



New Eco-Wise brand developed to raise awareness

Encouraging the sale of more environmentally friendly items through Massmart stores is an important goal for the group. Advocating responsible consumerism requires availability of suitable products and a solid plan for highlighting green goods in-store.

Massmart's Green Book of Answers will help each division's buyers find the right merchandise. It's up to the stores, however, to get shoppers' attention. That's why Massmart has launched Eco-Wise. It's the group's plan to help make sure environmentally friendly products get noticed where it counts most: on the shelves.



Eco-Wise green goods

Massmart's Eco-Wise brand will highlight environmentally responsible products so that customers will have a better chance of noticing these options in stores. The group's suppliers already make some of the products that will benefit from Eco-Wise in-store displays once the brand is launched, but many goods are being developed by Massmart to create a comprehensive product offering. "As our customers become more aware of the impact their product choices have on the environment, we're developing strategies to help them make better informed choices," says Ray Abraham, Massmart group private label executive.

"The Eco-Wise campaign's clear-cut goal is to highlight environmentally responsible products in-store for customers while they're shopping," he says. "Where our

suppliers have existing or new products recognised by independent environmental certification bodies, our Eco-Wise campaign will help highlight them on-shelf. But it's not just about labeling; consumer education is also important to tell shoppers things they may not know about what's available. Motors in certain appliances are becoming far more efficient. The ergonomics also are better and many products' output is better - these are all things we can communicate at a consumer product level. For example, we're looking at environmental labeling on refrigerators to spell out the energy savings in year one, two and three of owning the appliance".

"These kinds of messages are reassuring to customers," adds Stefan Botes, Massmart group private label manager. "When people realise they don't have to change their consumption patterns to choose environmentally responsible brands, it turns making the right choice into something that's easy to do. Good environmental labeling sends out a strong 'this is why you care' message".

Creating a lasting brand

"Eco-Wise will live across all categories," says Abraham, "from TVs and hi-fis to mops and brooms. There are many categories in which we are pursuing suppliers of suitable goods to carry the Eco-Wise brand forward.

We're looking for cool products, things our customers will want to use. Stores will be selling them at competitive prices, and because we're developing the merchandise ourselves in some cases, we can put in provisions to fund the awareness campaign".

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"Eco-Wise is going to introduce environmentally friendly products throughout Massmart stores with a certain degree of focus," Abraham continues. "High quality products and good pricing will push items through the tills. Strong in-store product labeling, display, shelf wobblers and educational material will pull customers' attention to the brand. It's a comprehensive campaign."

Alongside its Eco-Wise brand and awareness campaign development for stores, Massmart is also working with manufacturers to assist government in generating environmental labeling standards for South Africa. In constant contact with consumer and manufacturers, developing this strategy to highlight environmentally responsible products in stores is a contribution Massmart's well positioned to make. ■