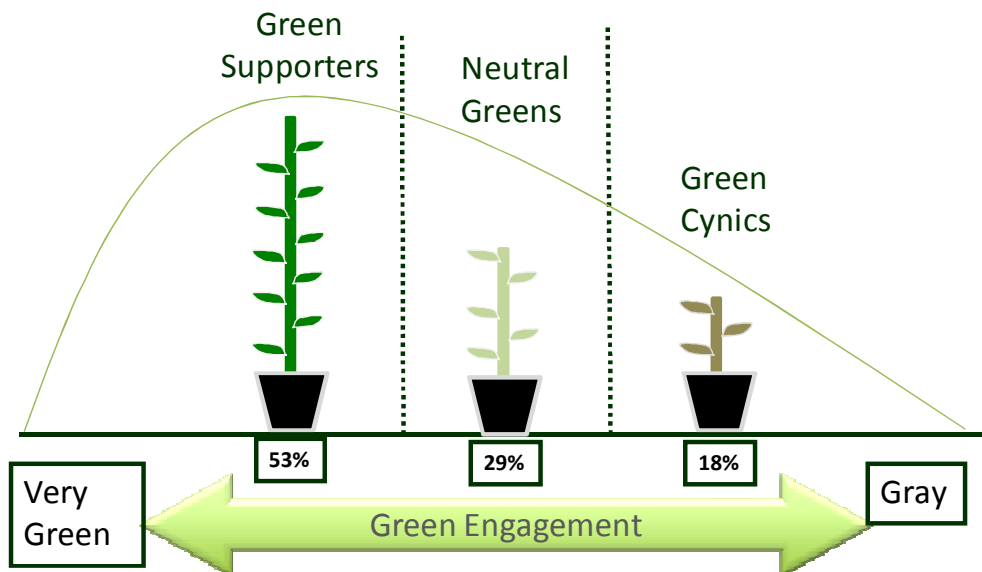


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The South African business case for going green

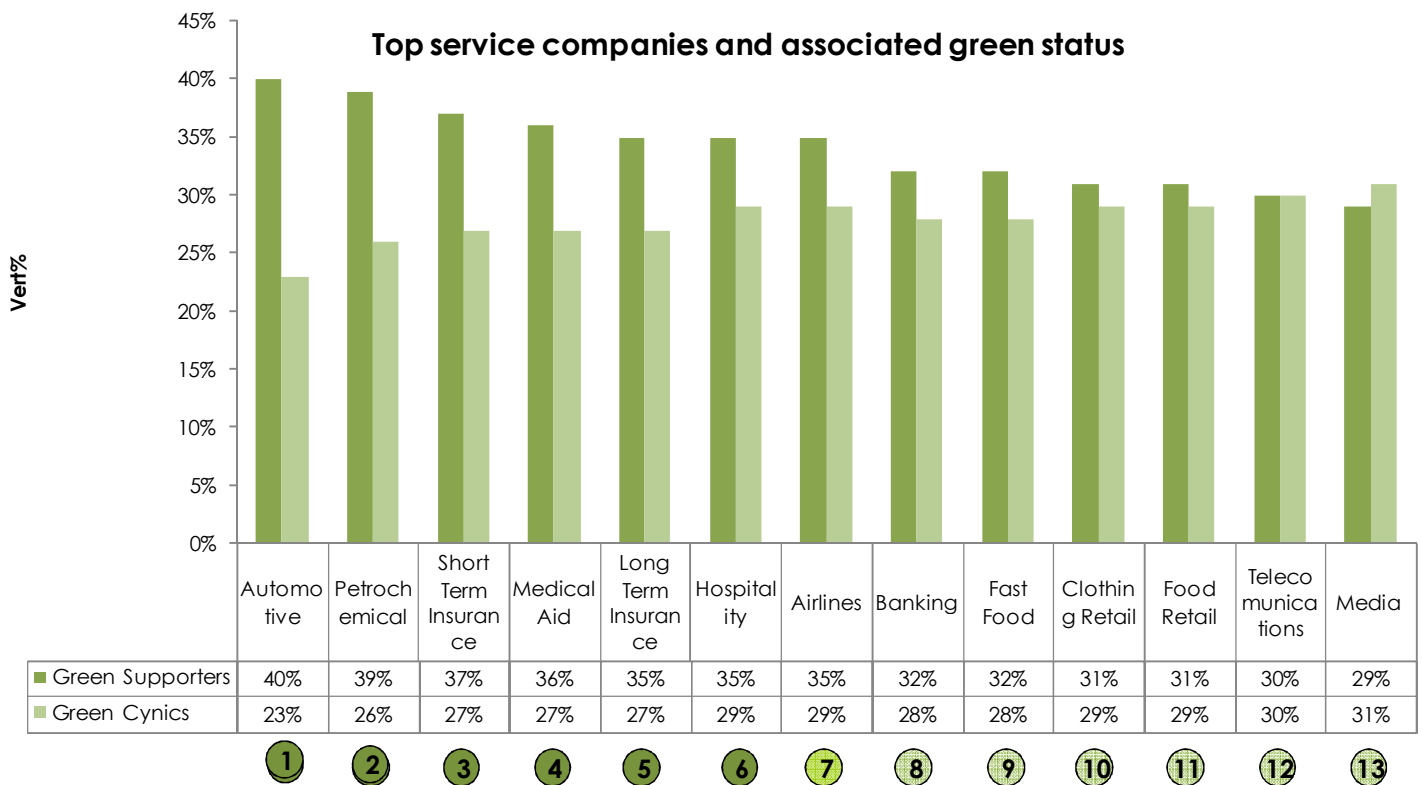
There is a growing concern for companies to “go green” and reduce their carbon footprint. It has become an obligation for most companies to reflect their respect for the environment. Going green is often also reflected in the brands themselves that consumers use. Brands need to have a position on the environment. If consumers believe in that position, the value of the brand – and the attraction to use or buy it – goes up, the reverse also applies as indicated by TGI™ SA.

An astonishing 53% of South African consumers have a positive green attitude, and subtle increases in green mindsets can be seen and is also expected to continue. Despite the attitudinal preference towards ‘green living’ consumers are still passive in terms of ‘green’ behavior and active contributions. When considering the industries across South Africa, 30% of the client base is positively green with the strongest green mindset being in the automotive and petrochemical industries, as indicated in the graphs below.



TGI™ SA 2010

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This new consumer group often referred to as greenies, are slightly more extroverted, opinionated and optimistic, making them vocal advocates or brand terrorists to be considered. Greenies often show passive support through only purchasing from stores they know have a green commitment, support ethical organisations and see driving eco-friendly vehicles as a pleasure that saves planet earth.

As this authentic green positioning and patterns of change become increasingly important, a massive marketing opportunity arises. Successful organisations can benefit from this by attracting greenies and building loyalty, with sincere messages and congruent performance. Growing proportions of greenies warrant authentic positioning on the environment, which could



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enabling success for all

create, not only differentiation, loyalty and increased brand value, due to effective reputation building and management.

Businesses do however face a challenge in communicating with these greenies, and need to ensure that they get the green message right. Businesses need to pay attention to a number of elements:

- Consumers will increasingly shift spending to greener brands. It therefore reiterates organisations' needs to demonstrate their green and ETHICAL credentials more than ever.
- Branded products and services that offer environmental integrity must strive also to compete with mainstream brands on performance and tangible benefits, rather than purely relying on their green credentials.
- A visible, universal trend is also evident in the correlation between green consumerism and brand loyalty. Green supporters are more inclined to stick to the brand they like once found.

Companies can make this marketing opportunity work for them by aligning their products with environmental concerns, and through this not only have the opportunity to differentiate and create positive brand images, but also help the public in their role as responsible consumers, through information and education.

Dare to know...

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