

Subject and Directivity of Mutual Environmental Communication Between Corporation and Consumer

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1. BACKGROUND AND THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

It becomes more and more important for companies to enhance mutual communication with stakeholders over their environmental activities. However, communication with consumer does not function effectively now. Although companies are sending information, consumer does not always catch it properly, and vice versa. In order to enhance mutual communication, it is essential to analyze why such a communication gap has structurally established, and under what condition the gap will be resolved.

2. THE VIEWPOINT AND THE METHOD OF RESEARCH

Based on previous research and the present condition, we define environmental communication as " various forms of information exchange activities between company and its stakeholders in order to promote eco-friendly management and marketing." It is thought that three points are important to understand the structure producing communication gap; purpose of environmental communication on the side of company (as accountability or as marketing communication), detailed communication activities, and concern and cognition of consumers. Questionnaires are carried out both for companies and consumer.

3. RESULT

Although companies expect feedback for environmental management, sales growth and etc., acquisition of reliance from consumer and improvement of company's image are thought most important. As for communication tools, environmental report and homepage are thought as important. On the other hand, many consumers, including who has higher concern, mainly get information from television and newspaper advertisement or labels of products and packages. It also became clear that companies which incorporate communication results in management are performing two-way communication, such as around-table conference which hears consumer's voice directly, and that companies which get consumers feedback are transmitting information over many years via communication tools familiar to consumer.

4. CONSIDERATION

It is clarified that accountability is the major motivation for companies to maintain communication with consumer. This is considered that companies can't fully regard environmental information as important marketing means, because the market where consumers prefer to eco-friendly products and services is immature. In terms of accountability, companies place emphasis on one-way communication. On the other hand, consumers get information about environmental activities of companies from advertisement or marketing communication of products and services. This is why the communication gap is caused. In order for environmental information to function as marketing means, improvements in consumers' environmental literacy is needed and political participation, such as law on promoting green purchasing, also plays an important role. And building two-way communication as accountability requires active endeavors of company over the years.