

SUSTAINABILITY

## Brands cannot thrive without sustainability: Bazaarvoice

April 21, 2021



*Many brands, including Faimont, are actively working towards sustainability goals, which is an effort that many consumers are looking for. Image credit: Faimont Mayakoba*

By KATIE TAMOLA

With climate change a stark and present reality, promoting clear and prominent sustainability practices are a necessity for brands looking to maintain consumers, according to [Bazaarvoice](#).

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The Influencer Sustainability Survey conducted last month examines the importance of brand transparency in regards to sustainability practices, how inclined consumers are to adopting more eco-friendly habits in their own lives and how brands should adapt to consumer preferences. The report suggests how imperative it is for brands to implement effective and transparent sustainability practices.

"I think that consumers are becoming increasingly expectant of sustainability, both in what they buy and from where they buy, which is directly going to impact the way brands and retailers operate and what they sell," said Suzin Wold, senior vice president of marketing at Bazaarvoice. "The vast majority, 85 percent, of our survey respondents said they agree or strongly agree that brands have a responsibility to protect both people and the planet by offering sustainable initiatives.

"While consumers know that they need to change their lifestyles to help positively impact the environment, they think companies need to act just as environmentally-friendly," she said.

The findings are based on the Bazaarvoice and Influencer survey of more than 10,000 global members of the Influencer community from the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, conducted in March 2021.

### Success and sustainability

The survey asked consumers several questions ranging from their knowledge of sustainability and personal sustainability practices to how likely sustainability efforts are to affect their brand loyalty.

For the survey's respondent age breakdown, Gen Z respondents made up 9.8 percent, millennials consisted of 70.99 percent, Gen X counted for 17.43 percent and baby boomers contributed 1.72 percent of the findings. The gender breakdown was 98.16 percent female and 1.84 percent male.



*In February, online retailer FarFetch has partnered with aftercare platform The Restory in new sustainability effort. Image courtesy of Farfetch*

Eighty-five percent of all participants agreed or strongly agreed that brands have a responsibility to protect both people and the planet by offering sustainable initiatives. More than 65 percent of respondents said they sometimes pay attention to terms like "green", "eco-friendly," and/or "sustainable" while 27.74 percent said they always pay attention to those terms.

More than 23 percent of respondents strongly agreed that they had a good understanding of what the term "sustainable" means, while more than 56 percent respondents agreed.

When considering how important it is for consumers to use brands and products that are either green, eco-friendly or sustainable, 25.49 percent of respondents said they felt it is very important while 53.09 percent of respondents felt that it is somewhat important.

Consumers are actively adopting more personal eco-friendly habits as well, with 47.68 percent of respondents stating that they try to bring their own bags when shopping to avoid plastic, 44.23 percent saying they are trying to buy more from sustainable brands and 37 percent strongly agreeing that they are trying to find alternative options to single-use disposable products. Seventy-six percent of shoppers also reported feeling more inclined to use products made from recycled and sustainable materials.

Consumers are even willing to switch brand loyalty and to pay more for more environmentally friendly products and brands, with 86 percent of consumers saying they would try a new "green" brand and 74 percent stating they would be willing to pay more for eco-friendly products.

However, 66 percent of consumers stated they would choose not to buy green products if their performance was not as good as other products, indicating that the quality of a product continues to be crucial.

More than 40 percent of respondents also said that they strongly agreed that brands have a responsibility to protect both people and the planet by offering sustainable initiatives.

Quality is always important, while consumers are now looking for both quality and environmental care in their products. Consumers want to see that brands have made the effort to implement sustainability practices and that they are transparent.



*Last month, L'Occitane noted that it was able to meet its biodiversity goal for 2025 by maintaining its dedication to the preservation of biodiversity, which the brand has done for years. Image courtesy of L'Occitane*

Consumers are not thoughtlessly purchasing products, but instead challenging brands to maintain and display

meaningful sustainable initiatives. In order to maintain brand loyalty and to continue enticing new customers, brands will simply have to make the effort.

A very sustainable future

Luxury brands are constantly and publicly setting clear and prominent sustainability goals. Across all sectors, brands are highlighting their sustainable efforts, how they have surpassed certain goals and how they are constantly working towards a better future.

French luxury conglomerate [LVMH Mot Hennessy Louis Vuitton](#) is hoping to inspire brands and policymakers with its Life 360 sustainability strategy, which addresses the environmental approach from manufacturing through in-store experiences. During the opening ceremony of LVMH's first Climate Week in December 2020, executives shared the framework of Life 360 as the group moves to intensify its environmental policy.

The new strategy sets three key deadlines 2023, 2026 and 2030 and revolves around four product-focused pillars: protect biodiversity, fight climate change, a circular economy and transparency ([see story](#)).

Earlier this month, hospitality group Fairmont Hotels & Resorts celebrated the 30th anniversary of its sustainability strategy by setting more ambitious environmental goals. As part of the [Planet21 program](#) by parent organization Accor, Fairmont will eliminate single-use plastics across all hotels by the end of 2022 and plans to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 ([see story](#)).

In February, Online retailer [Farfetch](#) partnered with aftercare platform The Restory in its latest effort to extend the lifecycle of luxury goods.

The program entitled "Farfetch Fix" provides services from The Restory which has cultivated a wide range of techniques offering aftercare and repair services to shoes, bags and leather goods. The partnership plays a part in the retailer's "Positively Farfetch" sustainability strategy ([see story](#)).

Brands need to recognize that the importance of sustainability is not fading anytime soon, and they will have to continue to challenge themselves with new and more transparent policies.

"If a brand hasn't already made sustainability a priority they should start as soon as possible," said Ms. Wold. "Consumers are actively changing their lifestyles to be more sustainable, and they want brands and retailers to follow suit.

"Brands and retailers also need to be sure to be as open, transparent, and communicative as possible about the ways they're prioritizing sustainability," she said. "Consumers want to hear more from brands on their sustainability efforts, as long as it's authentic."