

**PACKVERTISING**

## **Of all the colors of the rainbow... Green is the most important!**

The etymology of the word "green" ("verde" in Italian) derives from the popular Latin word "virdem", which in turn derives from "viridis" meaning "vivo" - "alive", "vivacious". Wide-ranging meanings, different attitudes and a thousand applications.

What does "applying a green style" mean in the fields of marketing and communication? In this context, for us it means a "general commitment" in regards not only to the environment and nature but also to society as a whole.

Paola Pellegrini

Continuous changes in society inevitably lead to changes in habits, too, including purchasing habits. Consumers adapt their purchasing and consumption behaviors to social-economic trends. Lifestyles, needs, desires, expectations change with changes in the world surrounding us. To address, solicit or somehow intervene on these potential changes, we recur to communication activities that become functional and contextual evolutions of the most appropriate techniques used until then. Company, marketing and communication strategies are increasingly heading in the direction of a style that can rightly be called "total green".

This all-encompassing expression identifies not only an attitude of "support" of socio-sustainable and eco-compatible themes, but it also implies the ability to follow its principles in an almost complete manner, in full respect of the environment and of the individuals inhabiting it, whether they be customers or internal reference persons (employees) and external society in general. It refers not only to the actions defined by a company's core business, but also to collateral activities and above all to communication and marketing: hence, to traditional advert campaigns, to the more modern and alternative activities today defined by the term "guerrilla". The path to follow turns green.

"GREEN" IS A HIGHLY INNOVATIVE CONCEPT and right now, a very evolutionary one. More and more often, a company who declares to be "green" intends transmitting a modern image, attentive and respectful of the environmental issues that characterize our society. Catering to socio-compatible and eco-sustainable themes basically means not neglecting any such aspect in the company's vision and mission, but also in its overall marketing, communication and promotional strategies.

For a company, following a Total Green Style means using quality, energy-saving equipment and systems for its production activities, or implementing green behaviors and habits within its premises such as waste sorting and the use of energy-saving lights - consolidated aspects applied in many companies today. But it also means not neglecting other "green details" in its promotional, communication and marketing activities. For example, in the case of an ad campaign, attention can be focused on apparently secondary aspects that go beyond the ability to design, identify and propose eco-friendly products and processes.

The wide use of biological raw materials for communication supports, the choice of low-impact media and the creation of correlated "satellite" activities that are "as green as possible" are some of the solutions available. These choices perfectly espouse the in-field - indoor/outdoor and on the road promotional activities. Just think of what would be the consequences if a 2-day mass-promotional activity involving families and children taking place in your city's squares and streets during the holidays, did not also entail a related and well-articulated waste collection process...! Well, the consequences in terms of image would not be very convincing if at the end of the celebrations, the venues chosen for the event remained strewn with bags or other trash bearing the promoter's logo! Don't you agree?

FOR THIS REASON, IT BECOMES IMPORTANT - IMAGE-WISE - TO APPLY A PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL AND PRO-SOCIETY STYLE also to communication activities in order not to disappoint expectations and to convince the public opinion of the goodness of one's actions.

Designing using direct policies. Using ecological materials. Identifying and proposing green and social solutions that can call attention to respect for the environment, people and citizens. Communicating and disseminating healthy principles and good habits, making them our own. Or, getting deeper into design details, managing zero-impact services and traveling using only non-polluting vehicles. All this makes the promoting company an admirable champion of these initiatives! And

if, at the end of all these processes, a minimal gas emission should remain, it would be a good idea to compensate for it by planting flowers or trees or developing a fund-raising campaign for a charity organization!

Today, post-modern definitions of marketing, communication and promotion are environment, green, social, ethical. An integral and honest brand reputation is useful in creating affinities and consensus when united with an innovative and valid corporate social responsibility ("simpler and more banal" to construe perhaps) just as long as it is sincere! •

In Milan, Party Round is the first Italian company to offer rigorously green event services and field promotions. Specialized for years in the supply of services for traditional and unconventional events on national territory, it has always focused on the sociology of the moment and is always abreast of the ongoing changes in society. Party Round has transformed its famous catering & banqueting service in the first totally green catering in Italy! Respect for the environment and for the health of its customers and guests are the main targets of this highly innovative, socio-compatible and eco-sustainable "green" service that uses quality, zero-km raw materials and for the most part, biological products and ecological detergents, managing what can properly be defined as zero-impact services. It performs waste sorting and uses only non-polluting vehicles for transportation. And just to make sure it makes up for any minor errors, it plants flowers and trees in its greenhouse in the center of Milan!

In Sweden, German car producer Volkswagen has created an advert campaign using messages having a clear social content: entertaining, acute commercials that transmit good habits through advertising. The philosophy of these commercials believes that, by entertaining the public, we can obtain a quick and radical change in people's (bad) habits by highlighting the playful side of the situation. So... how can we invite people to use the stairs in the metro rather than the less healthy escalators? Just install the keys of a piano on the steps of the metro station that really play music! Children and adults will want to climb up and down the stairs even more than just once, jumping from one step to another trying to create their own melodies.

Or: how to make people more sensitive to using waste bins in public parks to throw their trash? By offering them "the deepest waste bin in the world" that, at every piece of trash thrown in, emits the sound of a free-falling object... In just one day, it collected 41% more trash! And more: how to avoid that the areas around pubs frequented by youngsters be completely invaded by glasses and bottles? The solution lies in a juke-box to contain them. The device is weight-sensitive and issues particular music based on what is thrown in, for the joy of the young adults!

Well done Volkswagen for thinking up this totally entertaining and engrossing noble initiative that has succeeded in making people more sensitive to the different issues such as health, waste sorting, energy savings and respect for the environment.

From the automotive field comes another example. This time we're speaking about Fiat and the product at issue is the new 500, the car defined as the most ecological in Europe, characterized by minimal environmental impact and a low level of CO2 emissions. The campaign received two Golden Lion awards at the Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival in the Film and Outdoor categories for its clear originality, but also for the transparency with which on the one hand it admits to the impact that the automotive industry has on the environment, and on the other, it demonstrates its commitment to limit it as much as possible. We are speaking hence of safety, demonstrated through the results of the crash tests, and of environmental protection. It is not by chance that the animals chosen to drive the renowned car all belong to species in danger of extinction such as the penguin, the panda bear and the walrus.

Global warming. There are many campaigns against global warming undertaken in more or less daring and provocative fashion by environmental associations like the WWF or Green Peace and by many governments, but what we would like to highlight in this article are those disconnected from professional environmental and social business. We would like to speak about all those brands have decided to support the Stop Global Warming movement, which is enticing everyone to do their part in combating pollution. Companies find themselves in a very embarrassing situation in regards to this issue, since they are the biggest polluters. But many of them have tipped the scale in their favor by actively committing themselves to the cause, supporting the movement. Often they do this through products that best fit in with the initiative, maybe because they are manufactured using ecological raw materials, or by avoiding animal exploitation and using products of vegetable origin. Of course interest in ecology and the environment is a widely diffused trend... but since renowned names like Nike, Adidas and others are joining, let's hope it's not just a passing fad!

Guerrilla Gardening is another innovative activity promoted by those who adore greenery and nature and is part of the category of guerrilla activities, like latest-generation marketing. Many people - green guerrillas - above all in the USA but also in Europe and in Italy, tired of seeing asphalt and cement everywhere, have chosen to protest by acting privately. Free gardening unites groups of citizens who have made beautiful green installations in their cities in totally independent and spontaneous manner. They autonomously choose places where they want to set up such installations, work in groups, and - before giving life to their ideas - take into consideration both the aesthetic results as well as the functional ones. Subversive gardeners in every corner of the earth create something beautiful with their own hands where before there was degradation and indifference, supporting the environment and making society and the public opinion more sensitive to such issues.

Art is always involved, too. It's called EcoArt Project and it is the innovative international cultural platform wholly dedicated to the communication and promotion of environmental themes. In this case, the protagonists are artists from every part of the world working to increase attention towards these issues. A project dedicated mainly to the development of initiatives such as competitions, exhibitions and events, editorial projects and communication campaigns worldwide, using the green art channel. EcoArt Project is a multi-service platform dedicated to contemporary art and inspired by sustainability and ecology. Lots of creative artists coming from different fields meeting and working together to stimulate attitudes, habits and behaviors that have the safeguard of the planet as their main scope.

A network of people united by the desire to face the theme of sustainability through their art, turning it into a business at the same time. Actually... into an eco-business!