

STRATEGIC ZERO WASTE MARKETING IN THAILAND: ENHANCING BRAND VALUE AND DRIVING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

Amid rising global awareness of environmental concerns, particularly waste generation and its ecological and health impacts, businesses are increasingly adopting sustainable approaches. One emerging strategy is Zero Waste Marketing, which aims to eliminate waste across business processes while fostering resource efficiency and environmental responsibility. This article presents four strategic approaches that enhance brand image and drive sales performance by integrating zero-waste principles.

First, the Premium Pricing Strategy demonstrates that environmentally conscious consumers are willing to pay more for zero-waste or eco-friendly products, provided the brand effectively communicates value and emotional relevance. Avoiding discount promotions preserves perceived exclusivity and brand status. Second, Brand Coolness—characterized by authenticity, usefulness, aesthetics, innovation, popularity, and social symbolism—can elevate the perceived desirability of green brands, reinforcing customer loyalty and willingness to pay a premium. Third, Brand Storytelling proves to be a powerful emotional and cognitive engagement tool. Narratives highlighting production processes, raw material sourcing, or social responsibility initiatives (CSR) enhance consumer connection, brand identity, and perceived authenticity. Lastly, Eco-Friendly Packaging contributes to both waste reduction and brand differentiation. Biodegradable or recyclable packaging not only meets consumer environmental expectations but also builds long-term brand loyalty, especially among environmentally conscious segments.

The study draws on theoretical frameworks including the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model, explaining consumer intent through attitudes, subjective norms, and external stimuli. As Thailand moves toward a circular economy, zero-waste strategies will become increasingly vital for sustainable economic and environmental development. Businesses that adopt zero-waste marketing can create competitive advantages, enhance brand equity, and contribute to long-term environmental stewardship. These strategies represent an actionable path for companies seeking to align profitability with ecological integrity in the modern market.

Keywords: Zero Waste Marketing, Sustainability, Eco-Friendly Packaging, Consumer Behavior, Circular Economy

INTRODUCTION

This article reviews the literature on zero waste marketing through published research and synthesizes it by using the principles of creativity to apply it to businesses in Thailand, which will benefit the country's grassroots economy. The concept of zero waste marketing has a positive influence on purchasing decisions. This positive effect comes from environmentally friendly products. Most consumers with high incomes are more interested in product quality than product price, even if the price is more expensive than the price in general stores (Paulo et al., 2024). It also comes from online communication that reaches target consumers. Convenience is an important factor for middle-class and upper-class consumers. Businesses that use zero waste marketing strategies often succeed in creating convenience for consumers when they have to shop (Maulidah et al., 2024). The zero waste principle focuses on minimizing waste generation and promoting sustainability through efficient resource use and waste reduction efforts, such as waste disposal and continuous improvement. It is consistent with zero waste and sustainability goals by optimizing processes and increasing business operational efficiency. Today's consumers are aware of the environmental impacts of businesses, including greenhouse gas emissions, eutrophication, excessive use of resources and energy, pollution, excessive waste generation, large amounts of water, and inadequate health and safety practices. Overexploitation of natural resources leads to environmental damage and resource loss. Companies are turning to more sustainable approaches and initiatives to reduce all

types of waste and align with sustainability trends, including the use of renewable energy sources. Companies should plan and define environmental marketing goals and strategies, and be able to meet customer needs (Bas, 2024). From a study of 402 articles on zero waste and related works, different keywords were used, such as Zero waste, Waste Management, Sustainable Management, Circular Economy, Recycling, etc. These articles have similar definitions, namely the environment, reducing waste problems that affect society and nature, managing waste from nature to create value, etc., as shown in Figure 1. In addition, articles studying Zero waste occurred in 2020. Before that, it was a study of Recycling, which is the foundation of the concept of developing towards a more sustainable Zero waste (Bogusz et al., 2021) and recycling waste materials into new products (Awogbemi et al., 2022), as shown in Figure 2.

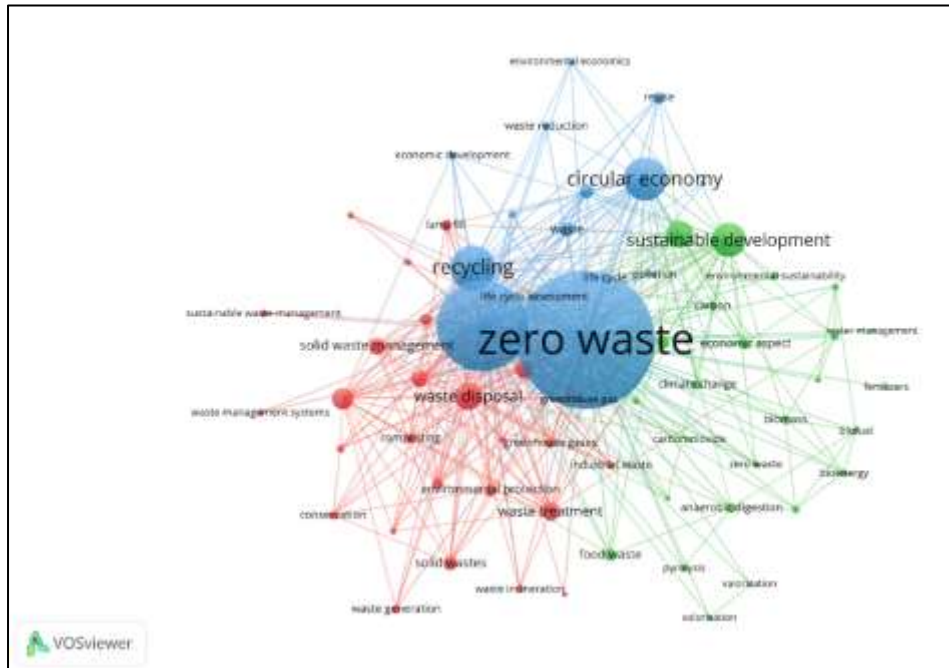


Figure 1. Use of keywords related to Zero waste

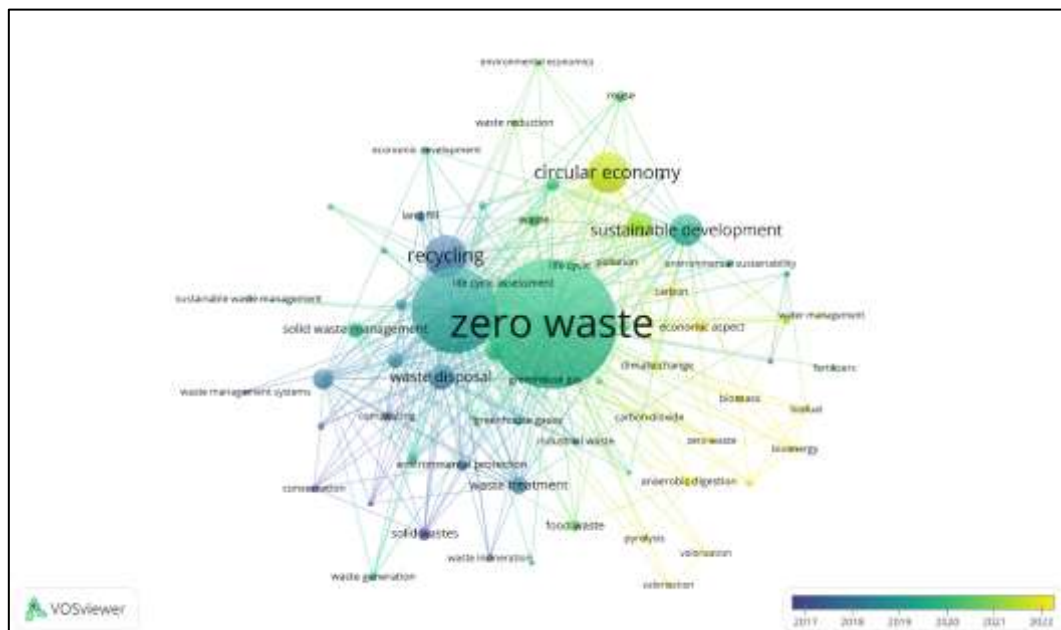


Figure 2. Time frame of article publication by keyword

Circular Economy

Circular economy is a concept that emphasizes the creation of added value from existing resources by reducing the use of natural resources, recycling, reusing materials, and reducing the amount of waste generated in the production and consumption processes. This concept has gained more popularity and attention worldwide, especially in the past decade due to the awareness of environmental problems caused by unsustainable resource

use, such as plastic waste, loss of biodiversity, and climate change (United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2017).

Thailand is one of the countries that has begun to apply the circular economy concept in many sectors, especially in the production and resource management sectors, including marketing, which can create new business opportunities and enhance long-term sustainability. This article will discuss the current and future situation of the circular economy and marketing in Thailand, focusing on the application of the circular economy to the development of the country's economy and marketing at present, and potential future trends. In recent years, especially after Thailand joined the Paris Agreement and expressed its intention to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the long term, the government and business sectors have begun to implement and issue policies that clearly support the circular economy. For example, waste management projects that promote recycling and reduce single-use plastic waste. The business sector has begun to realize the importance of applying the circular economy concept to enhance sustainability and increase competitiveness. Developing environmentally friendly products, such as using recyclable materials or designing reusable products (Blasiak et al., 2021), is a way for businesses to differentiate themselves from their competitors and meet the needs of today's environmentally conscious consumers. Many businesses have begun to develop marketing strategies that are linked to the circular economy, such as offering products that use easily degradable or reusable materials, such as clothing made from recycled materials, or using packaging made from biodegradable materials, as well as using marketing strategies that focus on creating awareness of the benefits of using environmentally friendly products (Khan et al., 2024). The Thai government has begun to implement policies that support the circular economy through legislation and related measures, such as banning the use of certain types of disposable plastics, supporting recycling projects, and promoting the use of renewable energy. In addition, the government supports investment in technologies that help manage waste and reduce resource use, such as supporting businesses to apply recycling technology to the production process. The circular economy will play an increasingly important role in all sectors of the Thai economy, especially in production and resource management, which will adjust to fully support the circular economy concept. For example, developing a more efficient waste management infrastructure, developing innovations that make it easier to recycle materials, and developing products that use recyclable materials in all sectors.

The efficient use of resources for sustainable development (SDGs)

The important role of businesses in achieving the 2030 Agenda and incorporating the SDGs into their business strategies is increasingly recognized. Many large businesses are investing in disseminating knowledge about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to businesses, governments and citizens. Communication plays a key role in disseminating knowledge about the SDGs, allowing users to build relationships and share ideas (Wagner et al., 2024), but also in helping all users to be aware of what is happening in the world. In particular, social media platforms are a key communication channel for reaching young people, who will be part of the population that will struggle with the future consequences of environmental, social and economic problems. Communication must be free of barriers, requiring all citizens, including those with disabilities, to achieve inclusion, equality, peace and development (Maschio, 2024). In particular, with continued economic growth, the concept of sustainable consumption is a key component of the SDGs, a challenge for businesses that are not only interested in profit, but also in the environment and communities (Jones et al., 2016).

Zero waste marketing is a marketing process that focuses on promoting and raising awareness about environmentally friendly products or services. It does not only promote the use of natural materials or renewable energy, but also means developing and promoting the sustainable use of resources and reducing the impact on the environment at every step of the production process. Zero waste marketing has a concept that aims not only to add value to the business, but also to encourage consumers to participate in environmental conservation and create positive perceptions about socially responsible business activities. It is part of a marketing strategy that focuses on developing products and services that reduce environmental impacts, whether it is using renewable energy, choosing materials that can be reused, or producing products that can be naturally degraded. The marketing process involved in zero waste marketing often consists in creating a brand that reflects environmental values, which will help build credibility and make a good image for the business (Bas, 2024). Zero waste marketing is not only about environmentally friendly products or services, but also covers activities related to reducing environmental impacts in the production and distribution processes, such as reducing energy consumption in the factory, choosing sustainable materials, or developing technologies that have the least environmental impact. Zero waste marketing often creates a difference for products and services, not only referring to the quality of the product, but also emphasizing the demonstration of sustainable use of natural resources and reducing the impact on the environment in all aspects of the business, including product design, material selection, and socially responsible production processes (Kautish et al., 2022). Zero waste marketing plays an essential role in supporting sustainable development, which is development in a way that does not harm natural resources or the environment in the long term. It helps promote the use of renewable energy, producing products using recyclable materials, and using technologies that can reduce environmental emissions. Businesses that use the concept of zero waste marketing can help reduce the use of limited resources, preserve the environment, and develop in a sustainable way.

Businesses that use the concept of zero waste marketing have a positive effect on profits and image, helping to create a circular economy. Economic efficiency by making the most of resources and minimizing environmental impacts. It has a positive impact on economic, environmental, and social sustainability measures. It achieves overall sustainability goals in eliminating waste, reducing costs, leading to cost reduction, and increasing customer satisfaction through zero waste marketing strategies (Veseli et al., 2024). It is not only a way to do business for short-term benefits, but also can create sustainability and good relationships with customers in the long term. It is also essential for businesses in many ways: Meet the needs of environmentally conscious consumers. Today's consumers are increasingly aware of the impact of human actions on the environment, especially younger consumers who tend to choose ethical products and promote environmental conservation. Businesses that can offer environmentally friendly products can create interest and attract customers in this group (Lee, 2009). Create a difference in the market. Today's business competition is fierce, and zero waste marketing helps businesses to differentiate themselves from their competitors. By creating a brand with a good image in terms of the environment, customers will feel confident and loyal to that brand. Reduce production costs Although using environmentally friendly materials may initially cost more, in the long run, efficient resource use, reduced energy consumption, and improved sustainability of the production process will help reduce operating costs in the long run. Increase social responsibility, which builds trust and confidence in the company, especially among consumers who value social and environmental responsibility (Paulo et al., 2024). Many companies today have started to use zero waste marketing to enhance their image and increase the appeal of their products or services. A prominent example is Patagonia, a clothing brand that has a policy of producing products using natural materials and supports the recycling of used products, including activities that focus on reducing the impact on the environment, and is aware of the problem of climate change and trying to find ways to produce products that are more environmentally friendly. TOMS, a brand known for producing comfortable shoes, uses its business profits to help people and the environment, expanding sustainable practices. Examples of zero waste marketing, using environmentally friendly materials such as sustainable cotton, packaging made from recycled materials to customers. It can be seen that both brands that have been mentioned stand firm in marketing zero waste for the environment and society. Customers have the intention to buy and support, resulting in good performance and a sustainable image of the company.

Eco-friendly Packaging

Today, brands and packaging manufacturers are collaborating to bring products to market with more environmentally friendly packaging that can protect sensitive ingredients from moisture, heat, oxygen and light (Montemarano, 2023). Environmental awareness and sustainability have become a topic of continuous interest, especially in the business sector that must adapt to meet the demands of increasingly environmentally conscious consumers. Packaging design is one of the strategies that businesses use to improve their operations with a low environmental impact. Packaging not only helps reduce the use of natural resources and pollution, but can also effectively enhance the brand image and differentiate itself in a highly competitive market. Environmentally friendly purchasing behavior occurs when consumers behave in general towards specific environmentally friendly consumption patterns. As the trend towards environmental friendliness increases, so does the awareness of environmentally friendly products (Giannoutsos et al., 2023). Environmentally friendly packaging can be defined as packaging that is designed and manufactured with a focus on reducing the environmental impact at every stage of the packaging lifecycle, from the selection of recyclable or biodegradable materials, to reducing energy and resource consumption in the manufacturing process, to reducing pollution caused by packaging waste management (Macht et al., 2023). Packaging does not just focus on using easily degradable or recyclable materials. But it also covers the selection of sustainable materials, such as using natural materials that can be grown and harvested without destroying natural resources. It also means reducing the use of chemicals that may be harmful to the environment in the production of packaging, including reducing the use of plastic materials that are not biodegradable in nature. The use of packaging in business has many advantages, both in terms of creating business sustainability and meeting the needs of consumers who are concerned about the environment, as follows:

- 1) Creating a good image and building customer loyalty. In an era where consumers are more aware of the impact of environmental destruction, choosing packaging that can help create a good image for the brand is crucial because consumers tend to focus on products that are environmentally valuable and friendly to the world. Using sustainable packaging can make businesses stand out in a highly competitive market. And it can create loyalty among customers who are looking for products that do not harm the environment. The choice of biodegradable or reusable materials can be a sign of a business's responsibility towards society and the environment (Casalegno et al., 2022).
- 2) Long-term cost savings: Although packaging may initially cost money to develop or change, it can effectively reduce production costs and environmental management in the long run. For example, using recyclable or biodegradable materials can reduce the amount of waste generated from product use in the long run and reduce waste management costs for businesses. In addition, reducing the use of plastic or toxic materials in the manufacturing process can reduce the costs of using materials that impact the environment (Magnier, Schoormans, 2015).
- 3) Creating new business opportunities: Using packaging allows businesses to differentiate themselves from their competitors, especially in today's highly competitive market. Businesses that use environmentally friendly

packaging can attract environmentally conscious customers willing to support brands with ethical values. In addition, adapting to environmental trends can also allow businesses to develop and create new products that meet market needs (Kautishet et al., 2022).

4) Packaging is part of sustainable development, a process that focuses on the efficient use of natural resources and reducing environmental impact. The use of packaging in business can help promote sustainable development in the business sector and encourage businesses to play a role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and reducing the use of unsustainable materials. and help reduce pollution caused by product production and use (Zhao et al., 2025).

5) Use of biodegradable packaging or plant-based materials, such as paper packaging made from recycled materials or plant-based materials such as bagasse or biodegradable bioplastics. The nutritional product packaging market includes blister packaging, bottles, jars, low-density polyethylene (PET) and high-density PET, boxes, stick packaging, and many more (Montemarano, 2023).

Businesses should therefore provide packaging that can promote their products to the market with an environmentally-friendly identity. Consumers with a high environmental attitude are interested in environmental activities, have moral concerns, and are committed to similar activities (Nguyen et al., 2019). Therefore, businesses can promote their products in terms of the environment. Companies can start by specifically targeting middle- to high-income consumers, as packaging is much more expensive than plastic packaging. Presenting products to the right audience allows businesses to cover costs (Ramadhanti et al., 2024).

Zero Waste Marketing Strategy Benefits Business Image and Sales

Awareness of environmental issues has increased worldwide, especially in terms of waste and waste management that affects nature and human health. As a result, businesses and businesses have to adapt and look for ways to help reduce the impact on the environment and enhance sustainability in their production and business operations. One of the currently popular approaches is the "Zero Waste Marketing Strategy", which aims to reduce all waste in the business process, as well as promote sustainable resource use and reduce environmental impacts.

From past studies, it was found that the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has been studied as a research framework to develop strategies for zero waste product purchase intentions. Attitude factors influence purchase intentions (Sun and Wang, 2020; Rastegari Kopaei et al., 2021) and income will be a factor that controls the purchase decision (Kronthal-Sacco and Whelan, 2019). Beautiful, distinctive packaging design or unique communication can help consumers have a good experience at first sight and attract interest. It will become a more positive attitude towards customers than products with an inconspicuous external image design (Majeed et al., 2022). In addition, positive consumer attitudes can also be derived from the perception of interesting brand storytelling, raising awareness, or recognizing the benefits of the product (Huang et al., 2022). However, it was also found that subjective norms are a factor affecting purchase intentions for zero-waste products, recyclable products, or environmentally related products (Choi and Johnson, 2019; La Barbera and Ajzen, 2021; Raghu and Rodrigues, 2022). In addition, the SOR framework, consisting of Stimulus, Organism, and Response, is used as a theoretical framework for studying consumer behavior. Consumers can respond through various stimuli from their surrounding perception, resulting in processing mechanisms and response behaviors (Rivas et al., 2022), in which response behaviors are often expressed by intention or willingness to purchase (Guerreiro et al., 2023).

This article presents 4 zero waste marketing strategies that can help businesses build a good image and increase sales effectively, including the application of these strategies in various business sectors to create benefits in both marketing and the environment.

1. Premium Pricing Strategy

Consumers are often willing to buy zero waste products, recyclable products or environmentally-related products, even if the price is higher than general products in the market, and the market value is continuously growing (Kronthal-Sacco and Whelan, 2019). However, such pricing will be more effective if the brand can create awareness, environmental issues or content that is highly sensitive to consumers, and create awareness (Chen et al., 2024). In addition, premium pricing will help show the value and position of the product in the market. Such pricing should not include sales promotions that focus on product discounts, buy one get one free, which will degrade the brand's market position. The target customer group will have a negative attitude and not feel the brand's specialness. And it may be an obstacle to building customer loyalty (Santos et al., 2024; Majeed et al., 2022). What will promote marketing in setting premium prices can be done by creating useful content, creating awareness of the value of the product, feeling involved with the brand in being a part of conserving the environment, focusing on content that influences the feeling that the brand sets a premium or expensive price because of many factors involved, such as higher costs than competitors, using some of the income to support environmental conservation activities, etc. (Huang et al., 2022; Santos et al., 2024).

2. Creating a good brand (Brand Coolness)

Building a good brand will be determined by four important characteristics: having positive valence, being subjective, autonomous, and dynamic, which are factors that make the brand look trustworthy, demonstrating success (Warren and Campbell, 2014). In addition, some research has found that the elements that will make environmentally related brands successful and lead to willingness to pay for products include 1) Authenticity (Authenticity) Perception of zero-waste marketing products will lead to emotional motivation to purchase and influence consumer attitude. 2) Usefulness) Product quality or utility is a factor leading to service intention. 3)

Aesthetically) Can be measured by product style and attractiveness. 4) Originality) When the innovative value is perceived, there will be a willingness to purchase the product at a sustainable premium price. 5) Energetic) Brand vitality. 6) Popular) Is the acceptance and popularity of the brand by customers worldwide. 7) Iconic) Is similar to popularity, such as local cultural symbols. 8) High Status) Expression, conveying status to others materially. Associated with environmentally friendly products and brands 9) Subculturalism is determined by expectations from social class paradigms. 10) Rebelliousness is a predictor of customer response (Guerreiro et al., 2023).

3. Brand Storytelling

Brand storytelling is another strategy that influences customer emotions. Storytelling often provides truthful information about product features, linking to marketing activities, the quality of raw materials, manufacturing processes, business history stories, or linking other events that are indirectly related to the product. Linking stories is a way to define the identity of the product to reach the essence that the creator wants to convey, expressed through rhetoric. Brand storytelling is a tool or strategy that helps reduce costs and generates more effective responses than other marketing strategies (Huang et al., 2022). In addition, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) is another storytelling and expression strategy that creates an image of environmental and social responsibility of the brand. When consumers buy products from brands that are marketed as CSR, they feel that they are part of a social welfare activity. and the environment (Papadas, 2021). CSR activities can also benefit businesses by retaining customers and employees within the business (Kärnä et al., 2003).

4. Use of Eco-Friendly Packaging

Using biodegradable or recyclable packaging is a strategy that helps reduce waste from non-biodegradable packaging, such as plastic packaging, which is often discarded as waste in nature. By changing to biodegradable or recycled materials, such as paper or natural materials, it will effectively reduce the amount of plastic waste in nature. It also helps consumers to be aware of the waste problem that affects the environment (Nguyen et al., 2019; Awogbemi et al., 2022; Bojanowska & Sulimierska, 2023), which is consistent with the concept of zero waste marketing. It also helps to promote brand trust. Customers tend to choose products that come with environmentally friendly packaging. Choosing such packaging makes the business look like a leader in caring for the environment and creates a purchase intention behavior (Pan et al., 2021; Majeed et al., 2022). In addition, the use of environmentally responsible packaging helps to build loyalty among customers who care about the environment, resulting in repeat purchases and promoting sales in the long term (Krampe et al., 2025).

CONCLUSION

The circular economy in Thailand holds significant potential to drive sustainability across economic and environmental dimensions. Governmental bodies and the private sector are increasingly aware of the necessity of efficient resource utilization. This is reflected in the increasing support for developing recyclable products and integrating circular economy principles into production and marketing processes. As this paradigm continues to evolve, it is expected to play a pivotal role in shaping Thailand's future economic development.

Within this context, Zero Waste Marketing emerges as a strategic approach aligned with the goals of the circular economy. It promotes the creation of environmentally responsible products and services that resonate with contemporary consumers who prioritise sustainability. Businesses that adopt zero waste marketing can differentiate themselves in competitive markets, appeal to environmentally conscious consumer segments, and foster a favourable brand image through socially and environmentally responsible practices.

One prominent tactic within this strategy is the development and use of eco-friendly packaging. Environmentally sustainable packaging mitigates ecological impact and enhances brand positioning and customer perception. It contributes to cost reduction in the long term, fosters consumer trust and loyalty, and facilitates regulatory compliance regarding environmental standards. Furthermore, such practices contribute to broader sustainable development goals by promoting environmental stewardship and reinforcing the perceived value of products.

In summary, zero waste marketing offers a comprehensive and forward-looking framework for businesses aiming to align profitability with environmental and social responsibility. It constitutes a critical component of modern business strategy and should be considered an essential pathway for companies striving for long-term sustainability and competitive advantage in an increasingly eco-conscious marketplace.

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