

ASPECTS REGARDING THE USE OF MARKETING FOR REDUCING CONSUMPTION

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Abstract

Environmental degradation is a reality that we face more and more often. It's been a while since recycling was proposed as a behavioral solution. Recently, however, the limits of recycling as a solution to environmental problems have begun to emerge. On the other hand, efforts to make products in a sustainable way and to stimulate the consumption of organic products is also not a solution given that we continue to exhibit irresponsible consumption behavior. In addition, despite countless initiatives by various companies and other stakeholders to reduce social and environmental impact, the planet's resources are becoming increasingly poor and the land and water are becoming increasingly polluted due to our unsustainable behavior. Humanity has reached the limits of the planet's sustaining capacity and the waste generated by production is more than the ecosystem can bear. In these circumstances, a new behavioral solution imposes itself, particularly one aimed at encouraging the reduction of resource consumption. It is imperative that consumers take into account the common good, including that of future generations, when exercising their buying and consuming behavior.

Although marketing has played for so long a crucial role in stimulating consumption, in the current context characterized by continuous environmental degradation, marketing is playing an increasingly important role in encouraging sustainable behavior aimed, in particular, at reducing consumption. In this context, the following paper reveals some important aspects regarding the necessity of consumption reduction and the ways in which marketing can add its contribution in this direction.

Keywords: social marketing, responsible consumer behavior, consumption reduction, sustainable marketing, anti-consumption.

1. Introduction

Environmental degradation is a reality that we face more and more often. It's been quite a while since recycling was proposed as a behavioral solution, which is not a too technologically sophisticated solution for the waste problem of a nation. Unfortunately, Romania is still flunking in this regard¹. We are still striving to achieve the targets set by the European Union for recycling without much success. We are still at an early stage when it comes to the existence of a recycling-oriented consumer behavior or the consumption of recycled materials.

Recently, however, the limits of recycling as a solution to the environmental problem have begun to appear. The level of recyclable materials saved from landfills remains constant given that there are still materials that cannot be recycled. The recycling process itself also involves consumption of resources (transport of recyclable materials involves the consumption of fossil fuels, etc.). Also, another reason why we can no longer consider recycling as the best solution to the waste problem is market saturation; with the encouragement of recycling, new buyers of materials should be sought in order to process them. On the other

hand, efforts to make products in a sustainable way and to stimulate the consumption of organic products is also not a solution given that we continue to exhibit irresponsible consumption behavior. In addition, despite countless initiatives by various companies and other stakeholders to reduce social and environmental impact, the planet's resources are becoming increasingly poor and the land and water are becoming increasingly polluted due to our unsustainable behavior. Humanity has reached the limits of the planet's sustaining capacity and the waste generated by production is more than the ecosystem can bear.

In these circumstances, a solution regarding the change of people's behavior imposes itself, in particular a solution aimed at encouraging the reduction of resource consumption. Few people are aware that the famous slogan „Reduce. Reuse. Recycle” that promotes environmentally sustainable behavior presents a series of actions in the order of their importance and impact². It is quite clear that consumers need to be increasingly encouraged to consider the consequences of their consumption decisions, as the consumer imposes by his purchase or non-purchase decision. It is also clear that consumer choices have different consequences for the environment. The consequences are different if the consumer chooses to travel by car, compared to those

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¹ Voicu, M. C., 2019, *The recycling behavior of Romanian consumers*, The International Scientific Session CKS 2019 – Challenges of the Knowledge Society 13-th Edition, Bucharest, May 17-18, published in CKS-e-Book, „Nicolae Titulescu” University Publishing House, pp.1151-1157, ISSN 2359-9227.

² Armstrong Soule, C.A., Reich, B.J., 2015, *Less is more: is a green demarketing strategy sustainable*, Journal of Marketing Management, Vol. 31, Nos. 13–14, pp. 1403-1427, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/281150826_Less_is_more_Is_a_green_demarketing_strategy_sustainable.

arising from the situation in which he chooses to ride a bicycle. Thus, it is imperative that consumers take into account the common good, including that of future generations, when exercising their buying and consuming behavior.

R.K. Pachauri, the president of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) at that time, stated in 2014 that although there are many solutions to limit climate change, the first sine qua non element is the will to change ourselves³. The common theme of all reports and studies on the environment that is increasingly brought forward is that if human activities are not drastically changed immediately, there is a high probability that life on Earth, including humans, will disappear during the 21st century⁴.

It is often stated that marketing activities are, to some extent, responsible for the current environmental degradation, a situation generated by consumption and over-consumption stimulated by these activities given that the success of marketing strategies is measured by indicators such as sales volume, market share, profits, etc. Focusing the attention of specialists only on these types of objectives in the process of formulating marketing strategies has a negative impact on society in terms of sustainability⁵.

On the other hand, as marketing also contributes to influencing consumer behavior⁶, its activities can be aimed at raising awareness of the consumption impact on the environment and achieving significant progress towards sustainability by promoting concepts such as responsible consumption, consumption reduction, anti-consumption, voluntary minimalism and a sustainable lifestyle. The problem in achieving this goal is to determine how to promote these concepts so that they are assimilated by consumers.

2. Why is it necessary to reduce consumption

Currently, the main sources of concern regarding the environment are:

- **Carbon dioxide emissions** which have already caused significant climate change seeing as these

emissions have increased significantly in recent years. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels has stabilized at 33 gigatons in 2019, following two years of increases⁷. In 2020, carbon dioxide emissions fell by 7%⁸, an unprecedented decline due to quarantine and restrictions to prevent the spread of the coronavirus. These consequences support the idea of the positive effects of reducing consumption.

- **The ecological footprint** is a standardized unit of measurement, which refers to the exploitable land and the sea area needed to produce the resources that human society consumes at a given time but also to absorb the resulting waste, using the available technology. The current ecological footprint both globally and individually, at the level of most countries, is unsustainable, a situation that is deteriorating with each passing day. By 2030, the demand for drinking water could exceed the supply by 40% and the forested areas will be reduced by 13%⁹.

- **Consumption growth in emerging economies** (such as China and India) characterized by a rapid population growth rate. The world's population is estimated to reach 9.6 billion by 2050¹⁰ (from 7 billion today), a situation in which the natural resources of three Earth like planets will be needed to support our current lifestyle. Achieving and maintaining sustainability will become an increasingly difficult task, given that demand for food and energy will increase by 40-50% and that for fresh water by 30-40%¹¹.

On the other hand, the analysis of the environmental impact of the products consumed within households is constantly performed by the European Union. Following these studies, it is always concluded that food and beverage consumption¹², utilities and transport are the categories of products that have the greatest negative impact on the environment. With regard to food consumption, the consumption of meat and meat products as well as milk and dairy products have the greatest negative impact on the environment. We cannot say that significant improvements have been made in these areas in terms of sustainability in recent decades, with global consumption growth exceeding

³ Cicala, J., Carmona, J., Oates, B.R., 2016, *Influencing Consumer Engagement in Environmentally Responsible Behavior*, International Journal of Management and Marketing Research, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 1-12, <http://www.theibfr.com/ARCHIVE/IJMMR-V9N2-2016.pdf#page=3>.

⁴ Cockburn, H., 2019, 'High likelihood of human civilisation coming to end' by 2050, report finds, The Independent, <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change-global-warming-end-human-civilisation-research-a8943531.html>.

⁵ Gangone, A.D., Asandei, M., 2017, *Sustainability Marketing in Romania's Retail Sector*, The Journal Contemporary Economy, Constantin Brancoveanu University, Vol. 2(2), pp 33-63, <http://www.revec.ro/papers/170203.pdf>.

⁶ Gordon, R., Carrigan, M., Hastings, G., 2011, *A framework for sustainable marketing*, Marketing Theory, Vol. 11, Issue 2, pp143-163, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.865.5185&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

⁷ *Global CO2 emissions in 2019, 2020*, International Energy Agency, <https://www.iea.org/articles/global-co2-emissions-in-2019>.

⁸ *Global carbon emissions down by record 7% in 2020*, December 2020, Deutsche Welle, <https://www.dw.com/en/global-carbon-emissions-down-by-record-7-in-2020/a-55900887>.

⁹ Danciu, V., 2013, *The sustainable company: new challenges and strategies for more sustainability*, Theoretical and Applied Economics, Vol XX, No 9 (586), pp. 4-24, <http://store.ectap.ro/articole/898.pdf>.

¹⁰ *Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns*, Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/>.

¹¹ Danciu, V., 2013, *The future of marketing: an appropriate response to the environment changes*, Theoretical and Applied Economics, Vol XX, No 5 (582), pp. 33-52, <http://store.ectap.ro/articole/859.pdf>.

¹² Notarnicola, B., Tassielli, G., Renzulli, P.A., Castellani, V., Sala, S., 2017, *Environmental impacts of food consumption in Europe*, Journal of Cleaner Production, Vol. 140, Part 2, pp 753-765, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652616307570>.

most of the improvements made in the field of environmental efficiency. Indeed, the consumption of organic food has increased, but to an even greater extent has increased the consumption of imported food or precooked products, which are consuming a lot of energy and additional raw materials (for example, for packaging). In the field of car production, sales growth of SUV vehicles exceeded the improvements obtained in fuel consumption efficiency offered by the new technologies implemented in the manufacture of engines. Households have become much more efficient in using energy for heating, but this improvement is outweighed by the increase in the level of energy used for countless home appliances. On the other hand, the number of households is increasing, and not necessarily pushed by population growth as much as the number of individual households. All this led to a 2.1% increase in energy consumption in 2017, compared to 2016¹³. In the first four months of 2020, however, global energy consumption fell by 3.8% as a result of the quarantine imposed in many countries¹⁴. Specialists' estimates of year-round energy consumption place this reduction at 5%. Such a reduction in energy consumption exceeds 6 times the record registered in 2009, due to the global economic crisis from that time. However, specialists fear that in the near future we will register an equally spectacular return to the growing trend of this consumption.

In this context, we can conclude that green marketing has failed in its desire to bring about changes or any significant progress towards sustainability.

3. Marketing for consumption reduction

Marketing was created in order to develop tangible products that meet the requirements and desires of customers in order to make a profit. The field has developed over time in various specializations such as service marketing to allow the realization of marketing in the field of intangibles, tourism marketing to promote visiting certain places or events, cultural marketing to promote culture or relational marketing that aims to build and to maintain long-term relationships with consumers. The common feature that permeates almost all the specializations that have emerged is that marketing aims to stimulate the growth of consumption or at least to change the consumer's purchasing decision in the direction of a particular product or service promoted. The exceptions are few and they refer to the so-called demarketing strategies that involve discouraging demand, such as, for example, placing a higher price during the tourist season to discourage the lower-income tourists, or anti-marketing strategies. One of the marketing specializations that has a significant potential aimed at reducing consumption is social marketing that uses the

tools, techniques and concepts of commercial marketing to achieve social goals. Most social marketing initiatives focus on changing consumer behavior in order to increase the well-being of consumers and/or society.

The field of marketing has been flirting for some time with the concept of reducing consumption or even anti-consumption, since the early '70s, with the advent of green marketing and social marketing. However, this marketing activity was focused on several areas (chemical industry, automotive industry, etc.) or on behaviors of interest (recycling, fuel saving, etc.). Unfortunately, promoting the reduction of consumption and non-purchase for certain products has involved, on the other hand, encouraging the consumption of organic products or encouraging the responsible way of disposing of products after consumption. These changes are indeed steps towards responsible behavior, but placing the emphasis on buying substitute products that are not so harmful to the environment is not a long-term solution and will not contribute substantially to the development of a sustainable economy, green marketing being rather used to create competitive advantages and a certain image in the market, as can be seen from the "progress" made towards sustainability. Thus, in the orientation of the green marketing so far, the concerns for stimulating the non-buying behavior of the consumers should be introduced. In order to achieve this goal, the marketing activity must focus on the positive economic aspects that reducing consumption could bring as well as on the level of well-being of the population in terms of happiness and quality of life.

The development of sustainable marketing strategies is not a simple process given that the contradiction between one of the basic principles of sustainability regarding the conservation of resources and low consumption, on the one hand, and one of the principles of marketing, on the other, regarding the increase of sales, which means the increase of production and consequently the increase of resource consumption, must be resolved.

The marketing aimed at reducing consumption should be based, similar to commercial marketing, on the *research of the target segment, competition and environment* and on a consumer approach through the *marketing mix* tailored to the characteristics of the field so we can talk about a social product and a social price.

In the concerted effort to limit global material consumption by reducing individual consumption, those who enjoy a high and average level of consumption (compared to a calculated global average), regardless of the country in which they live, play a much more important role than below-average consumption, so efforts should be focused primarily on

¹³ *Global Energy & CO₂ Status Report 2017*, March 2018, International Energy Agency, <https://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/GECO2017.pdf>.

¹⁴ *Global Energy Review 2020*, April 2020, International Energy Agency, <https://www.iea.org/reports/global-energy-review-2020>.

this segment¹⁵. Also, industrialized economies, which represent only 23% of the world's population, consume over 77% of the planet's resources (including 72% of total energy) and generate about 80% of global pollution¹⁶.

Also, a tool that can be used in this context is the one proposed by Sheth et al which is based on the planned social change model and a framework for addressing the discrepancy between attitude and behavior proposed by Sheth and Frazier. Through this tool, four consumer segments are delimited taking into account two criteria (see figure 1): 1. the tendency of the consumption behavior ("excessive" versus "temperate") and 2. the attitude towards consumption or the way of thinking ("caring" versus "non-caring") for each segment being proposed solutions for approaching them in order to reduce consumption.

Figure 1. Solutions for consumer approach taking into account the trend of consumer behavior and the attitude towards consumption

		CONSUMPTION	
		Excessive	Temperate
MINDSET	Caring	Incentives and Disincentives	Reinforcement
	Non-Caring	Mandates and Limits	Education

Sursa: Sheth, J.N., Sethia, N.K., Srinivas, S., 2011, *Mindful consumption: a customer-centric approach to sustainability*, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Vol. 39, Issue 1, pp 21-39, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11747-010-0216-3>

Also, an important concept in this context is the one regarding the consumer willingness for change. The model proposed by James O. Prochaska in 1977 to explain how cigarette addicts managed to give them up, a model that was later improved in collaboration with Carlo C. DiClemente¹⁷, can be taken into account in developing strategies aimed at reducing consumption. The mentioned theory holds that changing a behavior is a process that takes place in several stages: pre-contemplation - contemplation - preparation - action - maintenance. During pre-contemplation, individuals either do not want to change their behavior or are unaware of the consequences of their behavior for

themselves or others. In the contemplation stage, individuals begin to consider the costs and benefits of changing their behavior. In the preparation stage, individuals are motivated to change so they begin to prepare mentally and practically. During the action stage, the individual is in the process of change, followed by the stage in which the individual maintains the behavior or relapses to a previous state. Considering the mentioned model, we can observe the complexity of the process of changing a behavior taking into account that it takes place in several stages and that the relapse can happen a number of times. In the context of the reducing consumption issue, the model proposed by Prochaska contributes to understanding the availability of the target segment to change and thus to developing marketing strategies appropriate to the needs and desires of consumers. For example, in the pre-contemplation stage, marketers may seek to increase awareness and interest in reducing consumption and may even try to change the system of values and beliefs. In the contemplation stage, the marketer must convince and motivate consumers to perceive an increase in the benefits of the behavior that is to be adopted and a reduction in costs associated with its change (time, physical and money). In the next stages of preparation and action, marketers need to focus on stimulating action and finally, in order to maintain behavior change, specialists should consider reducing cognitive dissonance by consolidation¹⁸.

Another aspect that should be considered in this context was highlighted in a study by Black and Cherrier (2010)¹⁹, namely that consumers' self-interest or concern for the environment is not a sufficient motivation to reduce consumption. Self-interest and the concern for the environment are interrelated and together represent a motivation that determines the reduction of consumption and even the practice of anti-consumption.

Social changes are more likely to occur when communication no longer focuses on the message and the experience of those behind it, but rather on the audience's point of view, including possible barriers it faces to achieve the promoted social changes, given that in the campaigns carried out so far the emphasis has been on guilt, which didn't have not had the expected success²⁰.

Also, using marketing to reduce consumption can target different segments, beyond the target audience, including groups of media representatives, authorities or related businesses. Reducing consumption must also

¹⁵ Schaefer, A., Crane, A., 2005, *Addressing Sustainability and Consumption*, Journal of Macromarketing. Vol. 25, No 1, June, pp 76-92, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0276146705274987>.

¹⁶ Lim, W.M., 2017, *Inside the sustainable consumption theoretical toolbox: Critical concepts for sustainability, consumption, and marketing*, Journal of Business Research, No 78, pp 69-80, <https://fardapaper.ir/mohavaha/uploads/2017/10/Inside-the-sustainable-consumption-theoretical-toolbox.pdf>.

¹⁷ Debucean, D., 2013, *The stages of change in psychotherapy*, Journal of Integrative Psychotherapy, vol.2., no.2., <http://revista.psihoterapie-integrativa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/DEBUCEAN-STADIILE-SCHIMBARI-1.pdf>.

¹⁸ Baker, M.J., 2003, *The Marketing Book*, Fifth Edition, Butterworth-Heinemann Publishing House, pag. 712.

¹⁹ Black, I.R., Cherrier, H., 2010, *Anti-consumption as part of living a sustainable lifestyle: Daily practices, contextual motivations and subjective values*, Journal of Consumer Behaviour, Vol. 9, pp 437-453, Published online in Wiley Online Library.

²⁰ Nia, S.G., Sharif, B., 2011, *Impact of Social Marketing on Consumption Reduction*, Journal of Applied Business and Economics vol. 12, No 5, pp 111-124, <http://sharif.edu/~ghodsi/PaP/jabe.pdf>.

be transformed into acceptable behavior for policy makers too, given that such behavior contributes to reducing consumer spending with an impact on gross domestic product and, implicitly, on taxes and duties levied.

In addition, the target audience can be approached in different phases of awareness and reaction to a particular problem or behavior of interest.

According to marketers, the effectiveness in overcoming well-established consumption behaviors of marketing programs for reducing consumption lies in the extent to which consumption reduction will become a much more interesting behavior throughout society and when it will be considered a normal behavior²¹.

On the other hand, the *marketing mix* aimed at reducing consumption has the following dominant features:

- *The product* to be promoted is represented by the idea of reducing consumption. In this context, the marketing activity will be directed towards promoting statements that emphasize the need to consume less ("happiness cannot be bought in the store", "new does not necessarily mean better", "do not be another fashion victim", "walking makes the foot beautiful and the environment healthy" etc.). The idea of reducing consumption has already been addressed in campaigns to raise awareness of food waste, to promote vegetarianism as a solution to protect the environment (environmental vegetarianism) and to reduce the consumption of plastic packaging.

- *The placement* is, in this context, accessibility in terms of access to alternative solutions that bring satisfaction to the consumer following the reduction of consumption (for example, access to bicycles and bicycle lanes when the reduction of the number of cars on the roads is desired), access to repair services or access to information or expertise. One of the solutions that has gained momentum at the moment is collaborative consumption such as car sharing (for example, Get Pony, Zipcar, toy lending library), redistribution of goods (such as the Freecycle program) or social credit (Zopa) proposing the overcoming of individual property and the sharing of possessions²².

- In this case, *the price* mainly takes the form of time and effort costs (less financial costs taking into account that the reduction of consumption implies making savings) incurred to change the behavior. In this area, the decisions that can be taken by those interested in achieving a change in behavior towards reducing consumption, can take the form of discounts for access to infrastructure, service and information or reducing the risks associated with changing behavior

(secure parking for bicycles, instructors, etc.). It should also be borne in mind that the price paid by consumers who choose to reduce consumption can also take the form of rather unpleasant social labels ("strange", "idealistic", "gullible", etc.).

- *The communication* will be similar to the one practiced in commercial marketing, having a bidirectional character and aiming at interaction and building long-term relationships with the audience. Promoting consumption reduction aims to encourage the acceptance, adoption and maintenance of this behavior.

Communicating to people that they can no longer drive so much, that they should no longer consume as they see fit, or that they should no longer fly by plane are certainly more than unpopular messages. Reducing consumption must be addressed beyond its rational aspects regarding the benefits and necessity of this behavior, investing the concept of sustainability with an emotional charge capable of leading to this change in behavior. We must not lose sight of the fact that the reduction of consumption will be achieved, first of all, due to our own interest (for example, interest in what we leave behind to our children, care for our health, etc.), and not simply because of concern for the environment. The emphasis should be placed on the countless benefits of reducing consumption for the consumer - financial freedom, less stress, personal integrity and a good life - attributes of the so-called "quality of life" indicator.

The perception over reducing consumption, that of a practice due to insufficient financial resources, can be changed through communication campaigns that give a status to the consumer concerned about the environment. An example of this is the successful campaign conducted in 2015 by REI, a retailer of outdoor products, in which customers were asked to "opt outside" on Black Friday²³. As a result of this campaign, there are currently over 11 million Instagram posts with the hashtag #OptOutside and over 1.4 million people and 170 businesses committed to doing so on the REI website in 2017 (#OptOutside - Will you go out with us?).

One of the trends that could be promoted through the marketing activity aimed at reducing consumption is the phenomenon of "downshifting" or "voluntary simplicity"²⁴ with the meaning of giving up a well-paid job and a consumption-intensive lifestyle for a simpler lifestyle, less focused on material rewards but no less satisfactory. The trend clearly expresses a latent demand represented by consumers in search of a life with a lower stress level and a lifestyle less focused on

²¹ Fry, M.L., 2014, *Rethinking Social Marketing: Towards a sociality of consumption*, Journal of Social Marketing, Vol. 4, Issue 3, pp. 210 – 222, <https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/JSOCM-02-2014-0011>.

²² Prothero, A., Dobscha, S., Freund, J., Kilbourne, W.E., Luchs, M.G., Ozanne, L.K., Thøgersen, J., 2011, *Sustainable Consumption: Opportunities for Consumer Research and Public Policy*, Journal of Public Policy & Marketing, Vol. 30 (1), pp 31-38.

²³ Sekhon, T.S., Armstrong Soule, C.A., 2020, Conspicuous anticonsumption: When green demarketing brands restore symbolic benefits to anticonsumers, *Psychology & Marketing*, No 37, Issue 2, pp 278-290.

²⁴ Bekin, C., Carrigan, M., Szmigin, I., 2005, Defying Marketing Sovereignty: Voluntary Simplicity at New Consumption Communities, *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, Vol. 8, No 4, pp.413-429, <https://bura.brunel.ac.uk/bitstream/2438/1273/3/Final%2BQMR%2Bversion.pdf>.

consumption, elements that can be the basis of a campaign to promote the reduction of consumption.

4. Conclusions

Given that the available environmental resources are constantly decreasing and the probability of leading the current lifestyle decreases with each passing day, there is also a need to reduce the level of consumption for a significant number of people. Governments, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations and even companies play an important role in achieving this goal. But actual changes in purchasing behavior, defining part of a long process towards sustainable consumption, should take place primarily at the individual and household level.

Unfortunately, in contemporary society, individuals associate consumption with social welfare as an indicator of success and personal preferences. At the same time, the level of consumption has increased dramatically worldwide and, in particular, in developed countries, which reduces the chances of achieving a sustainable lifestyle. In these circumstances, all efforts must be focused on changing social paradigms and the economic system in order to minimize the impact on the environment and effectively reduce the level of consumption. The imperative and urgency of reducing the level of consumption are recognized only theoretically. Unfortunately, however, in reality the measures taken to achieve this goal are ineffective. The theory of punctuated equilibrium suggests that a radical change, in which the premises underlying previous behavior are called into question, usually occurs only if

people perceive a significant crisis. Perhaps a more active promotion of the crisis we are in will contribute to changing current consumer behavior. Higher education teachers, pressure groups and the media, among others, can play a significant role in creating a sense of crisis²⁵.

Particular emphasis should be placed on developing new strategies to change current high consumerism habits and promote a less materialistic mentality. Even if we resort to solutions such as recycling or consuming organic products, consumers need to be aware of what the appropriate level of consumption is and how to reach that level. Creating a sustainable society involves, among other things, that each of us uses only as much as we need.

Promoting the reduction of consumption in consumer societies is a particularly difficult task, a move against the tide created by the predominant consumer-oriented social paradigm. The consumption of a particular product is much easier to represent in the media and advertising compared to the joys brought by the savings obtained by reducing consumption and a simplified lifestyle. In other words, it is much more difficult to turn reducing consumption into an attractive behavior in the eyes of consumers.

Also, the consumer segment is not the only one that should be targeted by the marketing aimed at reducing consumption. Important in this context is the transformation of consumption reduction into an acceptable behavior for policy makers. A step in this direction is to promote the level of population's happiness as a metric system for measuring the progress of a state in exchange for traditional indicators of economic growth.

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