

EnviroSolutions release

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Is Green Just a Status Symbol?

More Costly Green Products Are More Desirable

Peterborough, ON – At first, Green Cleaning was simply ignored in the jansan world, then it was considered a fad, but now it's the primary trend in the professional cleaning industry.

Environmentally friendly products are now used for just about everything, ranging from bamboo towels to Green cleaning products.

But according to a new study by Viadas Griskevicius, Assistant Professor of Marketing at the University of Minnesota's Carlson School of Management, this may be because Green products are now seen as a status symbol in some market segments.*

"Green purchases are often motivated by status," he says. "People want to be seen as altruistic. Nothing communicates that better than buying Green products, even if they cost more or are inferior to comparable, non-Green products [but are seen as] benefiting the environment for everyone."

As an example, Griskevicius uses the Toyota Prius. Although the car is considerably more expensive than others in its size category, "[It] essentially functions as a mobile, self-promoting billboard for pro-environmentalism. When you publicly display your environmentally friendly nature, you send a signal [to others] that you care."

Professor Griskevicius based his study on online purchasing patterns. He found that when online shoppers make practicality the focus of their buying decision, the cost of a product is their key concern--not how Green it is.

Similarly, when the emphasis of the purchasing decision is on luxury and comfort, once again the environmental responsibility of the product is of little to no concern.

Interestingly, as to costs, the study also found that more expensive Green products may actually "increase the desirability" of those products because they are once again viewed as a status symbol to display in front of others.

However, while these trends may be evident among some consumers, those in the jansan industry should note that such sentiments are not usually present in other settings.

"This may be true for the consumer market," says Mike Sawchuk, Vice President of Enviro-Solutions, a manufacturer of Green cleaning products, and Charlotte Products, responding to the study.

"But I can say with confidence it is not true of today's end-users. They want proven-Green products that perform and are cost competitive. Status is not part of the equation."

***University of Minnesota (2010, March 16). "People will forgo luxury for Green products when status is on mind, researcher finds."**