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WHY THE GREEN MOVEMENT NEEDS SCIENCE, TOO

By Mark Wuttke, Principal, Wuttke Group www.wuttkegroup.com

In many ways, the green movement has positioned itself as the antidote to scientific advancement: The science of chemical additives, chemical substitutes, chemical stabilizers and chemical fertilizers. From that perspective, green was widely embraced not for what it was, but for what it wasn't – chemical laden, unsafe and bad for the environment.

But times have changed and consumers are demanding more than social consciousness and safety. They want green products that deliver proven benefits.

The green movement circa 2005: Show your badge

As the market for green products expanded (as well as ad and marketing budgets), companies focused their message on the pride of going green. In many respects, companies could succeed purely on the grounds of what they stood for, not what their products did. The core questions consumers asked were:

1. Is it good for the environment?
2. Is it good for people?
3. Is it safe?

The green movement today: Show me it works

After the global economic downturn, consumers shifted their focus from brand perception to product efficacy. After all, consumers have needs that must be met, and limited budgets to meet them. They want results. They want proof. And when things don't work the way they should, they want support. The consumer's main questions are now:

1. Does it work?
2. Can you prove it?
3. Is it worth the money?

Consumers are now more educated about how green products are produced, and have ancillary questions such as: where are the ingredients from? Are they high quality? Where is it manufactured? Is the product overheated? Are chemicals used to extract the ingredients?

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Evidence Based Trials: No Marketing, Please

As more and more demands are placed on the green market to prove its worth, the time has come for it to embrace the benefits of objective, independent scientific scrutiny. It's not enough for marketing teams to spin evidence from their own internal studies, companies must engage the help of well-regarded independent third parties to verify their claims so that consumers can feel that they are making smart decisions.

Think of scientific testing as the other side of the coin of organic certification. To truly assess organic products as the better alternative to conventional products, you need both.

Mark Wuttke heads the Wuttke Group, LLC, a world-class business development team with a focus on sustainable luxury, spa, boutique retail, organic luxury and the emerging category of eco-chic. Mark is an editorial advisory board member of Organic Spa Magazine, and works closely with LOHAS, Green Spa Network, and Natural Beauty Summit in America & Europe.
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