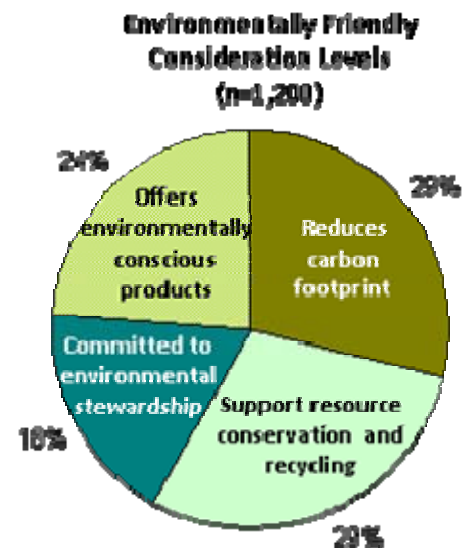


## Consumer Expectations from Businesses around Green

Barely a day passes without the rollout of a new “environmentally responsible” product — energy saving cars, eco-friendly light bulbs, computer monitors and building materials. The application of Green to product descriptions can be most imaginative: consider Green underwear and car washes. But what are the consumer expectations from Green products? Besides hearing company claims, do consumers expect Green products to perform differently or have other benefits? What sets companies apart in consumers’ minds around the issue of Green?

When viewed through the lens of the consumer, Green is a fascinating story. Hansa|GCR asked respondents to weight the importance of four environmental factors that describe a company’s organizational commitment to the environment. Respondents allocated 100 points across the four factors to assess a company’s Green identity. Respondents allocated more points to the factors they felt were more important and fewer or zero points to factors that were less important. The pie chart shows mean scores for the four environmental factors. Three out of four environmental factors (carbon footprint, Green products and services, and resource conservation and recycling) are direct actions affecting the environment and require organizations to change their internal behavior. In contrast, a commitment to environmental stewardship, such as making donations, public service, or other outreach efforts are external activities that indirectly lead to environmental conservation.



The key finding is, as measures of environmental commitment, respondents placed the least amount of weight on indirect, external activities and placed more weight on internal actions requiring a change in company behavior. Put simply, consumers want companies first to get their own house in order before taking external steps that affect the environment. Being Green begins at home inside the organization.

Dr. Paul Schwarz is Vice President, Sustainability Research and Green Market Insights at Hansa|GCR. He can be reached at [pschwarz@hansagcr.com](mailto:pschwarz@hansagcr.com)