

Position paper - Best practices in communicating environmental credentials in energy retailing

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Abstracts

Introduction

The proliferation of environmental claims by European power retailers has confused many energy consumers, creating uncertainty about which claims to trust and how best to make environmentally friendly energy purchases. Effectively shaping, communicating and delivering the environmental credentials of energy products and services is a great challenge, one which most utilities have failed thus far.

Scope

A view as to why the trend is towards greater demand for detailed specification of the environmental attributes of utility products and services.

Guidelines of how to build your environmental marketing and green message around customer priorities, while meeting your own environmental strategy.

An explanation of how to drive value and sales through the independent verification of claims and the adoption of certification standards.

A case study of the most effective and successfully marketed green power program in the world.

Highlights

Claims about the environmental attributes of utility products and services are on the rise, as are customer expectations. The case for 'pushing' the environmental attributes of utility products and services are varied but well established, yet utilities must learn to build their environmental marketing and green message around customer priorities.

Having developed an appropriate understanding of the utility's carbon footprint, innovation must take priority over messaging. Also, verification of utilities' environmental claims by an independent body and adhering to certification standards both add value, not least because they both open up strong marketing channels.

For environmental claims to be credible, they also need to be made within the context of a wider environmental or sustainability program. Marketing 'green' successfully also requires level pricing, targeted products and messaging which must enable and encourage consumers to act.

Reasons to Purchase

Assess the relative strength of your current green marketing and communication strategy and take corrective actions where necessary.

Understand how to best shape, communicate and deliver the environmental credentials of your 'green' energy tariffs, products and services.

Succeed where others have failed: leverage your green credentials as a non-price differentiator and as a way to unlock greater commercial advantage.

Contents

DATAMONITOR VIEW

CATALYST

SUMMARY

ANALYSIS

Best practices in communicating environmental credentials in energy retailing

Claims about the environmental attributes of utility products and services are on the rise, as are customer expectations

The cases for 'pushing' the environmental attributes of utility products and services are varied but well established

Utilities must build their environmental marketing and green message around customer priorities

Having developed an appropriate understanding of the utility's carbon footprint, innovation must take priority over messaging

Having claims verified by an independent body and adhering to certification standards adds value

Having claims verified by an independent body and adhering to certification standards adds value

Green certification opens up strong marketing channels

For any claim to be credible, it also needs to be made within the context of a wider environmental or sustainability program

Marketing 'green' successfully requires level pricing, and targeted products and messaging

A case study of green tariffs in the US highlights the importance of persistent and creative marketing and falling price premiums

Palo Alto has created one of the most effective and successfully marketed green power programs in the US (1/2)

Palo Alto has created one of the most effective and successfully marketed green power programs in the US (2/2)

The successful marketing of 'green' products and services must both enable and encourage consumers to act

The takeaway messages for utilities seeking to develop their green marketing strategies are clear

APPENDIX

Ask the analyst

Datamonitor consulting

Disclaimer

List Of Figures

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: More US consumers are making clean power choices than ever before

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