

# Sustainable Consumption: Communication Strategies

*Developing communication programs are essential to influence customers towards sustainable consumption*

How do communication strategies ensure sustainable consumption among customers? Persuading customers to act more responsibly is a challenge. Companies are developing effective communication programs to make customers consumption more sustainable.

**Developing communication programs** are necessary to influence customers. Marketers need to identify the right mix of promotional tools that would ensure that communication reaches the consumer at the right time and right place. For this, it is necessary that marketers develop a proper communication program.

**1. Nudge Theory: Nudge theory tells that positive reinforcement and indirect suggestions can achieve non-forced compliance.** Nudging can be done as follows.

- **Social Proof:** If others who are like me are doing it, I will follow it. A letter by government stating that 9 out of 10 people in Britain pay their tax on time, motivated others to comply
- **Choice Editing:** Arranging the choices in a certain method where individuals can be nudged into desired way. Keeping healthy food in a school cafeteria at eye level, while putting less healthy junk food in harder to reach places to discourage consumption of junk food and push consumption of healthier food
- **Framing:** Framing the marketing message based on what will motivate others to act. Organ donation registration increased 20% in England due to framing. In the past, people had to apply a form if they wanted to donate organ after death. The rule now is that people have to apply a form if they don't want to make a donation
- **Prompts:** A little prompt, a change of wording, a text message, can change the behavior in our favor. In a railway station in UK, a series of green footprints leading to rubbish bins resulted in reduced littering by as much as 46%

Coke uses nudge theory to influence customers to eat and drink responsibly. It uses recycling icons on cans (*prompt*), removes unhealthy inputs in the manufacturing (*choice editing*), introducing eat-ready food (*prompt*), informing others about the percentage of customers who have already re-used towels (*social proof, framing*) to influence customers for responsible drinking and eating.

**2. Social Marketing:** It is using communication strategies to change what people think, feel, believe, and do, not simply what they know. Coke is promoting 'physical activity' as an antidote to the problem of obesity in the new TV ad. It is opening 'Positivity Fitness Centers' in schools to improve student' fitness. It is encouraging

'Track Walks' and hiring US veterans to teach military-style fitness classes in citywide facilities i.e. Coke Boot Camp. Coke's social marketing is 'to inspire healthy and happy living'.

| Topic   | Course               |
|---|----------------------|
| Developing communication programs:<br>Communication mix in marketing: Unit 19.6 | Marketing Management |

**Source:**

- **John Durummond**, *Customer Behavior Change: The Holy Grail of Conscious Brands*, [www.sustainablebrands.com](http://www.sustainablebrands.com),&
- *Nudge Theory: The Quiet Revolution*, <http://www.affinitytraining.org/nudgetheory.html>
- <http://www.brandchannel.com/home/post/2013/09/23/Coca-Cola-Keep-Rolling-Initiative-092313.aspx>