"Think Like The Sun: For Greener Marketing Effectiveness."

A presentation for Columbia University Graduate School of Business

Tim Love Vice Chairman Omnicom Group Inc. September, 2008 More than ever, it is important that a product or service's philosophical values are made known to stakeholders and customers and that these values correspond to the new consumer outlook of Ecologism. Understanding some of the dynamics of Ecologism is the objective of this paper, that a) consumer behavior is affected by beliefs, b) that beliefs are affected by information, c) that the way information is received and transmitted has an effect on consumer's perception of their "ecology" and, d) this "ecology" has enormous implications for the success or failure of brands and companies. This paper is intended to help individuals and corporations better adapt to Ecologism. It offers some tools which can assist you in communicating more effectively and profitably for your benefit as well as everyone else's on the planet — now and henceforth. Ecologism suggests that we must be aware of and be accountable for the long-term effect our actions, products and services have in a world that truly is a global village. It requires a new model for consumer behavior that assumes that an open system is quickly replacing the previous closed system. Ecologism also assumes harmony with the concept of total quality. Like total quality, Ecologism requires a fundamental philosophical acceptance of a complete, integrated system, including the impact on earth, individuals and future societies.

Undeniable Truth

The evidences of environmental neglect and degradation are becoming more apparent to consumers. The early warning signs via increased media coverage, the obvious facts about world population increases and the projected needs our children will have, in just the next twenty-five years, are alarming. The environmental crisis our civilization is approaching is real. It is not a fanatic's nervousness or over reaction to timid hearts that should stir your soul to action. It is the simple economic call of the consumer.

There is much confusion about environmental issues and about what each of us can do, if anything, to avert some of the chaos that some economists and environmentalists predict. It seems especially desperate for a growing number of individuals who have little faith that their personal behavior will make a difference in helping avert environmental stresses like food shortages, air and water pollution and atmospheric and climate degradation. While many people debate what the signs indicate, it is time to look for solutions. Fear, confusion and lack of confidence have always been the warning signals for leadership, the need for a guiding vision and responsible actions.

Where do we look for solutions?

It can be confusing when we hear conflicting arguments about environmental issues like "Global Warming" or "Greenhouse Effect". Whoever named these threats was not a marketing or advertising person. These terms sound like they are sort of good for us. "Global Warming" seems warm and nurturing, offering a calming feeling, while "Greenhouse Effect" conjures up images of nicely grown tomatoes, fruits or flowers from a protected, controlled environment. The reality is that, named more appropriately, e.g., Earth Poisoning and Atmosphere Suffocation, they are real and increasingly present dangers, exacerbated by the needs of a rapidly growing world population. Even the word, "Sustainability", lacks the sense of urgency and challenge that the subject requires today. We urgently need solutions and behavior change.

Innovation is needed

Innovation is needed when it comes to these issues in order to grow businesses and achieve a more optimistic economic future. We must each commit ourselves to a more enlightened entrepreneurial perspective, which lives up to the needs of today's consumers and those of future generations. A recent study by Green Light International on international consumer attitudes stresses the importance of creativity in marketing. Their report says that "brands that advertise creatively are implicitly acknowledging that the power lies with the consumer because they are treating them as discerning and intelligent, rather than passive and manipulative. They are more likely to be identified with and therefore consumed."

No one expects a business, serving consumers, to have all the answers. Consumers know solutions to complex problems are not easy. Consumers are demanding that you let them know your company is not asleep at the wheel when it comes to their environmental concerns and their particular cultural needs. This will also effect marketing strategy and implementation. This paper offers a new perspective for global marketing: "Think Like The Sun: For Greener Marketing Effectiveness."

Insights into understanding

Researching consumer trends from the perspective of communications and reflecting on what history has taught us, can offer insight on where society is today and what we must do to assure a positive future. The essential thesis is that advancements in information technologies have an enormous impact in shaping our

perception of the world and, in turn, our beliefs and our behavior in it. By better understanding the dynamics of consumerism and the new information technologies in the age of increased ecological consequence, we will be more effective at determining the kind of behavior we and our corporations need to have. This, in turn, can lead to a healthier balance with nature and a greatly improved economic outlook.

Long-term relationships between societies and the products and services they use are built on more than short-term benefits and needs. Consumers, especially young consumers, have grown up with many product and brand name alternatives. With their consumption they have become accustomed to a heavy din of advertising and marketing solicitations through a more developed media, more complex than ever before in history. A large and influential population segment, the so-called post World War II baby boomers grew up with it. Indeed, their behavior patterns, expectations and perceptions have been influenced by it. However, outside of the developed markets in the world, the largest population segment is under the age of 25 years old. The world's youth today are the most media savvy audience in history. The global youth culture is the point-of-market-entry for the new market and new world of public opinion that is emerging. They are consuming communications technologies and information from all vantage points of opinion and culture. And, as control of new communications technologies have shifted to individual consumers, the first media of importance is people. Word-of-mouth has become the most important factor in consumption of ideas or brands.

New attitudes new values

Consumers are becoming more discerning about what a brand, service, or company's values are. A new attitude is developing. It is an attitude influenced by a reaction to the overly indulgent 1990's, a growing awareness of the fragile nature of our planet and the rapidly growing world population. Evidence of this attitude shift is more apparent in consumer marketing arenas where marketers are closely monitoring behavior trends in order to sustain their business enterprises. Today's consumers have needs they desire to satisfy, but not at the expense of their long-term values, other people's lives, or the world's environment.

New expectations, new beliefs

In the past, we have looked primarily to our courts, governments and institutions to lead us and sustain us through change. However, it appears these entities may only be capable of taking us so far in addressing the difficult global challenges created by a post-industrial revolution society. Each of us, as individuals, must change our perspective and our behavior patterns. This is a fundamental change in world culture which governments, courts and institutions cannot manage or lead by themselves. The costs are too high and the effect is insufficient. Our communities and our corporations have to step forward and be the leaders in this new age. The global village created by advances in communications technologies increasingly enables the world's populace to come in contact more with corporations and brands than governments. Today, of the top 100 economies in the world, 51 are corporations. More people are in touch with icons like Coca-Cola, Nestle, Philips, Mercedes, Pepsi, Nokia, McDonald's, IBM, Nike, Pampers, American Express or Toyota than any single nation's government. This means issues of sustainability cannot be separated from issues of marketing brands.

Understand the effects of Secondhand Culture

The concept of "secondhand smoke" has now evolved, in a broader sense, to also apply to the effects of "secondhand culture". Due to the rapid expansion of media accessibility, developed market culture, including U.S. corporations, is now more perceivable in other cultures than has ever been possible before. Like secondhand smoke, this culture exposes itself in places and affects people in ways that we are not aware of, even people we may not be intending to connect with. This has an effect on how they think about other nation's cultures and helps them define their own. Realize that your corporation is actually serving an interconnected, intercultural world that has no borders. Globalization is over. It has given way to the need for embracing multi-culturalism and global economic interdependency.

An evolution of consumerism

The fundamental changes we are experiencing are broad based: socio-economic, political and environmental. The engine of cultural change in the past three decades has been the world's economy with advertising media proliferation and consumerism as the throttle. Today, there is an evolution of the consumerist movement-taking place. It is an evolution in the age of ecology, where every individual has to consider the fundamental cause and effect relationship between their behavior and its environmental impact on the Earth and on other individuals. This includes their consumption behavior and brand loyalty. Sustaining a healthy balance with the increasingly fragile nature of our planet is at question.

The collision of these events is leading to an evolution in consumer perspective, called Ecologism. Ecologism gives name to a phenomenon of two massive trends marrying to give new direction to industry, nations and everyone on the planet. It is a term that helps explain why sustainability and marketing effectiveness can no longer be considered mutually exclusive.

ecol-o-gism n

- 1: consumerism in an age of increased ecological perception/awareness where interdependency of consumer behavior has economic and social outcomes.
- 2: new directions environmental initiatives are taking given increased universal compatibility in communications technology and knowledge transfer.

Our world is changing more dramatically and at a faster rate than at any time in history. Perhaps you have felt like the world events and relationships are changing so fast that things are becoming impossible to keep up with. It is hard to know what frame of reference to maintain for perceiving these events.

On the issue of who discovered water, we're pretty sure it wasn't the fish. Like fish in water, it is hard for most of us to see what is going on around the world that would result in the rapid change of events and opinions increasing in the post 9/11 world. It is hard to see, because of the range, speed and complexity of events people are now able to perceive in the media. The media is now truly globally dispersed. The hyper-speed with which events can be observed in the media is supercharging perception. Today over 3-billion people are able to communicate with each other and more than half of the connections are made with mobile communications technologies versus PC.

With Y2K and particularly since 9/11, we have seen dramatic changes in economic influence, economic and social relationships between nations and political leaderships. We are looking at an expanded European Union emerging with the potential for significant economic power. We see restructuring of a host of political and economic models into reinvented countries and communities. Beyond this there are growing concerns about healthcare, AIDS, drugs hunger and education in the news every day as our world population continues to grow.

Perhaps this is why consumer research polls like Roper increasingly find that people's number one desire is for more available time, better work-life balance, to escape the cacophony of events and stresses of our times. This occurs despite the fact that the technological advances of the post World War II era have given us a far more convenient way of life.

Advertising and marketing research is an industry that exists to understand changing trends, communications technologies and techniques for communicating information to consumers. It is also keenly focused on understanding consumer behavior, consumer perception and in general what makes people do or think what they do. It is no wonder then that the advertising and marketing research community might be an early indicator of changes in communications technologies and consumer behavior patterns than most other industries.

A New Perspective Is Needed For Marketing Effectiveness

Many in our industry, including our clients, have been asking questions about the future and where all the current changes are taking us. One thing we can all say is that the entire field of communications does not work the way it used to. New tools and acceptance of a new perspective are needed in order to market more effectively and to encourage sustainability of the planet.

Many companies, indeed, even government servants, may be trying to react to the changing global economic and social environment from the perspective of the past. Yet, there has been an insidious change in the global perceptual environment. The perspective and frame-of-reference we have typically used to see the world over the past 20 years, is obsolete. It is no longer sufficiently relevant to serve us, our corporations, or our fellow man, into the future.

The process of understanding the changes underway and adapting will be no small task for those involved in marketing, advertising or the media. The purpose of advertising, to provide information and educate us about the benefits of a particular product or service, has not changed. However, everything else about advertising has changed. The media, the methods, the techniques and, most important, the consumer has

changed. Ecologism is the recognition that doing business going forward requires a commitment to managing the total experience of your actions. Environmental impact and marketing effectiveness are no longer mutually exclusive. This interconnected-ness of sustainability and marketing also has an interdependency of impact on a company's ability to attract long-term capital. Companies that do good, will do better.

Discovering Ecologism

In the early 1990's I was part of symposium of advertising researches and agency leaders formed to consider changes in marketing that could evolve over the next 10-15 years. Your own Professor Plummer was a key member of this symposium. We were considering what things would be like for marketing and the environment, about now in 2010.

What we had realized was that many of us had increasingly been dealing with communications issues that were broader and more far-reaching than the simple benefits or needs a product or service was designed to deliver. It became clear that the nature of our work and our responsibility as communicators was different. Something fundamental seemed to be changing in our society and our client's businesses. Our clients were asking us to help them deal with ecological and consumer issues that extended beyond what they traditionally talked about in communicating the benefits of their brands. While they created products or services to fulfill consumer needs, they were finding it necessary to address issues they could not avoid in order for their businesses to survive. Issues like solid waste, litter, food nutrition and food safety, drunk driving, alcohol abuse, consumer liability and passive product effects. In comparing notes with each other at our symposium, the advertising and marketing professionals suspected that a profound change had taken place with consumers and, therefore, we must change.

The symposium pooled some of the most talented minds in the communications business. Those in attendance included people with experience on the solid waste issue of disposable diapers, poison-tampering on Tylenol, oil spills and related issues for an energy client, political campaign experiences with the development of the EU, the Carter, Reagan and Clinton campaigns, adoption and abortion issuesl, chemical waste and plastics issues for a large chemical corporation, Sierra Club communications issues related to global warming, challenges faced on behalf of the Nature Conservancy and responsible drinking, bottle legislation and litter issues for a brewery client. These and many other client examples which were shared. They also had in common the fact that policy, tax and legislation outcomes were ultimately attached to these issues. The issues were clearly economic in consequence.

In virtually every case we analyzed, we saw the tremendous importance of leadership in addressing major issues. Whereas in the past, leadership was measured in terms of the company or brand with the biggest market share, the most outlets or the most sales, the meaning of leadership seemed to have shifted. Somewhere in the 1990's big got "too big" and past leaders who were big became distrusted by consumers who were becoming increasingly concerned about quality and service in their measure of leadership. More and more it seems that in order to achieve perceived leadership in the marketplace, it is no longer enough for advertisers to just stress size, product features or benefits. It is increasingly necessary to assume the public responsibility that goes with leadership, by acknowledging and speaking out on broader social issues related to one's products, services and reputation.

A leadership vision today must go beyond a narrow view of the business enterprise or the venues of public communications. It must be part of a company's or brand's culture, where its social capital is a key criteria for business success.

Consumers are demanding far more of the individuals and companies behind the brands they consume. The reason for this is that consumers today have access to a tremendous amount of information, more than at any time in history. Technology and high-speed communication have allowed consumers to access all kinds of rapid-fire, fast-breaking news. And since public relations typically works best when it filters through the media from third parties, at least related to sensitive or controversial issues, it is becoming harder to marketers to participate in the dialogue around issues affecting their business with PR alone. They need to get out in front or respond quicker than can typically be expected with PR and/or by relying on the news media to carry a balanced message. The core objective in dealing with issues is speed, impact and controlling part of the dialogue.

Our symposium realized that our experiences with issues reflected a change underway in consumerism as well as in the important issues. This led us to judge the term Ecologism as more correctly identifying the new era we were collectively experiencing along with some of our clients. Ecologism is the term we used to help us understand how the old model of consumerism has changed in the new age of increased ecological awareness and rapid technological innovation. We concluded that the scope of the consumer change was much broader than our physical environment. A fundamental paradigm shift was taking place that affected the way consumers perceive everything in their environment, not just protection of the earth's beauty and resources.

This new consumerism is based on the notion that brands, ideas and businesses get their power from the consumer. AG Lafley, of the Procter & Gamble Company, very correctly coined the phrase "the consumer is boss" when he became CEO in mid 2000. Ecologism includes this consumer power to underscore that perceptual frameworks change as mankind's perception of the environment changes. Intrinsic to the Ecologism underway is the fact that our advancements in information technology are changing, so that most of us can learn about how consumer purchases have a fundamental effect in altering us and our environment for better or for worse. The environment in our case has a much broader meaning that includes a person's internal environment, as well as the external environment; the present and the future ones.

The End of Globalization - Web2.0 to Web3.0

What does the future hold for marketing and advertising brands?

Globalization can hardly be a more current topic for marketers as well as consumers. Consider the tremendous influence of globalization that has taken place, actually since the early 1990's. A new marketing perspective is needed to compete effectively going forward. Whether you're dealing with "local only" businesses, or you are engaged in multinational/global business, globalization has affected marketing strategy. Globalization was largely about geographic expansion of brands and ideas. That expansion has given way to a global village, and a new perspective is required for brands.

I well remember when the first personal computers became available in the 1980's. They were used largely for word processing at first and then in the late 1980's for email.

In the mid-1990's the worldwide web proliferated and the term Web1.0 saw websites increase in popularity. Web1.0 was about people gaining access to information, the "information superhighway" as it was called.

Then, around Y2K we saw Web2.0 start to accelerate things as the focus shifted on users gaining access to other users. Social networks were invented and blogs became prevalent. People were using the internet to live their lives, as opposed to supplementing them. According to trends emagazine, this is the era we are in now and it will last until around 2010, when we will start to see Web3.0 emerge.

Web3.0 is being called the "Semantic Web", it will give people access to greater intelligence because the internet itself will increasingly be more intelligent. It means the internet will be able to read incoming data and define exactly how it applies to that particular user. Search engines will understand what you are seeking even more accurately. The linkages that exist will multiply, increasing the interconnectedness of ideas

Tim Berners-Lee, the creator of the worldwide web in 1989, sees Web3.0 as a "seamless web of all the data in your life," where this idea of "mashups" becomes extremely sophisticated. He says you'll be able to drag your bank statement over your calendar and see how much money you have spent each day. He sees an era where every piece of digital information is given "a longitude and a latitude on a map." We've already seen some of this with the iPhone and the advancements in digital mobile technology linkages in Japan. According to ABI Research, in 2007, 76 million mobile phones were connected to the internet. By 2013, its expected to jump to 700 million.

This means we are evolving from a "Knowledge Economy", which was coined at the outset of the information explosion fielded by the computer. Those who had the knowledge had the power. Advances in communications technology evolved this to an "Attention Economy". In any relationship, he who has more choices in the relationship has more power. As the availability of choices for an individual increased with

Web2.0, power shifted to consumers. With the explosion of information, available in real time via fragmented media, it is harder to attract and keep a consumer's attention today.

Ideas are the currency in the Attention Economy. A marketer must have brilliant, fresh, motivating, ideas or you will simply get lost in the flurry of information. Ideas that are relevant, not just more information or more data. Ideas must connect emotionally with individuals.

In looking at the past to help us with the future, we need no better example than Marshall McLuhan. McLuhan's views on the development of man and society were traced from his studies of the effects media developments had on man and society throughout history. His controversial theory was that developments in media have a direct effect on people and how they organize and live in the world. He studied the effects of media going back to hieroglyphics and on to the Gutenberg press, to the telephone, the radio and television — all of which had a huge impact on people, business, society and ultimately, on their awareness of their environment.

McLuhan predicted that each of these advances were new information technologies and that he most significant, would be the merging of the electronic media of the television and the computer with the new technologies like outer-space, satellite transmission and borderless electronic media access. It was not known as the "internet" when McLuhan developed his predictions of what the future might be like. Today, we are experiencing the effect of accelerated communications technologies, even beyond what he forecast.

He predicted the "Global Village" would be created by the information convergence. He urged us to "understand media and you will understand man" and to consider the "medium is the message". Looking at the world today, it would seem McLuhan was right.

The age of globalization is over. It has given way to a time for greater multi-cultural appreciation and sensitivity. Globalization was as important an influence on the world as any of the great, previous ages of macro-change, like the Iron Age, the Renaissance or the Industrial Revolution. The new age of independency, multi-cultural sensitivity, this Ecologism, will prove to be an equally significant shift in social, political and economic impact.

What is the New Perspective?

What have the marketers been doing with all these developments? Starting around the late 1980's when the Berlin Wall came down and the Cold War officially ended, we have been faithfully following the business school mantras: to "Think Global – Act Local" or a more recent permutation called "Act Global – Think Local" which some marketers are advocating.

A new marketing perspective is needed. It's time to officially retire the idea of "Think Global – Act Local."

This old mantra of "Think Global – Act Local" helped marketers when it first came out in the 1980's when Coca Cola began using it to get his marketing people to think global and act local. It made sense for a marketplace that was seeing walls fall down and new markets opening up for the first time. It was a tremendous perspective that got us all to think of business issues and strategy outside of our own. It made us realize we can't be blind to what's happening in other markets outside of the geography in which we are most often dealing with. "Think Global – Act Local" was tremendously helpful, initially.

However it's a geographic concept that does not provide an ideal perspective for brand building today. It assumes borders that do not exist quite so definitively today, in the interconnected, wireless world we communicate in. It does not reflect the convergence in information development and media proliferation consumers are experiencing.

We need a new perspective that can more relevantly reflect the business world and the total environment we live in . A new perspective is needed to help guide strategy for our brands and for the important sustainability needs of our planet.

We need a frame of reference that captures the benefits of both points of view on local and global. One that captures the importance of local cultural relevance that is so important. One that recognizes the competitive dynamics of our global business environment. One that is more sensitive to sustainability needs perceived in each culture.

I call this new perspective "Think Like The Sun". It asks us to look at the world from the outside in, to consider a vantage point other than our own, immediate, self-interest. When we think about our brands, our businesses and the environment – "Think Like The Sun."

Think Like the Sun

When we get up in the morning the sun comes up, many of us in marketing go to work on our brands, or business. We work all day long to create ideas and seek information to help grow our businesses. A the end of the day, when the sun goes down, we turn the lights off and we go home. It is easy to think that our brand and our business kind of stops, in a way, for that evening.

We go home, put our head on our pillow and we fall asleep. For all intents and purposes, our brand or business seems to stop in suspension until the next day, and the new dawn, when the sun comes up, and we resume our activities to drive that brand to success. That's the way it seems.

You know that's not what happens. The sun doesn't go up and down, it's we here on earth that revolve. With an interconnected media environment, that's fully wired, proliferating worldwide television and internet technology we are no longer operating in isolation, our world is a "global village" and this global village, where we are increasingly connected to each other.

Our brands and our businesses are making contact with consumers outside the realm of what we see, beyond the day and the night, we experience as we market our brand in our own geography. Our brands are having an impact on the environment and, the environment is now everyone's to share and be aware of. Like the sun, our brands and businesses are making contact with consumers, somewhere all the time, in "real" time.

Instead of focusing on borders and geography, Think Like The Sun requires us to focus on brands, markets and consumers and to act in a global, more responsible environmental way.

Think Like The Sun is a frame of reference to help marketers build successful brands, while also effectively sustaining the planet. This perspective asks us to embrace the dynamics of multi-culturalism and calls for strategic planning for the consequences of marketing in the global village.

Marketing To Marketers - "The World's" Youth

Young consumers today are the most marketing exposed generation in history. They enjoy the control new media gives them. They reward those who market well, and punish those who don't. Those that succeed will apply the mantra "the consumer is boss", not just in product development, but also in delivering a more rewarding breed of communications.

This generation want us to make communications fun, to respect their intelligence, to walk the talk, which means to live up to our words, to listen and to do things to help their community. They want to know where you stand on issues like sustainability. They want to know that your values and principles are what you practice.

The research firm Roper-Starch recently conducted a worldwide study to learn about cause branding and whether doing social good can translate to market share improvement for companies or brands. Overall, 38% of the world's consumers say "it is very important in their decision-making that brands and companies make efforts to address social issues or causes. The top issues consumers across the world want to see companies take on are: the environment, education and hunger/poverty. Emerging markets, in particular, have strong expectations for companies to help address these big social issue.

A market leaders' performance edge has never been smaller. In this high-speed world, it is simply too easy to copy and too easy to take products, formulas and technologies and ship them overnight into a market to nullify competitive advantage in product performance. It is hard to hold onto real, tangible superiority for very long. But, you sure don't want to get out of line for very long either, because your product performance must always be seen as being in line, among the best of the best. In addition your product must line up to the standard of being protective of the environment, no matter where it is made, sold or consumed. Emotional and reputational values from experience are harder for competition to duplicate.

The emotional connection between a brand and a consumer is embodied in a relationship. The transaction is the outcome of that relationship. The evolution for brands is from being a transaction to becoming a relationship, that is emotional, functional and one that has sustainable impact.

Six Key Tenets For Greener Marketing Effectiveness

There are Six Key Tenets of building brands today in the age of Ecologism, where we are marketing in an intercultural global community.

- 1) Symbols, sounds and visuals speak louder than words when you're dealing across borders, cultures and languages. The most powerful communication devices are the symbols and visuals and also the sounds that can be used to communicate ideas. Often these are more powerful and communicate better for a brand across geographies than the actual words that are used. Words can become very difficult to translate. Obviously words and the language used in communicating ideas for brands need to be tailored and very well crafted for culture differences and local needs. But the prevailing part of the brand message is becoming more and more visually oriented visuals and sounds can be more emotional.
- 2) <u>Design becomes a key element in relationship building</u>. In fact, design has had a rebirth in the brand-building business. Design is critical in terms of consumer appeal, brand differentiation and environmental impact. A surprising use of design was the Apple Imac introduction. It was brilliant because it used wonderful colors and transparent designs on a computer
- 3) <u>Brand Equity is the essential foundation</u>. These are the symbols and ideas that become the property and story of the brand in the consumers mind. We must start by determining the essence of each brand and what the consumer-perceived equities are. Without that essence the brand doesn't live as a continuous brand across geographies, across cultures. We're very focused on working to get to a brand equity statement of words and visuals for our clients. There's a lot of discipline and work we're putting on this right now and it is highly dependent on consumer research. More and more consumers want to know how brands impact the environment and this can become part of the brand's equity.
- 4) <u>Develop a Collaboration Value-Chain approach to relationship-building.</u> Teamwork is a very important concept in this new world of building global brands. Teamwork is something that doesn't come naturally between geographies, countries and individuals globally. Therefore, business leadership will require developing the skills of collaboration in individuals and as a key dimension of corporate culture.
- 5) <u>Harness consumer-learning power</u>. That means any learning from anywhere is applicable anywhere. This means an even higher order appreciation for research learning and cross-research application. Harnessing consumer research power from around the world actually can deliver a competitive advantage to your brand or your mission to advocate sustainability. It also means that consumer research related to sustainability must be looked at and analyzed across markets and geographies.
- 6) Marketing programs for every brand and company have to include sustainability in strategy. Sustainability and marketing effectiveness are no longer separate agendas. They are interdependent. Sustainability has too important a role in a brand's ability to achieve business success to be relegated to a secondary strategic role.

The Future

Corporations will provide some of the greatest contributions to the resolution of our environmental problems. Profits will make it possible. We need to encourage marketers to work diligently to develop their Ecologism marketing skills. The contribution of industry to society in this vital arena is critical. We, and other companies we effect with our thinking, can be valuable partners in making it all happen.

A brand's social capital is as important as its tangible assets or intellectual capital. Each of these components is measurable.

Imagine what the future could hold. Over the next twenty years, if not sooner, we could have at our disposal a fully electric, non-polluting automobile industry. We will witness the consolidation of the computer, the radio, the television, the telephone and voice recognition into one, integrated and wireless,

virtual mobile communications system. We will develop technology that will enable us to continue to increasingly replace travel with virtual, interpersonal, emotional communications.

These technologies exist already today. They are not a Jules Verne dream. It is just a matter of time and consumer demand, before these new technologies are present everywhere and become invisible to us. It is not that hard to consider the effects these new information technologies will have on us in the future. We already know more about ourselves, our tendencies and our inevitabilities, than ever before. With this comes a new consciousness. It is a consciousness that does not survive well in a closed socio-economic system. In fact, Ecologism breaks down social and economic barriers.

McLuhan said "the spoken word was the first technology by which man was able to let go of his environment in order to grasp it in a new way." As we become tribalized by our further developments in information technology, we will, once again, let go of our environment in order to grasp it in a new, more spiritual way.

Through the evolution of consumerism to Ecologism, we are appreciating the fundamental relationship our environment has on our own health, survival and well-being. The dimensions of this environment are far broader and more real than at any time in history. We look to the galaxies and space now as real tangible dimensions of our definition of environment, whereas these were mere concepts or theories in the past. As Yeats described, "The visible world is no longer a reality and the unseen world is no longer a dream." Marketers and governments need to look past globalization to better appreciate the interculturalism of our global village. Think Like The Sun is a perspective that can help us do this.

In 1962, in her book *Silent Spring*, Rachael Carson, along with many other early environmentalists, urged us to consider the environment from a total quality perspective, to view the planet as a single system. She wrote how killing bugs with pesticides may also kill birds that eat the bugs, as well as humans who eat the vegetables or drink the water that runs off the field. Carson stressed the interconnected-ness of things.

Despite this, the scientific and research community has tended to be more specialized in studying the earth, often ignoring the connections. Eric Barron, director of Penn State's Earth System Science Centers says: "Oceanographers study water and ignore the atmosphere above it. When the water evaporates and forms a cloud that makes rain, it becomes the purview of a meteorologist. If that rain falls on land, it becomes civil engineering. If it percolates down, that's geology. If it affects vegetation it's biology. If it becomes snow, it's something for a polar expert."

More and more, the scientific community is coming to view the ecology as a system. This system view is a necessary evolution for the scientific community as well as the marketing and advertising research communities. All parties need to adopt a macro view, a total quality perspective of cooperation in order to provide safe and responsible environmental development. We can get there if we ignore borders, adopt a more multilateral view and Think Like The Sun.

Ecologism is not a fad. It is a fundamental shift in values, perception and belief systems. It is an evolution of consumerism in the age of ecology fueled by advances in media technologies. If has created an increased sense of community. This is well articulated by Bill Halamandaris in his book, *The Spirit of Giving*, "Community comes when people see hope where there is fear and decide to join hands, linking themselves with others in a common cause. Community comes when people decide not to ignore a problem or run away, but to reinforce each other and take on apathy and despair. Community comes when we realize nothing of real value can be accomplished alone."

Ecologism requires leadership to find the social capital in ideas to sustain ourselves and our planet.

Tim Love September, 2008