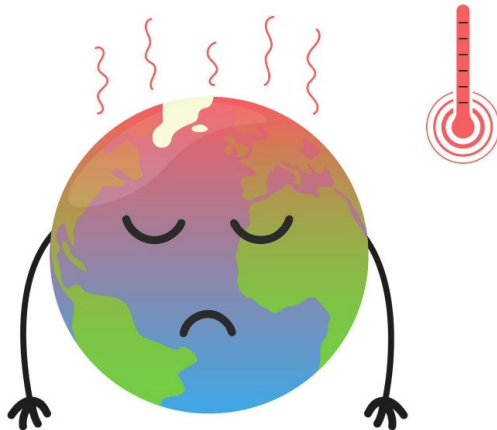


It gets hotter every year: Climate change and the role of environmental sustainability advertising.



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The impact of climate change is rapidly escalating in South Africa and unless concerted action is taken, temperatures may rise by more than 4°C by the year 2100. Marketing has a significant role to play in overcoming these environmental issues as it has the power to influence society's consumption behaviours. Studies have shown that consumers think brands are more influential in generating societal transformation than governments. This requires brands to take brave actions in support of environmental sustainability, while representing truthful and believable marketing communications. To achieve this, many businesses are turning to environmental sustainability advertising.

Considering the importance of sustainability and the responsibility of organisations and governments to protect the natural environment, there is a need to gain further insights into how consumers view organisations that support environmental initiatives.

A research study was conducted by Katherine Hugo, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#). The aim of this study was to explore the influence of brand bravery and advertisement credibility on advertising effectiveness within the context of environmental sustainability. Advertising effectiveness is represented by brand attitude, attitude towards the advertisement, and purchase intent. This study explored the views of Woolworths shoppers on their environmentally sustainable advertising efforts on Facebook. This research is important because brand

bravery is a relatively new concept, of which further research is required, and environmental sustainability advertising has been under-researched, especially in an African context.

A sample of 362 adult Woolworths shoppers who were Facebook users were asked to answer a self-completion online questionnaire. The questionnaire was hosted on the Qualtrics survey platform and distributed through various social media platforms, using non-probability sampling. The results of this study show that:

Brand bravery didn't predict attitude towards the advertisement, whereas advertisement credibility did. These findings imply that the truthfulness and believability (i.e. credibility) of advertising are more important than brand bravery to consumers. Woolworths should therefore consider focusing on the authenticity of their advertising messages. Furthermore, both brand bravery and advertisement credibility predict attitude towards the brand. Managers can leverage brand bravery and advertisement credibility in their advertising to favourably influence consumers' views of their brand. Additionally, both brand bravery and advertisement credibility predict purchase intent. Managers can, therefore, leverage brand bravery and advertisement credibility to attempt to improve financial performance.

In addition to expanding our understanding, and validating the role brand bravery and advertisement credibility play in advertising effectiveness, these relationships create a foundation for future investigation, leading to further theoretical development. Additionally, this study provides us with evidence of how these relationships apply in a developing country, by providing an African context.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2022 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Katherine Hugo under the supervision of [Prof Tania Maree](#).