

Cracking the Consumption Conundrum

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Attention all global brands, your consumers are experiencing a consumption conundrum! A study, conducted by the Hartman Group, found that over time sustainability has shifted from being a 'nice to have' to being a cultural value that shapes society. In other words, sustainability is a complete moral system of beliefs and attitudes. However, our ongoing Visual GPS research has uncovered a disparity between what consumers say they do and how they act when it comes to sustainability, which puts brands in a unique position to help bridge the gap.

Nearly 8 in 10 global consumers consider themselves to be eco-friendly, with a healthy proportion saying that they recycle (75%) and some stopping the use of single use plastics (43%). However, when it comes to the point of purchase, convenience appears to override this sentiment. Nearly half of global consumers told us that they know they should care more for the environment but convenience takes priority. From a regional point of view, European consumers are the lowest at 41% and Asia Pacific is highest at 63%. Our data also showed that convenience is most important for Gen Z and least for Baby Boomers.

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It is encouraging that brands have ready-and-willing consumers when it comes to leading and promoting a sustainable lifestyle. Here is how brands, who are already in the process of doing amazing things around sustainability, can crack the consumption conundrum by visualising how their services are not only sustainable, but convenient:

- **Show eco-deliveries.** Online deliveries, especially during the pandemic, have offered great convenience. Whether it's electric bikes, scooters or vans, show the greener methods of sending exciting packages to consumers. Alternatively, show delivery lockers, that benefit shoppers and reduce the need for couriers to make multiple trips.

- **Show the convenience of technology.** Technology has had the benefit of making things that were once time consuming easier and advancing our access to sustainable innovations. Show how smart home technology allows people to control and monitor energy consumption at a touch of a button and without interrupting their enjoyable moments. Also, show how consumers use technology to educate and empower themselves to make cost-effective sustainable choices in their daily lives. For example, scanning a product label that means consumers have quick access to learn more about a product, using apps to donate second-hand clothes or watching tutorials on upcycling.
- **Show plastic reduction opportunities.** A number of retail stores offer plastic-free options by providing refill stations or encouraging reuse through 'bring your own cup/bag' schemes. Visualising this is the perfect way for consumers to see your leadership and see how they can simply make purchasing options that limit plastic waste. Evolve from studio flat lays of reusable items and consider showing zero waste schemes in use at a store.
- **Consider your audience.** Convenience is most important for Gen Z, so visualising ease and availability to them especially will play a big part in their purchasing decisions. That is not to say, ignore other age groups. Sustainability is for every generation and the visuals that different generations respond best to vary. [Check out this article](#) for a closer look on generational preferences when it comes to visuals on sustainability.