

Space Marketing Trifecta Strategies: Corporate Responsibility, Climate Crisis, and the Space Industry

By Izzy House

Abstract

There are powerful marketing opportunities that combine the activities of the space industry with corporate responsibility that can mitigate the climate crisis. Companies that embrace this trifecta of strategies can develop a brand story that resonates with their audiences while benefiting the planet.

Keywords: Space marketing, corporate responsibility, climate crisis, climate change, space economy, space industry, marketing strategies, content development, business, sustainability.

Introduction

Historic flooding, freakish storms, wildfires, and heat waves that kill thousands—does this signal that climate change is turning into a climate crisis? The planet is changing, and it is finally getting the attention it needs. These events are stimulating conversations that need to happen, and the climate crisis is beginning to trend. Corporate responsibility and the space industry is also beginning to trend in popularity. Combining all three trends into a marketing strategy generates goodwill and trust, and it may help to save our world.

Marketing is usually seen as a type of sales tool that is interruptive and annoying while trying to take our money in exchange for a subpar product. Marketing is so much more than an annoying ad or commercial, and it can be a powerful tool that can have a positive impact. Marketing has the power to change the world. It can save lives and create positive movements. It can eradicate diseases like polio by initiating widespread vaccination, spread the call for freedom against tyranny, or galvanize a county to step on the Moon. Marketing also has the power to save our world from ourselves. As the concern and conversation grows about the health of our planet, it can be a useful strategy for business messaging to join the conversation and bring about real change.

What is Marketing?

The term *marketing* can be confusing even to those in the industry. The American Marketing Association's official definition is "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, & processes for creating, communicating, delivering, & exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, & society at large."¹ The basic translation for this definition means that it is everything that a company does to interact with its audience.

¹ American Marketing Association, "Definitions of Marketing," July 20, 2022, www.ama.org/the-definition-of-marketing-what-is-marketing/.

There are different facets of marketing. Sales is the human touch point of marketing. Public affairs is the news and crisis-handling facet of marketing. Advertising is paid promotion to bring awareness of a campaign or offer. These terms are not interchangeable with marketing, but they are part of it, just as the hand is not the body, but it is a valuable part of it. Marketing includes everything your brand does, including product creation, messaging, how your employees interact, and even what your storefront smells like (yes—that is a thing—scent marketing). Marketing also includes the science behind the scenes that determines who your audience is, how to craft strong messages that resonate with it, and how to measure the effectiveness of each interaction.

Marketing is more than just a vehicle to sell a widget. It is the bullhorn that brings awareness. Marketing is powerful, and it can create change. It has the power to bring an idea to the masses that can spur the adoption of electricity, eradicate disease like polio, liberate a country from an oppressive regime, and put a man on the Moon. Marketing is critical for any movement to happen. It brings the issue into awareness. This is true for the climate crisis, space exploration, and corporate responsibility. As these subjects begin to dominate the conversation, companies will be encouraged to take actions that make sure that they are a positive part of the discussion.

The Climate Crisis is Trending

People are talking about the climate crisis because there is real concern for the future of our planet. The public is noticing water levels rise, temperatures climbing, and evidence of pollution. It is difficult to ignore wildfires and floods, as they erase lives in an instant. It is becoming personal, and people are demanding action before it is too late.

Marketing can enhance social pressure to initiate positive change. During the 1970s and the 1980s, satellite technology discovered holes in the ozone that were caused by chemicals in aerosols. Concerned scientists used technologies to determine what was causing the holes. They used marketing to share their findings with the public to create change.

In 1985, social pressure saw complete international cooperation resulting in the signing of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in 1987.² Marketing tactics can help to build momentum by informing the public about the actions that need to happen to initiate change from new laws to pressure for more eco-driven goods and services.

Space is Trending

Satellites have been a part of our daily routine for decades. Weather forecasting, climate monitoring, and communications pour into our devices and reveal the damage

² Environmental Protection Agency, "International Treaties and Cooperation About the Protection of the Stratospheric Ozone Layer," www.epa.gov/ozone-layer-protection/international-treaties-and-cooperation-about-protection-stratospheric-ozone.

that humanity's industry and consumerism has done to the planet. The eyes of space have given scientist solutions and instigated valuable legislation that has resulted in tangible results. For example, the holes in the ozone layer were detected and measured using NOAA and NASA researchers' satellite instruments aboard Aura, Suomi-NPP and NOAA-20 satellites.³

Space provides a miniature ecosystem that allows scientists to study the effects of our activities and provides a platform to develop clean technologies. The International Space Station produces technology like filtration systems that can create clean water and air. There have been over 3,300 research projects in the past two decades on issues that impact our climate, from farming practices to manufacturing to solar technology.⁴

Corporate Responsibility is Trending

People want to do business with companies that give back and take responsibility. The tolerance for corporate fleecing of the public is over. It matters to customers that their chosen products do not harm the planet and that they are sustainable. A catchy jingle or tagline is not enough anymore. Corporations, organizations, and small businesses must step up. The people are demanding that those who have done the most damage with manufacturing and design clean up the mess they have left behind.

Satellites measure changes in our climate and pollutants in our environment. Valuable data can impact corporations and small business decisions about their environmental footprint. The conversation on sustainability and responsibility will happen. Business leaders will need to decide on which side of the conversation they will find themselves. They can control the message by implementing positive environmental changes within their business practices and reap the rewards of public support or ignore the signs and be deemed the villains.

Trifecta of Marketing Strategies

The pressure for change can provide new opportunities for marketing initiatives that are part of the conversation and that have positive results for our planet and survival. By displaying corporate responsibility through space activities that improve our home, some companies have embraced this trifecta of strategies and are using space to develop greener products. As these three trends merge, they produce powerful results. It is a win for the planet as big businesses change from harmful practices and start using sustainable business practices. It is a win for the citizens of our planet who get to live better and

³ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, "Antarctic Ozone Hole is 13th Largest on Record and Expected to Persist into November," www.noaa.gov/news/antarctic-ozone-hole-is-13th-largest-on-record-and-expected-to-persist-into-november.

⁴ NASA, "Entering the Decade of Results: Benefits for Humanity Released," July 11, 2022. www.nasa.gov/mission_pages/station/research/news/benefits-2022-book.

healthier lives. It is a win for our humanity as we make positive change. It is a win for companies to have a brand story that people trust and support.

Estée Lauder is an exclusive partner of the ISS National Lab Sustainability Challenge, which is funding research for future-thinking plastics alternatives. The objective of the sustainability challenge is to use the unique ISS environment to develop, test, or mature products and processes that address at least one of three goals: reduce plastic waste introduction into the environment, seek alternative feedstocks and pathways for polymer production beyond petrochemicals, and reduce virgin plastic manufacturing. In addition, Estée Lauder is a founding member of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition.⁵

Target Corporation has also partnered with the ISS National Lab's ISS Cotton Sustainability Challenge. This challenge focuses on improving the use of natural resources such as water for sustainable cotton production on Earth. Two of the resulting studies seek to create water-saving strains of cotton and a third challenge recipient is focused on providing real-time information to farmers to manage water use and crop production better.⁶ Target received an honorable mention along with some great earned-marketing exposure from the influential business magazine, *Fast Company's* 2019 World Changing Ideas Awards,⁷ which "celebrate businesses, policies, and nonprofits that are poised to help shift society to a more sustainable and equitable future."⁸ This event is another example of the power of this marketing strategy and how it is gaining momentum.

A third notable company that is building a brand story with this trifecta powerhouse strategy is Vaya Space. Vaya Space created rocket fuel from recycled plastic bottles making it the first green rocket. Each launch uses more than two million discarded water bottles. In addition, Vaya Space participates in the International Coastal Cleanup.⁹

All these companies earn media coverage as outlets talk about what they are doing in addition to the influential content they produce. This creates a feeling of goodwill and trust among their audience. It fosters hope that something can be done and that these companies are doing something about our home planet. It enforces the identity of their consumers who demand their products like Estée Lauder's customers, or those who shop at Target's stores.

⁵ Estée Lauder Companies, "Estée Lauder Joins the International Space Station National Lab's Sustainability Challenge as Exclusive Partner," www.elcompanies.com/en/news-and-media/newsroom/press-releases/2021/10-28-2021.

⁶ ISS National Laboratory, "Target ISS Cotton Sustainability Challenge Receives Honorable Mention in *Fast Company's* World Changing Ideas," www.issnationallab.org/iss360/target-iss-cotton-sustainability-challenge-receives-honorable-mention-in-fast-companys-world-changing-ideas/.

⁷ Morgan Clendaniel, "World Changing Ideas 2019: 17 Winning Solutions That Could Save the Planet," *Fast Company*, www.fastcompany.com/90329204/world-changing-ideas-2019-17-winning-solutions-that-could-save-the-planet.

⁸ Clendaniel, "World Changing Ideas 2019."

⁹ Vaya Space, "Eco-Friendly," www.vayaspace.com/ecofriendly.

Opportunities

There are many opportunities to use space for corporate responsibility to mitigate the climate crisis. By displaying corporate responsibility through space activities that improve our environment, companies can develop brand stories that resonate with their audience. Brand stories generate content for social media, earn positive stories in the news, and give reasons for customers to choose them for purchases.

There are several platforms that can guide this marketing journey. Companies can use data to develop an eco-friendlier supply chain, enter into a sustainability challenge or competition, develop a new product that is Earth-kind or cleans up pollutants, and the list continues. Actions can be small steps or giant leaps that are budget friendly or large committed investments. Companies can pick the ones that fit their industries and that they can sustain.

They can be creative with what they choose to do and make sure that it can be fiscally rewarding. Climate-related strategies cannot help our world if the company goes bankrupt in the process. A little ingenuity and a dedication to environmentally friendly endeavors can reap large rewards for everyone involved. They can enlist public support and make the public a part of the story. The public will promote such initiatives and become staunch fans of such activities.

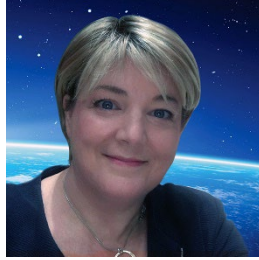
A Word of Caution

When using this strategy, companies should make sure that their actions are authentic and that their intentions are noble. If companies do not follow through or are found untruthful, it can destroy any trust and be almost impossible to recover from the damage. This is an emotive subject to which people connect their identity. It is a very personal relationship. Breaking trust can result in violent reactions or erase any real effort that such companies have made. It is easy to become a target for negative attention.

Conclusion

Developing corporate responsibility-focused programs that mitigate the climate crisis using technologies resulting from the space industry can develop a brand story in three powerful categories that provide marketing content that may resonate deeply with the public. These marketing trifecta strategies create a winning solution for companies, their customers, and the environment.

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About the Author: As an author of the book, *Space Marketing, Competing in the New Commercial Space Industry* and as the host of the Space Marketing Podcast, Izzy House aims to be a voice that helps to guide businesses through the concepts of marketing. With an extensive marketing background and three marketing degrees, she turns the lens of marketing onto the space industry. Armed with 20+ years of experience in public affairs, outreach, and marketing, Izzy aims to empower space companies and further their dreams of space exploration.

Editors' Notes: First-time contributor Izzy House is a marketing expert who focuses on the space industry. Her paper offers an overview of promotional opportunities available to many commercial space companies, and suggestions for how to take advantage of them. Ranging from the climate crisis to corporate responsibility, she focuses on making a meaningful impact rather than mere advertising strategies. Her prospective approach exemplifies the sort of optimistic stance we will all need to bring to future endeavors in order to work toward shared success in the growing space economy. **Mark Wagner and Gordon Arthur.**