

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

Marketing Strategies to Incentives Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Development of Sustainable Energy

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Description: The objective of this project is to investigate the role of market pull strategies in advancing sustainability goals. Specifically, the intent is to identify what “drives” consumers’ attitudes and behaviors relative to sustainable products. This includes consumers’ personal attitudes, opinions, and beliefs, their perceptions of their own and organizations’ abilities to affect or change the environment in which they live, and their personal characteristics (e.g. demographics). In addition, in collaboration with the College of Communications, the strengths and weaknesses of the various modalities that can be used to deliver sustainability knowledge to consumers (e.g. advertisements, testimonials, expert word-of-mouth communications, public relations, publicity, etc) will be assessed. Specifically, the research will attempt to identify the optimal market pull modality; that is, the means by which to deliver to consumers the knowledge that drives the purchase of sustainable goods and services. The overall objective of the research is to provide much needed market pull information for organizations embarking on “green” marketing strategies; that is, firms in the process of developing or expanding their mix of environmentally friendly goods and services.

Budget: \$278,778 (total), \$102, 564 (yr 2)

Universities: FSU

External Collaborators: NA

Progress Summary

Research Objectives for Current Reporting Period: The main objectives for the current reporting period include the further development and search for outside grants for the recently formed Center for Sustainability Initiatives (CSI) in the College of Business at The Florida State University. Further, growing the online research panel created by the CSI is an important step in monitoring and evaluating consumers within the state of Florida. The main research objectives also aim to provide deliverables, including published conference papers, journal articles, presentations, and other modes of educational knowledge transfer.

Progress Made Toward Objectives During Reporting Period: The research team has made tremendous strides during the reporting period in meeting many of the goals we set. Currently six papers have been published in the proceedings of national or regional conferences, including our premiere American Marketing Association conferences. Further, twelve conference presentations have been given on sustainability related topics funded through the IESSES grant. Numerous articles of research are also under review at various journals, or nearing the process of submission to select premiere marketing journals.

Securing additional funds has also been a priority for the CSI. As such, members of the research team were recently awarded a research grant from the Von Allmen Center for Green Marketing in the Gatton College of Business and Economics at the University of Kentucky. The proposal, entitled “The Adoption of Sustainable Practices: Overcoming Perceived Barriers to Socially Responsible Initiatives” won the highly competitive award.

In addition, Dr. Joe Cronin and his research recently team chaired a special session on sustainability at the American Marketing Association’s Winter Educator’s Conference entitled Sustainability in Action. World-renowned scholars in the field of sustainability in marketing not only attended the session, but many participated by presenting their own research as well. The session was well received by all that attended and was likely one of the most prominent events at the conference. Several members of the research team also attended the first annual Sustainability in Marketing Colloquium hosted by the University of Kentucky.

In addition, members of the CSI research team have been active within the FSU and local communities. Member of the research team have been invited to speak at a number professional and practitioner-oriented seminars at the state and local level. Within the university, the research team is exploring potential partnerships with other groups to incorporate a sustainability-oriented approach to business strategies. The development of a sustainability-oriented marketing class is also in the works, potentially as an undergraduate course or as a part of the MS in Marketing program. In addition, the undergraduate basic marketing course has gone green by requiring students to utilize an online textbook.

The online research panel housed in the CSI has made tremendous progress as well. The panel is quickly approaching 1,000 members and we hope to dramatically increase that number very soon with the help of the FSU Alumni Office. Current panel members are already actively engaged in our research and eager to participate in future endeavors.