



June 2007

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TerraChoice Releases 2007 EcoMarket Summary Report

TerraChoice recently released its EcoMarkets 2007 Summary Report, which provides valuable insight into the status of green procurement policies and green purchasing behaviors in North America. TerraChoice is North America's premier environmental marketing agency and also manages the EcoLogo standards and certification program.

EcoMarkets, TerraChoice's annual research initiative, monitors the patterns of green procurement and supply chain management in business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-government (B2G) contexts. This report, available to the public free of charge, can be obtained through TerraChoice's [website](#). A more detailed and customized analysis is available to the organization's clients and partners upon request.

Hundreds of procurement professionals across North America with more than \$5 billion in annual spending are represented in the sample population. Also, this year, TerraChoice partnered with two other organizations to prepare the study. These are:

- The North American Green Purchasing Initiative (NAGPI), a project of the trilateral North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and
- The Responsible Purchasing Network, a project of the Center for a New American Dream.

The 2007 EcoMarkets study presents valuable insights on the actual percentage of spending that is influenced by environmental factors

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and the environmental issues that drive green purchasing behaviors. TerraChoice asked specific questions related to the janitorial and sanitation, electricity, and paper and paper-related products sectors. The study sought to determine specific buying trends in each. Additionally, the study analyzed current and future green purchasing trends.

Some of the key findings of the study include:

- Nearly half of all organizations now have paper reuse/recycle programs. Twenty-five percent have a green paper purchasing program in place and one third have implemented paper reduction programs (multiple responses were allowed).
- Fifty-six percent of the survey respondents believe that green cleaning products are those that contain no harmful by-products or ingredients, 31 percent consider green cleaning products to be biodegradable and 22 percent say green cleaning products are not harmful to the environment or people.
- Although only 28 percent of janitorial contracts require the use of green cleaning products, a full 30 percent of those surveyed said they didn't know whether or not their organization required the use of such products so it is believed the 28 percent may underestimate this pattern.

GreenSpeak

One of the ways TerraChoice works to grow the world's most sustainable companies is by helping them improve the way they communicate their environmental value propositions. One of the most interesting issues explored in the 2007 EcoMarkets study concerns the relative purchasing importance of several environmental issues. For example, issues related to the human environment, such as human health and toxics are consistently deemed to be more important issues than technical and media-specific issues such as water pollution and biodegradability. For purchasers, issues relating to the non-human ecological environment, such as habitat loss and preserving biodiversity are deemed the least important.

Scott McDougall, President of TerraChoice, points out that although the terms "energy conservation," "greenhouse gas emissions" and "climate change" are all interrelated, using the term "energy conservation" appears to have more appeal to customers when it comes to making green purchasing decisions. When it comes to packaging-related issues, McDougall says that referring to "reduced packaging" is far less effective than referring to "recycled and recyclable packaging."

JanSan Outlook

According to McDougall, few B2B industries have seen as much

growth in the use of environmentally-preferable products as the janitorial and sanitation sector. They [janitorial procurement professionals] are driven by concerns about indoor health, worker safety, and the potentially hazardous impacts of some conventional cleaning products. He goes on to say that green cleaning is shaking up the entire cleaning industry.

McDougall adds that green purchasing at the institutional level is at an all-time high and will likely continue to grow. Green markets are larger than ever before, and this is good news for the makers and marketers of environmentally-preferable products today and in the coming years, says McDougall.

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*Legislative and Regulatory Update
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