

Busting myths about sustainable products





The Marketing Research and Insight
EXCELLENCE
AWARDS powered by QUIRK'S



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The evolving “green” challenges

A large pile of colorful plastic and paper waste, representing consumer waste disposal.

Consumer Waste Disposal

Two stacks of gold coins with small green plants growing out of them, symbolizing greenwashing.

Greenwashing

A person wearing a face mask and gloves, holding a brown paper shopping bag, representing COVID-specific behaviors.

COVID Specific Behaviors

A close-up of two young people smiling, representing Gen Z.

Gen Z

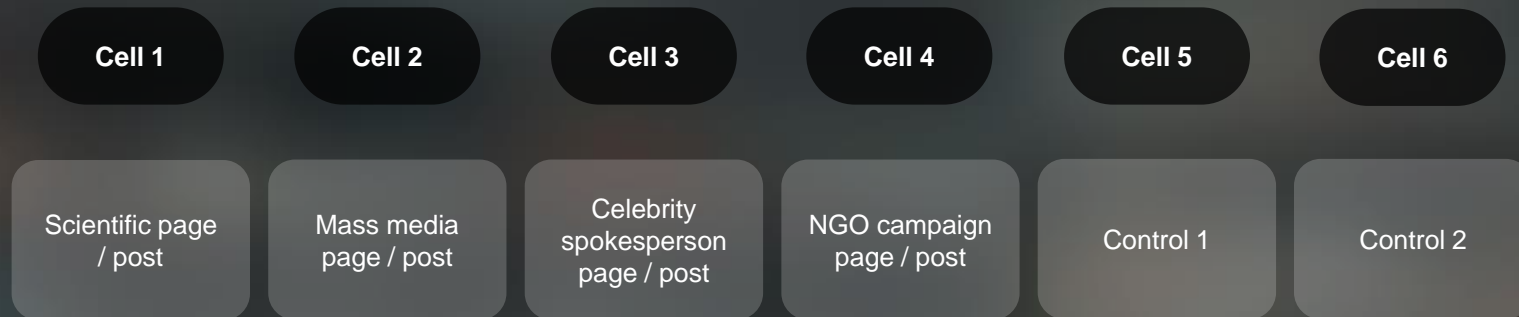


Tackling the challenge



Learn more about **how consumers see plastic pollution and sustainable products** in order to adjust communication tone, claims, campaigns and, consequentially, **make sustainable options mainstream.**

Study methodology



Each cell had 4 post variants (to balance the impact of particular post, image or page)

No timeline exposure shelf with ECO sticker

No timeline exposure shelf with ECO sticker

All shelves with sticker, marking eco-friendly products

Neutral timeline exposure (w/o plastic pollution related posts)



United States



General population 18+



Shopping in 4 categories:

- Energy bars
- Body wash
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes



N=1,200:
6 cells x 200 respondents per
(4 test cells and 2 control cells)



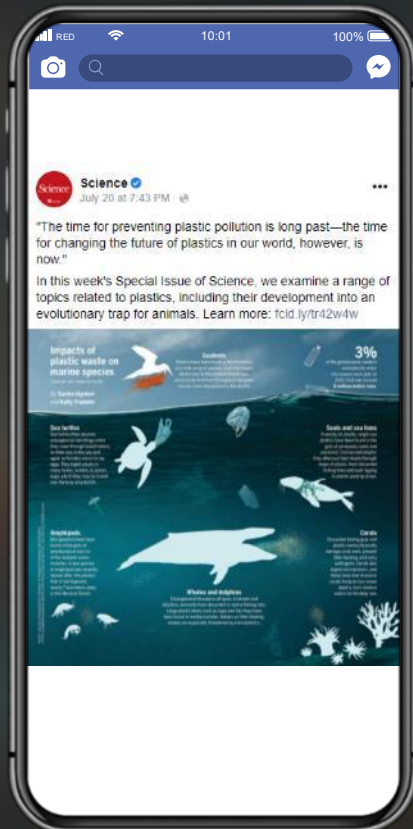
Methods used:

- Eye Tracking on FB timeline
- Facial Coding on FB timeline
- Virtual Shopping
- MaxDiff for claim testing
- Survey

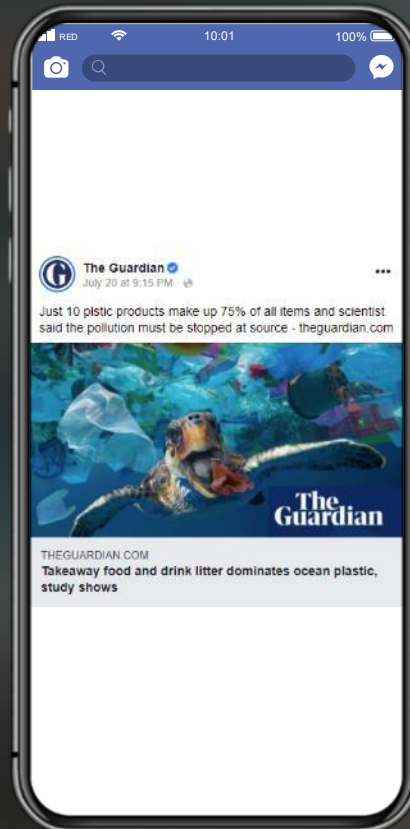
Facebook Posts Tested



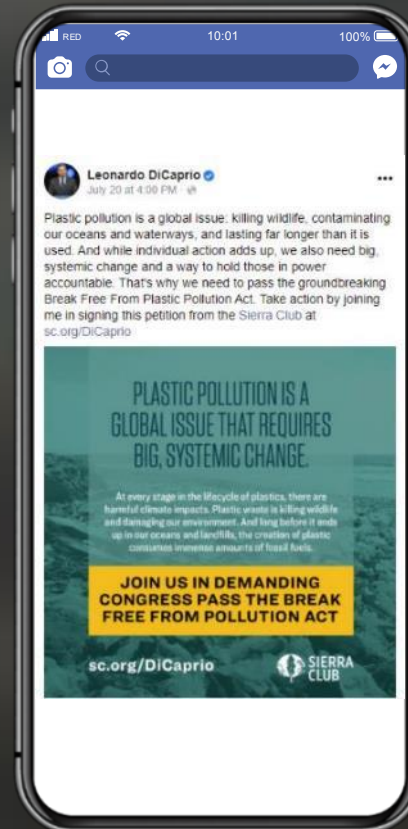
Backed by Science



Mass Media Promoted



Celebrity Endorsed



NGO Campaigns



But first, we must expand the narrative because



**Sustainability is
more than just
packaging**

Thinking about the product, its **advertising, claims, your supply chain** and above all, understanding **who your consumers** are and **how they relate** to it, is the only way to do sustainability right.

**How do you
navigate all these
different aspects of
sustainability?**



Voice of the consumer

Our consumers are very aware of pollution, yet don't think they can make a big difference – this is where brands can play a part



88%

of shoppers believe that the pollution of air, water and soil is one of the most relevant threats to preserving our environment

34%

However, only

of shoppers think they personally can contribute to a large extent to solving the problem

**How does Colgate-
Palmolive choose
which issues to
focus on?**



Myth #1



Myth #2



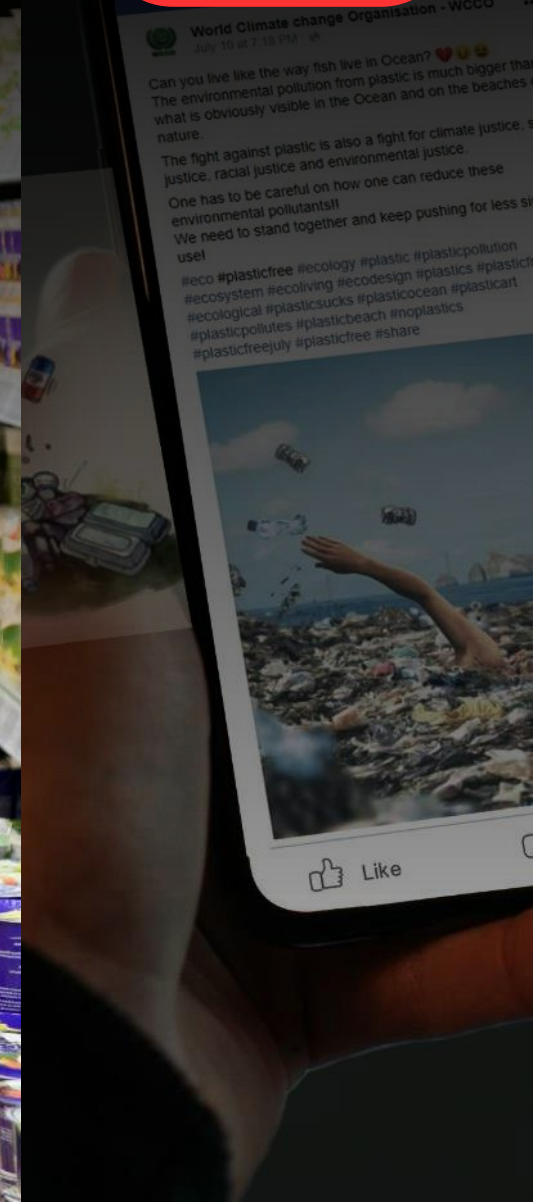
Myth #3



Myth #4



Myth #5



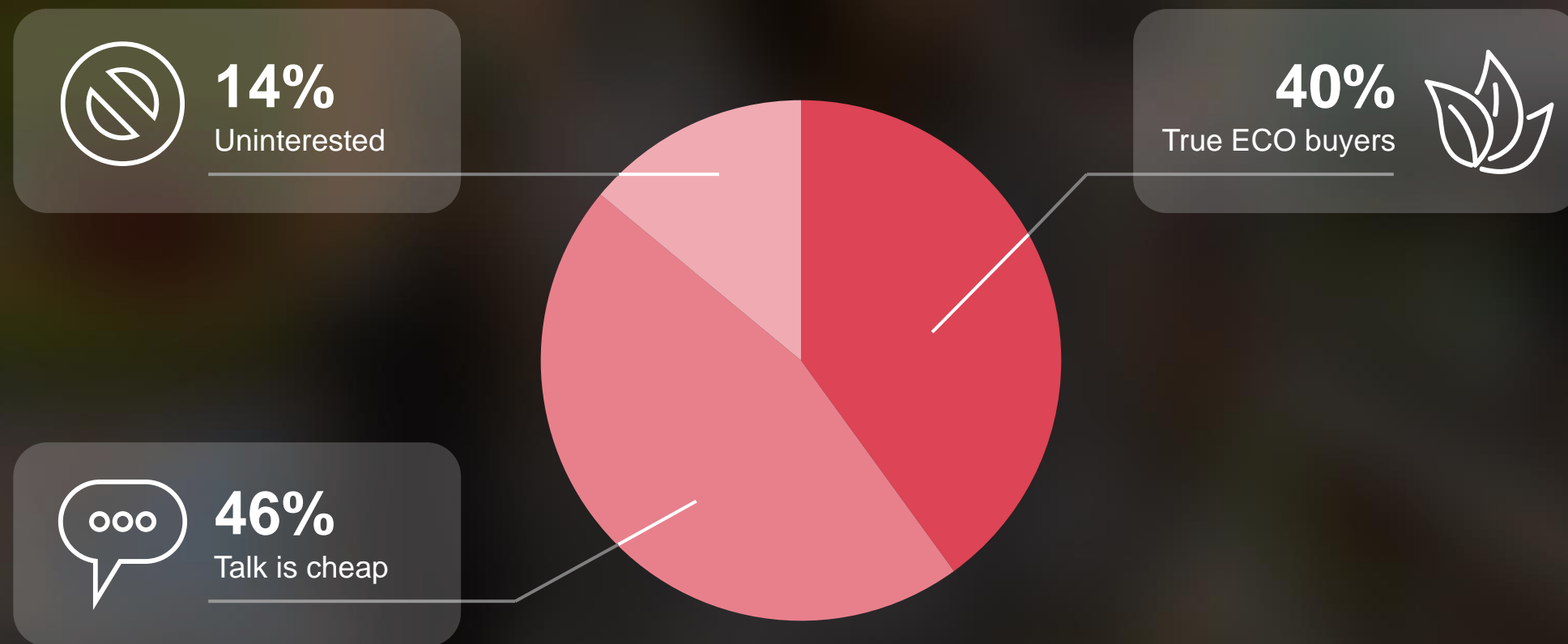
A woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped button-down shirt and blue jeans, is standing in a grocery store aisle. She is holding a loaf of bread in her left hand and a jar of jam in her right hand, looking down at the jar. The background is a blurred view of grocery store shelves. The image is framed by a large circular graphic with a purple-to-pink gradient.

Myth #1

**Sustainable products
are a difficult and niche
category – very few
consumers are into it**



86% of consumers are ready to try greener alternatives



**Given the
increasing
conversation on
climate change,
have you noticed
any emerging
consumer trends?**



Good practices examples: Make it easy to do good



Palmolive brand relaunched the US & Canada dish liquid businesses in 100% recycled plastic and 100% biodegradable ingredients



There's no behavior change required

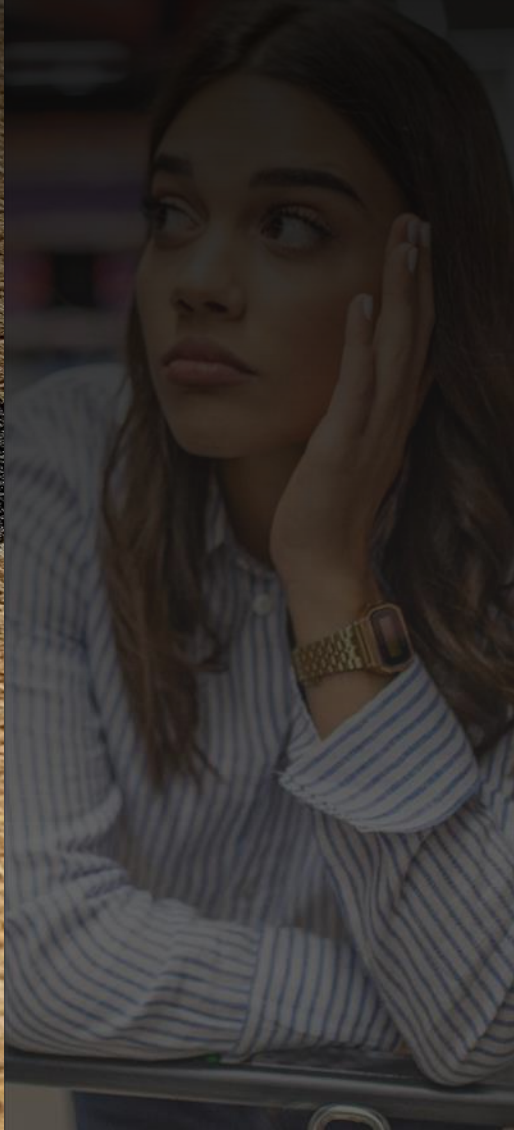
Myth #1



Myth #2



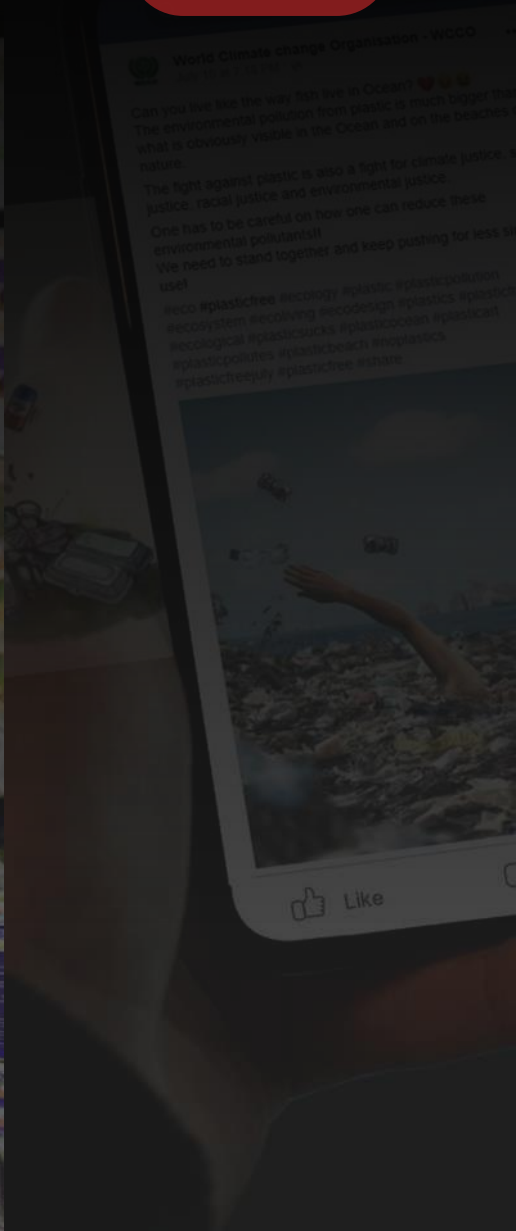
Myth #3



Myth #4



Myth #5



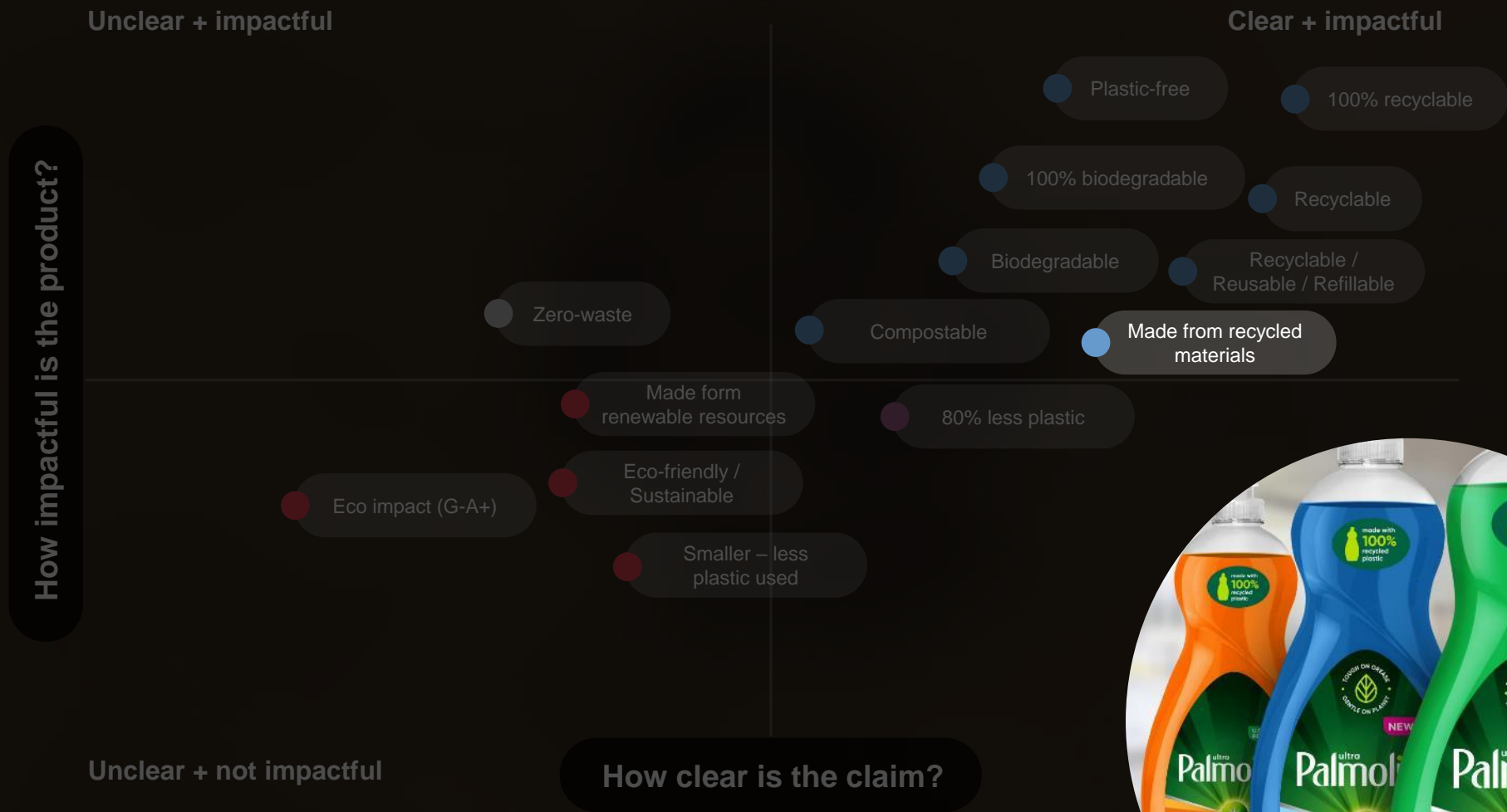


Myth #2

**Claiming your product
is sustainable makes a
difference**



Sometimes what consumers find clear is not the most sustainable option



Have you noticed that some claims perform better than others? What would you say are the best practices for choosing the right one?



Myth #1



Myth #2



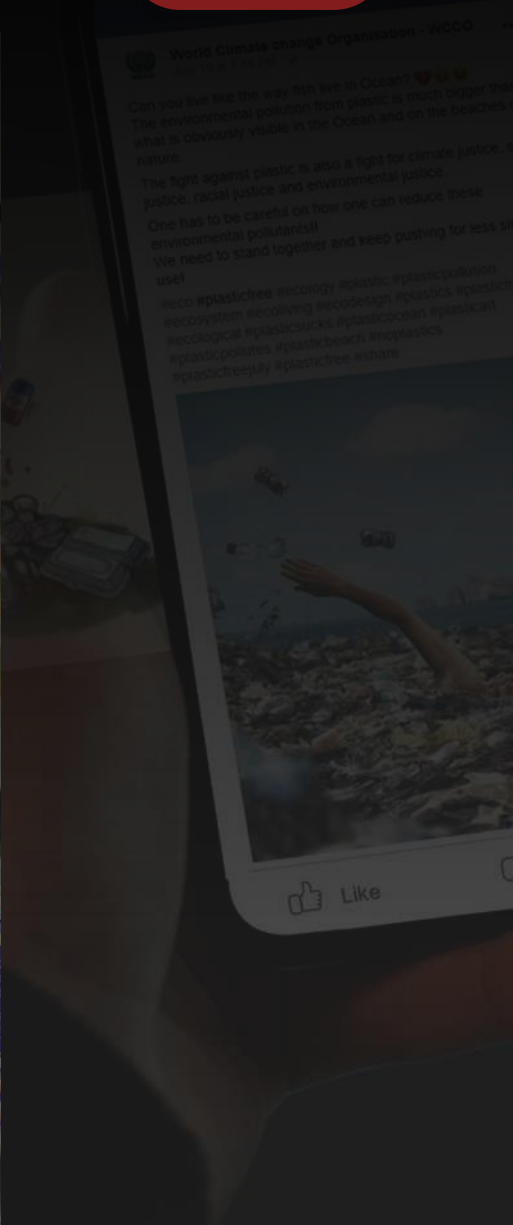
Myth #3



Myth #4



Myth #5





Myth #3

**Buying sustainable means
'sacrificing' or 'giving up'
consumer experience for
the greater good**



Aim to improve quality of the experience with sustainability



41%

of consumers would opt to buy more sustainable products if they were better quality



**What are other
good examples
of sustainable
products improving
consumer
experience?**



Myth #1



Myth #2



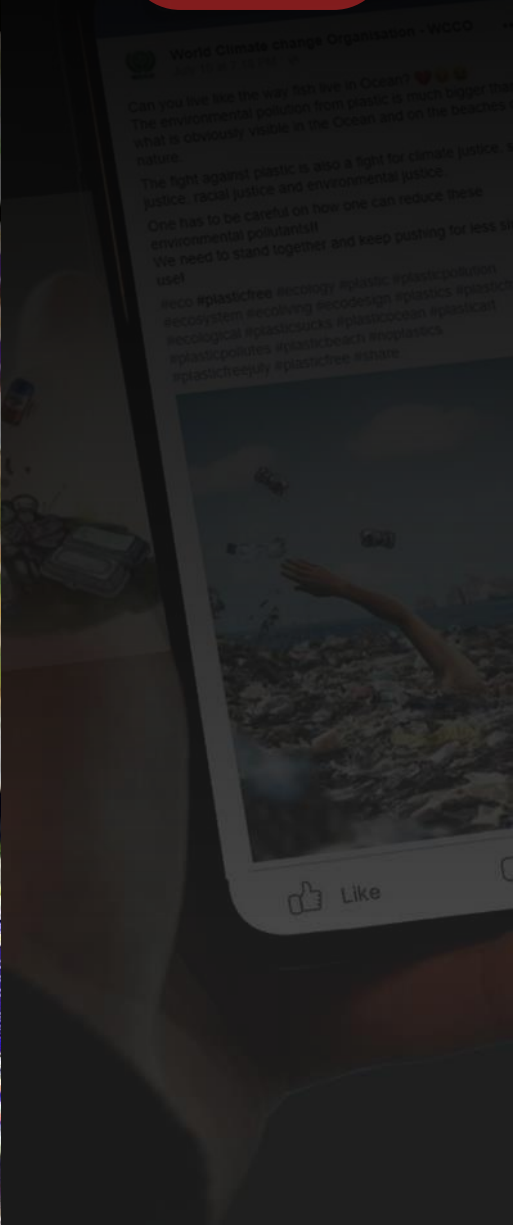
Myth #3



Myth #4



Myth #5



Myth #4

**Without demand,
there is no space for
opportunity**



Bigger brands can change the green game

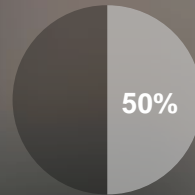
27% of shoppers would buy more eco-products if they were from well-known brands



Top 3 incentives
for buying more
eco friendly

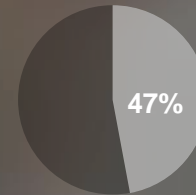
1

lower price



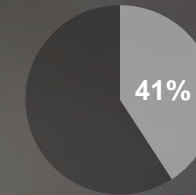
2

higher availability



3

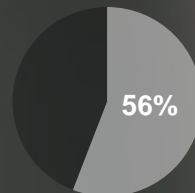
better quality of
those products



Top 3 barriers
for buying eco
friendly

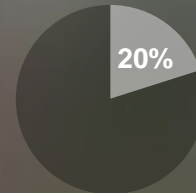
1

high price



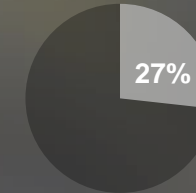
2

unavailability



3

lack of variety/options
to chose from



A reality check: Keep the prices competitive
~80% of shoppers are not willing to pay more for sustainable products!



**What is the first step
to making a new
sustainable product
truly competitive?**



Fully understand the job to be done



Elevate sustainability to key consumer needs - but think beyond as well.

Brush better.*
Less waste.



*vs. brushing teeth alone with an ordinary flat-trim toothbrush

Spiral bristles
and whitening
cups to polish
stains away



The products
MUST deliver on
key category
benefits

Reusable
aluminum
handle.

80%
less plastic.*



*Compared to similarly sized Colgate® toothbrushes

Myth #1



Myth #2



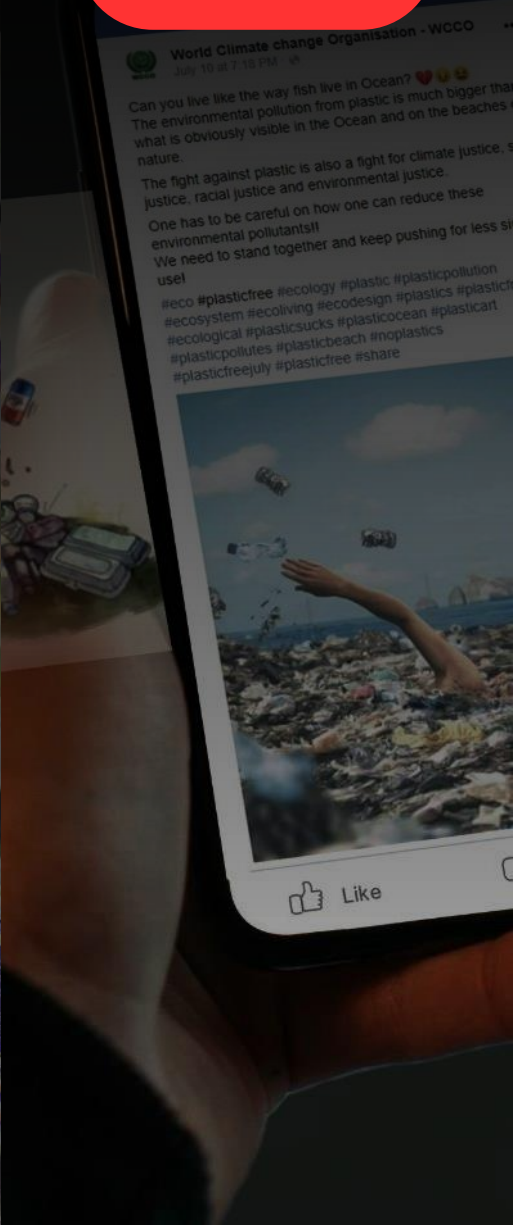
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Myth #4



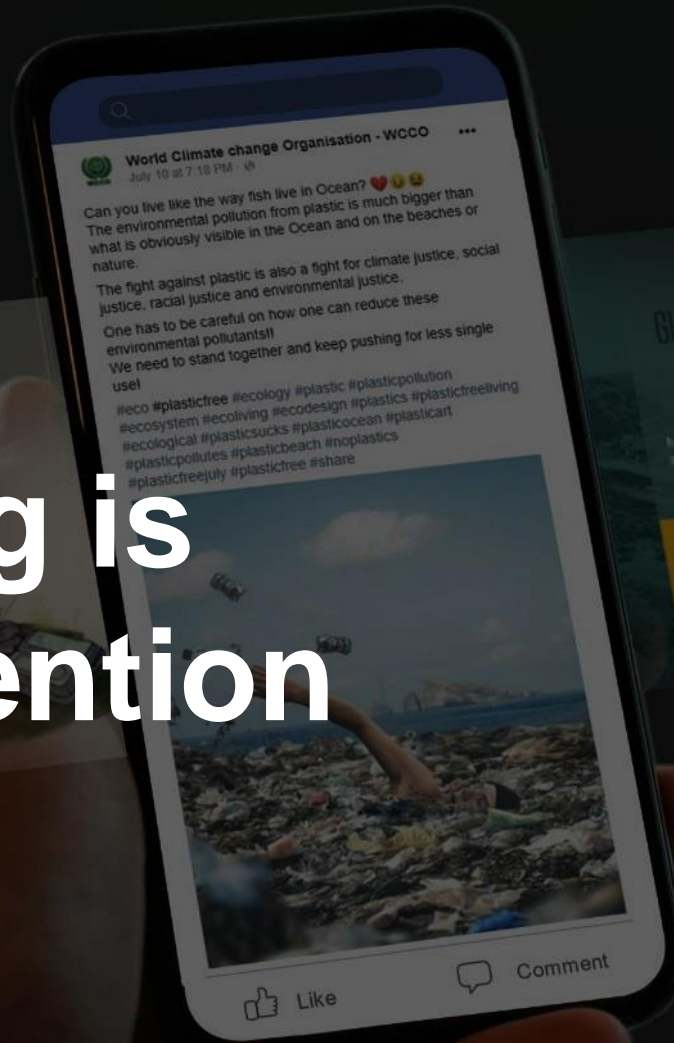
Myth #5





Myth #5

Guilt-tripping is good for attention



Facial coding **vs** Virtual shopping

results by media sources

The posts in our study mainly evoked interest, yet, facial coding has also detected negative emotions, such as disgust and fear.

	N	happy	surprised	interested	confused	disgusted	afraid	pe	ne	ER
scientific	57	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	2%
mass media	61	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%
celebrity	61	2%	2%	11%	0%	2%	0%	13%	2%	15%
NGO	63	2%	0%	8%	0%	3%	2%	8%	5%	13%

VS

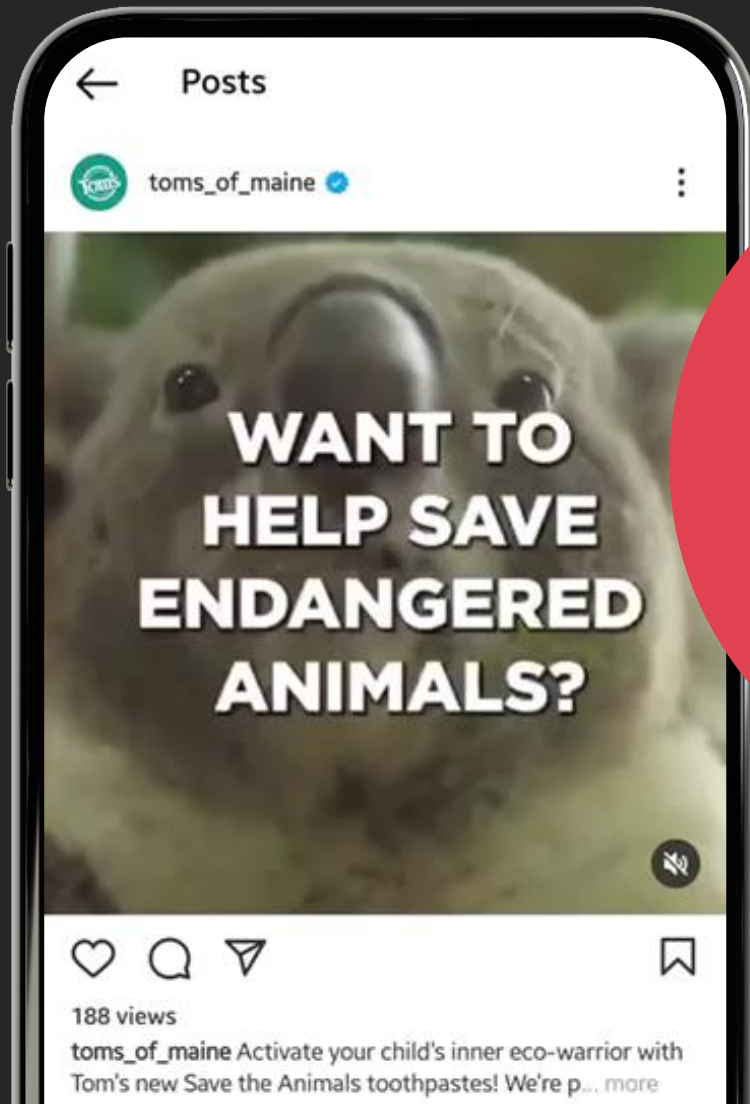
		Scientific (A)	Mass Media (B)	Celebrity (C)	NGO (D)	Control 1- Sticker (E)	Control 2- Neutral (F)
INTEREST	Toothbrush ECO	23% BCE	15%	15%	18%	15%	18%
	Toothbrush REGULAR	78%	80%	79%	78%	80%	84%
	Toothpaste ECO	15% E	12%	12%	14%	9%	9%
	Toothpaste REGULAR	85%	91%	88%	88%	88%	92%
PURCHASE FROM SHELF	Toothbrush ECO	18% BCE	12%	11%	16%	9%	14%
	Toothpaste REGULAR	77%	77%	77%	74%	77%	81%
	Toothpaste ECO	14% E	10%	9%	11%	8%	6%
	Toothpaste REGULAR	82%	88%	85%	86%	85%	88%

Ad exposure in our experiments significantly increased sales of sustainable products by up to 9%. Highest impact was seen for scientific posts.

**How should
brands employ social
media to create a
positive association
with acting greener?
How does Colgate
do it?**



Leverage the power of word of mouth



This can be scary for a brand to give up a certain sense of control, but the brand advocates bring enthusiasm and credibility!



Making sustainable products competitive in 4 steps

1st step

**Understand
your
consumers**

2nd step

**Inspire with
emotions**

3rd step

**Optimize
messaging**

4th step

**Think big
about
change**



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eyesee

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