGAJUNTO Safira (English Version)." *YouTube*, YouTube, 14 Apr. 2021, www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y1JsVhlo70Y&t=30s.



The pictures show that Safira has gone through milestone moments over two decades, yet the straw remains in the ocean the entire time which strikes a sense of fear after the realization of the impact of one human action. The audience may fear that a straw can stay in the ocean for many lifetimes if no action is taken, yet the ordinary use of plastic straws goes unnoticed by most. This likely has a profound impact on viewers as it draws their attention and interest to the product and its promises. "The Girl with the Whale" causes joy and sympathy appealing to sensitive emotions, while "NESCAU #JOGAJUNTO Safira" induces fear and concern among the audience.

Ads developed by Ogilvy provoke a sense of responsibility among the viewers regarding environmental issues and sustainability. In "See What You Save," the WWF and NCPA exhibition shows the average amount of paper one person uses and emphasizes "see what you save when you save paper" directly to viewers. Visually understanding the extent of paper wasted that could be saved effectively makes the audience feel responsible for their actions and is likely to raise awareness on the issues of deforestation. Thus, visual perception makes the viewers more aware of their paper waste. When a viewer connects to an ad due to its relatability, they are likely to feel responsible to take action, which in this case is recycling and saving paper. Also in "The Shower," Unilever is informing the audience on water conservation after showing Indian villagers responding to a shower installed in their village and encouraging viewers to "help a village quench its thirst." The state of the village makes the audience feel sympathetic and want to help them, which appeals to a sense of responsibility in saving water to benefit the villagers and others like them. This sense of responsibility is powerful because it resonates in the viewers' minds to remember the ad and the brand's message. Because the ad emphasizes how impactful conserving water can be, it may act as a reminder and convince the audience to be cautious. The responsibility

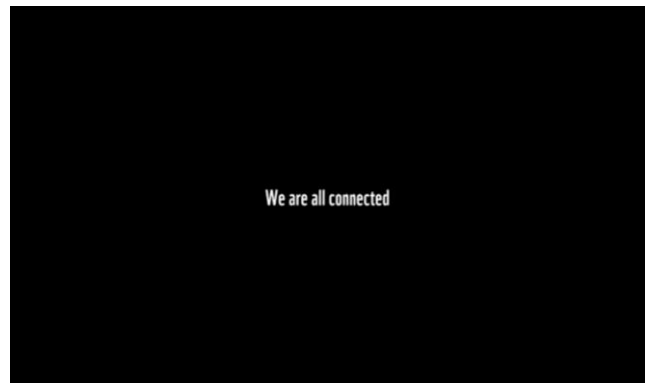
viewers feel to take action on environmental issues like paper waste and lack of water supply makes the ads both memorable and impactful.

Inclusive language within the copy of Ogilvy's ads is a powerful technique that greatly persuades the audience regarding sustainability. Many ads utilize inclusive language such as the word "we" in "IKEA: Why We Make" which states "the better the choices we make in here, the better off we'll all be out there" referring to their sustainable products like kitchen fronts made of plastic bottles. The word "we" is powerful in advertising as it makes the audience feel a part of the initiative or cause. Convincing the audience that they will be affected by sustainable practices implemented today, impacts their mindsets when choosing which brand to support. This ad shows that IKEA focuses on sustainable practices not just for the good of the environment or profit, but as well as ensuring the well-being of humankind. Inclusive language and the powerful word "we" are also strategically used within "We're All Connected" after showing videos of humans next to various animals stating, "we are all connected" (see fig. 3).

Fig. 3. Ogilvy. "We're All Connected."

AdForum,

<https://www.adforum.com/creative-work/best-of/7920/best-environmental-ads/play#34467950>.



The word "we" also makes the viewer feel part of a group which in this case is living things on Earth. "We" leads viewers to subconsciously feel connected with others like the animals shown and causes viewers to connect to the brand and its values thinking it truly applies to them. This is important because it makes the viewers share the brand's sustainable values in response to their inclusion in the situation. Words like "we" are inclusive, and therefore make them feel affected and connected to certain environmental issues that the brand values.

Ogilvy's ads portray videos of habitats and ecosystems that have been restored or need to be saved to show their sustainable practices and goals. Ads that incorporate videos of wildlife can be seen in "We're All Connected" where there are videos of habitats contrasted with that of humans (see fig. 4).

Fig. 4. Ogilvy. "We're All Connected." *AdForum*, <https://www.adforum.com/creative->



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The videos provide perspective to viewers on the situation that animals are facing and help to provide an image of the significance of environmental issues. This is long-lasting in one's mind and effectively engages the audience in the brand over time. Another example of videos of habitats and ecosystems is in "Natural Source of Vitality" where drone shots of a forest ecosystem are displayed (see fig. 5).

Fig. 5. Ogilvy. "Vittel: Natural Source of Vitality." *Ads of the World*, 1 July 2020, www.adsoftheworld.com/media/film/vittel_natural_source_of_vitality.



Videos of the trees in an ecosystem that the brand helped to plant indicate that they are working towards reducing climate change. This also indicates that the brand values healthy ecosystems and is working against deforestation. The drone shots show what the brand has done alongside their business to better the habitat which is a primary goal of sustainable marketing. Both images of animals and drone shots of habitats perceptualize the scope of an environmental issue and showcase the brand's efforts to address these issues successfully.

Ads developed by Ogilvy advertise brands' efforts to reduce human activities that contribute to climate change or other environmental issues with statistics and facts. "Natural Source of Vitality" describes what the brand has done in a forest ecosystem claiming that "we've planted thousands of trees and preserved 300 hectares of forest...this has been going on for nearly 30 years!" The number of 300 hectares puts into perspective the large number of forest acres that they tried to preserve by displaying their goals. This appeals to millennials who are increasingly spending from brands that value reducing climate change and solving environmental issues that we face today (Patel). Planting trees, in particular, is common among brands and is implemented in "IKEA: Why We Make" where the ad states "we try to make choices to put back what we take out" referring to trees. The bottom text states they have "planted 2.8 million trees across America." Both of which refer to their sustainable practice of planting trees to make up for what they use in manufacturing products. The number 2.8 million stands out and highlights the brand's interest in planting trees to be sustainable and reducing climate change. This distinctly shown effort is valuable to certain consumers, possibly affecting their preferences.

Ogilvy's ads incorporate statistics and facts to demonstrate a brand's values and efforts. Ogilvy's use of various aspects of sustainable marketing is successful in engaging and persuading the audience. The impact of the ads is significant and long-lasting and Ogilvy's methodology towards this is what makes this type of marketing unique. The strategy of effective sustainable marketing includes appeals to emotion, provoking responsibility, inclusive language, images of ecosystems, and statistics. Thus, the rise in sustainable marketing like that of Ogilvy's is justified by how this type of advertising stands out amongst competitors to viewers who care about environmental issues and sustainable practices to protect the Earth for many years to come.

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