LUND UNIVERSITY
School of Economics and Management

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Sustainability Marketing Communications

Current State and Future
Trends in Marketing Communications. Benchmarking

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Olga Kulak | Wang Dian | Íñigo Guerrero Mendicoa

Master Thesis | Msc. in Sustainable Business Leadership

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Trends in Marketing Communications**

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This thesis has been written as a part of the degree project course in the Masters program "Sustainable Business Leadership" at the School of Economics and Management, Lund University.

The course was based on the methodology of action learning and self-managed learning. The students were all assigned to an in-company projects as consultants. As a part of course the students were responsible for organizing several learning events addressing relevant issues related to the in-company projects. The students continuously documented their learning in learning journals and participated in tutorials on these journals.

The assessments of the students are done partly on the written thesis, partly on the consultancy process and report to the company, partly on performance in learning events and other parts of the course and partly on the ability to document and reflect on the student's individual learning and development.

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ABSTRACT
The new term "sustainability marketing communications" emerged and the has gained increased interests and implementations in recent years. The aim of the degree project is to provide suggestions to Skånemejerier on the basis of current state in dairies and trends in marketing communications in the entire industry. Benchmarking is applied throughout the study and two different benchmarking processes are conducted.

To start with, industry benchmarking is performed with the scope of dairy industry. Skånemejerier are compared with leading dairy companies from European countries plus another two from the United States and one from Russia.

While in the second part, we start with a brief introduction of main trends in marketing communications in general. Then, we investigate how company can use sustainability in communications with customers and describe how much it can influence their buying decissions. Furthermore, we concentrate on newly emerged digital media and provide more deeply analysis of trends there. Additionally, we investigate eight selected international companies, leaders in sustainability in their sectors, to see in practice how they use sustainability in their marketing messages and deal with trends in digital media. Last but not the least, we try to analyze their performance in online communications and find valuable practical recommendations for our client. We suggest Skånemejerier to continue to focus on online social media. For instance, create short videos on Skånemejerier website, develop interactive

media platforms where customers can communicate with each other and share their ideas about the company and/or products, and encourage people to share possitive information about Skånemejerier through various social networks.

Key words: Sustainability, Sustainability Marketing, Sustainability Marketing Communicatiions, Trends, Benchmarking, Skånemejerier, Social Network

Contents

Preface

First and foremost, we would like to express our gratitude to our supervisors Stein Kleppesto and Christine Blomqvist for their dedicated supervision and guidance during our degree project work. They are patient, always giving us confidence and inspirations. We would also like to thank Fredrik Heidenholm, Fredrik Javensköld and Caroline Olsson from Skånemejerier for their indispensible guidance and cooperation. Finally, we appreciate teachers and classmates who once assisted us and helped in accomplishing our master program in the School of Economics and Management of Lund University.

Lund, June 2011

Olga Kulak, Dian Wang and Íñigo Guerrero Mendicoa

1   Introduction

The global community is struggling with the issue of over population, poverty, soaring energy consumption, air and water pollutions, biodiversity damage and many other negative impacts of climate change. In this environment, sustainability issue has been considered to be a worldwide concern across border and country.

Sustainability is a rather broad and vague concept. The core of mainstream sustainability thinking contains three dimensions, environmental, economic, and social sustainability (Adams W.M., 2006). For marketing practices, sustainability is an industry issue of key importance in the long haul (Emma Williams). Companies have the opportunity to use environmental issues and product information to redirect buying decisions toward its ecologically compatible products and corporate identity (Fuller, 1999, pp.224). However, how to communicate marketing of sustainability effectively is not an easy task, no matter large or small organizations (companies).

Pioneering companies have attempted ways to perform well in sustainability marketing communications. In fact, some has already got some success which will be presented in the latter part.

Based in Skåne County, Skånemejerier is Sweden's leading dairy company and the fourth largest in Nordic region (FoodChain, 2011). As the local dairy company, Skånemejerier cares about sustainability. According to Caroline Olsson - the marketing manager in Skånemejerier, Skånemejerier desires to position itself as one of the leading companies in sustainability in Sweden and stand out from the marketplace. It keeps on making great efforts and obtained some achievements so far which can be seen from its annual report and through our meetings with management team. However, Skånemejerier still desires to make improvements in sustainability marketing communications.

2 Aim and scope

The aim of the study is to provide recommendations in the field of sustainability marketing communications to Skånemejerier based on current state in dairies and trends of marketing communications in the entire industry.

Two benchmarking processes are conducted in the study. To start with, the industry benchmarking is carried out within the dairies. The purpose of this part of the project is to have a snapshot, to take a pulse, of how the dairy industry is doing in the marketing communications of sustainability today. It is important to remark that the scope of this study is just about communications. It will not evaluate the actions that the companies are taking, or how sustainable they are at this moment. The farthest this study goes is the analysis of how reliable the data is from the point of views of the costumers, as well as other stakeholders.

The universe of the companies in this study is limited to ten dairies, including, in this group some of the most known dairy companies, according to the size and equity. While on the other hand, the same study and methodology was applied in the market and regions, where Skånemejerier is acting, with the main actors of these regions. Concretely, after the meetings with managers from Skånemejerier, we arranged the assessment of the competency from Scania to all Sweden, and Denmark.

Summarizing, we selected the 10 companies for the study from:

– Five of them come from a group of some of the biggest and most known companies in the dairy industry. The companies, are not intended to be fully compared with Skånemejerier. The revenue, size and resources of these biggest players, are much higher, and they have much more power for marketing communications, and consulting reports. However, this part of the study, definitely will provide to the readers of this thesis a view of some of the best practices and tendencies, in the marketing communications of sustainability in the dairy industry.

- The other five companies come from the market where Skånemejerier is competing, or aspire to compete. It will be studied some of the key competitors of the Scanian company in Sweden and Denmark

- We collected much information and we have studied the dairy industry for selecting the companies. But after all, we used our own criteria, our knowledge and the feedback received from the management team at Skånemejerier, for selecting the most relevant companies for this benchmarking

The reader of this thesis, will be able to perceive in short time, how these companies are using their marketing communications in sustainability in the current days, and will be able to have the idea of how Skånemejerier is communicating in comparison with its benchmarking peers.

While in the second part, main trends of marketing communications are explained and analyzed. It will give Skånemejerier a global perspective in marketing communications. Additionally, the global benchmarking is performed. Eight selected global companies, leaders in sustainability in their sectors are benchmarked. Which wil allow to the reader to see, in practice, how they deal with these trends. On the basis of that, some practical suggestions to Skånemejerier are made.

The study aims to answer:

- ✓ What are the trends of marketing communications globally?
- ✓ What are the selected leading international industrial companies doing in terms of sustainability marketing communications?
- ✓ What recommendations can be provided to Skånemejerier based on the global benchmarking results?

3 Background

In this section, relevant information about sustainability, sustainability marketing, and marketing communications of sustainability are performed.

Sustainability

Since 1980s sustainability has been used in the sense of human sustainability on Planet Earth (Adams, W.M., 2006). The concept of sustainability is rather vague and broad. In general, it consists of considerations of environment, society and economy which are quoted as the "three pillars" of sustainability (Adams, W.M., 2006). It is indicated that the three pillars which are inevitably intertwined and connected are not equally exclusive but reciprocally reinforcing (Adams, W.M., 2006). It encompasses all of those issues which may make influences on our lives, such as population growth, biodiversity, equality and economic development and etc.

Popularity of Sustainability in Business World
While working on our study we reviewed various of books, articles and some analytical reports from different consulting companies and agencies, and based on that we can outline three important forces which together will more likely contribute to the popularity of sustainability now and in the future: growing demand on resources and constrained supply, increasing regulatory and social scrutiny, and an aging and health-conscious population.

Exhibit 1. Increasing Concern about Sustainability *(Peter Bisson, 2010),(Booz&Co, 2011b)*
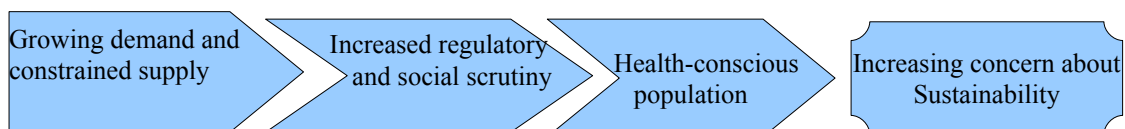
Factor 1: Growing Demand and Constrained Supply [Peter Bisson, 2010]

Taking into account the projections for population growth and the increase of middle class in the emerging economies, the demand for natural resources will rise significantly. However, in the meanwhile, the resources are becoming sparse.

Factor 2: Increased Regulatory and Social Scrutiny [Peter Bisson 2010]

Lots of issues are becoming more and more visible around the world, such as water scarcity, pollution, and food safety. For business it means future regulations and push from customers and other stakeholders, which will show increasing demand for greater corporate environmental responsibilities. More likely, more and more people will demand higher quality of product that may include sustainable way of production, fresh air, clean water and improving living standards. Naturally, the most innovative companies will try to adapt and get profits from these trends. Another point to take into account is that business as a whole is interconnected. For example, if company possesses itself as sustainable, it is likely to put restrictions on suppliers and retailers it works with. As a result, less innovative companies have no other way to follow.

Factor 3: Increased Concern about Health and Healthy Food [Booz&Co, 2011b]

This is shaping first of all food industry today. As the population is aging today the demand on beverages, food, and other products that promote health is increasing. According to Booz&Company study, the market share of carbonated soft drinks is declining with annual rate of 1.6 % since 2004. Meanwhile, the market share of beverages that are seen by consumers as healthier is increasing. Another good example can be the decision made by PepsiCo in October 2010, which created Global Nutrition Group and set the goal to triple its "good-for-you" products by 2020.

The three forces, described above, are more likely to increase the existing concerns of people about sustainability in the future. Next, we will try to regard

which aspects of sustainability are more important from customers' and executives' point of views.

Sustainability from Customers' and Executives' Point of Views

Increasing customers' concerns about sustainability is a great opportunity for companies. Companies are able to differentiate themselves from their competitors by acting on sustainability issues and to be rewarded by their customers' for doing good things. Indeed, according to the McKinsey survey, published in 2007, 87 % of customers said they do worry about environmental and social impacts of the products they buy. The survey examined 7,751 people, both from developing and developed countries living on three different continents [Heila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008].

Figure 1 reflects executives 'and customers' answer on the question: *Which issues will be the most important in the next five years?* Additionally, it shows the changes happened in executives' opinion during one year period.

Figure 1: Executives' perspective (The graph indicates the percentage of respondents selecting given issue as 1 of top 3)
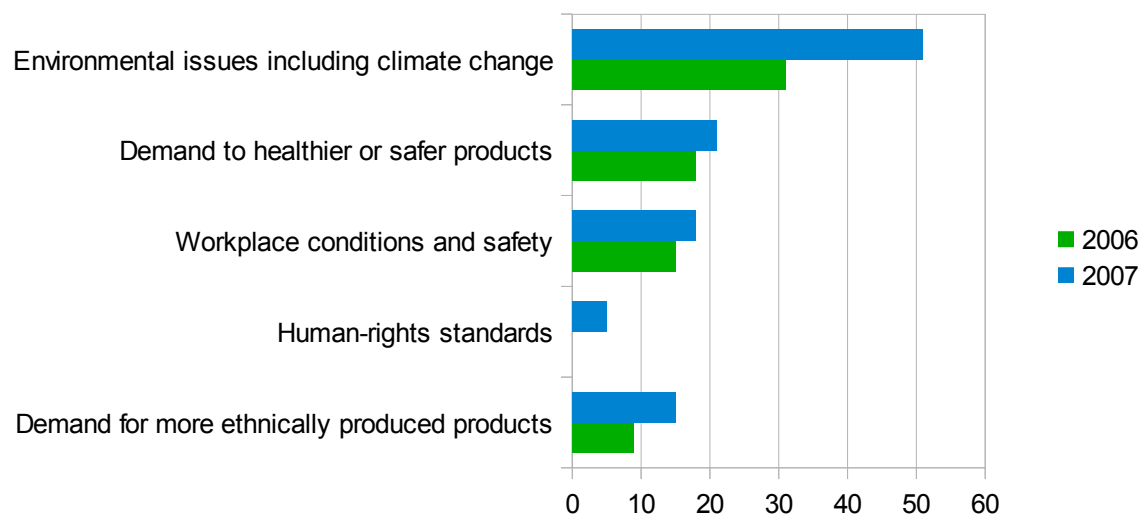
As it can be seen from the graph above, the most important issue in the next 5 years for executives became environmental aspects of sustainability with 51 % of executives putting it among one of the top three to care about. Moreover, it was

65 % increase according to responses given in 2006. Secondly, it is the demand to healthier or safer products: 21% and 17 % increase. It is indicated that executives care about sustainability issues mostly. The Figure 2 reflects the answer on the same question but given by customers:

Figure 2: Customer perspective (The graph indicates the percentage of respondents selecting given issue as 1 of top 3)
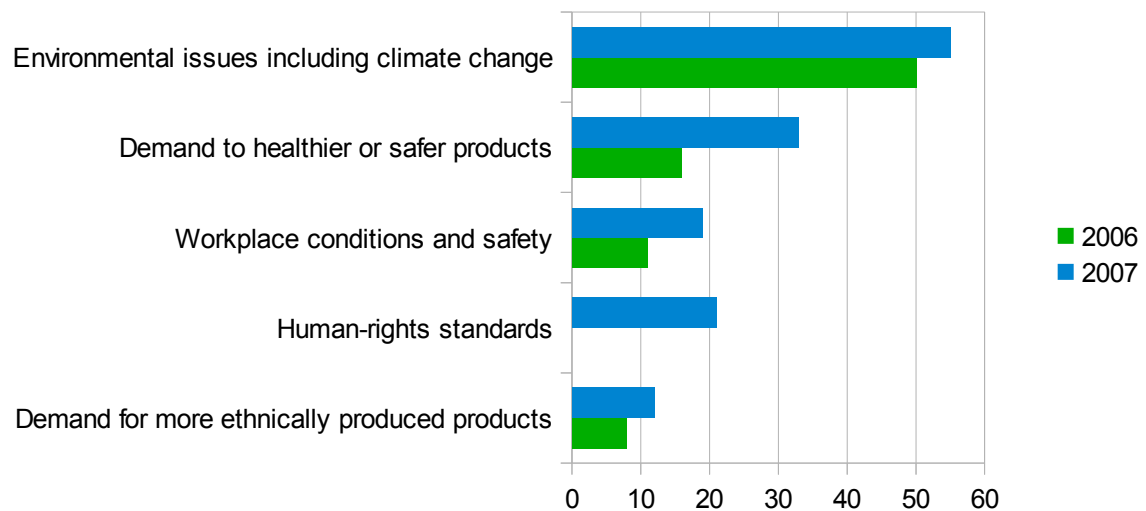
As it seen from the graph above, the most important issues according to customers' responses are environmental issues also. It is the same as in executives' case. 55% of customers put it among the top three for the next five years, which is 4% more than executives. As it goes from the two graphs above, there is an increase in concerning about sustainability issues among costumers and executives. Next, we will talk about sustainability marketing-one of the best practices to implement sustainability issues in business world.

Sustainability Marketing

The term "Sustainable marketing" coined by Sheth and Parvatiyar (1995), addresses the "ways and means" for reconciling economic and ecological factors through revised products and product systems. A number of other terms have been applied which have similar meanings, such as "green marketing" (Ottman 1993: Peattie 1992), "eco-marketing" (Fuller and Butler, 1994). In the book of "Sustainability marketing: Managerial-ecological issues", Fuller (1999, pp.4) defines sustainability marketing as:

The process of planning, implementing and controlling the development, pricing, promotion and distributes of products in a manner that satisfies the following three criteria:

1. *Customer needs are met*

2. *Organizational goals are attained*

3. *The process is compatible with ecosystems*

The definition is an extension of traditional marketing's managerial orientation, rather than a radical change. It keeps a focus on managing process through which customers are satisfied and organizational goals are attained simultaneously. The difference is the consideration of environment striving to reduce eco-costs and serve the long-term well-being of society (Fuller, 1999, pp.4). Sustainability marketing provides companies an opportunity to update product and service systems to achieve "zero" impacts to the environment while providing the same or even improved benefits to customers.

Marketing communications of sustainability

Marketing Communications Theory

Marketing Communications are messages and related media used to communicate with a market. It is the "promotion" part of the "Marketing Mix" or the "four Ps": price, place, promotion, and product (P. R. Smith, 2002, pp.7). It is a transaction facilitator, one that supports a basic assumption of the free market economy-the customer's ability and right to make an informed choice (Fuller, 1999, pp.223).

There is not a universal diagram which can reflect all the means and complexities of the marketing communication process. However, some communication models are available which can illustrate simplified marketing communication processes in theory. In the next subsection, it considers two basic models which are relevant to the following topic of sustainability marketing communications.

Two Models of Marketing Communications

Mass Communications Model (P. R. Smith, 2002, pp.73)

The Figure 3 below shows the mass communications model. It is a traditional way of market communications. The basic model assumes that the sender is active, the receivers are passive and the message is delivered properly to each receiver. It is considered to be attractive ways of communications as it can reach a large number of audiences quickly and cheaply. However, it should be noted that much of mass advertising is ignored or distorted by receivers in the communication process. The message is coded appropriately by the sender, transferred through a certain media channel. Then, the receiver receives and decodes the message. In this process, there is "noise", the extraneous factors that distract or even distort the coded messages, which is illustrated in the Figure 4. Even though, there are usually a percentage of receivers who are either well informed or interested in the particular product type. As a result, mass communication is still of interest to many marking communicators. The typical examples of mass communications are television, radio, and newspaper advertising.

Figure 3 the Mass Communication Model (Source: P. R. Smith, 2002, pp.74)
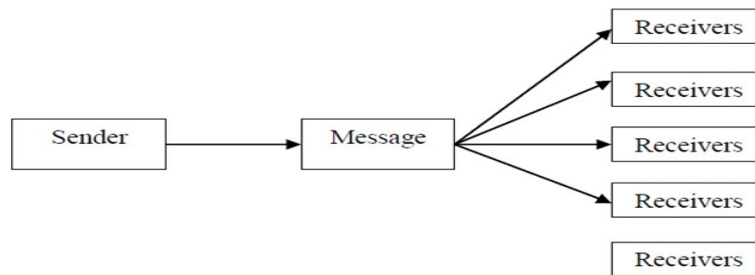
Figure 4 the Communication Process (Source: Based on Schramm's 1955 Model)
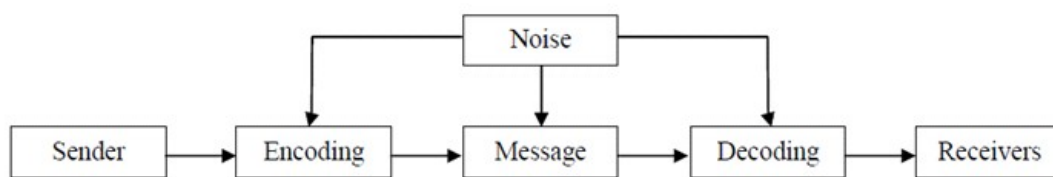
Web Communications Model (P. R. Smith, 2002, pp.78)

The advanced model is considered to be today's new model of communications. The Figure 5 illustrates its simplified version. (We simplified the 'nodes' in between the Receivers and Senders. The node represents opinion leader (O.L.), which can influence other buyers, but do not necessarily provide advice according to P.R. Smith, 2002, pp.75). The flow of communications becomes like a web of communications among customers and senders. It revolves around the brand instead of simply sending messages by the brand owner. Markets are conversations. Thanks to Internet. Word of mouth spreads more quickly online than offline. Customers can discuss with each other (C2C) and, then, back to the company (C2B). In addition, the company can also facilitate conversations with customers (B2C). In doing so, it can look and listen to customers, furthermore, build strong relations with them. The typical examples of web communications are company website, Facebook and youtube.

Figure 5 the Web Communication Model (Source: P. R. Smith, 2002, pp.75)
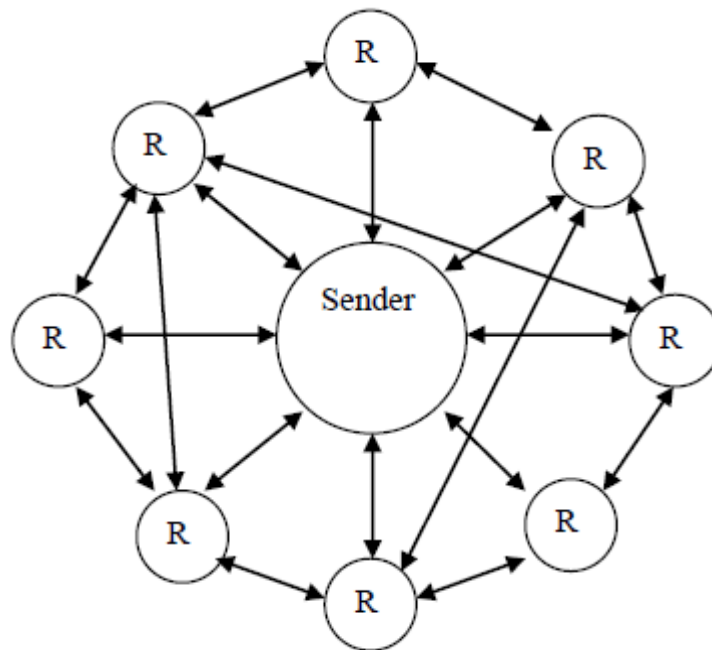
The Importance of Marketing Communications

We had several interviews with the management of Skånemejerier. They all stressed the significance of marketing communications and expressed that Skånemejerier is willing to be proficient in marketing communications. It is not surprising that they have very similar views at this point as the role of the marketing communications is quite important, to positively influence customer behavior now and in the future (Fuller, 1999, pp.223). The marketing communications has its own mix which is referred to as the communication mix, including the following standard tools: (1) advertising, (2) personal selling, (3) sales promotion, and (4) publicity-public relations (PR) (Fuller, 1999, pp.223). It should be noted that only advertising and publicity-public relations are involved in our study. The purpose of marketing communications is to blend these tools in such a manner as to provide customers value added through information.

Marketing Communications of Sustainability

Sustainability marketing communications is to communicate about sustainability issues across the community through marketing communication activities (Elise, 2010, pp.2).

When it comes to sustainability marketing communications, it concerns more about environmental and social issues. According to Fuller (1999, pp.225), sustainability marketing communications involves fostering an image of environmental responsibility that will lead to product purchase. It constantly addresses two specific objectives: (1) educating a diverse set of stakeholders about environmental issues and (2) establishing and maintaining the environmental credibility of both the product and the firm behind it. Marketers have the chance to use environmental issues and product information to redirect buying decisions toward its ecologically compatible product and/or service and differentiate itself from competitors. Effective marketing communications will facilitate the desired result-positive environmental and social effects and profits. We will discuss the issue of sustainability marketing communications further in the following parts of our study.

4 Methodology

Benchmarking is applied as a technique to identify current status of marketing communications of sustainability in dairies, and verify trends of marketing communications in general. To start with, the definition, history and classification of benchmarking are presented briefly. Next, the methodology of benchmarking is performed.

4.1 Benchmarking in General

Definition of benchmarking

There has not been a universal definition of benchmarking. Many authors have attempted to define benchmarking according to the process or practice that is benchmarked. However, those various definitions are with the same meaning in essence. Benchmarking is a technique for identifying highest standards of excellence and making improvements. It is also a method of identifying new ideas and new ways to reach the ultimate objective of benchmarking which is process improvement that meets the attributes of customer expectations (Omachonu and Ross, 1994, pp. 140-1).

History of benchmarking

According to Camp (1989a), benchmarking initiatives were taken by Xerox Corporation in the late 1970s. During that time, Xerox was losing market share and feeling great pressure from its competitors so Xerox examined its unit manufacturing costs and then compared competing copiers in terms of their operating capabilities, features, and mechanical parts. These initial applications of benchmarking were referred to as "product quality and feature comparisons". Xerox soon found solutions and prompted new plans for regaining its leading position in the photocopier market. It achieved excellent quality in most products and processes involved. For instance, machine defects reduced by more than 90%, marketing productivity increased by one-third (Mittelstaedt, 1992). Until then, benchmarking was becoming fairly popular worldwide. It attracts large corporations, such as Motorola (Biesada, 1991), Texas Instruments (Baker, 1995), General Motor,

AT&T (Mittelstaedt, 1992), to adopt it as a management tool to improve performance (Allio and Allio, 1994).

Classification of benchmarking

There are five different types of benchmarking including, namely, internal benchmarking, competitive benchmarking, industry benchmarking, generic benchmarking and global benchmarking (Lema and Price, 1995). The classification was established on the basis of the nature of the referent other, the content of what was to be benchmarked. Further information is available in Lema and Price's work.

In our study, the benchmarking among dairy companies belongs to the industry benchmarking catalogue as it involves both competitors and non-competitors worldwide within the dairy industry. The benchmarking, in the second part of the study, focuses on best work process and functions of marketing communications of sustainability. It consists of the comparison with large international leading companies in sustainability. Accordingly, it is considered to be the global benchmarking.

Benchmarking Methodology in General

There is no single benchmarking process that has been universally adopted. Our study is based on the Karlof and Ostblom (1993) simplified five-step model (Figure 6). It starts with "Decide What to Benchmark" and ends with the "Implement for Effect". Here, we restrict our exercise to "Analysis the Information". We shall elaborate here four core steps, which are "Decide What to Benchmark", "Identify Benchmark Partners", "Gather Information" and "Analyze Information".

Figure 6 Karlof and Ostblom (1993) Simplified Five-Step Benchmarking Model

Decide What to Benchmark

The first step towards benchmarking is identification of activities to be benchmarked. As we proceeded we have chosen sustainability marketing communications as the major problem we studied. Apart from activity identification, a good understanding of the organization is necessary. We visited Skånemejerier several times and had constructive meeting with staffs of the management. We also looked through the annual report and the environment report of Skånemejerier. In addition, we had meetings with other groups helping us have deep understanding of Skånemejerier further.

Identify benchmarking partners

In this step, possible benchmarking partners are selected. Caroline Olsson is very interested in other companies in food industry, while Fedrik Heidenholm suggests us finding out more about other best practices in the entire industry. We consider their opinions and believe it is more likely to achieve breakthrough advances by studying both processes: benchmarking within and outside diary/food industry. Therefore, we decide to divide the benchmarking study into two parts. To start with, it is the industry benchmarking. The global benchmarking is followed. More details will be provided in the subsections of methodology of industry and global benchmarking respectively.

Gather information

Data collection is the most essential but difficult step. During the study, both primary data and secondary data are collected and applied. We acquired relevant data about Skånemejerier through interviews, meeting, telephone, e-mail and on-line resources. We mostly contacted staffs in Skånemejerier through e-mail and telephone. As the staffs in Skånemejerier were quite busy, it took time to organize and have a face-to-face meeting with them. For possible partners, we obtained information mainly through their official websites, annual reports and sustainability reports (if applicable). We also tried to contact possible partners through telephone, e-mails. As time for thesis work is too limited, we are not able to make interviews with all

possible partners. Therefore, communicating through e-mail turns to be the most cost-effective way. For instance, we sent e-mails to all the companies in the general benchmarking list and obtained some positive replies which are reflected in our study results.

Analyze the information

Collecting data is only part of the benchmarking process. According to a benchmarking study carried out by Government of Alberta, at least 60 percent of the time devoted to a benchmarking project should be spent in analyzing data, deriving insights, communicating findings, and convincing the audience.

After compiling benchmarking information, we expect to find performance gap between Skånemejerier's performance in sustainable marketing communications and those of benchmarking companies. We shall analyze the extent of the performance gap, estimate the benefits and offer recommendations in the end.

4.2   Methodology for the Benchmarking in the dairy Industry

We are analyzing how the companies are communicating their sustainability, using a framework extracted from the report of 7 Ways to Communicate Your Commitment to Sustainability, by Anita Campbel, from Small Businesses Trends. This Frameworks remarks as the most perceived communications in sustainability this indicators:

1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it

2. Reduce energy consumption in your company fleet

3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging

4. Incorporate recycling in your supply chain

5. Pay consumers for recycling items

6. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers and service providers

7. Source your supply chain sustainably

We will analyze the most relevant companies in the dairy industry towards this framework of communication.

4.2.1   Decide what to benchmark

Benchmarking can be a very useful tool for comparing in which point Skånemejerier is respecting its competitors and other companies in the industry in Sustainability. In addition, there are many indicators that can give us an objective idea about what a dairy company is doing in Sustainability. As the characteristics of this industry, the most important parameters are related with:

- CO_2 emissions: Which is the level of carbon emissions emitted by the company in all the life cycle of their products
- GHG's emissions: As the dairy industry is one of the responsible of the emission of Greenhouse gases [citation needed], there are dairies that are publishing their emissions of GHG's
- Water consumption: The production of milk consumes an important quantity of water per liter of milk
- Waste treatment
- Energy efficiency
- Percentage of renewal energy used
- Packaging best practices

And some companies have this information available, but not all the companies have all this indicators available for us, and even, the most of the companies don't publish

them. Then, a benchmarking without having all the parameters in all companies loses its sense.

Consequently, we are comparing with other kind of parameters, particularly, related with how the companies are communicating the sustainability, and how we can know they are acting and reporting. The analysis intends to be more complete, but at this point, includes these indicators:

- Revenue: The companies with biggest revenue normally have more resources and needs of reporting. It is normal that the big players have more reports and standards, than the smaller companies.
- Country: the consumers of every country have a determinate sensibility with the sustainability. It is also relevant to Skånemejerier to evaluate how 'close' is Sweden to Denmark we are studying
- Communication of Sustainability: How the company is communicating sustainability is important, in the way how the consumers, providers, distributors, investors and other stakeholders perceive their actions. We evaluate, from 0 to 3, how well they are communicating this.
- Sustainability Actions: Apart from the marketing communications, some companies can prove with real data the sustainability actions they are making. We evaluate this with this indicator, from 0 to 3 as well
- Sustainable Reporting: Do the company publish a Sustainable Report?
- GRI Report: As is becoming an standard in the reporting of Sustainability, we identify if they have a GRI report or not
- We have the intention of add more data to the benchmarking

4.2.2 Identify Benchmarking Peers and Gather Information

Then it comes to the comparison of Skånemejerier with relevant companies and with the biggest players in the industry. We will analyze the main competitors in the region of Skånemejerier. In the Figure 7, we can see the players in Scandinavia and North Europe:

Figure 7 the Main Competitors in the Region of Skånemejerier
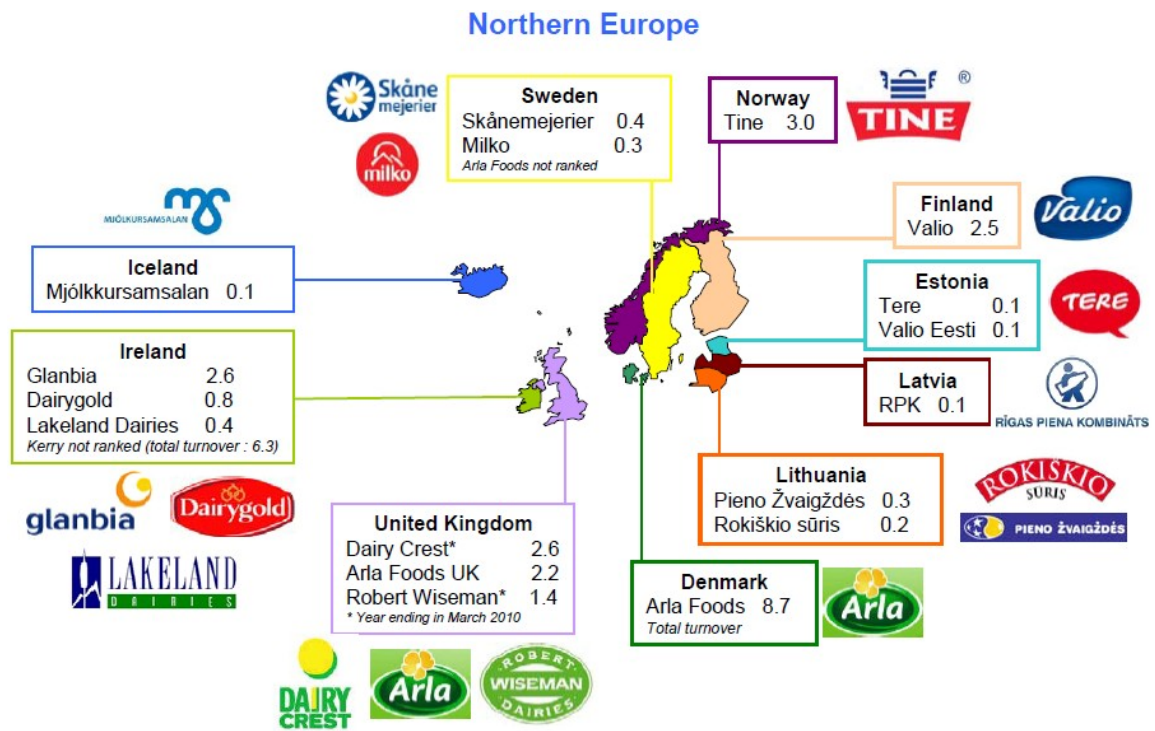
The final conclusion comes from a weighted sustainability index build over an estimation of the importance of the data collected. This sustainability index we will help to find the position of Skånemejerier respect its competitors, and will provide some relevant conclusions and outcomes from the analysis.

4.3 Methodology for the Global Trends in Sustainability

To conduct the first part of the study we reviewed various analytical reports, books, articles and websites which discussed the issues of marketing communication, trends in marketing and sustainability. Additionally, we visited marketing agencies and consulting companies' blogs and forums, such as European Interactive Advertising Association, Social Media Examiner, Marketing Week, McKinsey Quarterly, TED, etc. where if possible communicated with professionals from the field. By doing that we tried to answer the questions :

Is the concern about different aspects of sustainability issues such as green products, environment protection, human rights (child labor, employees rights and benefits) is going to grow among consumers?

Which aspects of sustainability will be/are the most important for organizations if they want to attract more customers?

Which are the main challenges and opportunities when it comes to sustainable marketing?

Which kinds of online media tools and techniques will be more popular among marketers in the future and how companies can use them to get the biggest advantage?

4.3.1.Decide what to benchmark and Identify Benchmarking Peers

To select leading sustainable companies we reviewed various ratings and publications. Such as: 'The Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations' by Corporate Knights, Dow Jones 'Sustainability Indexes', Fortune '100 best companies to work for', CRO's 'The Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations', Forbes 'Top 200 World's Most Reputable Companies'. They use different methodologies and, what comes naturally, results they achieve varies from one another. For example, Corporate Knight use indicators which reflect real achievement of the companies like (energy efficiency, CO_2 emission, waste productivity). Fortune in its rating mostly relay on intangible things, such as employee' satisfaction, career and personal development, work-life balance, and so on.

As the goal of our study was to analyze sustainability marketing communications of companies, we were interested in both kinds of rating. It was important for us to choose companies which are doing a lot in communication about sustainability. But in the same time to be able to measure their performance in sustainability marketing communication we needed to be aware about their real achievements in sustainability. Taking into account the time constraint and the limited resources available in our study we decided to concentrate on online media communications. We chose as a basis the main of twelve newly appeared online media tools and technologies, described by McKinsey&Company study (Business Technology Office, 2010). We investigated companies' websites, Facebook pages, YouTube channels and chose those who, as we think, are doing well in communication about sustainability. Additionally, we checked

independent ratings, forums and blogs such as European Interactive Advertising Association, Glassdoor.com, Social Media Examiner to see what independent sources think about the companies we selected. Finally, Caroline Olsson, the marketing director in Skånemejerier suggested us to include more companies working with food or customers good . As the way they use sustainability in marketing communications can be interesting for Skånemejerier. With the consideration of everything stated above eight companies were selected for benchmarking: Starbucks, Unilever, Coca-Cola, IKEA, Jonson&Jonson, Toyota, McDonald's and Wal-Mart.

The indicators we chose for benchmarking can be "devided " in two parts. First part of the indicators we chose for benchmarking (product, company, employee/ customer satisfaction, rewards, truth/standards) reflects real achievements in sustainability companies have.

Second part, which are: Website, Social network page, You Tube channel (if available), and the level of interaction the company have with customers (how quickly it responds on questions and react on comments/complains, how easy is to left the comment or to share an idea about the company) is quite subjective and is based mostly on our own impressions as customers.

When we graded the companies' performance online we were mostly measured following factors:

1) How easy is to find the information about sustainability on the corporate website/social networks page/You Tube channel, etc.

2) How clear the message is?

3) Is the contest interesting, do we want to figure out more/to spend more time on the website?

4) Is it something we want to share with our friends?

5) Is the company respond on our messages/questions/complains and how quickly it does

4.3.2 Gather and Analyze the Information

To get the information about real achievements in sustainability selected companies have we firstly analyzed the available information on the companies' websites and other

online media platforms. Then, we reviewed independent reports, ranking and charts to see what other sources think about the companies.To measure their performance in online sustainability communications we investigated their three main online media tools and technologies: Facebook, You Tube, Website.**(Business Technology Office, 2010)** Additionally, we communicated with selected companies through emails, websites and social media pages. Plus we reviewed independent reports, ranking and forums to see what other sources think about the companies.

By regarding quite different companies in sense of products, size and place of origin we aimed to find some good examples of how they deal with the emerging trends in sustainability marketing communications.

The part of results we achieved are quite subjective as some of our conclusions (about companies' performance in social networks, blogs, video channels) don't rely on any established sources such as ratings or analytical reports. However the fact that this study was done by three people decreased the possibility of misinterpretation and subjectivity. Additionally, we reviewed analytical reports and articles from reliable sources such as McKinsey Quarterly, The Economist, books, articles from Lund University library and etc.

Another important thing to mention is that in the case of sustainability marketing media and techniques marketers use are mostly the same as in the case of traditional marketing. By media we mean companies' website, pages in social media, established blog, etc. By techniques: creating interesting contest, engaging customers in the discussions and so on. The difference is in message companies send by using communication channels and techniques mentioned above. For example, conventional marketing is mostly selling-oriented and focused on end benefits, when sustainability marketing is much more about education and focused on values (The new green marketing paradigm, Ottman, 1997, p.48).

5 Industry Benchmarking

5.1 Methodology Applied in this study

The ambiguity of the term sustainability can create some confusion when we want to make an objective definition of being sustainable. The most known approach is the already commented "triple bottom line", which defines sustainability in the environmental, economic and social dimensions. However, depending on the industry and the scope of the study we are taking, the importance of sustainability aspects can change, particularly, if we focus on the communications of the sustainability, which is the intention of this study.

The first challenge of this study is to find the most adequate framework and indicators to measure and to compare the sustainability marketing communications of the dairy companies. After selecting some good frameworks for benchmarking, the study moved to analyze how to apply the frameworks for the selected companies in the benchmarking. In this stage, the marketing communications of the companies, gave a replication of some common parameters or metrics, which are, for inherent reasons, more communicated in this industry. These indicators, as energy efficiency, recycling measures, sustainable supply chain or packaging, are frequently remarked in the communications of the dairies, and many of them adapt very good in the framework of smallbizztrends.com, "7 Ways to Communicate Your Commitment to Sustainability", by Anita Campbel (Anita Campell , 2010) . This report was used, and adapted to the study, using six of its seven indicators, as was described in the first section of the methodology. These six indicators are repeated in many of the communications, and will be used for measure in an objective way, how the dairies present in this study are communicating their sustainability. After this, a score was given, in a subjective way. The study weights each of every six indicators from zero to three, according to these criteria:

- Inaction (0 points): the company is communicating nothing about this aspect
- Communication (1 point): the company references or communicates at least something about its efforts for improving in this issue

- Data (2 points): the dairy as well, is offering or publishing some concrete data or metric about that aspect
- Reliability of the data (3 points): an external agent, as a consulting company or a government agency, is validating or confirming this data.

With all these, we are able to build up our spider charts, representing an area in a hexagon, specifying how the dairy is communicating in every indicator used in this framework, facilitating a very easy and fast way of presentation to the readers.

Figure 8 the Framework of the Spider Chart
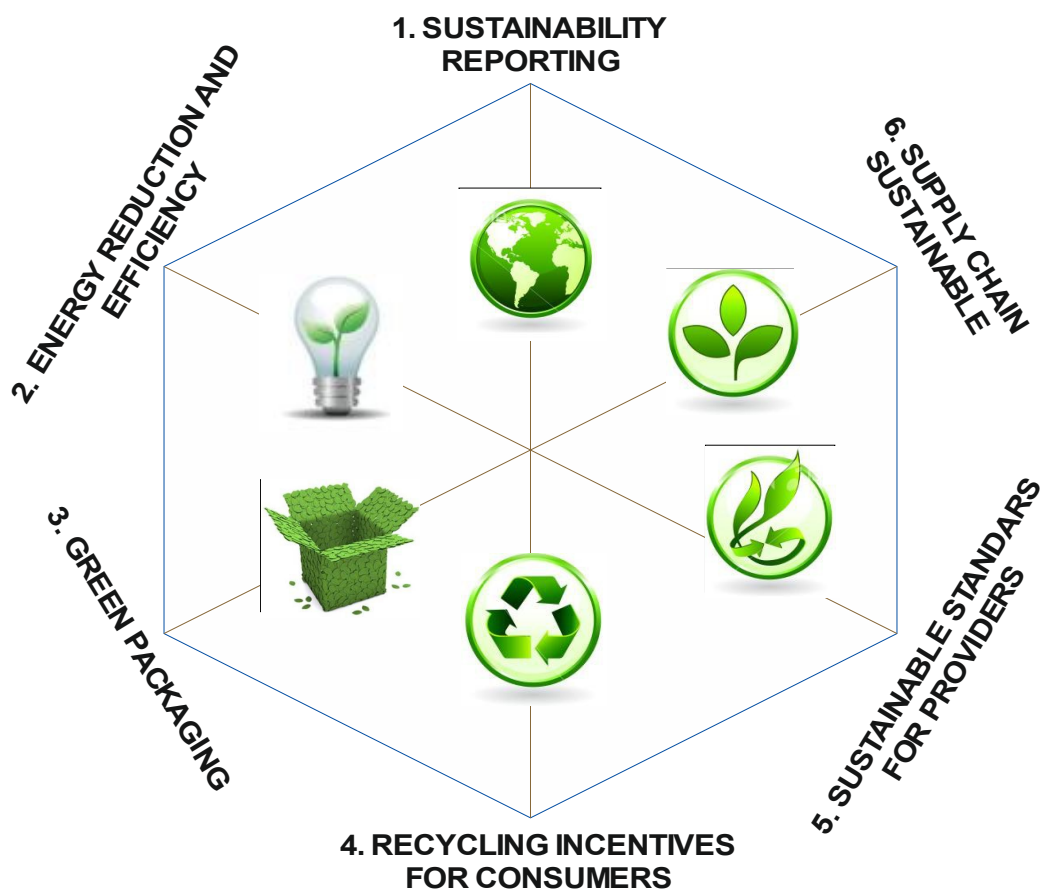
This spider chart, will be used for the individual study of every company, and as a common place for comparing and overlapping all the data which will be shown in the result of the industry benchmarking.

5.2   Analysis of some of the biggest players

They are the biggest players, well-known companies, that apart of dairy products, and leading in milk derivatives, are also very good positioned in the food industry, with many subsidiaries, and presence worldwide. As described before, the comparison of Skånemejerier with this huge actors (that actually some of them are in direct competition with it), must be understood as a frame of reference in sustainability communications, more than a model to imitate. The quantity of resources, synergies, and scale economies, are not comparable with Skånemejerier. But there is much utility to take a view of how this big fishes are doing, which standards are following, how they find their position in the sustainability communication, and of course have a feeling of what are the trends too in the dairy and the food industry.

For example, we can see how many of the companies of this group are following a GRI standard. This GRI report, normally is issued by a consultancy company that evaluates many of the parameters present in our framework, offering reliable data to the stakeholders, as well as, defining an established in the food industry, and in some others.

5.2.1   Danone

Danone   **Sustainability Communications**


```
Danone
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= 11,9
Country : France
Sustainability Communication (0 – 18):  18
Sustainability Reporting : Yes
GRI (Yes / No) : Yes
Comments:   French dairy leader
```
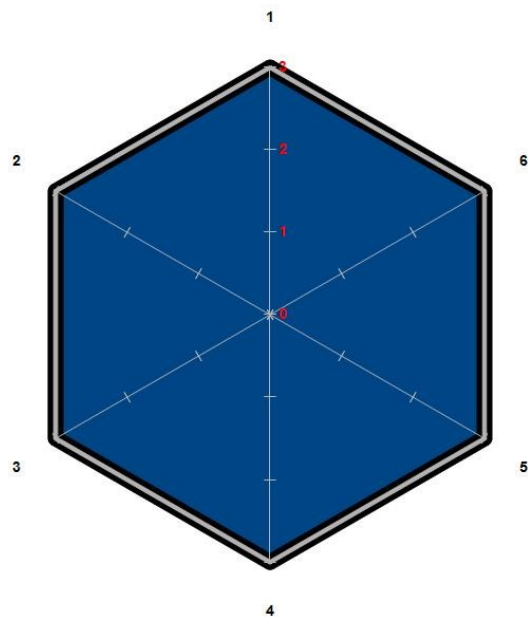
Figure 10 the Spider Chart of Danone

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

- **Developing a Sustainability Plan. Publishing it and measuring it:** Full section in the website about all the sustainability policies and user friendly, apart of a very complete sustainability report. (Communicated, measured and reliable = 3 points)

- **Reducing energy consumption:** Communication of energy – efficiency strategy, and full information under the GRI report

- **Using green packaging, including recycled packaging:** Communication of a full recycling strategy and data of 100% recyclability of their bottles (around 25% made effective)

- **Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain:** Programs of communication with the consumer

- **Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers:** Election of the suppliers and providers, only complying with their policies
- **Sourcing your supply chain sustainable:** Presented in many ways

Danone	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	3
2. Reduce energy consumption	3
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	3
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	3
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / provider	3
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	3

Table 1 the Benchmarking Result of Danone

Short description: Danone is one of the leading companies in the food industry. It has a wide quantity of brands and presence in the five continents. The focus of the company is the farming, the industry, distribution, consumption and sustainability in all the supply chain.

Figure 11 the Snapshot from Danone Official Website

Picture: We can find Sustainability in the first view in the website of the company

Sustainability Communication: It is easy to identify Danone with Sustainability from the first view. The linkage between the company and the sustainability it is clear in the communications of the enterprise.

Main Focus: Sustainable Development and Research and Innovation

Sustainability Report: Yes. GRI.

Presence: Global

Initiatives:

– Danone is presenting its 'road to sustainability', with a user-friendly interface where it shows all the supply chain, and the life-cycle of their products. This life-cycle is divided in 6 phases (http://www.danone.com/en/sur-une-route-durable/sur-une-route-durable.html):

1. Sourcing: build sustainable partnerships with suppliers, with compliance with the principles of the company promoting environmental friendly practices and protecting water resources

2. Industrial Production. Measuring the carbon footprint in the production. Limit environmental impact. Effectiveness in packaging, recycling, water consumption and energy consumption (here are many of the main fields to communicate sustainability)

3. Transport. Optimizing carbon emissions impact in its logistics

4. Sales. New distribution models

5. Consumption. Sustainable interaction with the consumers

6. End of Cycle. Ensuring and supporting the recycling processes.

Figure 12 the Six Stages Involved in a Danone Product

Danone uses with this representation, an easy and friendly presentation model of their sustainability measures, that is also supported by a very complete Sustainability Report, with GRI index and even a KMPG opinion report confirming the validity of the Danone's sustainability initiatives.

5.2.2 Nestlé

Nestlé   **Sustainability Communications**

Nestlé
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **27,3 (Worldwide)**
Country : **Switzerland**
Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): 11
Sustainability Reporting : Yes
GRI (Yes / No) : Yes
Comments: Biggest food company in the world
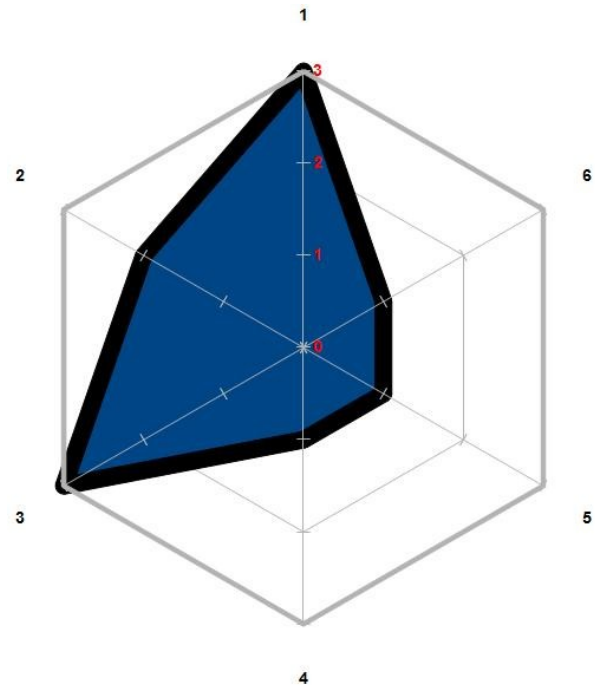
Figure 13 the Spider Chart of Nestle

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. **Developing a Sustainability Plan.** Nestlé presents, not in the first line, but accessible, many reports and focus in Sustainability. It counts with a sustainability report and a GRI report. The company communicates that CHF 175 million were expended in Sustainability programs

2. **Reducing energy consumption:** In the section about energy efficiency and renewable energy, it shows up a reduction in the Carbon emissions until 22% and use of renewable energy, but it doesn't clarify if they are increasing that percentage

3. **Using green packaging, including recycled packaging:** Optimizing Packaging. Use of PIQET (Packaging Impact Quick Evaluation Tool). Nestlé has a trace

over a continuous depletion in material by weight, apart from some other indicators, very complete

4. **Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain:** Not easy to find more than some interactive tools with the consumer about sustainability, it has as a CSR newsletter

5. **Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers:** Commitment with the local manufacturing

6. **Sourcing your supply chain sustainable:** Using a LCA (Life-cycle Assessments), over all the supply chain, assessing the environmental impact of its practices

Nestlé	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	3
2. Reduce energy consumption	2
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	3
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	1
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	1
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	1

Table 2 the Benchmarking Results of Nestle

Description: Nestlé, is a big Swiss corporation which is the largest food company in the world. It has presence in 86 countries. It is a global company of reference in the food industry, representing a matrix of many known brands in different countries (for example Bonka, Kit Kat, Bultoni, Nescafé, etc.). As a big corporation, applies certain certifications and controls of quality in all its production processes, specially related with the reporting and the traceability. However, in their communication doesn't seem that the sustainability is the center of their efforts, and the brand is more identified with quality and innovation.

Sustainability Communication: Nestlé doesn't focus in communicating sustainability, but the group is in some initiatives for the environment, as the World Cocoa Foundation (WCF), that tries to protect the environment of the damages of the cocoa production

Figure 14 the Snapshot of Nestle Official Website

Main Focus: Consumers, Innovation and Quality

Sustainability Report: Yes. Nestlé is reporting a GRI Certification and a ISO 14001, as certifications for measuring the quality and the impact on the environment in the product life cycle

Presence: Global (86 countries)

Initiatives:

– Policy in Environmental Responsibility.

– Nestlé uses in its policy an environmental management system (NEMS), based in a cycle of continuous improvement in the production, in environmental aspects. From general requirements, applying an environmental policy, to a planning phase; Nestlé implements a list of measures in many fields (resources, competence, communication, documentation, control of documents, operational control and emergency plan). They use this framework, as the most powerful ways of communicating its sustainability.

5.2.3 Kraft Foods

Kraft Foods   **Sustainability Communications**

Kraft Foods
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **6,8**
Country : **United States**
Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): **18**
Sustainability Reporting: Yes
GRI (Yes / No) : No
Comments: 3rd. Dairy in the US, 2nd food company in world
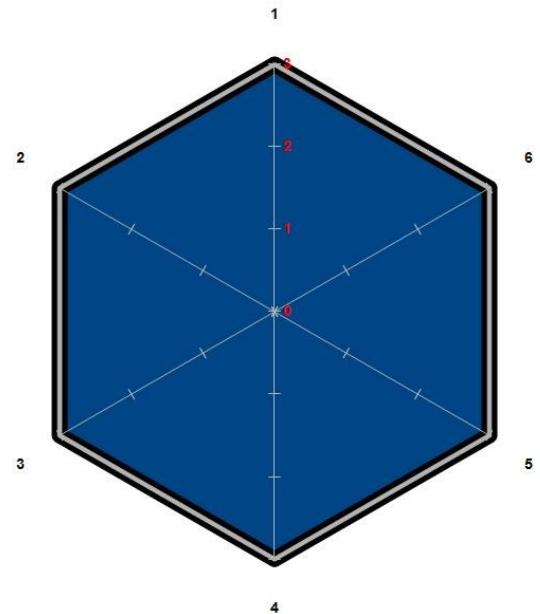
Figure 15 the Spider Chart of Kraft Foods

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan: Complete Reports and Communication in the web
2. Reducing energy consumption: Communicating from 2005 to 2010, it reduced energy use by 16 percent and energy-related carbon dioxide emissions by 18 percent
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Between 2005 and 2010, they cut 100,000 metric tons of packaging from our supply chain
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: Partnered with TerraCycle™, a company that collects post-consumer and post-industrial packaging and turns the waste into merchandise
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: Requesting the fulfillment of many polices for their suppliers
6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: We can observe in all the supply chains many sustainability aspects

Kraft foods	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	3
2. Reduce energy consumption	3
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	3
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	3
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	3
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	3

Table 3 the Benchmarking Results of Kraft Foods

Description: Kraft foods is the third producer of milk in USA, one of the most known brands in the food industry, as the second largest food and beverage company in the world.

Sustainability Communication: Kraft is betting for sustainability as one of the pillars in its communication strategy. They offer a important quantity of reports and methodologies, and a clear positioning in the sustainability.

Main Focus: Sustainability, Quality and Taste

Sustainability Report: Yes

Presence: Core Business in the United States and Canada

Initiatives:

* Kraft foods counts with measurable records about improvements in Sustainability since many years. The company communicates some metrics that better are perceived as sustainable by the consumers and other stakeholders, having data, that improves year by year of:

- Water consumption
- Carbon emissions
- Energy Consumption
- Waste Generation
- Packaging impact depletion
- And etc

Creating a more delicious world.

Our Sustainability Goals: To be achieved by 2015, with 2010 as the base year

25% increase in sustainable sourced* agricultural commodities

-50k metric tons — 100 million pound reduction in global packaging

15% less energy expended

↓15% Reduction in CO2 emissions

15% less water used in manufacturing

15% less waste in manufacturing

-80.5k kilometers — 50 million mile reduction from transportation network

Find out more. Download our 2010 Report >

Community Involvment > Helping those in need

Workplace and Culture > 43% of salaried employees are women

Health and Well-Being > Eat delicious, live well

Our Commitment to Integrity > Compliance and Integrity

Tell us how we are doing >

To us, a delicious world is about living well and taking care of each other today, while being vigilant about the tomorrow that we'll leave for the next generations.

* Sustainably sourced defined as third-party certification/verification

This is a good example of communicating all the efforts that the company is doing for being more sustainable to the consumer. In just a view, the metrics more best perceived are shown up

Figure 16 the Snapshot of Kraft Foods Official Website

− The company presents in its communication as well the environmental reporting of the ISO 14001 and the EMS (Environmental Management System). The company is since 2008 in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, and has many awards and recognitions in Sustainability. Definitely is one of the leaders in sustainability in the dairy and in the food industry.

− This is the Sustainability Wheel used by Kraft Foods in all their processes, according to its Sustainability/CSR Report (Creating a more delicious world). In the report, we can find detailed metrics of all this sections, with many facts and data.

Figure 17 the Sustainability Wheel

5.2.4 Central Lechera Asturiana

Central Lechera Asturiana (CLAS)   **Sustainability Communications**

Central Lechera Asturiana
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **1,2**
Country : **Spain**
Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): 10
Sustainability Reporting : Yes
GRI (Yes / No) : No
Comments: Spanish dairy leader
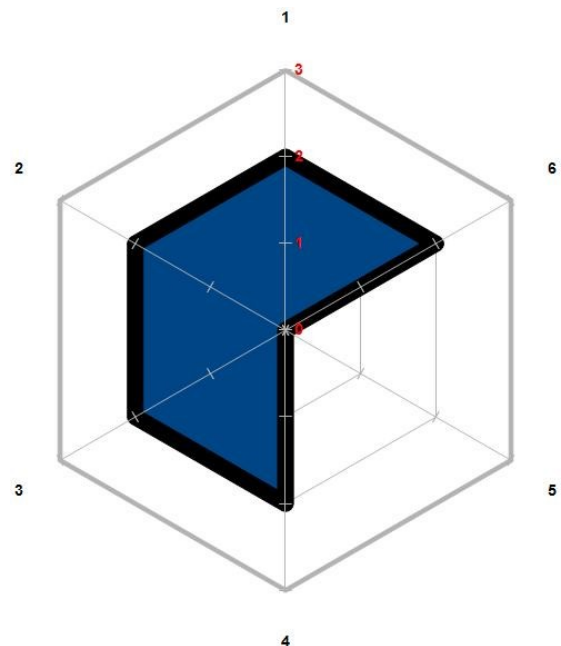
Figure 18 the Spider Chart of Asturiana

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan : Presents a clear bet for the Sustainability, but it is missed more indicators, and more reliable sources, as well as, more organization in the information, that probably will be demanded by the consumer in the future
2. Reducing energy consumption: It states that the 88% of the electricity used is self-generated
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Communicating reduction of the total weight of the packaging
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: Another part of the communication, without clear trace
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: There is no information
6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: Control of the footprint in all the phases of the life-cycle of the product

Central Lechera Asturiana	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	2
2. Reduce energy consumption	2
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	2
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	2
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	0
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	2

Table 4 the Benchmarking Result of Asturiana

Description: This Spanish group is one of the most interesting companies for benchmarking with Skånemejerier, because has many similarities. First of all, like Skånemejerier, is a cooperative owned by the farmers. Another aspect in common is that in the name of the brand, appears the name of a non- central region, in this case, Asturias; that is a small region compared with the rest of the country, representing the 2,33% of the population of Spain and the 1,65% of the national GDP. This company, since many years ago, is selling its rural background in its advertizing and communications as a pro. In a region more rural, it is easy to identify the message of the company, with the cows grazing in the asturian mountainous geography. Also, in this nature context, the company strains in make actions for improving its respect to the environment, and reduce its ecological footprint. Respecting to the size, CLAS has a revenue around three times the revenue of Skånemejerier, and is leading in Spain, where a more competitive market exists, with many brands competing, and a constant growth in the sales of the products known as white brands.

Sustainability Communication: Central Lechera Asturiana is communicating its efforts for being more sustainable in many ways. In the website, we can find information about the reduction in use of water for the production, the improvement and plans in energy efficiency and waste treatment and a remarkable Carbon emissions decrease over the last years.

Figure 19 the Snapshot of Asturiana Official Website

Main Focus: Nature and Sustainability

Sustainability Report: Yes, but not standards as GRI or ISO 14001. This must be something to improve, because the industry is moving to prove the sustainable communications with standards reports.

Presence: Spain, where leads the market

Initiatives:

- CLAS shows many indicators in its communications that are related with the best ways of communicating sustainability in the industry, but it seems that they need to be supported for some external inspector, or more reliable assessment.
- Measures against the global warming and carbon emissions depletion

5.2.5 FrieslandCampina

FrieslandCampina

Friesland Campina
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **11,4**
Country : **Netherlands**
Communication of Sustainability (0 – 3): 18
Sustainability Reporting : Yes
GRI (Yes / No) : Yes
Comments: Leader in Netherlands, and one of the biggest in Europe

Sustainability Communications
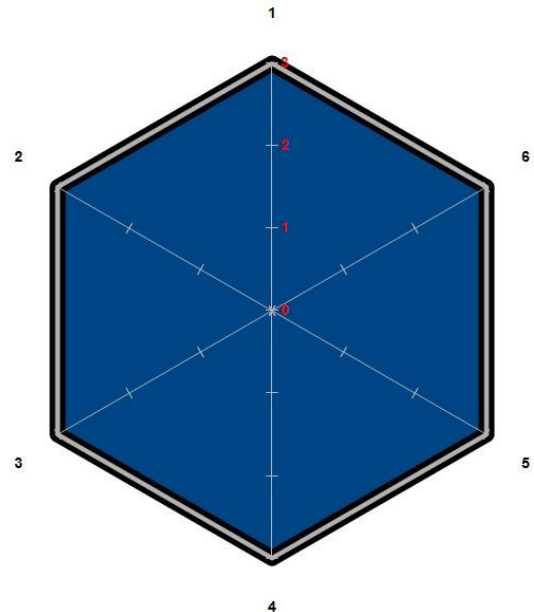
Figure 20 the Spider Chart of Friesland Campina

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan: Complete reports and communication in the web
2. Reducing energy eonsumption: Full reports about energy efficiency
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Friesland Campina is applying best practices in packaging efficiency
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: Recycling strategies
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: Presenting many polices for their suppliers
6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: EMS that follows all life-cycle

Friesland Campina	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	3
2. Reduce energy consumption	3
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	3
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	3
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	3

Table 5 the Benchmarking Reuslts of Friesland Campina

Description: FrieslandCampina is a Dutch dairy cooperative. It is the result of the merge between Royal Friesland Foods and Campina GmbH.

Sustainability Communication: There is a section in its communications dedicated to the Sustainability. It is part of one of the pillars of the message of the company: the Corporate Social Responsibility.

Table 5 the Snapshot of Friesland Campina Official Website

Main Focus: Innovation, Health and CSR

Sustainability Report: Yes and GRI

Presence: Core Business in the Netherlands. Greece, Germany, Russia, USA and Belgium are important markets as well for FrieslandCampina, and has sales offices in 24 countries (WDS, 2010)

Other Comments: The company is complying with many of the considered standards in sustainability, as is special reporting in this field, or the GRI report, that is not easy to find in many dairies. However, FrieslandCampina doesn't focus its message in sustainability, but in other aspects as the health and the innovation in its products.

Initiatives:
- Reports and Standards: Friesland Campina stands of for having a very complete portfolio of environmental and sustainable solutions in their communications. In its means of communication we can find:

    - Sustainability Reporting: A complete report, more detailed, for any stakeholder who wants to know more in detail the actions and the metrics of the sustainability plans of the company

    - Standards of Quality in Sustainability: ISO 14001 and the GRI Report

    - Water efficiency

5.3 Analysis of the direct competency of Skånemejerier

5.3.1 Skånemejerier

Skånemejerier

Sustainability Communications

Skånemejerier
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **0,4**
Country : **Sweden**
Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): 13
Sustainability Reporting : No
GRI (Yes / No) : No
Comments: Second dairy in Sweden
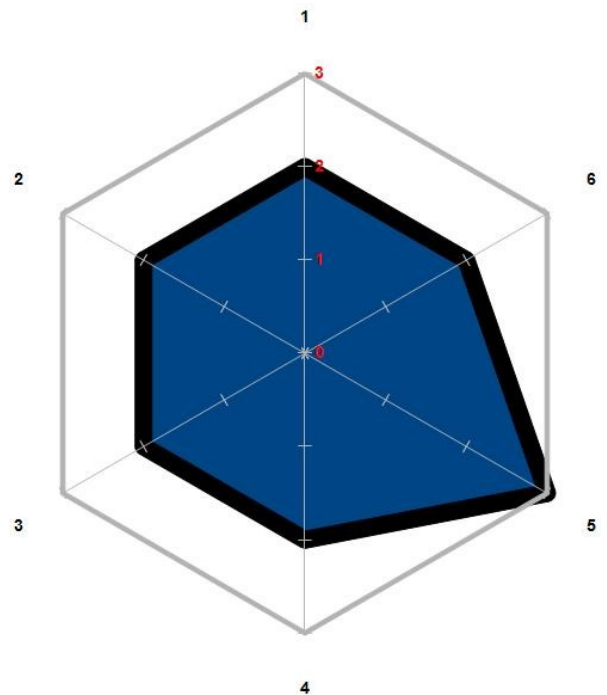
Figure 21 the Spider Chart of Skånemejerier
Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan. Publishing it and measuring it: An environmental brochure, in Swedish, waiting for the coming sustainability report on next year

2. Reducing energy consumption: The company some information about the energy effectiveness
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Communicating good practices in packaging
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: Another part of the communication, but it has not a clear trace of the data
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: Skånemejerier has controls of minimum standards for their suppliers. The KRAV certification warranties that the farmers and suppliers comply with the minimum standards of quality

6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: A short scheme of the production process

Skånemejerier	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	2
2. Reduce energy consumption	2
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	2
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	2
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	3
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	2

Table 6 the Benchmarking Results of Skånemejerier

Description: Skånemejerier is a dairy company that leads the market in the swedish region of Scania, and is the second Swedish dairy. Is structured in a cooperative model , and owned by around 600 farmers. It is remarkable that this company is strongly linked with the people of the region of Scania, and the company has been placed as part of the identity of the region. One proof of this is the boycotts against the Supermarket chain Coop, when they decided to quit of their stores the Skånemejerier products.

The company produces fresh milk, and milk products, as well as some fruit-based beverages.

Sustainability Communication: There are many attempts for positioning the company as a organization that makes sustainability and environmental efforts. The managing group of the company, is preparing a sustainability report for 2012, and is concerned about the communication and the application of sustainability policies.
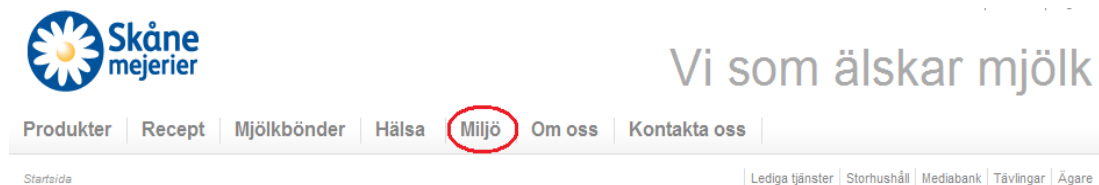
Figure 22 the Snapshot of Skånemejerier Official Website

Main Focus: Natural farming and sustainability

Sustainability Report: Environmental report and preparing a sustainability report for the next year. ISO 14001 certified

Presence: Sweden and Denmark

Initiatives:

– The fact is that Skånemejerier is doing many things for be more sustainable, but maybe we know this more for the interviews and our internal knowledge of the company, than because how Skånemejerier communicates all that they make
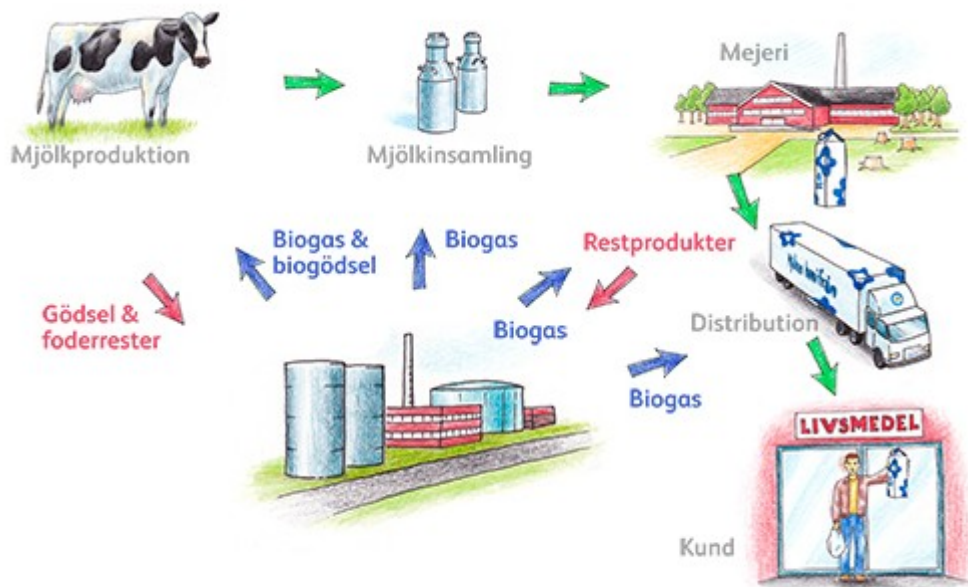
Figure 23 An Example of Skånemejerier in Marketing Communications

5.3.2   Arla

Arla

Sustainability Communications

Arla Foods

Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **8,7 (Worldwide)**

Country : **Denmark**

Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): 14

Sustainability Reporting: Yes

GRI (Yes / No) : No

Comments: One of the biggest dairies in Europe and main competitor of Skånemejerier in some regions
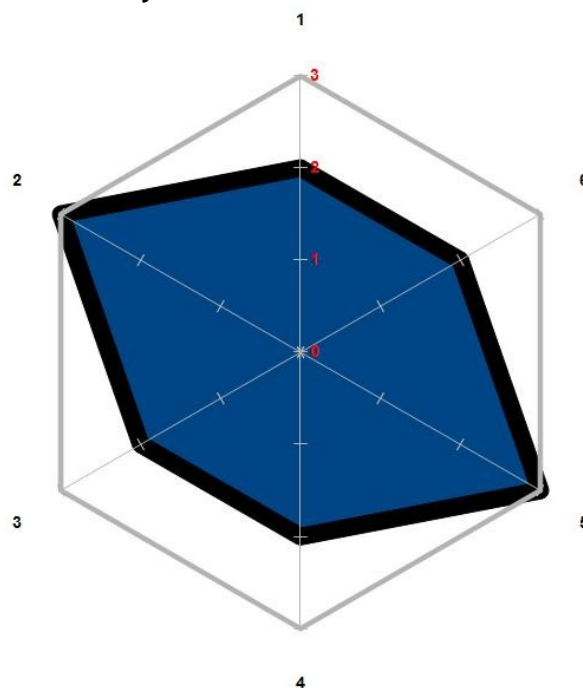
Firgure 24 the Spider Chart of Arla

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan. Publishing it and measuring it: There is a full strategy and reporting, but maybe not the most complete in the industry. The company is committed, but have space for improving

2. Reducing energy consumption: The company offers data about their efforts for reducing the energy consumption and the carbon footprint

3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Some data about the co2 emitted by the packaging, and communicates improvements in packaging, but is difficult to find concrete data

4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: Data and focus in communication with the consumer

5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: t has a system of certification of the quality of the suppliers with a code of conduct

6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: The sustainability is applied in many parts of the life cycle of the product

Arla	(0 − 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	2
2. Reduce energy consumption	3
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	2
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	2
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	3
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	2

Table 7 the Benchmarking Results of Arla

Description: Arla is one of the biggest dairy companies, leading the market in Sweden and Denmark, and second in United Kingdom. Arla is dominating in many parts of Sweden, having a big proportion of the market in the capital Stockholm, and maintaining a very good relation with the distribution chains. It works with a cooperative model, and is owned by Swedish and Danish dairy farmers.

Sustainability Communication: A part inside the CSR, that is not the center of the communication of the company. In its communication it is possible to find a sustainability report, and many references to the main communication points in sustainability. Probably compared with others, it communicates efforts, but doesn't offer that full reports with metrics and certifications confirming and proving what is said.

Picture: Sustainability as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility of the company

Figure 25 the Snapshot of Arla Official Website

Main Focus: Nature, Farming

Sustainability Report: Yes

Presence: Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Spain, Sweden, UK, USA

Initiatives:

* Arla presents all its measures in sustainability integrated in the CSR Report, that it includes all other compromises with the society. In the message of the company about Sustainability, it seems clear that they focus in some of the main drivers of communication in sustainability, as are:

    - Products: Presenting the continuous reduction of the environmental impact of their products

- Production / Plant: Making efforts to comply with the environmental standards

- Resources: Energy and raw materials efficiency

- Suppliers: a control of the providers to be according with the policies of the company

- Recycling practices

5.3.3 Valio

Valio   **Sustainability Communications**

Valio
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **2,5**
Country : **Finland**
Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): 8
Sustainability Reporting: Yes
GRI (Yes / No) : No
Comments: Leader in Finland, well established in Sweden and Estonia
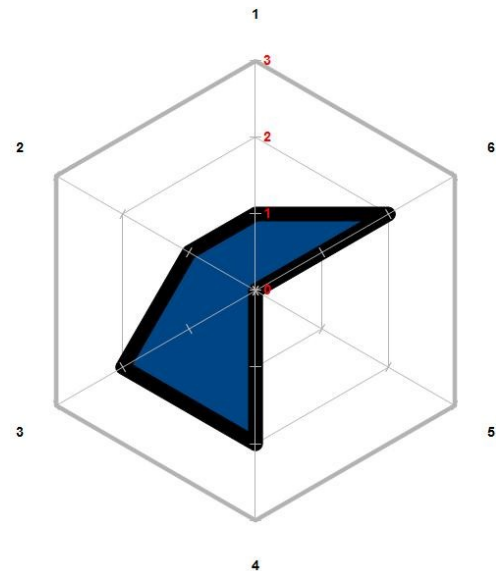
Figure 26 the Spider Chart of Valio

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan: Valio publishes every year an own-made complete sustainability Report, but the last one is from 2009.
2. Reducing energy Consumption: It communicates some efforts to be energy-efficient, and it is affected by policies of the Kyoto protocol
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Valio uses green raw materials for the packaging
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: Valio states that all their packaging is recyclable
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: No information found
6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: Applying sustainability actions in all the supply chain

Valio	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	1
2. Reduce energy consumption	1
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	2
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	2
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	0
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	2

Table 8 the Benchmarking Results of Valio

DESCRIPTION: Valio Ltd (Finnish: Valio Oy) is one of the biggest producers of milk in Finland, producing until the 86% of the milk in this country, and expanding its activities to some near countries as Estonia (where is the second dairy), or Sweden, being direct competitor of Skånemejerier

SUSTAINABILITY: Important part of the communication strategy of the company

MAIN FOCUS: Innovation, R & D, and Sustainability

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT: Some reports in the Sustainability section

PRESENCE: Subsidiaries in Belgium, Russia, the United States, Sweden, Estonia and China

INITIATIVES:

- Financial responsibility
- Valio dairy farms
- Product safety
- Environmental responsibility
- Social responsibility
- Taste and good feelings

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT: YES

5.3.4   Milko

Sustainability Communications

| Milko |
|---|
| Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **0,3** |
| Country : **Sweden** |
| Sustainability Communication (0 – 18): 2 |
| Sustainability Reporting : Yes |
| GRI (Yes / No) : No |
| Comments: Dominant position in the central region of Sweden |
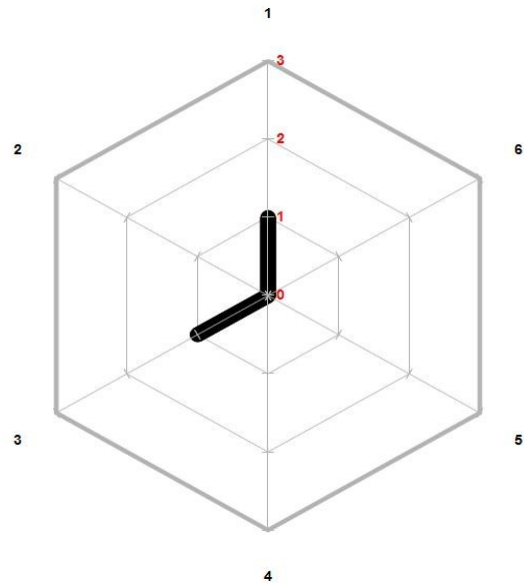
Figure 27 the Spider Chart of Milko

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan. Publishing it and measuring it: Short communication about nature and organic production
2. Reducing energy consumption: No information
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: Milko possesses some recycling stations.
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: No information
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: No information
6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: No information

Milko	(0 – 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	1
2. Reduce energy consumption	0
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	1
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	0
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	0
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	0

Table 9 the Benchmarking Results of Milko

DESCRIPTION: Swedish group, that leads in more than 1/3 of Sweden, in some regions in the central part of the country. Similar size to Skånemejerier and also a cooperative.

SUSTAINABILITY: Just talks short about organic production and Natural Quality.

MAIN FOCUS: Local milk and connection with the consumer

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT PUBLISHED: No

PRESENCE: 1/3 of Sweden

INITIATIVES

Activities related with sport, health, nature, schools and families

OTHER COMMENTS

Milko is one of Sweden's largest dairy companies, and owned by about 800 dairy farmers.

5.3.5 Tine

Tine

Sustainability Communications

| Tine	
Revenue (only dairy in Bilion US$) (WDS,2010)= **3**	
Country : **Norway**	
Sustainability Communication(0 − 18): 1	
Sustainability Reporting (0 − 3): Yes	
GRI (Yes / No) : No	
Comments: Leader in Norway	
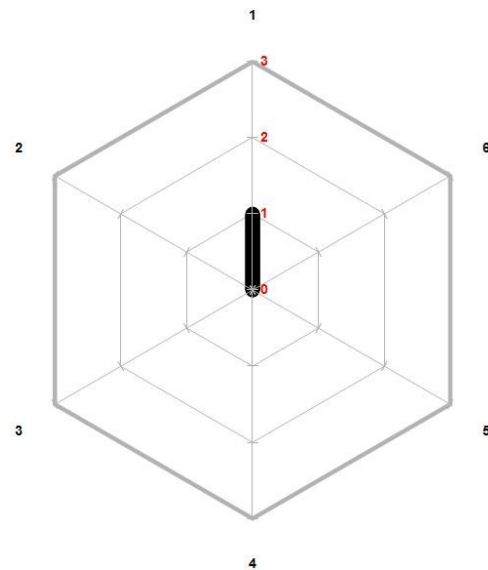
Figure 28 the Snapshot of Tine

Framework: 6 ways to communicate commitment with Sustainability

1. Developing a Sustainability Plan. Publishing it and measuring it: Tine has no intention to communicate sustainability, only some comments about nature, and organic production
2. Reducing energy consumption: No information
3. Using green packaging, including recycled packaging: No information
4. Incorporating recycling measures for consumers and supply chain: No information
5. Establishing sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers: No information
6. Sourcing your supply chain sustainable: No information

Tine	(0 − 3)
1. Develop a sustainability plan, publish it publicly and measure it	1
2. Reduce energy consumption	0
3. Use green packaging, including recycled packaging	0
4. Incorporate recycling measures for consumers and supply chain	0
5. Establish sustainability standards for choosing suppliers / providers	0
6. Source your supply chain sustainably	0

Table 10 the Benchmarking Results of Tine

SUSTAINABILITY: It is not a part of the communication strategy of the company

MAIN FOCUS: Health, family

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT: No

PRESENCE: Norway

INITIATIVES:

- Milk and health
- Children and Youth

5.4   Results of the Benchmarking

After the analysis of these ten companies, we present all the results together, in order to have the possibility of compare in a view all the results.

5.4.1   Overview of all the results

In this picture, we can see in a view the performance of all the companies participating in this study. In the first row, there are the bigger players and leading companies, and in the second row are Skånemejerier and its direct competitors.

Figure 29 Overview of the Reuslts

It is a clear difference between the first and the second row. The first conclusion we can reach is that the sustainability communications are linked with the size and resources of the company. A smaller company can not assume the costs of the reports and the studies for communicate sustainability in a more reliable way.

We see a clear proportion between the revenue and the sustainability communication capabilities then.
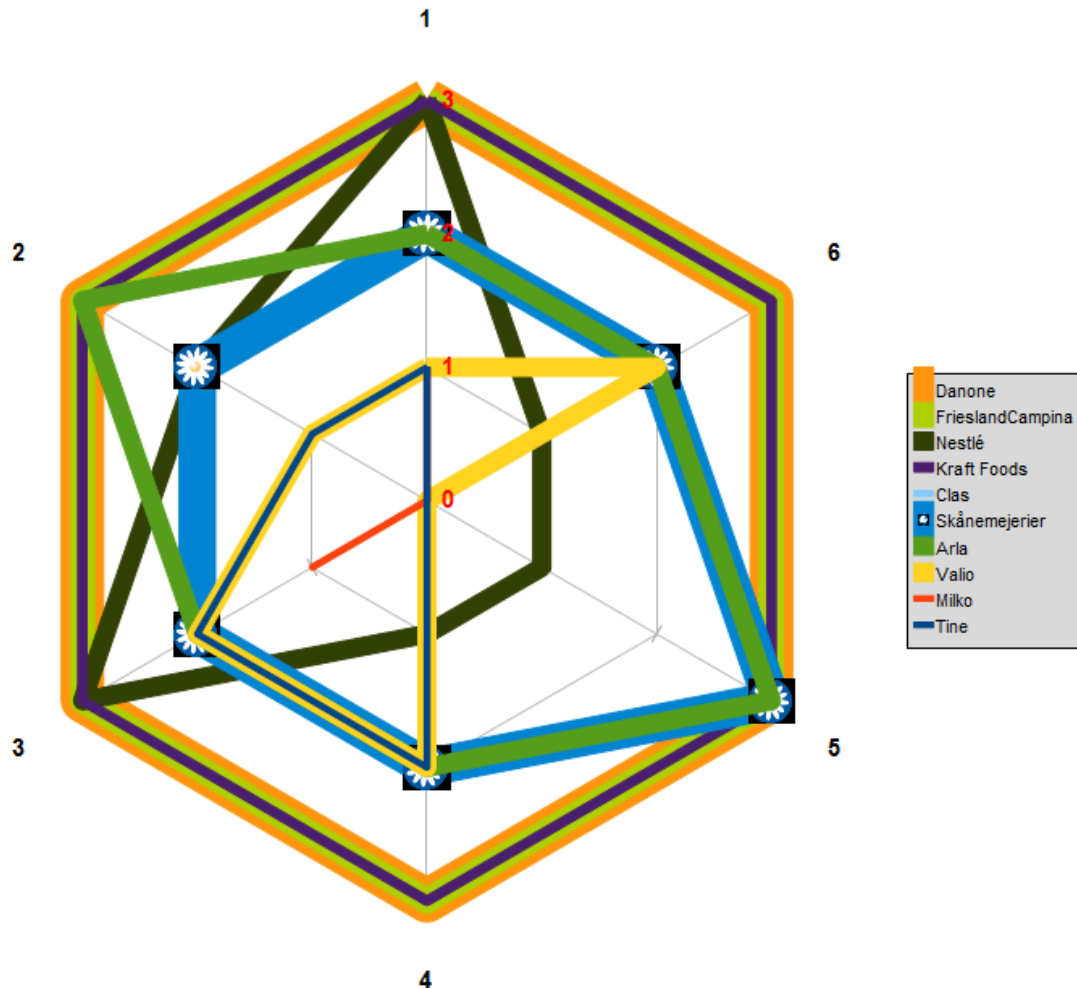
Figure 30 the Comparisions of Skånemejerier with Large Players

However, we can see that Skånemejerier has a remarkable area in the communication of Sustainability for its size, almost at the level of its main competitor: Arla, and with a very similar performance in each indicator. We will see in the next sections, the comparison of Skånemejerier with the biggest companies, and with its competetitors.

5.4.2 Skånemejerier compared with the biggest players

In this more clear spider chart, we can see Skånemejerier compared with the leading companies, that are the most of them, much bigger in size. This picture is a good frame of reference for the company, for finding what is the benchmarking process: a continuous cycle of improvement, towards the comparison with the best practices, in this case, in sustainability communications.
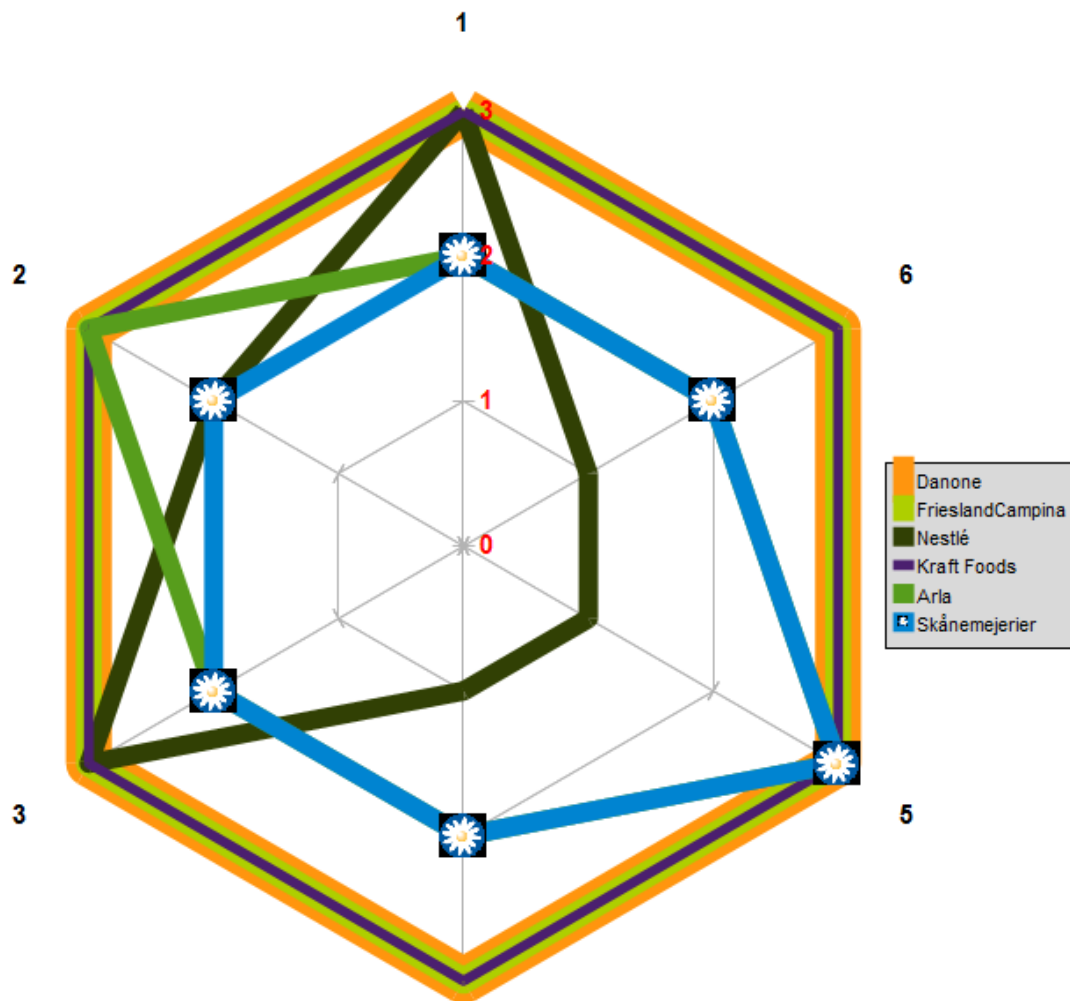
Figure 30 the Comparisions of Skånemejerier with its Competitors

From here we can identify that Skåmejerier is well situated in all the indicators, even having best practices in the standards for its suppliers, but also it is showed a path or way for improving in sustainability communications in the future

5.4.3 Skånemejerier vs. competitors

This is a snapshot of how is Skånemejerier communicating it sustainability, with its neighbors in the stand of the supermarket. It seems clear that is doing better than the mean, only surpassed by Arla, in one indicator, and with a very similar performance.
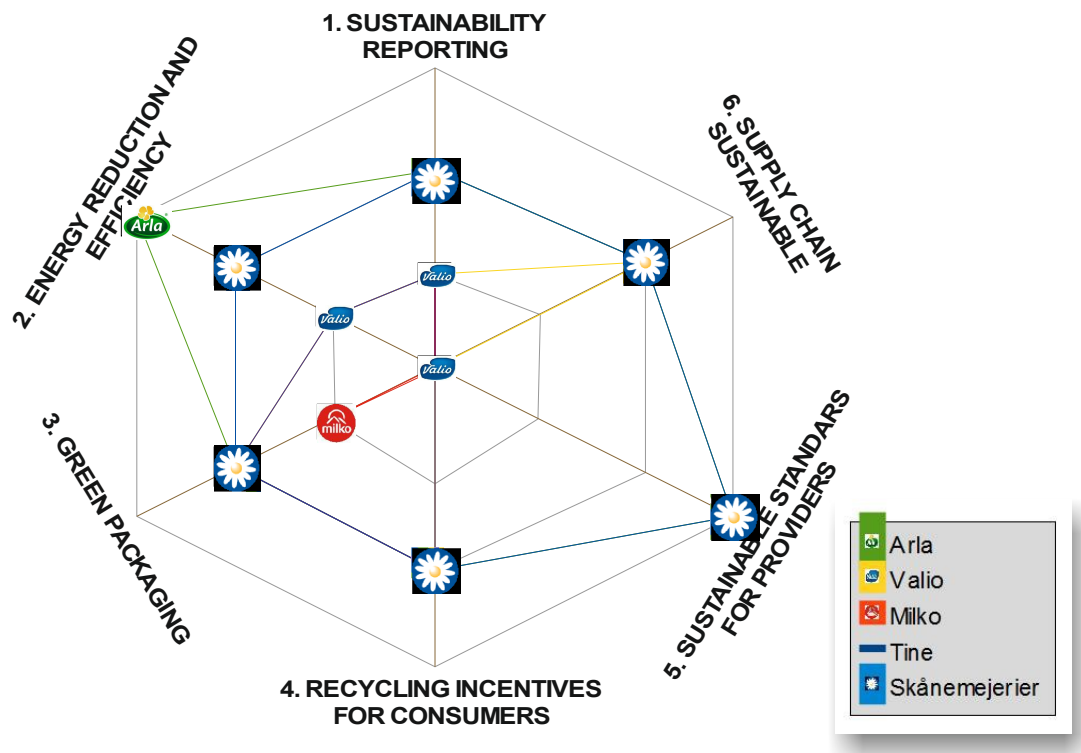
Figure 30 the Snapshot of Skånemejerier with its Competitors in Marketing Communications

However, there is something to underline in this benchmark. If Skånemejerier is placed second in this benchmark with its competitors; the fact is that the main competitor, and the leader in sales in the regions where Skånemejerier wants to grow, according with the meetings with the managing team of the company. This means that Skånemejerier according to this study, is some behind in sustainability communications against its main competitor (but is very close).

5.5   Conclusions and Suggestions from the benchmarking

Skånemejerier is doing fine in their marketing communications in sustainability currently. The company has a very good focus in the most important indicators, specially if we consider its size. But always there is a way of improving, and the benchmarking, precisely, consists in find ways of continuous improving. Is for this that, taking a look at the best practices in the best industry; Skånemejerier could improve still its sustainability communications, applying this actions:

- Certifications as a GRI report, that would provide more reliable data, coming from external inspectors

- Efforts for offering more data about sustainability policies. It doesn't seem necessary to offer this data in the first line of the marketing communications, but there are some consumers and other stakeholders, that are increasing their worries about the sustainability. All the most important dairies, are tracing and accumulating data in the whole supply chain

More information in the communications in English. If Skånemejerier wants to grow, maybe it is not a big effort to reach more people, in regions where not all people talk Swedish, specially for all the benefits that would bring, comparing with the workload, and because the main competitor, Arla, is offering multilingual communications.

6 Trends in sustainable marketing. Benchmarking: global sustainable companies.

6.1 Introduction

"The best advertisement is done by satisfied customers"

-Philip Kotter

While working on our study we saw different sources telling about the same trends shaping marketing function today. Most of them were talking about the importance of transparency and honesty for a company, real value of content, power of customers and much more person-centric marketing. By doing our study we tried to figure out what drives these trends and we can conclude that they are the sequences of the rising popularity of the Internet in the world. In other words the increasing number of customers with access to the Internet together with increasing number of online communities changed the way people communicate with each other and make their decisions to buy products. Some sources call this trend the "the consumerization of IT", "iConsumers" (M.G, 2011) or "rise of the digital consumers" (David Court, 2009).

The picture below describes the difference between old and new processes of making decision to buy products made by customers. (David Court, 2009)
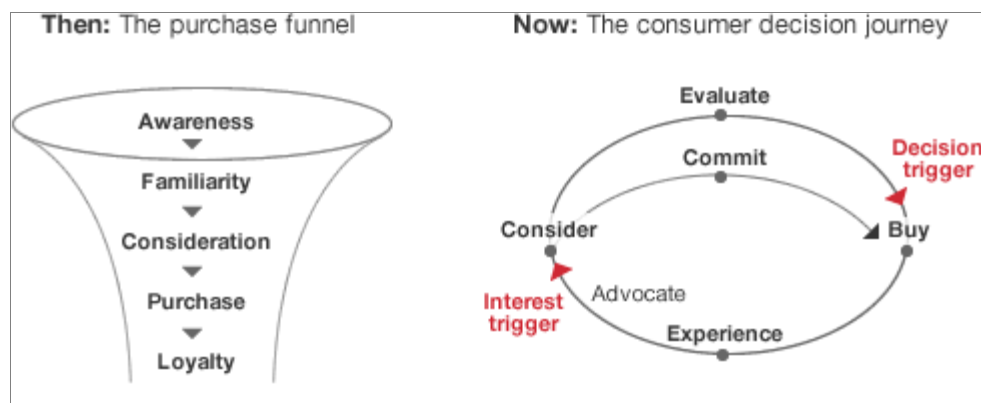
Figure 31 Changing in Customer's Decision Making Process

According to the old model, customers start their decision process with the variety of brands in mind. It is reflected in the picture by "Awareness" stage. Then marketers reach the customers through different media by sending various messages and at the end the customers come up with one exact brand. Now partly because of explosion of products and new digital channels and partly because of much better informed and educated customers the old model doesn't work.

In the study made by McKinsey more than 20 000 consumers across three continents were examined. The conclusion was that today word-of-mouth, online review and forums are more important in the customer buying decision process than traditional advertisement, which is mostly company- driven. The new model reflects consumer-driven marketing (David Court, 2009).

Several other sources such as articles published by The Economists, Booz&Company, Marketing Week and Mediascope Europe reports emphasized the importance of various online ratings, reviews and social networks for customers' buying decision process.

6.1.1 Sustainability Issue from Customers' Point of View. Statistics

The survey conducted by McKinsey&Company in 2007 reflects customers' concern about the environmental and social impact of the products they buy (Sheila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008). The graph below addresses this concern in the case of food and beverage companies and describes it more deeply. It based on answers the customers gave on the question: "What should food and beverage companies do to make you more inclined to choose their products over others?" (% of respondents selecting giving issue as 1 of top 3; based on responses from customers from developed markets: UK, USA, Canada, France, Germany)

Exhibit 2 : (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008)
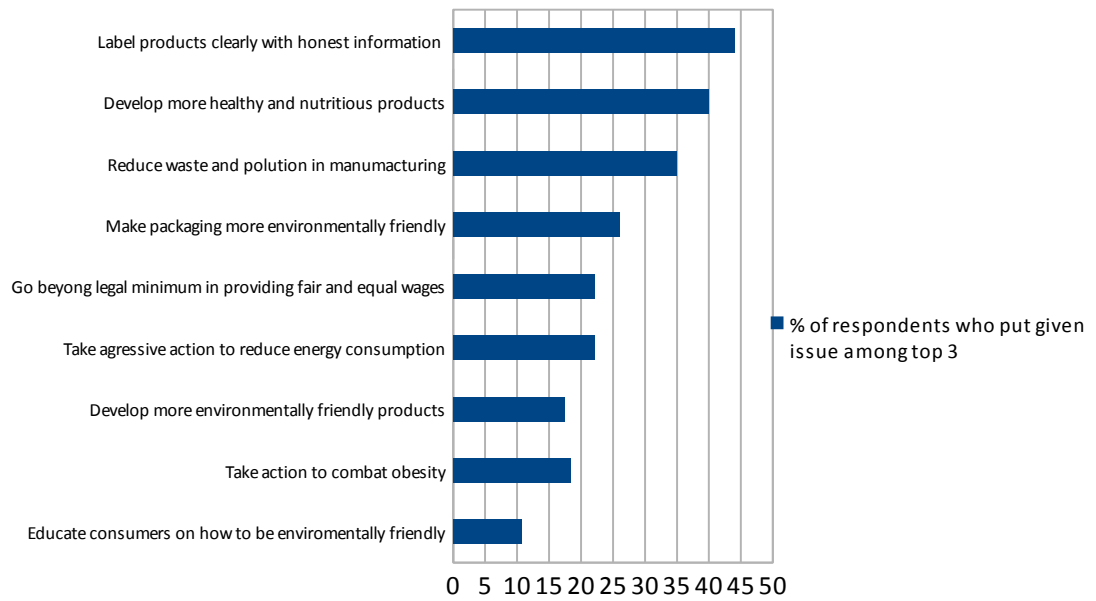
As follows from the graph above, there most important things companies need to do to influence customers' decision are: clear labeling which reflects well the information about the product, healthier and more nutritious product, the reduced impact on the environment. For food and beverage companies this information is even more important as 55 % of costumers said they have already changed their decision to buy the food and beverages from companies who are not acting "in the best interest of society", as they heard (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008). Approximately, the same percentage of customers indicated they have already bought products because of company reputation as socially and environment friendly organization (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008).

The graph below represents the segmentation of consumers of global retail chain by their willingness to pay for products "with environmental and social benefits".

Exhibit 3. (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008)
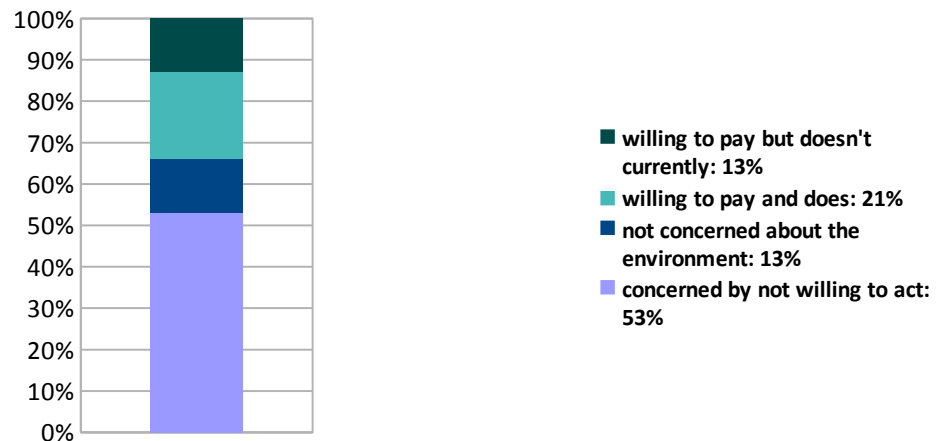
007: willingness to pay for products with environmental and social benefits

- ■ willing to pay but doesn't currently: 13%
- ■ willing to pay and does: 21%
- ■ not concerned about the environment: 13%
- ■ concerned by not willing to act: 53%

As it is seen from the graph above 34 % of global retail chain customers said they were willing to pay for the products with environmental and social benefits (ethnically produces, such as fair-trade coffee or products which are energy or water efficient), and 21 % do this already. But majority of customers, 53 % said they do concern about the environment but don't want to act. The following graph indicates the reasons for giving such answer.

Exhibit 4. Reasons for not Buying Environmental-Friendly Products (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008)

- ■ Can't afford to pay: 8%
- ■ Lack of knowledge is a barrier: 13%
- ■ Don't want to compromise quality: 13%
- ■ Both price and convenience are issues: 9%
- ■ Won't compromise convenience: 9%
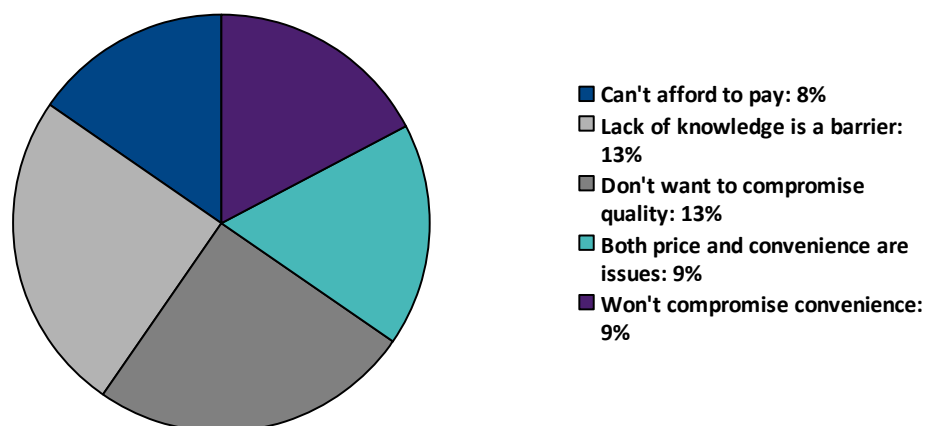
Importance of Sustainability Issue for Companies

More and more customers becoming concern about environmental and social issues of the products they buy and we see it as an opportunity for companies who can act on these trends (Sheila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008). For example, customers indicated willingness to pay premium to companies which are doing well in addressing their concerns about the environment and health (especially it's true for organizations producing food and beverages). In the case of environment the most important issues for costumers are the impact company has on global warming, level of waste and pollution. Health is reflected by such issues as food safety, use of products which are not genetically modified and actions to avoid or limit the use of different kinds of pesticides. Moreover, 55 % of costumers said they have already refused to buy food and beverages from companies which they heard are not acting "in the best interest of society". Additionally, costumers specified three the most important things which can push them to give their preference to one product rather than to choose the competitive one. It is clear labeling which reflect well the information about the product, more healthy and nutritious products and the reduced impact on the environment. But companies need to do better job in telling the costumers about their sustainability efforts. According to the survey 63 % of the respondents had no idea which one of five well-established brands was the most environmental- friendly (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008).

The first step which can be done by companies in order to increase their sales of environment friendly products is building awareness among the costumers. And here various strategies can be used. For example, Wal-Mart put the bulbs in different places in its stores, at eye level, as usual on the top two or three shelves in order to help costumers to find green options as well as to increase awareness about environment friendly products. Toyota implemented special marketing promotion, which says, "We've significantly increased production on the hard-to-find, easy-to-drive Toyota Prius." Since 1999 the company was increasing its cars output by 50 % a

year in average, according to AutoInsight. (Sheila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008)

Further in our study we regard various media which companies can use to communicate with their customers and to build awareness about the products they have. We will concentrate on digital channels and describe main trends there.

6.1.2 Trends in Marketing Communications Channels

The Increasing Influence of Internet

When it comes to marketing there are few emerging forces which are changing the entire function a lot. The main of them is Internet. To say few words about the dynamic: 15 years ago less than 1 % of the world's population was online, now this number is 25%. For mobile phones, that number is 3% and 50% respectively (Peter Bisson, Elizabeth Stephenson, and S. Patrick Viguerie, 2010). In Europe the use of Internet increased on 19 % during the last four years only (Mediascope Europe, 2010b). It influenced a lot on people' habits. Because of popularity of social networking, text messages and e-mails today Americans are spending 30 % more time reading than 10 years ago. Additionally, these people are also write, 15 millions in the USA only post online product reviews on a weekly basis. Additionally, they consider online reviews to be almost twice as influential as traditional advertisement (Peter Bisson, Elizabeth Stephenson, and S. Patrick Viguerie, 2010). According to the survey made by Razorfish, the online marketing agency, more than six out of ten consumers before making purchase decision read online reviews (Booz&Co, 2011). It puts the Internet in the very center of consumer-driven marketing, as it's crucial during the evaluation stage of decision making process. In other words during the stage when customers thinking which product to choose: searching for information, reviewing ratings and various forums. In order to capture customers' attention at this stage companies need to create properties that will attract customers, such as Web sites, blogs, forums and various other digital assets that can foster word-of-mouth and tell customers about the products (David Court, 2009). And most of

experts agree that this trend is going to continue with the development of the Internet.

"It will be personal. It will run on the equivalent of your mobile phone. It will know where you are via GPS, and you will use it as your personal and social assistant. It will know who your friends are and when they show up near you. It will remind you of their birthdays. It will entertain you. It will warn you of impending threats and it will keep you up to date. It will use all of that computing power that's in the cloud, as we call it."

–Eric Schmidt, CEO, Google about the future of Internet

Social Media Techniques from Executives' Point of View

According to EIAA's latest Mediascope Europe study as much as 33 % of Europeans claim they cannot live without the Internet. This number becomes equal to the percentage of people who say they cannot live without TV (Mediascope Europe, 2010b). However, do executives and marketing managers take this into account when they develop their strategy and how they react on this trend?

Interesting results were published be McKinsey&Company, which conducted the survey receiving 3,249 responses from executives across variety of industries, functional specialties and region (Business Technology Office, 2010). Executives were asked questions about the intensity and purpose of use of main online tools and techniques, such as blogs, mash-ups (a Web application that combines multiple sources of data into a single tool), micro-blogging, peer to peer, podcasts, prediction markets, rating, RSS (Really Simple Syndication), social networking, tagging, video sharing, and wikis in their business. The survey called it Web 2.0 tools and techniques. Additionally, they were asking questions about the possibility of future investment in Web 2.0. Their plans for future increase in spending in existing tools as well as main priorities. The graph below covers main benefits which businesses can get from using Web 2.0 tools. The graph outlines benefits from using twelve selected tools, which were described above for such purposes as: Reducing time to market,

Increasing revenue, Reducing marketing costs, Reducing customer support costs, Increasing effectiveness of marketing, Increasing customers' satisfaction.

Exhibit 5. Benefits from using Web.2.0 (asked only of respondents who reported using one or more technologies in their companies; % of companies seeing measurable benefits from using technologies internally) (Business Technology Office, 2010)
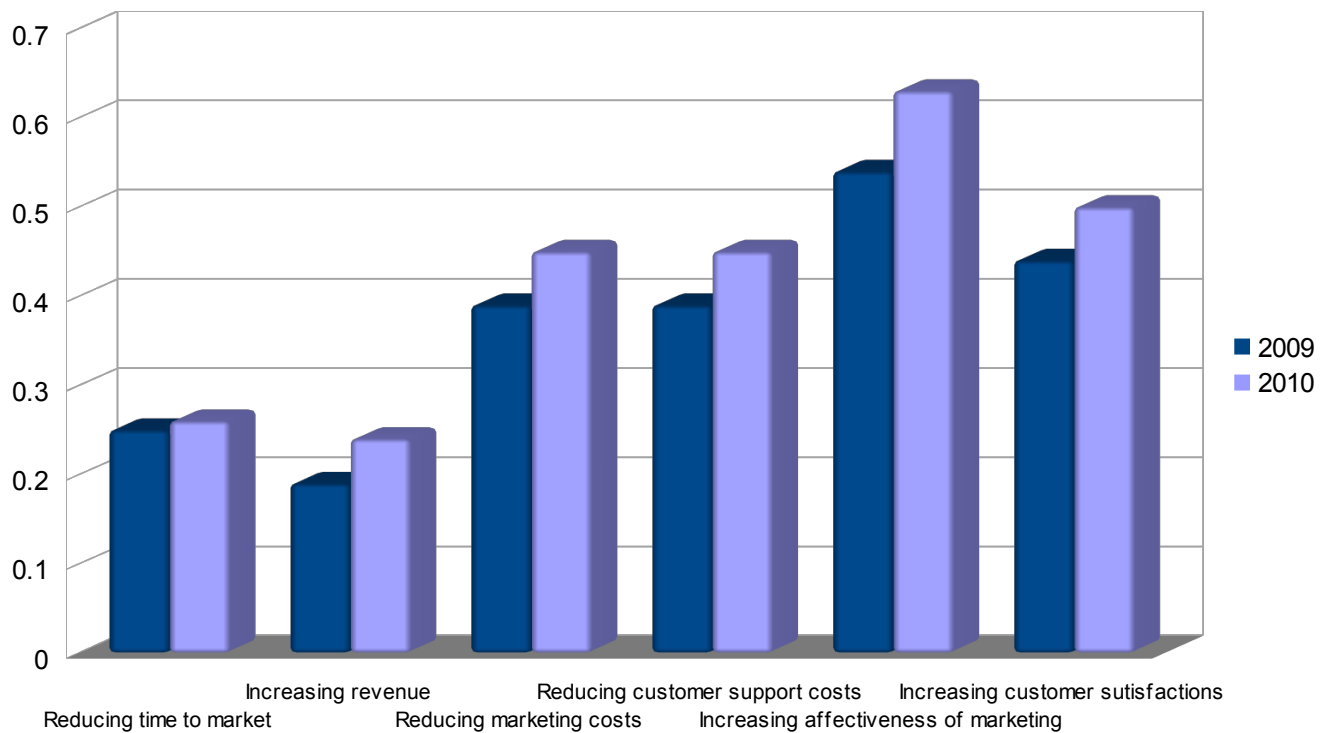
As follows from the graph, more than 60 % of executives see measurable benefits in marketing effectiveness from using Web 2.0 technologies in their businesses. Additionally, more executives speak about positive affect from implying Web 2.0 tools in 2010, comparably to 2009. This trend is true for all the six purposes, as it can be seen from the graph above.

Moreover, the increase in use of Internet by people is reflected by companies' willingness to invest in Web.2.0 technologies. From each year more and more executives understand the importance of such tools for their business. The graph

below outlines some trends in companies' investment plans when it comes to Web.2.0 technologies.

Exhibit 6: Companies Plans for Investing in Web 2.0 Technologies and Tools over the Next Three Years (Business Technology Office, 2010)
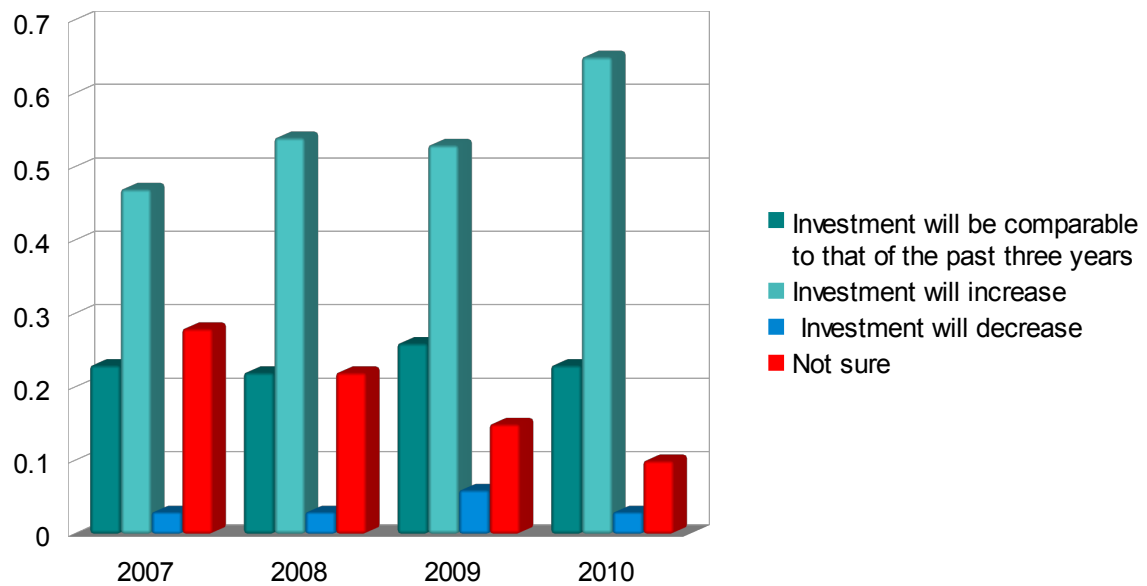
The main trend can be seen from the exhibit above: in 2010 more than 60 % of executives said they plan to increase their investment in Web 2.0 technologies over the next three years. In 2007, this number was a little bit higher than 45 %. And only 3 % of executives said they planned to decrease their spending in the next three year period.

6.1.3 Social Media from Marketers' Point of View

Today a lot of marketers consider social media to be important part of their strategy. Interesting findings were published in the Social Media Marketing Report, which gathered the responses from 3300 marketers and which became available online in April, 2011 (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011). According to that study as much as 90 % of

marketers say that social media is important for their business. By implementing social media tools businesses can gain various benefits, such as generated exposure for the business, increased traffic, improved search rankings, resulted in new business partnerships, generated qualified leads, reduced overall marketing expenses, and improved sales. The graph below indicates the percentage of marketers which saw the benefits described above from using social media:

Exhibit 7: Benefits from Social Media Marketing (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011)
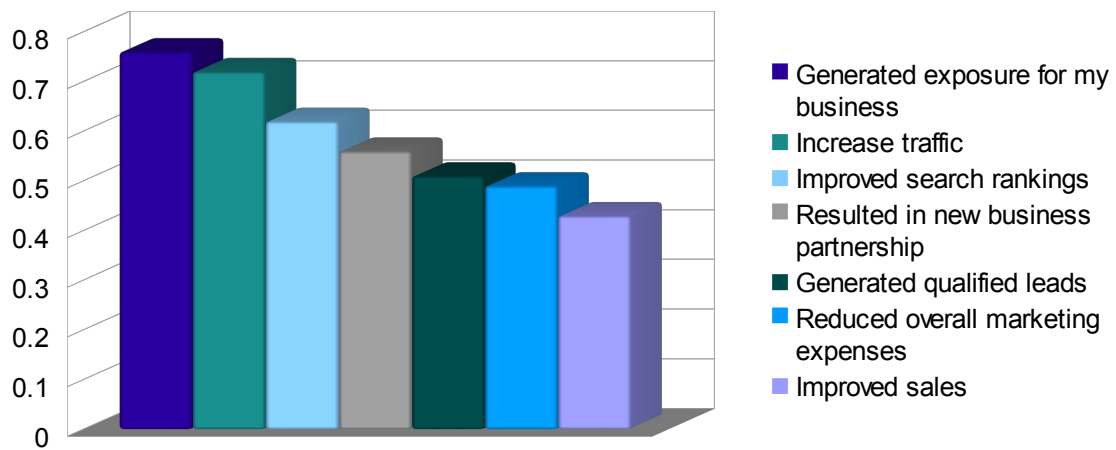
Majority of marketers said that social media helped to generate exposure for their businesses. As it can be seen from the graph above 88 % of marketers named it as the main advantage. Next come: increased traffic (72 %), which is 9 % higher comparably to the last year study. And improved search ranking (62 %), with 8 % growth from the previous year.

Speaking about social media tools used by marketers, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blogs named as the most popular according to the report. The graph below shows that:

Exhibit 8: Commonly Used Social Media Tools (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011)
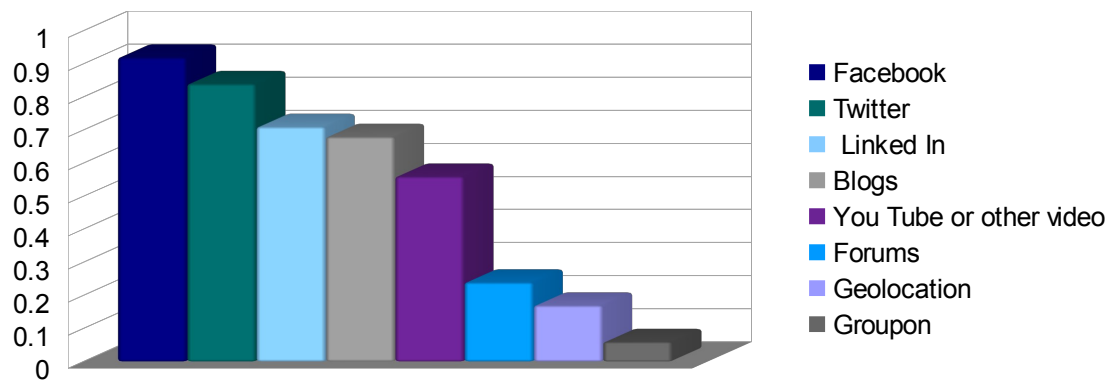
The interesting trend here is that Facebook is leading the list of the most popular social media tools, with 92 % of marketers said that. It outperformed Twitter, which got 84 % and was the leader according to the previous year report. In 2010 report, Twitter had 88 % and was on the first place, while Facebook got 87 % and was slightly behind. In 2009 report, only 77 % of marketers said they were using Facebook. So there is an increase of 20 % in the usage of Facebook during the two year period only. LinkedIn lost 7 % compared to last year report.

Another important issue to outline is marketers' plans about future use of social media tools. Do they plan to increase, decrease, and not utilize at all or leave in the same level the use of different social media tools? Next, two graphs shows the answers in the case of two popular social media networks: Facebook and You Tube. Few trends can be seen more obvious from the graphs below.

Exhibit 9: Future Use of Facebook (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011)

Facebook is the main tool in social media for most of marketers surveyed; 92 % of them are using Facebook and 75 % said they plan to increase their activities.
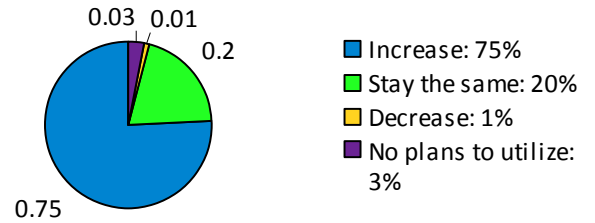
Exhibit 10: Future Use of YouTube (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011)

With the 77 % of marketers planning to increase their use of You Tube and other video marketing next year, it became the top area for investment among the all social media tools.
Additionally, among marketers who represent business with 1000 and more employees 82 % indicated You Tube and other video marketing as their key growing area for a near future (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011).
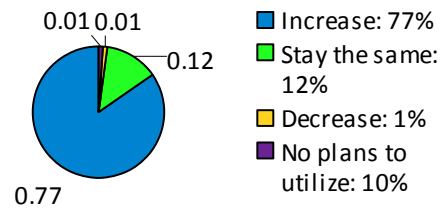
Social Networks as One of the Main Social Media Tools

An interesting finding can be seen from McKinsey&Company survey, which was mentioned previously (Business Technology Office, 2010). They are about five popular Web. 2.0 tools, marketers use to reach customers. Five tables below show the results based on percentage of executives which answered positively on the question: *Are you using the following technologies and tools to reach customers?*

Table 1. Marketing (Business Technology Office, 2010)

Tools | Year	2009	2010	Change
Blogs	45,00%	43,00%	-4,00%
Social networks	41,00%	59,00%	39,00%
Video sharing	36,00%	33,00%	-9,00%
RSS	30,00%	26,00%	-13,00%
Podcasts	29,00%	26,00%	-10,00%

Table 2. Acquiring new customers(Business Technology Office, 2010)

Tools | Year	2009	2010	Change
Blogs	42,00%	39,00%	-7,00%
Social networks	43,00%	64,00%	49,00%
Video sharing	31,00%	28,00%	-9,00%
RSS	23,00%	17,00%	-26,00%
Podcasts	25,00%	21,00%	-16,00%

Table 3. Developing products (Business Technology Office, 2010)

Tools | Year	2009	2010	Change
Blogs	41,00%	42,00%	-2,00%
Social networks	37,00%	49,00%	32,00%
Video sharing	21,00%	14,00%	-33,00%
RSS	11,00%	8,00%	-27,00%
Podcasts	10,00%	9,00%	-10,00%

Table 4. Improving customer service (Business Technology Office, 2010)

Tools | Year	2009	2010	Change
Blogs	35,00%	36,00%	3,00%
Social networks	30,00%	45,00%	50,00%
Video sharing	25,00%	22,00%	-12,00%
RSS	24,00%	17,00%	-29,00%
Podcasts	18,00%	18,00%	0,00%

Table 5. Letting customers to interact with each other (Business Technology Office, 2010)

Tools | Year	2009	2010	Change
Blogs	37,00%	41,00%	11,00%
Social networks	52,00%	64,00%	23,00%
Video sharing	17,00%	15,00%	-12,00%
RSS	10,00%	8,00%	-20,00%
Podcasts	8,00%	8,00%	0,00%

The trend can be seen from five tables above. Executives see social networks as the main Web 2.0 tool for developing products, acquiring new customers and marketing purposes. Moreover, that is the only technique which shows significant growth from the previous year in all five cases (38.6 % in average)

And as it was mentioned previously, marketers regard Facebook as the most important social media network which is demonstrated in Exhibit. 13. So further we decided to describe it more closely from customers' perspective.

Social Networks from Customers' Perspective

Consumers who came to the retailer's site from Facebook during a seven-week period last year were three times more likely than average to buy a product (Booz&Co, 2011). It gives the company the signal that it is important to keep its Social Media fan page fresh. Table below outline the results of the CMB Consumer Pulse 2010. Booz & Company analyze the survey, with included responses from 1,600 consumers.

Table 6. Social media impact on purchase Intent (Booz&Co, 2011)

Social media	Are you more likely to buy since becoming a fan/follower?	Are you more likely to recommend since becoming a fan/follower?
Facebook	51,00%	60,00%
Twitter	67,00%	79,00%

As it seen from the table above more than half of customers said they are more likely to buy and recommend the products from the company which is among their favorites in social networks.

6.2. Benchmarking Results

In this section, the results of global benchmarking are shown. The methodology is described in previous section already.

6.2.1 Starbucks:
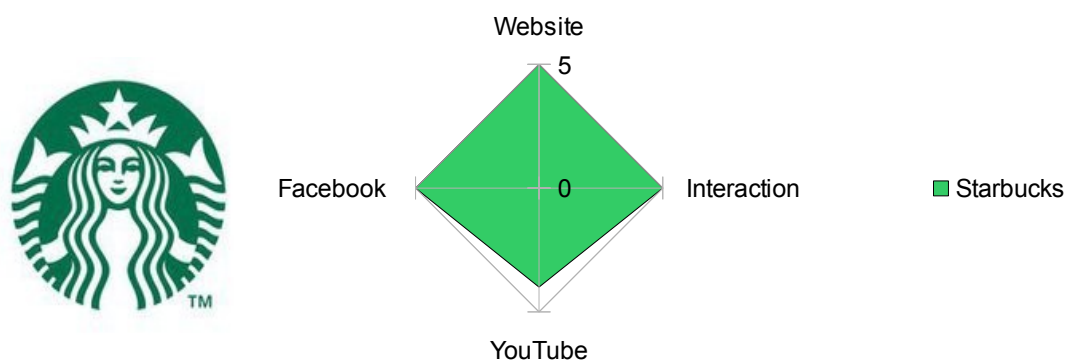
Overview: Present in more than 50 countries, over 16,000 locations, $9.8 billion revenue (FY09); 117,000 employees

Product: The largest purchaser of Fairtrade certified coffee in the world;

Company: Focus on reuse and recycling, the goal to have cups which are 100 % reusable or recyclable by 2015. More than 26 million beverages which were served by Starbucks in 2009 were in reusable cups.

Truth/Standards: Third-party verification is necessary for all suppliers that have C.A.F.E. Status. Set the goal to purchase only coffee which is verified by externally audited system, such Fairtrade, Farmer Equity Practices, etc. The company plans to achieve this goal by 2015.

Stakeholders' satisfaction/Rewards: Customer satisfaction is 76%; 100 Best Companies to Work For, Fortune, 2010; National Top 50 Green Companies, Green Power Partnership, 2010; **Company rating:** 3.4 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
5	**Company website**	Customer engagement		Excellent
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
5	**Facebook**	Fan base		Excellent
		Customer engagement		Excellent
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
4	**You Tube (other video channel)**	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Good
			Willingness to share	Good
5	**Level of interaction**	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react?		Yes

6.2.2 IKEA
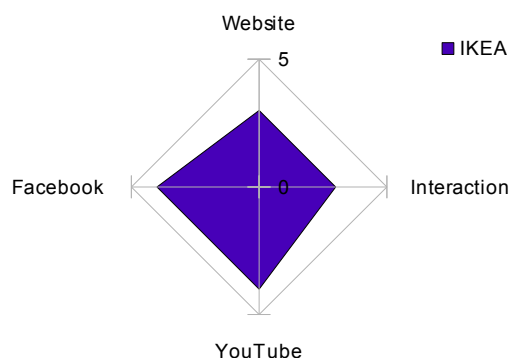
Overview: 123 000 employees, 40 countries around the world

Product: 71% of all IKEA products are recyclable or made from recycled materials. The company recycles 84% of the waste generated in its stores.

Company: IKEA set the long term objective of powering all IKEA units – stores, warehouses, offices and IKEA owned factories – with 100% renewable energy, $77 million investment in clean technology startups like solar.

Truth/Standards: Code of conduct IWAY for suppliers, IKEA also requires third party audits of its wood suppliers. Currently, 94% of suppliers meet IKEA minimum requirements, but only a small number are FSC-certified.

Stakeholders satisfaction/Rewards: Top 200 World's Most Reputable Companies (2), Forbes, 2009; Best Companies Group, 2009; Company rating: 3.4 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
3	Company website	Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	No
4	Facebook	Fan base		Good
		Customer engagement		Good

		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	No
4	**You Tube (other video channel)**	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
3	**Level of interaction**	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react?		Satisfactory

6.2.3 Jonson&Jonson
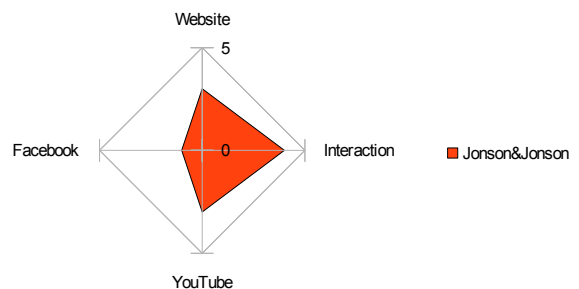
Overview: sales: $61.9 billion in 2009, 114,000 people in 60 countries

Product: Introduced EARTHWARDS™, process and product scorecard to analyze five key areas with the potential for the greatest environmental impacts: materials, waste, water, energy and packaging; 54 % of electronic-based waste products can be taken back for re-manufacturing/reuse

Company: Absolute reduction in CO_2 emissions of 7 % from 1990–2010. Manufacturing and R&D sites: 102 (99 %) are certified to the ISO 14001 Environmental Management System.

Truth/Standards: Close to 100 % of external manufacturers in conformance with

Johnson &Johnson Standards for Responsible External Manufacturing.

Stakeholders satisfaction/Rewards: 2010: National Top 50 Green Companies (10)
Green Power Partnership; Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality, Human Rights
Campaign; World's Most Admired Companies, Fortune,2009; Company rating: 3.3
(out of 5, according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
3	Company website	Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	No
1	Facebook	Fan base		No
		Customer engagement		No
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	No
			Willingness to share	No
3	You Tube (other video channel)	Do the company has personal video channel		No
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	No
			Willingness to share	No
2	Level of interaction	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react?		Satisfactory

6.2.4 Toyota
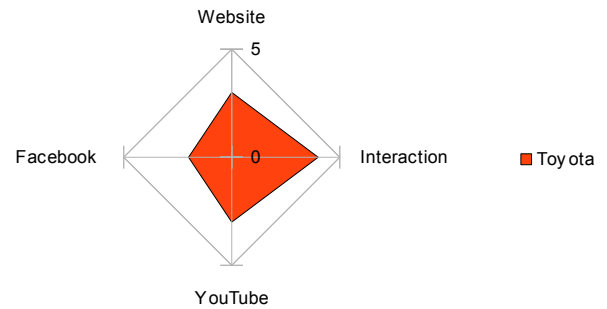
Overview: Revenue $1.6 billion; 317,734 people worldwide

Product: Working on introducing more green vehicles (PHV, EV,FCV) and improve average fuel efficiency – in all- regions-by 25% comparable to 2005 base

Company: Reduction in CO_2 emission to 1.37 million tons per year; using more renewable energy sources in production

Truth/Standards: Suppliers are expected to achieve and maintain ISO 14001 certification, Conduct annual environmental supplier survey to reward best practice in the supply chain.

Stakeholders satisfaction/Rewards: Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality, Human Rights Campaign,2010; Top 50 Companies for Diversity, Diversity Inc, 2009; Company rating: 3.0 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
3	Company website	Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	No
3	Facebook	Fan base		Great
		Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes

3	You Tube (other video channel)	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	No
			Willingness to share	No
4	Level of interaction	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react?		Satisfactory
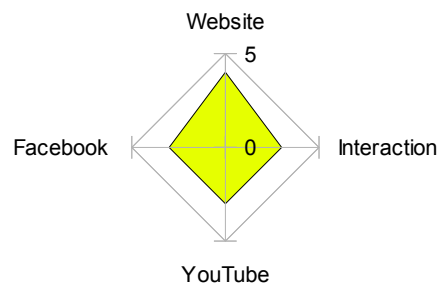
6.2.5 McDonald's

Overview: Over 31,000 restaurants, 400,000 employees; present in 118 countries; $23.5 billion revenue,

Product: Packaging gives customers essential nutrition information using easy-to-understand icons and bar chart format

Company: The biggest part of the consumer packaging (close to 82%) made from renewable materials. Additionally, 30% of the material comes from recycled fiber.

Truth/Standards: The company participated in the development of guidelines to determine the sustainability of fisheries in partnership with Conservation International.

Stakeholders satisfaction/Rewards: Customer satisfaction is 70%; 82% of employees said they recommend working at McDonalds to a friend, World's Most Admired Companies,Fortune,2009; Top Companies for Leaders,Fortune,2009 Company rating:

3.0 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
4	**Company website**	Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
3	**Facebook**	Fan base		Very good
		Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
3	**You Tube (other video channel)**	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
3	**Level of interaction**	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Good
		Do they quickly the react?		Yes
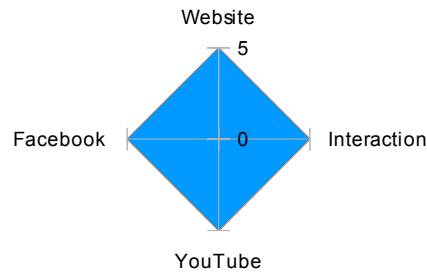
6.2.6 WalMart

Overview: 2.1 million employees, 8,100 stores; present in 15 countries, $405.6 is sales

Product: In it's stores sell affordable organic produce, fair trade coffee, and compact fluorescent light bulbs; The goals are to increase HIP products.

Company: Achieved the goal and made fleet 25% more efficient in 2008; 500 stores were retrofitted with low and medium temperature refrigerated display cases

Truth/Standards: Encouraging its suppliers to improve their sustainability performance, Published many quantitative metrics.

Stakeholders satisfaction/Rewards: Depending on retail unit customer satisfaction is: 68% to 70%; National Top 50 Green Companies, Green Power Partnership, 2010, World's Most Admired Companies, Fortune, 2009 Top 500 Green Companies, Newsweek, 2009Company rating: 2.9 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
5	**Company website**	Customer engagement		Excellent
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
5	**Facebook**	Fan base		Excellent
		Customer engagement		Excellent
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
5	**You Tube (other**	Do the company has personal		Yes

		video channel	video channel		
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes	
			Willingness to share	Yes	
5	**Level of interaction**	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes	
		Do they quickly react?		Yes	

6.2.7 Unilever
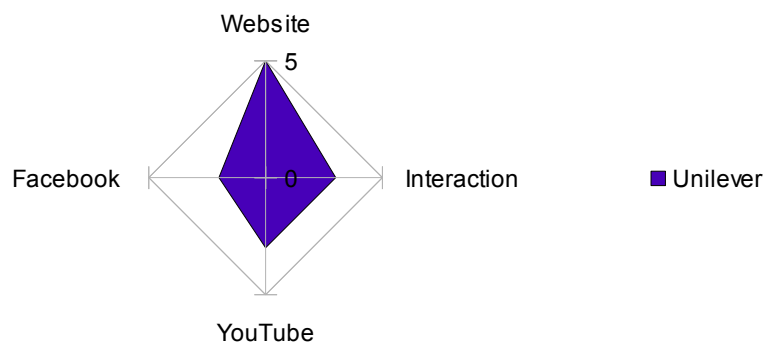
Overview: 167 000-employees at the end of 2010, 180 countries products are sold

Company: By 2020 the company aims to halve the greenhouse gas impact of the products across the life cycle– from the sourcing of raw materials, through to consumer use and disposal. (targets are expressed on a ' per consumer use' bases)

Truth/Standards: Suppliers are expected to achieve and maintain ISO 14001 certification, Conduct annual environmental supplier survey to reward best practice in the supply chain.

Stakeholders' satisfaction/Rewards: In 2010 got the award: Best Places to Work for LGBT Equality and Best Workplaces for Commuters. Company rating: 3.6 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Perform ance
5	**Company website**	Customer engagement		Very good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
2	**Facebook**	Fan base		Good
		Customer engagement		No
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	No
			Willingness to share	No
3	**You Tube (other video channel)**	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	No
3	**Level of interaction**	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react?		Yes

6.2.8 Coca Cola
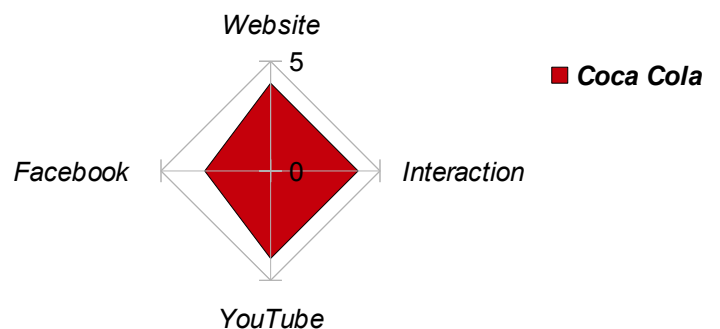
Overview: Present in 200 countries; sales: $31.9 billion; 92,400 employees

Product: 450 new beverage products were launched in 2007, among them 150 low- and no-calorie products; that resulted in increase of 17 % of its product portfolio in this segment; 23 % of today sales are products that are low-cal

Company: Since 2002 reduced the water use by 2 %, today the total usage: 300 billion liters of water; from 2007 more than 85 % of water used compliance with internal water treatment standards.

Truth/Standards: 146 of company facilities are OHSAS 18001 certified

Stakeholders satisfaction/Rewards: Customer satisfaction is more than 85%; World's Most Admired Companies (6), Fortune 2011; America's Most Reputable Company, Forbes 2011; Company ranking 3.1 (out of 5 according to glassdoor.com)

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
4	Company website	Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
3	Facebook	Fan base		Excellent
		Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
4	You Tube (other video channel)	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
4	Level of interaction	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react ?		Yes

6.2.9 Skånemejerier
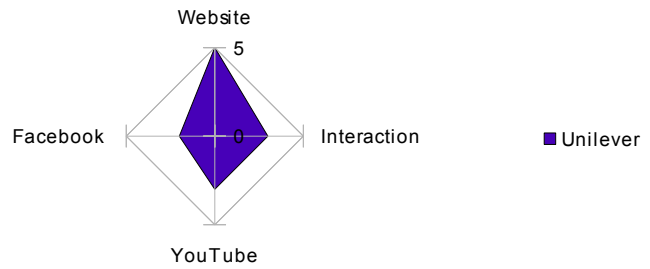
In this part, the results about

online permormance of the company are shown. The general information about

achievement in sustainability is provided in previous section already.

Grade	Category	Measurement		Performance
3	Company website	Customer engagement		Good
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
4	Facebook	Fan base		Good
		Customer engagement		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	Yes
			Willingness to share	Yes
2	You Tube (other video channel)	Do the company has personal video channel		Yes
		Quality of content	Willingness to return	No
			Willingness to share	No
4	Level of interaction	Is it easy to leave a comment, to share or to complain?		Yes
		Do they quickly react?		Yes

6.2.10 Performance in online communications | Overview of global companies:

Company	Website	Facebook	YouTube	Interaction
Walmart	5	5	5	5
McDonald's	4	3	3	3
Toyota	3	2	3	4
Jonson&Jonson	3	1	3	2
IKEA	3	4	4	3
Coca-Cola	4	3	4	4
Unilever	5	2	3	3
Skanemejerier	3	4	2	4
Starbucks	5	5	4	5
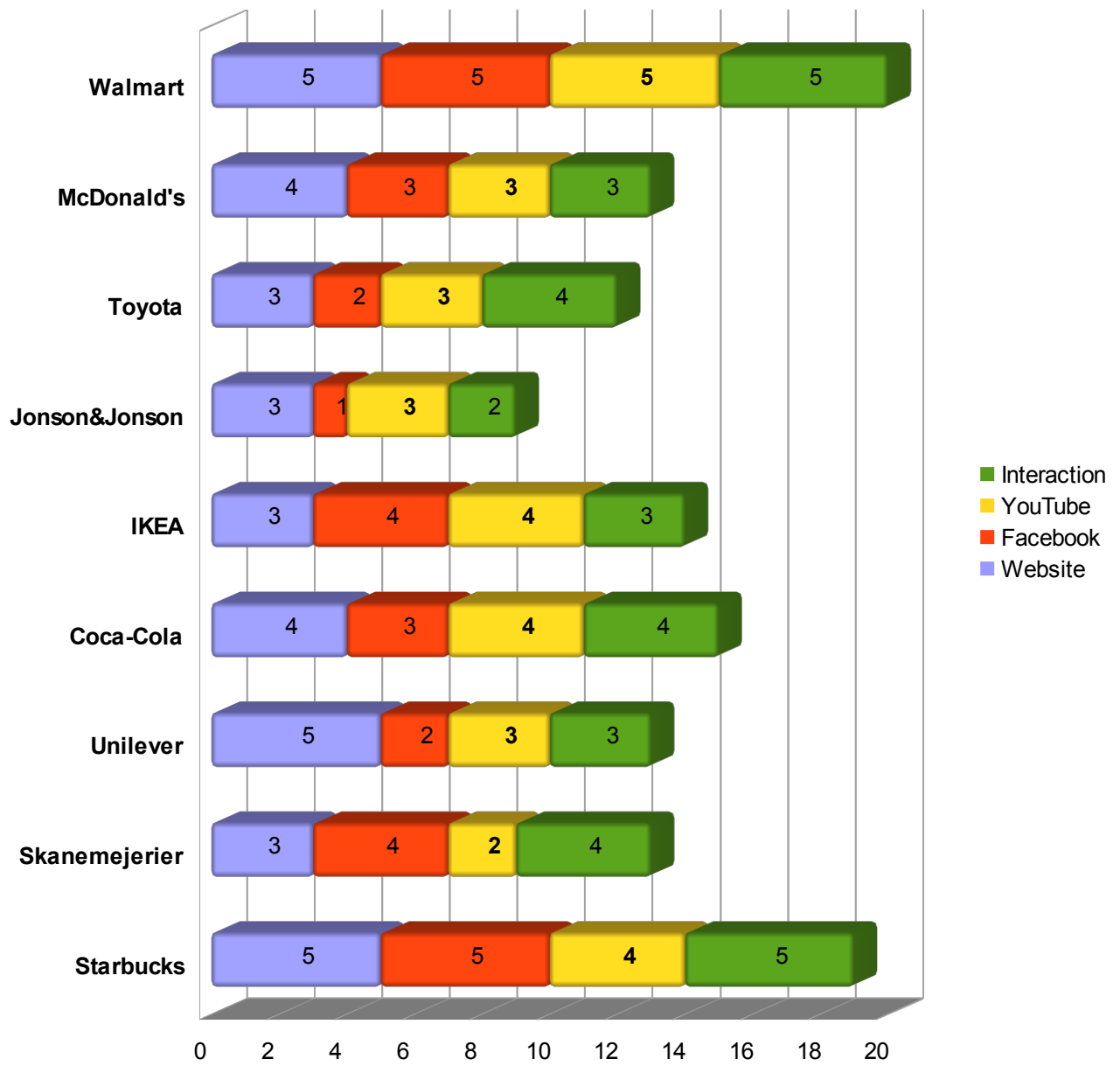
6.2.11 Discussion

Companies try to capture people concern about social and environmental aspects of sustainability which becoming more and more popular. (Sheila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008) They use various techniques trying to show customers their concern about the issue: use videos telling people about environmental problems, make sustainability reports and publish various articles about the importance of sustainability. Additionally, most of selected companies refer to independent ratings and sources as a proof of their performance. And they do have real achievements, according to various independent agencies, ratings and articles we reviewed. It is understandable. Company needs to do real things and have real achievements in order to communicate about different aspects of sustainability with customers. As today the information online can't be control by the company, so the price of not telling the truth can be too high. For example, employees can easily post negative comments online if they are not satisfied by their work experience or customers can post their own reviews about the products.

Additionally, selected companies started to analyze the entire life-cycle of products produced and put restrictions on suppliers/partners they work with. The best examples here are Wal-Mart and IKEA. Plus, after figuring out that customers have a great impact on the environment by using the products, companies start working with them trying to educate how possible to reduce that impact.

For example IKEA decided to open more of their stores in malls and big shopping centers, where the public transport options are available, after figuring out that the biggest part of its customers drive to get to the store. Additionally, that decision contribute to the main IKEA goal: to make furniture affordable for a huge amount of people as it will allow customers without cars to get to IKEA stores. It is extremely important now, when company plan to enter and grow in developing markets (IKEA Group Sustainability Report). Unilever created special videos which educate customers how they can limit their impact on the environment. So, selected companies are doing quite a lot of things connected to sustainability and do communicate about them using various online media channels. But do customers have willing to pay extra money for green or environment friendly products? While

working on benchmarking we found few positive examples. The most known is, of course, Toyota Prius which despite of being 20 % more expensive than a similar regular model captured 2 % of US market. (Toyota Sustainability Report 2010) But in general the situation is quite different. Jake Backus, Coca-Cola customer sustainability director has the following opinion about the issue: "Consumers will not switch to a more sustainable product unless it is equally good or better than the current one, and equally priced (Michael Barnett, 2011)." The manager in IKEA has the similar opinion. He said that sustainability efforts do contribute to company reputation and positive image, but most of customers buy their products not because they are sustainable but rather because they are quite cheap and have good design.

In a sense of communication most of selected companies do use the increasing popularity of the Internet among customers in marketing purpose. They have created interactive websites, developed Facebook pages, forums and blogs. Additionally, companies have their own You Tube channels. And, our opinion, they are quite successful in creating interesting content. What means they do understand the importance of people' attention today (Susan Gunelius, 2010). To capture customers' attention companies need, as we think, to be persistent and creative. First one refers to different communication channels company need to use to reach customers. Second one is mostly about the content of messages the company send. In a world where customer's attention is an asset and all the information can be easily discussed and shared on the thousands of forums it's too costly for the company to send boring or unclear messages.

From the other hand creative promotion/ advertisement can not only attract customers' attention but as well push them to share the information about the product/company with their friends which is quite important in the world where everyone and everything is connected. In the case of social networks, we think it is important for company to have an established fan base which will promote the company for free through their online friends' networks or external sources.

Starbucks, for example, directly links strong financial performance to its success in social media (the Facebook fan base of the company reached ten millions people and became the highest among all US corporations) and innovative ideas such as "My Starbucks Idea". Similar approaches now have McDonalds and Wal-Mart. They both created sections on their Facebook pages and Websites pages where customers can share their ideas. By doing that they got two main things: engaged customers into discussions and showed that they do care about their opinion. Plus they got plenty of new ideas for free.

Additional thing we find interesting about companies which we investigated is the usage of short videos on their website (1-4min). As usual, they are telling people about the companies' goals, visions and main achievements. Additionally, most of companies use videos to educate customers about different aspects of Sustainability: environment problems, poverty, social issues. So rather than just advertise company products and services these videos are focused on main challenges which society is facing today and show that the organization do understand and care of them. So as we understand the goal of such videos is to create a general positive image about the company as a global responsible citizen. And the general idea of using videos is quite interesting. Stories are much more influencing and memorable that statistics or text, it's something employees and customers can share with one another through social networks such as Facebook and You Tube. And the topic can be different: "Who we are", "Our vision and goals", "Apology and recovery" (if necessary), or "Personal stories" video, which is more about people rather than the company (Jennifer Aaker and Andy Smith, 2011).

6.2.12 Major Findings:

Top three things which can influence customers buying decisions: clear labeling which reflect well the information about the product, more healthy and nutritious product, the reduced impact on the environment (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008).

55 % of costumers said they have already refused to buy food and beverages from companies which they heard are not acting "in the best interest of society" (Sheila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008).

63 % of customers said they have no idea which one of five well-established brands is the most environmental friendly (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008).

33 % of Europeans said they cannot live without the Internet (the same amount of Europeans can't live without TV) (Mediascope Europe, 2010b).

use of Internet in Europe increased on 18.5 % from 2006 to 2010; 64 % of European population is online (in Sweden this number was 81 % and 84 % in Denmark) (Mediascope Europe, 2010b).

54 % of Europeans (279m) spend online 12.1 hours per week in average (Mediascope Europe, 2010b).

Most of European population (76 % op people elder than 16) use different kinds of media at the same time; 30 % of them mix watching TV with using Internet (Sweden: 93%, Denmark: 94%) (Mediascope Europe, 2010b).

More than 50 % of Internet users in Europe said they it is common for them to change their decision on what brand to buy after making the research online (Mediascope Europe, 2010b).

More than six out of ten consumers before making purchase decision read online reviews (Booz&Co, 2011).

60 % of customers said they are more likely to buy and 51 to recommend to their friends products from the company they became a fan of at Facebook. (Booz&Co, 2011).

Top social media tools used by marketers: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Blogs (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011).

Facebook is the main tool in social media: 92 % of marketers surveyed use it and 75 % plan to increase their activities in the future (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011).

77 % of marketers plan to increase their use of You Tube and other video channels next year; among business with 1000 and more employees 82 % of marketers indicated You Tube and other video marketing as their key growing area for a near future (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011).

7   Conclusions

The increasing awareness about sustainability it's not just a big challenge, it's as well a great chance for companies to meet newly appeared social and ecological values of people and in this way to achieve good reputation and be rewarded for doing the right things. Additionally, by creating innovative products they can catch more customers, get access and satisfy new people's values (Sheila M.J Bonini and Jeremy M.Oppenheim, 2008).

Most of customers specified the impact food company has on environment: global warming, level of waste and pollution and health issues: food safety, the use of genetically modified products and different kinds of pesticides to be the most important for them. They said they have willingness to pay premium to those companies who are doing well in addressing their concerns about the environment and health. Moreover, 55 % of costumers said they have already refused to buy food and beverages from organizations which they heard are not acting "in the best interest of society" (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008). So the increasing concern about health and environment among customers is a quite interesting trend for companies producing "green" products and positioning themselves as sustainable. But we want to discuss some challenges they need to be ready to face with. First of all, only 21 % of customer's said they do actually buy green products. To catch the remaining 53 % of people who care about the environmental and social issues but are not willing to act, companies need to deal with such issues as customers' concern about quality (which is according to the existing opinion isn't good enough) and convenience. More than half of respondents named it as the main barrier when it comes to environment-friendly products. Next comes price with 32 % of people indicated this (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008).

One of the ways for companies to overcome the existing concern about convenience and quality of products can be better communications with customers and better description of products on the websites and other media channels. To say more,

communication about sustainability is a gap most companies have: 63 % of customers said they have no idea which one of five well-established brands the most environmental friendly. Free samples can be another way to deal with this concern (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008).

In the case of price, companies need to be ready to add value to products to compensate price. It must be something customers care about: higher quality, benefits for health (food/drinks), broader range of function. There is an increasing demand for personalized products, products with emotional appeal: iPads, iPhones, Starbucks Frappuccino, etc. After the global crises people became quite sensitive to price of the products and this trend is not going to end in the near future. According to the survey conducted by Booz&Company in August, in 2010 customers spent even less than 2009. So it's going to be a challenge for companies, they need to differentiate themselves somehow as more and more customers see most of products as commodities (Booz&Company, 2011b).

Additionally, we think companies need to be careful with building a "just" green brand. With the increasing number of companies possessing themselves sustainable, it is becoming more and more difficult for them to differentiate themselves from competitors. And this trend is more likely going to continue in the future. That means challenges for companies focusing on building their brands as "just green" ones (Sarah van Schagen, 2008) .Secondly, by concentrating too much on "green" aspects of a product, company, as we it see, risks to catch the attention of limited number of consumers, in other word, niche segment. It can be the exact goal the company has. But if not, than it can be better to find a balance in communication about newly appeared social and environmental issues and others "old" aspects which reflect strong sides of the company and differentiate it from competitors. For example, all the successful organizations we regarded in our study have an idea that makes them unique. In the case of Wal-Mart it is a goal to provide the cheapest prices possible. IKEA wants to make high quality, good design furniture affordable to a broad range of people. But, in the same time, both of them make sustainability reports, publish articles about the environmental problems, and donate to children

in India. They do communicate about sustainability with customers, but avoid building the entire brand on it.

Another important trend we found in our study and want to speak a little bit about has to do with channels marketers use to communicate with customers. McKinsey called it the "consumerization of IT". In other word, the increasing number of customers accessing to the Internet multiply together with the rise in popularity of various social networks and digital tools changed the way people make decision to buy products. It shaped the entire marketing function (David Court, 2009). David Court, Director in McKinsey explained the sequences for organizations of such extreme growth of population online (in Europe alone the increase was 18.5 % from 2006 to 2010, so that 81 % of Swedes and 84 % of Danes were online in 2010 (Mediascope Europe, 2010b)):

"Companies need to develop ways for consumers to talk about their products so that word-of-mouth works. They need to develop or be represented on independent sites where people go to research products. Increasingly, that's where the purchase decisions are being made."

A lot of studies and analytical reports prove the David Court opinion. For example, according to one of them more than 55 % of Europeans said they change their decision on what brand to buy after making the research online (Mediascope Europe, 2010b). People consider online reviews to be almost twice as influential as traditional advertisement. And according to the survey made by Razorfish, the online marketing agency: more than six out of ten consumers before making purchase decision read online reviews (Booz&Co, 2011). We think it is quite understandable, people always believed to independent sources of information and friends' opinion as they have no incentives to lie. The best argument can be: they simply do not make profit on that. And now, with the rise of various social networks and ratings people got the chance to ask much bigger friends for a advice or to check forums and blogs. As much as 60 % of customers said they are more likely to buy and 51 to recommend to their friends products from the company they became a fan of at Facebook (Booz&Co, 2011).

So, various social networks are useful communication channels for companies, and it is not only a new way to advertise products or to educate customers. Rather, it's an opportunity to become close to people, gain feedback about the performance. Moreover, we see social networks as brilliant tools for companies to get new ideas for free by engaging their customers into discussions and to increase the effect of marketing dramatically by building a fan base of loyal customers and then encouraging them to share the information about the company and products with their friends. So, it is the old word-of-mouth but in today digital world. In the real life, it is almost impossible to share the information with 200 friends in a minute.

The rise of Internet popularity among people can explain (or at least partly explain) many of other emerging trends in marketing: transparency, honesty, quality of content (Susan Gunalius, 2011). The access to information which is exist today for each person in each particular house can offer a lot of pluses for organizations (possibility to be closer to customers, to communicate better, to get feedback and new ideas, etc), but it means new challenges as well. For example, companies need to price their products very carefully as any customer can compare the price online with competitors' prices. Any bad information about the company and product extremely quickly appear and is discussed on thousands of forums. Bad reviews can break the companies' reputations immediately. All this made honesty and transparency extremely important. It's very dangerous to lie now. Another thing is attention. With plenty of information available through multiply sources, both online and off-line it is quite difficult for companies to make customers to listen. And once company got customers' attention it's important to get from this as much as possible. That explain why the quality of content is much more important now. Additionally, interesting/creative content which has good quality may inspire customers to share it with friends and relatives. The old word-of-mouth effect but in today digital word where we all connected to each other online will have the bigger impact.

7.1 Suggestions for Skanemejerier

Consider the possibility to achieve recognized certifications such as GRI reports, provided by external auditors. So that all the data used by the company can be proved and will look really objective. Continue to apply efforts to translate information into English and develop English version of website, which is well behind Swedish version now. That will be even more important for the company in the future as it plans to growth to the new areas. The availability of information in English and verified data will be quite essential for acquiring new customers and building truth among them.

•**Continue to concentrate on healthier products and clearer labeling:** There is an increasing demand on beverages, food, and other products that promote health: natural and more nutritious products, organic products (Booz&Company, 2011). It is driving partly by aging population and partly by the increasing concern about sustainability issues. Customers indicated clear labeling which reflects well the information about the products and the reduced impact on the environment the products have to be the most important issues for them (Sheila M.J Bonini, Greg Hintz, Lenny T. Mendonca, 2008). Taking into account this we recommend you to keep on launching more of healthier products, such as ecological, organic nutritional products and communicate about them with costumers.

•**Continue to concentrate on online media:** The increasing popularity of Internet as a source for information and channel for communication among people, made good corporate website and presence in various social networks: Facebook, Twitter, forums and blogs important. There is a need to create a base where customers can communicate with one another, share opinions, ask questions and provide complains (David Court, 2009). Skånemejerier is already present online and has a big fan base on Facebook. Next we provide some suggestions on possible improvements in the way the company communicate through various digital channels:: website, Facebook page, and YouTube. We hope this will contribute to

company's efforts to create an interesting and engagement environment for its customers, where they are willing to spend time discussing issues, sharing ideas and giving feedbacks.

•**online video:** Multiply sources speak about the increasing popularity of YouTube and other video channels and the growth in the use of online videos in general. According to one of them, 82 % of marketers indicated You Tube and other video marketing as their key growing area for a near future (Michael. A. Stelzner, 2011). Taking that into account, we strongly recommend the online short video applications.

We like the idea of short videos on the companies' websites and want to advise to Skånemejerier create some personal stories and share them with customers. We see it as a great way to tell people about main goals, accomplishments, plans or challenges. Stories are interactive, interesting and memorable. And they don't require any efforts or much time, customers only need to click on a picture and listen. And then, if they find it to be interesting, creative or valuable they will share it with friends by clicking "share" button at a company website, Facebook or You Tube page. By doing that they will make the company visible for their friends. One short story can be about achievement in sustainability: Sustainability report but for much broader audience. A good example of such video is "The road to Sustainability" by McDonald's .

- ● **Develop the online platform where ideas can be shared**

The idea is to create a place on the website and social network pages where customers can share their ideas with company and discuss various topics with one another easily. We see it as a great way for companies to engage customers into interesting discussions and to get plenty of good ideas for free. Excellent example here can be "My Starbucks Idea" . It encourages customers to share their thoughts with the company about the products and propose possible improvements. Additionally, they created page like "Implemented ideas", so they not only show customers that they take their thoughts seriously but encourage others to share. Additionally, they have the division: "Ideas for sustainability". That not only

highlighted the company concern about sustainability but also catch which issues customers consider to be the most important and focus on them.

- **Encourage customers to share the information**

The thing we suggest are tools companies use to encourage customers to share information about the company with their friends through various social networks.

One of the ways to do it can be to create the campaign "Fan of the week". We saw it on various companies websites and pages: Coca Cola, OREO, Zappos, etc. The idea is to propose customers to make a photo of themselves with something associated with the company: the product, slogan or place and to upload it on a company's website or Facebook page. To make it more interactive and interesting the company can add a possibility for costumers to "Like" photos and to select the best one. Plus the pictures on which customers will press "Like" button will appear then on their own Walls, what will make the company brand visible for the friends of these people, so it's free advertisement as well. The photo of the winner then is published on a website and is there up to the next week.

- **Create media platform**

The idea is about creating a popular media platform to promote the complementary products of other companies and by doing this to earn money. The first companies which implemented this idea were retailers, airlines companies and hotels. For example, Johnson & Johnson has created BabyCenter that promotes complementary products from other companies, and even competitive ones. By doing that the company creates the image of being objective, generate income and increase traffic on the site. We understand that the implementation of this idea require time and efforts.

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9 Appendix

Links to Selected Companies in Industry Benchmarking (if Available) Company	Title of Report	Link
Danone	Danone 2009 Sustainability Report	http://www.danone.com/images/pdf/rapport_dd_2009_synthese_en.pdf
Milko	Unavailable	http://www.milko.se/templates/Page.aspx?id=9
Arla	Our Responsibility Arla Food's Corporate Social Resonsibility Report 2010	http://www.arla.com/Upload/Global/Publications/PDF/arlacsr2010UK.pdf
Valio	Unavailable	http://www.valio.fi/
Tino	Unavailable	http://www.tine.no
Dairy Crest	Unavailable	http://dairycrest.co.uk
MÜLLER	Unavailable	http://www.muellergroup.com/unternehmen.0.html?&L=1
Nordmilch	Unavailable	http://www.dmk.de/en/forschung-entwicklung/index.html
FrieslandCampina	CSR Report 2009 Corporate Socail Responsibility	http://www.frieslandcampina.com/english/responsibility/~/media/382BB1D0FEB44E8CA948AC3F088E6EA3.ashx
NESTLÉ	The Nestlé Policy on Environmental Sustainability	http://www.nestle.de/Helper/Brochure/Unternehmen/Documents/Nestle_Policy_on_Environmental_Sustainability_Oct_2008.pdf
Links to Sustainability Reports of Selected	Title of Report	Link

Companies in General Benchmarking Company		
Unilever	Sustainable Development Report 2010	http://www.unilever.com/sustainability/introduction/index.aspx
Unilever	Unilever Sustainable Living Plan	http://www.unilever.com/images/UnileverSustainableLivingPlan_tcm13-239379.pdf
Coca Cola	Sustainability Review 2009/2010	http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/pdf/SR09/2009-2010_The_Coca-Cola_Company_Sustainability_Review.pdf
Jonson&Jonson	Responsibility Report 2010	http://www.jnj.com/wps/wcm/connect/f9f1148046e763e7b0b4bae02a8d6552/110421_FINAL_J%26J_2010_ResponsibilityReport.pdf?MOD=AJPERES
Jonson&Jonson	Sustainability Measures 2010	http://www.jnj.com/wps/wcm/connect/6410f0804f5562bd9d84bd1bb31559c7/sustainability-measures.pdf?MOD=AJPERES
Jonson&Jonson	Climate Friendly Energy Policy 2010	http://www.jnj.com/wps/wcm/connect/fd0c2f804f5562ee9d96bd1bb31559c7/climate-friendly-energy-policy.pdf?MOD=AJPERES
Toyota	Sustainability Report 2010	http://www.toyota-global.com/sustainability/sustainability_report/pdf_file_download/10/pdf/sustainability_report10.pdf
WalMart	Global Sustainability Report	http://cdn.walmartstores.com/sites/sustainabilityreport/2010/WMT2010GlobalSustainabilityReport.pdf
Starbucks	Global Responsibility Report 2010	http://www.starbucks.com/static/pdf/goals_progress_report_2011.pdf
McDonald	Worldwide CR Report	http://www.aboutmcdonalds.com/mcd/csr/report.ht

		ml
IKEA Group	Sustainability Report	http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_GB/about_ikea/pdf/ikea_ser_2010.pdf

Sustainability Reporting:

Unilever Sustainable Development Report 2010

Unilever Sustainable Living Plan 2010

Coca Cola Sustainability Review 2009/2010

Jonson&Jonson Responsibility Report 2010

Jonson&Jonson Sustainability Measures 2010

Jonson&Jonson Climate Friendly Energy Policy 2010

Toyota Sustainability Report 2010

WalMart Global Sustainability Report 2010

Starbucks Global Responsibility Report 2010

McDonald's Worldwide CR Report

IKEA Group, Sustainability Report