



Nielsen Online

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News Release

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ONLINE CONSUMERS CALL FOR GREATER TRANSPARENCY IN STRATEGIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, ACCORDING TO NIELSEN ONLINE

BuzzMetrics Service shows 50 Percent Increase in Online Conversations around Sustainability; Discussion Broadens beyond Global Warming

NEW YORK– March 31, 2008 – Nielsen Online, a service of The Nielsen Company, today released findings from its “Sustainability through the Eyes and Megaphones of the Blogosphere” report, which examined consumer attitudes about personal and corporate responsibility towards the environment. Protecting the environment has become increasingly important to consumers, with online buzz around sustainability growing 50 percent in 2007. While early in the year discussion was dominated by the topic of global warming, bloggers progressively addressed a wider variety of green-related issues, with a particular emphasis on personal action such as recycling, avoiding excess packaging, and carpooling.

“As in many sectors, consumers are becoming increasingly vocal online about the issue of sustainability,” said Jessica Hogue, research director, Nielsen Online. “Blogger attention to related issues like pollution, toxins and sustainable agriculture reveal an important intersection between personal health and environmental wellness.”

Table 1: Top 10 Sustainability Topics for 2007

Topic	Buzz Trend: Increasing or Declining
Global Warming/Climate Change	-
Renewable Energy/Alternative Fuels	+
Resource Conservation	+
Recycle/Reuse	+
Carbon Emissions	-
Pollution	+
Organics	-
Toxins	+
Packaging/Plastic	+
Transportation (hybrids, carpooling)	+

Source: Nielsen Online, BuzzMetrics



Note: Topics are ranked by number of messages among sustainability bloggers from 1/1/07 to 12/31/07, with the Buzz trend reflecting change from 1/1/07 to 12/31/07.

Top Sustainability Blogs

Discovery Channel's TreeHugger led the top sustainability blogs for 2007, with 4,612 messages related specifically to sustainability. Worldchanging and Biopact took the No. 2 and 3 spots, with 738 and 722 sustainability messages, respectively.

Table 2: Top 5 Sustainability Blogs for 2007

Blog	Sustainability Messages
TreeHugger	4,612
Worldchanging	738
Biopact	722
The Oil Drum	706
The Alternative Consumer	698

Source: Nielsen Online, BuzzMetrics

Note: Blogs are ranked by number of messages about sustainability from 1/1/07 to 12/31/07.

Greenwashing: A Failed Corporate Strategy

Not only are consumers looking for practical steps they can take to reduce personal environmental impact, but they are also holding corporations accountable for action and results. Bloggers are quick to condemn "greenwashing" – when they suspect companies misrepresent their environmental impact with aggressive PR campaigns – as spurious attempts to be "green." Consumers expect consistency in action and authentic and transparent messaging.

Table 3: Top 5 Greenwashing Topics

Greenwashing Topic	Percent of Discussion
Contradictory Actions	25%
Incongruous with Company/Industry	21%
False/Misleading Comments	19%
Seek Regulated Oversight	18%
General Suspicion	17%

Source: Nielsen Online, BuzzMetrics

Nielsen Online analysis showed that similar environmental initiatives can provoke different consumer responses depending on a company's reputation and history. For example, in the retail sector, while Wal-Mart and Target both introduced reusable shopping bags, some consumers voiced skepticism towards Wal-Mart because of its association with environmental, labor, and health care issues. Although in general consumers were supportive of Wal-Mart's reusable bags, some were still dubious of the retailer's intent.

"When it comes to the environment, consumers are insisting on both transparency and consistency from the corporations they patronize," said Hogue. "Consumer support depends on action as well as perceived sincerity and commitment."

Sustainability Webinar – Greenwashing: Who's Winning – and Losing – the Green Race Online?

For more insights from Nielsen Online's "Sustainability through the Eyes and Megaphones of the Blogosphere" report, please sign up here for our April 1st Webinar:

<http://www.netratings.com/resources.jsp?section=event&nav=2>



About Nielsen Online:

Nielsen Online, a service of The Nielsen Company, delivers comprehensive, independent measurement and analysis of online audiences, advertising, video, consumer-generated media, word of mouth, commerce and consumer behavior, and includes products previously marketed under the Nielsen//NetRatings and Nielsen BuzzMetrics brands. With high quality, technology-driven products and services, Nielsen Online enables clients to make informed business decisions regarding their Internet, digital and marketing strategies. For more information, please visit www.nielsen-online.com.

About The Nielsen Company:

The Nielsen Company is a global information and media company with leading market positions in marketing information (ACNielsen), media information (Nielsen Media Research), online intelligence (NetRatings and BuzzMetrics), mobile measurement, trade shows and business publications (Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter, Adweek). The privately held company is active in more than 100 countries, with headquarters in Haarlem, the Netherlands, and New York, USA. For more information, please visit, www.nielsen.com.

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Editor's Note: Please source all data to Nielsen Online.