

ARE CONSUMERS GOING GREEN?



There is a growing concern for the environment and an increase in consumers' intention of "going green". This has given rise to green marketing which aims to influence consumers' purchase behaviour by encouraging them to buy products that do not harm the environment. Actual purchasing behaviour has lagged behind consumers' expressed concern for the environment - and the feeling is that green marketing has underachieved. Are consumers really worried about the environment and does this reflect in their purchase behaviour?

A recent study was conducted in order to examine the effects of environmental concern and attitude towards green purchases on consumers' green purchase behaviours. The study was conducted by Liesel Burrows, a [Master's](#) student in the [Department of Marketing Management](#), in South Africa amongst a sample of 302 South African consumers.

As consumer awareness of, and concern for the environment increase, the growing number of consumers demanding environmentally friendly alternatives seem to increase. These consumers will regularly visit retailers who are able to meet their demands. In order to satisfy customers' needs, retailers should be armed with an understanding of consumer green purchase behaviour.

The results of this study indicate that consumers' environmental concern is strongly linked to them engaging in green purchase behaviours. The study also found that concern for the environment has an influence on a consumer's attitude towards green purchases.

The findings of this study will help marketers to understand the factors involved in green purchase behaviours in order to effectively structure marketing and communication strategies. This will increase the likelihood of consumers engaging in green purchase behaviours and consequently reduce their negative impact on the environment. In addition, marketers are provided insight into variables that may influence the way in which organisations are perceived.

This research was conducted as part of the fulfilment of the [Master's degree](#) in Marketing Management in 2011 with the [Department of Marketing Management](#) by Liesel Burrows under the supervision of Dr A Strasheim.