

# The Illusion of Eco-Friendly Brands: Greenwashing and Consumer Backlash in Fast-Fashion Retail

Azy Athoillah Yazid\*

<sup>1</sup>Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Darul Ulum Banyuwangi, Indonesia

## ABSTRACT

### Keywords:

Greenwashing;  
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Management;  
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Netnography; Fast-  
Fashion Industry.

Escalating global commitments to sustainable development have encouraged fast-fashion retailers to integrate environmental narratives into corporate branding, yet the growing reliance on symbolic sustainability communication has simultaneously intensified the risk of greenwashing and public distrust. Addressing this tension, the research investigates how digitally connected consumers identify inconsistencies between corporate environmental claims and operational realities, and how such discoveries evolve into organized forms of digital resistance. An exploratory qualitative case study was employed using a systematically anonymized multinational retailer, designated as Brand Alpha, with evidence derived from corporate sustainability documents, green marketing campaigns, publicly accessible digital discourse, and netnographic observation. Thematic analysis revealed that contemporary consumers increasingly function as independent digital auditors who verify corporate claims by cross-referencing sustainability reports, supply chain information, environmental NGO publications, and user-generated content across online platforms. Once discrepancies become publicly visible, collaborative digital verification rapidly transforms individual skepticism into decentralized backlash, viral exposure, and consumer boycott movements that progressively weaken corporate legitimacy and erode symbolic brand equity. These findings demonstrate that sustainable competitive advantage can no longer rely upon symbolic environmental positioning alone, requiring green marketing management to embrace radically transparent, verifiable, and operationally substantiated sustainability practices capable of withstanding continuous public scrutiny within hyper-connected digital ecosystems.

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\*Corresponding Author: [azyathoillah@gmail.com](mailto:azyathoillah@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

The accelerating transition toward a green economy has redefined the normative foundations of contemporary business competition, placing environmental responsibility alongside financial performance as a decisive

indicator of corporate legitimacy. (Zervoudi et al., 2025) Across global retail markets, sustainability has evolved from a peripheral ethical concern into a strategic narrative that shapes investment decisions, regulatory expectations, and consumer trust. Fast-fashion corporations, confronted by mounting ecological scrutiny, increasingly incorporate environmental language, symbolic certifications, and sustainability campaigns into their corporate identities in pursuit of moral credibility. Such narratives frequently promise circular production, responsible sourcing, and carbon reduction while presenting brands as active contributors to sustainable development. Yet the persuasive power of these messages extends beyond environmental communication; it constructs reputational capital that influences purchasing behavior, stakeholder confidence, and institutional acceptance. The commercialization of sustainability therefore transforms ecological discourse into a valuable strategic asset, although its authenticity remains persistently contested within highly competitive retail environments (Thompson & Kumar, 2022). This evolving dynamic has intensified scholarly concern regarding the credibility of environmental claims and their managerial implications (Forliano et al., 2025).

Despite the proliferation of sustainability narratives, the operational logic of the fast-fashion industry remains fundamentally anchored in rapid product turnover, accelerated consumption cycles, extensive global supply chains, and relentless cost minimization. (Kaplan, 2024) These structural characteristics generate an inherent contradiction between ecological responsibility and commercial imperatives, rendering genuine sustainability exceptionally difficult to achieve without profound organizational transformation. Instead of redesigning production systems, some firms strategically prioritize symbolic environmental communication that creates the appearance of responsible conduct while preserving conventional business practices. This phenomenon, widely recognized as greenwashing, emerges not merely as deceptive advertising but as a sophisticated reputational strategy that selectively amplifies favorable environmental information while obscuring unsustainable realities. The resulting disjunction between corporate rhetoric and operational behavior produces a fragile legitimacy that depends upon limited public scrutiny rather than substantive ecological performance (Keresztúri et al., 2025). As competitive pressure intensifies, cosmetic sustainability increasingly becomes an expedient managerial response to escalating environmental expectations rather than authentic organizational change (Bhattacharjee et al., 2025).

Digital transformation has fundamentally altered the architecture of marketplace accountability by redistributing informational power from corporations to networked publics. (Kehinde, 2024) Consumers no longer function as passive recipients of promotional narratives; instead, they actively investigate environmental claims through open data, independent reports,

investigative journalism, influencer analyses, and collaborative online communities. Social media platforms, algorithmic recommendation systems, and user-generated content collectively enable rapid comparison between official corporate messaging and observable organizational behavior. Consequently, contemporary consumers increasingly operate as decentralized digital auditors capable of identifying inconsistencies, documenting evidence, and disseminating critical evaluations at unprecedented speed. The accessibility of environmental information has substantially reduced corporate control over brand narratives while strengthening collective mechanisms of public verification (M. K. Khan et al., 2024). Within this environment, even carefully constructed sustainability campaigns remain continuously vulnerable to independent scrutiny, making authenticity a strategic necessity rather than a desirable marketing attribute (Wallach & Popovich, 2023).

When discrepancies between environmental promises and organizational practices become publicly visible, consumer skepticism frequently evolves into coordinated collective resistance that extends far beyond isolated dissatisfaction. (M. S. Wang & Tracey, 2024) Digital platforms facilitate the rapid aggregation of individual experiences into highly visible public controversies where accusations of hypocrisy circulate through hashtags, viral videos, online reviews, and activist campaigns. As these narratives gain momentum, reputational damage becomes amplified by algorithmic visibility and peer-to-peer diffusion, transforming localized criticism into transnational consumer movements. The emergence of cancel culture and digitally organized boycotts demonstrates how perceived ethical inconsistency can rapidly undermine corporate credibility, diminish customer loyalty, and weaken long-term brand equity (Abbasi et al., 2023). Rather than responding solely to product quality or pricing, consumers increasingly evaluate brands through moral expectations, rewarding transparency while sanctioning perceived deception. Consequently, greenwashing represents not merely a communication failure but a catalyst capable of triggering cascading reputational crises across interconnected digital ecosystems (Andriani & Siripipatthanakul, 2026).

Although green marketing has attracted substantial scholarly attention, prevailing research continues to concentrate predominantly on identifying effective sustainability strategies, environmental communication instruments, and consumer responses to authentic green initiatives. Comparatively less attention has been devoted to understanding the destructive mechanisms that unfold when environmental claims are exposed as manipulated representations rather than credible organizational commitments. This imbalance creates a significant theoretical blind spot because the reputational consequences of greenwashing extend beyond misleading communication into complex processes of trust erosion, digital mobilization, collective outrage, and enduring

legitimacy loss. Existing marketing management frameworks frequently underestimate the speed with which reputational deterioration occurs in hyper-connected digital societies, where information circulates independently of corporate control. A deeper examination of these backlash mechanisms is therefore necessary to explain why symbolic sustainability can rapidly transform from a valuable strategic resource into a source of severe organizational vulnerability, thereby enriching contemporary discussions on corporate reputation, stakeholder trust, and ethical marketing governance.

This study addresses that gap by investigating the anatomy of greenwashing detection and the subsequent emergence of consumer backlash through an exploratory qualitative case study centered on a multinational fast-fashion retailer systematically anonymized as Brand Alpha. Rather than measuring consumer attitudes through conventional survey approaches, the research examines how environmental narratives are constructed, challenged, verified, and ultimately contested within digitally mediated public discourse. Particular attention is directed toward the sequence through which perceived inconsistencies evolve into widespread reputational crises, revealing the interaction between corporate communication, consumer interpretation, and collective digital action. By reconstructing these interconnected processes, the study seeks to generate a more nuanced conceptual framework capable of explaining the dynamics of authenticity, reputational resilience, and public accountability within contemporary green marketing management. The findings are expected to provide theoretically grounded and strategically relevant insights that assist organizations in developing sustainability communication founded upon verifiable practices instead of symbolic environmental positioning.

## METHOD

This investigation adopts an exploratory qualitative case study design to generate an in-depth understanding of how greenwashing allegations emerge, become publicly verified, and subsequently reshape corporate reputation within the fast-fashion retail industry. The case was selected through purposive sampling based on three criteria: international market prominence, extensive public commitment to environmental sustainability, and documented involvement in a globally visible greenwashing controversy. To preserve analytical neutrality while maintaining empirical richness, the focal organization is systematically anonymized under the taxonomic designation **Brand Alpha**. The evidentiary foundation combines two complementary sources of qualitative data. The first comprises corporate secondary materials, including official sustainability reports, environmental responsibility statements, annual reports, website disclosures, and green marketing campaign content released throughout the controversy period. The second consists of digital netnographic evidence

extracted from publicly accessible consumer interactions on X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram, encompassing viral hashtags, critical commentaries, activist narratives, reposted visual content, and discussion threads generated during the peak escalation of the controversy. This dual-source strategy enables simultaneous examination of institutional sustainability narratives and the evolving digital interpretation of those narratives by networked consumers.

Analytical interpretation follows the principles of Thematic Analysis, allowing complex textual and digital evidence to be organized into conceptually coherent patterns while preserving contextual depth. The analytical sequence begins with intensive familiarization through repeated reading of corporate documents and digital interactions, followed by open coding that identifies recurring expressions, symbolic representations, evaluative judgments, and patterns of consumer interpretation. Related codes are subsequently clustered into higher-order categories that illuminate successive stages in the anatomy of greenwashing detection, including environmental claim construction, perceived inconsistencies, credibility questioning, collective skepticism, reputational delegitimization, and digitally coordinated boycott mobilization. Continuous comparison across corporate and public narratives refines thematic boundaries while ensuring conceptual consistency throughout the interpretative process. The trustworthiness of the findings is strengthened through systematic source triangulation by juxtaposing Brand Alpha's official sustainability claims with independent environmental NGO assessments and organically generated social media discourse. This triangulated interpretative framework enhances credibility, confirmability, dependability, and analytical rigor by minimizing single-source bias while ensuring that emerging conclusions remain firmly grounded in convergent qualitative evidence.

## **RESULT**

### **Empirical Evidence of Brand Alpha's Greenwashing Practices**

The documentary analysis identified that Brand Alpha consistently incorporated sustainability-oriented rhetoric into its corporate communication across multiple official channels, including annual sustainability reports, product webpages, promotional catalogues, digital advertising, and seasonal campaign materials. Environmental claims were repeatedly framed through expressions such as Eco-Conscious Collection, Made with Recycled Materials, Responsibly Sourced Cotton, Lower Impact Fashion, and Designed for a Better Future. Similar terminology also appeared on garment labels, online product descriptions, and promotional banners accompanying newly launched capsule collections. Corporate publications emphasized commitments to circularity, responsible sourcing, climate action, and waste reduction, while visual communication systematically reinforced these messages through dominant green colour

schemes, imagery depicting forests, oceans, and natural landscapes, together with minimalist packaging intended to symbolize ecological responsibility. Examination of campaign documents further revealed that sustainability narratives were embedded within mainstream commercial marketing rather than being presented as stand-alone corporate social responsibility initiatives. Throughout the observation period, environmental messaging consistently functioned as a central branding element intended to strengthen Brand Alpha's ethical positioning and cultivate consumer perceptions of environmental stewardship across global retail markets.

Document comparison between Brand Alpha's sustainability disclosures and publicly accessible operational records revealed recurring inconsistencies between environmental marketing narratives and documented production characteristics. Corporate sustainability reports acknowledged that garments marketed under eco-conscious collections primarily incorporated recycled polyester, recycled cotton, or alternative fibres; however, accompanying technical disclosures indicated that these collections represented only a limited segment of the company's overall annual product portfolio. The broader production system continued to operate through high-volume manufacturing, rapid inventory turnover, geographically dispersed supplier networks, and frequent seasonal product releases characteristic of the fast-fashion business model. Publicly available environmental assessments and supply chain documentation also reported persistent challenges associated with intensive resource consumption, textile waste generation, synthetic fibre pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions arising from global logistics activities. Although Brand Alpha disclosed several pilot initiatives involving garment recycling and circular fashion programs, documentary evidence showed that these initiatives remained complementary rather than structurally integrated into company-wide production practices. The observed documentary pattern therefore reflected a clear distinction between prominently communicated environmental initiatives and the dominant operational characteristics evident throughout the company's production system.

Table 1. Empirical Mismatch Between Brand Alpha's Green Claims and Operational Realities

| Green Marketing Campaign Data                                                                       | Documented Supply Chain Evidence                                                                             | Identified Greenwashing Typology                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Eco-Conscious Collection promoted garments containing recycled polyester or recycled cotton through | Technical disclosures within sustainability reports indicated that eco-conscious products constituted only a | Hidden Trade-Off – environmental improvements were communicated selectively while |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| product labels, website descriptions, and seasonal advertising campaigns.                                                                                                                                  | limited proportion of the overall merchandise portfolio, while conventional textile production remained the company's dominant manufacturing activity.                                                                                 | broader production practices with greater ecological impacts remained largely unchanged.                                                                            |
| Corporate campaigns highlighted commitments to circular fashion, including garment collection bins, textile recycling initiatives, and take-back programmes encouraging consumers to return used clothing. | Operational documentation continued to describe rapid product turnover, frequent collection releases, and sustained production growth, indicating that recycling initiatives operated alongside an expanding linear consumption model. | Lesser of Two Evils – environmentally positive initiatives coexisted with a business model fundamentally dependent on continuous mass consumption.                  |
| Promotional materials frequently employed expressions such as Responsibly Sourced, Lower Impact, and Better Choice, supported by green imagery and sustainability-themed visual branding.                  | Public corporate disclosures provided limited supplier-level traceability, restricted information regarding wastewater treatment, microfiber emissions, and inconsistent reporting of product life-cycle environmental performance.    | Vagueness – broad environmental terminology created favourable ecological perceptions without comprehensive, verifiable operational evidence supporting the claims. |

### Data Patterns in Radical Consumer Detection Channels

The netnographic observation revealed that digital consumers no longer relied exclusively on Brand Alpha's official sustainability communication when evaluating the credibility of its environmental commitments. Instead, public verification emerged through a decentralized process in which consumers independently gathered, compared, and redistributed information across multiple digital platforms. The highest concentration of verification activities was identified on X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Reddit discussion forums, and YouTube investigative content, where users exchanged screenshots of

sustainability reports, archived advertising materials, product labels, and corporate press releases. Digital participants also referred to publicly accessible databases and institutional resources, including corporate ESG disclosures, supplier transparency platforms, fashion transparency rankings, environmental NGO publications, customs trade databases, and open-source supply chain mapping initiatives. Hyperlinks directing audiences toward external investigative reports frequently accompanied social media posts questioning Brand Alpha's environmental narratives. Observation of these interactions demonstrated that consumers increasingly combined official corporate publications with independent documentary evidence before accepting environmental claims, transforming routine online discussions into collaborative verification activities supported by publicly available information rather than personal opinion alone.

The digital conversations exhibited a recurring pattern of collective evidence aggregation in which individual observations gradually evolved into coordinated public documentation. Initial discussions generally originated from users questioning specific promotional statements or product labels advertised as environmentally responsible. These observations were subsequently expanded by other participants who uploaded excerpts from sustainability reports, shared archived versions of previous corporate campaigns, and linked investigative publications produced by independent environmental organizations. Several discussion threads documented direct comparisons between Brand Alpha's public commitments regarding recycled materials, circular fashion initiatives, and responsible sourcing policies with external assessments evaluating supply chain transparency, production practices, and environmental performance. Instagram carousel posts frequently synthesized multiple documentary sources into chronological visual narratives, while longer discussion threads on X organized hyperlinks, screenshots, and documentary excerpts into publicly accessible evidence repositories. Throughout the observation period, verification activities displayed a collaborative rather than centralized structure, with different users contributing complementary forms of documentary evidence that collectively strengthened public scrutiny of Brand Alpha's environmental communication without relying upon formal institutional investigations.

### **Metrics and Trajectory of the Digital Backlash**

Netnographic observation identified a sequential trajectory through which isolated expressions of consumer doubt developed into a broad digital backlash against Brand Alpha. The earliest stage consisted of individual posts questioning the credibility of specific sustainability campaigns, particularly promotional content emphasizing recycled materials and environmentally

responsible collections. These initial reactions remained limited in visibility until users began circulating screenshots of corporate advertising alongside excerpts from sustainability reports and external investigative publications. During the subsequent phase, the controversy expanded rapidly as environmental activists, ethical fashion advocates, independent content creators, and consumer communities reposted comparable documentary evidence across X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, and Reddit. Repeated circulation of identical documentary materials increased the visibility of the controversy beyond specialized sustainability communities and attracted broader public participation. Observation of the discussion timeline indicated that each additional corporate clarification generated renewed public examination rather than reducing skepticism, resulting in repeated waves of digital engagement characterized by continuous redistribution of archived campaign materials, investigative reports, and user-generated documentary content throughout the observation period.

Qualitative coding of digital interactions revealed several recurring forms of consumer resistance that consistently appeared across platforms during the controversy. One dominant pattern involved the widespread use of sustainability-related hashtags explicitly associating Brand Alpha with allegations of greenwashing, which functioned as searchable repositories connecting dispersed conversations into a unified digital narrative. Another recurring pattern consisted of exposure videos uploaded to short-form and long-form social media platforms, where content creators juxtaposed promotional advertisements with documentary evidence obtained from sustainability reports, supplier information, and independent environmental investigations. Public call-out posts also emerged as a prominent category, with users directly tagging Brand Alpha's official accounts while requesting clarification regarding specific environmental claims and production practices. Alongside these activities, digital boycott declarations encouraged consumers to discontinue purchases, avoid newly launched collections, and redirect spending toward brands perceived as demonstrating greater environmental transparency. Throughout the observation period, these forms of resistance remained highly interconnected, with hashtags, exposure content, public criticism, and boycott appeals continuously reinforcing one another through sustained cross-platform circulation.

### **Documented Shifts in Brand Sentiment and Public Trust**

The qualitative analysis documented a noticeable transformation in the tone and orientation of public discourse surrounding Brand Alpha following the emergence of greenwashing allegations. During the initial stage of observation, consumer interactions predominantly reflected positive engagement with

sustainability campaigns, frequently emphasizing environmental responsibility, innovative eco-conscious collections, and the perceived accessibility of ethical fashion. As documentary evidence questioning these claims became increasingly circulated across digital platforms, the dominant narrative gradually shifted toward critical evaluation of corporate credibility. Comments expressing admiration for Brand Alpha's sustainability initiatives were progressively replaced by discussions centered on transparency, accountability, supply chain disclosure, and environmental integrity. Users increasingly questioned the reliability of product labels, sustainability slogans, and promotional campaigns, while requests for verifiable evidence became substantially more frequent within public discussions. The digital conversation also demonstrated a transition from evaluating individual products to scrutinizing the company's broader environmental governance, indicating that public attention had expanded beyond marketing communication toward institutional credibility and organizational trustworthiness.

The observation period further revealed that the digital footprint of the controversy persisted beyond the peak stage of public attention, leaving a continuing archive of critical narratives accessible across multiple online platforms. Previously published campaign materials remained accompanied by consumer comments referencing greenwashing allegations, while older promotional posts continued to attract renewed engagement whenever sustainability-related discussions resurfaced. Search results associated with Brand Alpha increasingly displayed investigative articles, consumer criticism, environmental commentary, and archived social media discussions alongside official corporate communications, illustrating the durability of digitally preserved reputational traces. Netnographic observation also identified recurring patterns of consumers revisiting earlier controversy-related content whenever Brand Alpha introduced new sustainability campaigns or environmental commitments, suggesting that historical allegations continued to shape contemporary interpretations of corporate messaging. Across the entire observation window, evidence of consumer disengagement was expressed not only through explicit boycott declarations but also through persistent recommendations encouraging greater scrutiny of corporate sustainability claims before future purchasing decisions, indicating that public skepticism remained embedded within the brand's evolving digital reputation.

## DISCUSSION

The empirical findings demonstrate that Brand Alpha's sustainability communication functioned as a symbolic mechanism for securing organizational legitimacy rather than reflecting comprehensive operational transformation. (M. Khan & Lockhart, 2022) Legitimacy Theory explains this decoupling as an

institutional strategy through which organizations seek alignment with prevailing societal expectations while preserving existing economic structures. Brand Alpha's selective disclosure of environmental initiatives illustrates an attempt to manufacture moral legitimacy through persuasive narratives instead of verifiable ecological performance. Once inconsistencies between corporate rhetoric and supply chain realities became publicly observable, legitimacy shifted from a strategic resource to a structural liability. Institutional credibility deteriorated because stakeholder expectations increasingly demanded substantive environmental accountability rather than symbolic compliance, reinforcing arguments that legitimacy remains contingent upon consistency between organizational claims and observable practices.(Prencipe, 2025)

The documented verification practices illustrate a profound transformation in consumer cognition, where environmental communication is no longer accepted at face value but subjected to continuous public scrutiny (Li et al., 2025). Exposure to contradictory corporate narratives generated cognitive friction as sustainability claims conflicted with independently accessible evidence regarding production practices. This inconsistency weakened trust and intensified consumer skepticism, encouraging audiences to assume the role of evaluative investigators rather than passive recipients of marketing communication. Digital consumers actively compared corporate disclosures with external environmental reports, transforming skepticism into an evidence-based assessment of corporate credibility. Such findings reinforce the proposition that perceived corporate hypocrisy fundamentally disrupts trust formation, reducing the persuasive capacity of green marketing while strengthening critical consumer judgment (Pham et al., 2023).

The trajectory of digital backlash extends beyond conventional electronic word-of-mouth and reflects the emergence of decentralized mechanisms of corporate accountability. (Chen et al., 2021) Digital activism theory suggests that networked communication environments enable dispersed individuals to coordinate collective action without formal organizational structures. The observed circulation of hashtags, documentary screenshots, exposure videos, and boycott appeals illustrates how information becomes strategically mobilized to challenge corporate narratives. Rather than functioning merely as expressions of dissatisfaction, these digital artifacts operate as instruments of public verification that amplify reputational pressure through algorithmic visibility and peer-to-peer dissemination. Brand Alpha therefore encountered accountability generated not only by regulators or advocacy organizations but also by interconnected consumer networks capable of transforming isolated criticism into sustained reputational contestation (Dzreke & Dzreke, 2025).

These findings carry significant implications for contemporary green

marketing management by challenging the strategic value of symbolic environmental positioning unsupported by operational evidence (Persakis et al., 2025). Short-term reputational benefits obtained through selective sustainability communication become increasingly fragile within digitally connected markets characterized by rapid information diffusion and persistent public archiving. Once discrepancies are identified, organizations incur reputational costs that frequently exceed the initial marketing advantages generated by environmentally oriented campaigns. Green marketing consequently shifts from a communication-centered activity toward an accountability-centered managerial practice in which transparency, traceability, and measurable environmental performance constitute essential strategic assets. The evidence indicates that long-term brand resilience depends less upon persuasive environmental narratives than upon demonstrable organizational consistency across production systems, supply chains, and stakeholder communication (Ivasciuc & Ispas, 2026).

Future-oriented green marketing requires a transition from symbolic environmental storytelling toward radical operational transparency, where every sustainability claim is supported by accessible, verifiable, and continuously updated evidence. (S. Wang et al., 2024) Such an approach strengthens organizational credibility while reducing opportunities for perceived greenwashing in increasingly transparent digital ecosystems. Although this qualitative case study provides a contextually rich understanding of Brand Alpha's reputational dynamics, its findings remain analytically bounded by a single-case design and document-based netnographic observation. Subsequent research could strengthen external validity through comparative multi-case investigations, longitudinal digital sentiment analyses, or quantitative structural models examining the relationships among greenwashing perception, consumer trust, boycott intention, and long-term brand equity across different retail sectors (Singh et al., 2025).

## CONCLUSION

The case of Brand Alpha demonstrates that greenwashing has evolved from a reputational communication issue into a strategic vulnerability capable of undermining corporate legitimacy within digitally connected markets. Environmental narratives detached from operational realities no longer function as sustainable mechanisms for securing public trust because consumers possess unprecedented capacity to verify, compare, and disseminate information across interconnected digital networks. This democratization of information transforms consumers into independent auditors who collectively expose inconsistencies between corporate rhetoric and organizational practice. Once corporate hypocrisy becomes publicly identifiable, decentralized digital communities

rapidly amplify criticism through persistent online interactions that weaken manufactured moral legitimacy and accelerate long-term erosion of symbolic brand equity. Sustainable competitive advantage therefore depends less on persuasive environmental messaging than on authentic organizational consistency supported by transparent production practices, credible disclosure, and demonstrable environmental accountability throughout the corporate value chain.

These findings underscore the necessity for green marketing management within the fast-fashion industry to move beyond symbolic environmental positioning toward radically transparent and verifiable operational governance extending across the entire supply chain. Marketing communication should function as a reflection of measurable environmental performance rather than as an instrument for constructing ecological impressions unsupported by organizational practice. Such a strategic transformation offers stronger foundations for enduring stakeholder trust and reputational resilience amid increasingly sophisticated digital scrutiny. Nevertheless, this study remains bounded by its exploratory qualitative case study design and the analytical focus on a single anonymized multinational retailer. Future research should extend this inquiry through comparative multi-case investigations and quantitative modelling capable of measuring the causal elasticity between digital boycott intensity, consumer trust deterioration, corporate reputation, and long-term financial performance across diverse retail and consumer goods industries.

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