

# Corporate sustainability: What arouses consumer skepticism?

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## **Abstract**

Skepticism protects consumers against misleading and deceptive marketing tactics, negatively affecting consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions. Through 25 in-depth consumer interviews, this paper explores what stimulates consumer skepticism toward companies' sustainability initiatives. Our research reveals that consumers recognize communication as a consequence of commitment, and inconsistencies in communication can cause doubts about the companies' ulterior motives. Our study uncovers that adopting single initiatives, applying conflicting approaches, and not following sustainability values in decision-making processes are among the elements that encourage consumers' disbelief. This research emphasizes the changes companies must promote to support sustainability values.

**Subject Areas:** *Consumer Behavior; Market Orientation; Marketing Strategy*