

HOW TO BUILD A SUSTAINABLE BRAND

The ultimate step-by-step, tried and tested checklist

GREEN EXPECTATIONS

With spending behaviour shifting, more consumers are swapping household names for affordable, private-label brands. But when the economy bounces back, will your customers too?

Right now, retailers have the opportunity to turn short-term switchers into brand loyalists. And we believe sustainability is the best way to leverage your brand purpose.

But positioning yourself as a sustainability-forward brand is no easy feat. The days of greenwashing are firmly behind us, and consumer expectations are rising. Now, brands must have sustainability at their core—and be able to communicate this in a way that's meaningful to their audience.

Whether you're launching or rebranding, it can feel overwhelming. So we've put together the ultimate checklist to break it down, and help your brand become sustainable, from concept to shelf.

Work through this list, and your brand will reap the rewards—so will the planet.

Sustainability is the key to unlocking long-term success for your private-label brand. Follow our step-by-step checklist for retailers to learn how to create, implement and manage a sustainable brand.

Let's go.

PHASE 1

BRAND CREATION

Back to the drawing board. It's time to work on your brand blue (or should we say green) print.

 DO YOUR RESEARCH

PROCESS

Starting to flesh out that brand concept? Before you do anything else, you've got to research the sustainability issues most relevant to your brand, target audience and industry.

This could be climate change, waste reduction, ethical sourcing, social responsibility, or something you haven't yet discovered...

RESULT

- Identify potential areas of risk and opportunities for positive change to differentiate your brand from the competition.
- Find unique ways to offer sustainable products or services that meet the needs of environmentally-conscious consumers.

 NAIL YOUR MESSAGING

PROCESS

Once you've identified the issue most relevant to your industry or audience, the next step is creating messaging that communicates your commitment to sustainability and aligns with your brand values.

Our top tips:

- Be transparent about your sustainability efforts—even if you haven't yet reached your targets.
- Don't forget the basics: educate your customer on how to properly dispose of your product and packaging, and encourage recycling and re-use.
- Live by your word: use eco-friendly marketing materials.
- Highlight your sustainability unique selling point on your website, product packaging, and social media channels.

RESULT

- Strengthen brand trust and build a community of loyal customers.

 WALK THE TALK

PROCESS

Finally, it's important to walk the talk when it comes to sustainability—despite the debate, we have enough evidence now to know that purpose and profit go hand in hand.

That means taking concrete actions to achieve your sustainability goals and live up to your brand values.

RESULT

- Establish an enduring, profitable brand.

PHASE 2

IMPLEMENTATION

Once you feel confident about your brand positioning, the next step is to make that concept a reality. Here's how to review your pack design and printing processes to identify where you can increase efficiency, cut back on waste, and introduce greener materials.

 OPTIMIZE YOUR PRINT DESIGN

PROCESS

Firstly, implement a process to review your print design. Try to identify economical savings in color usage while maintaining quality consistency and staying true to the design intent (look and feel).

RESULT

- Printers meet the desired target quicker, and with less testing/wastage on press.

 SWITCH TO SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS AND PACKAGING

PROCESS

When reviewing your pack format, there are 3 things you can make more sustainable:

- Packaging materials: where possible, swap plastics for biodegradable, recyclable or reusable packaging.
- Minimal packaging design: scale back excessive packaging, while still protecting your product.
- Reduce material weight to save on shipping weight and cut transport emissions.

RESULT

- Your final product is delivered to shelf safely and appeals to your environmentally-conscious customer.

 SWITCH TO DIGITAL PRINTING

PROCESS

Upgrade your approval process for photography and artwork to go 100% digital, using a high quality system that retains both color and brand content integrity.

RESULT

- Digital printing uses less energy and has a smaller carbon footprint overall, so you can reduce waste.

PHASE 3

BRAND MANAGEMENT

Now that you've communicated and implemented your brand sustainability strategy on your packaging, you need to manage long term sustainable growth and continuous improvement.

 PRODUCE ESG REPORTING**PROCESS**

There are 3 things you need to remember to meet your ESG targets:

- Engage with suppliers on a daily basis to request and record all the sustainability data you need.
- Collect and organise all relevant data from your supply chain.
- Generate summarised sustainability reports for your stakeholders to benchmark against ESG targets.

RESULT

- Empower all stakeholders to work towards ESG targets.
- Share transparent steps to building a more sustainable brand with your audience.

 DEVELOP A TAILORED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**PROCESS**

Once you've got the right data, you can develop an improvement program that's right for your brand and supply chain, measuring the quality and consistency of your packaging, covering print, sealing and substrates.

RESULT

- Make sure your brand is within ESG compliance.

 PROVIDE IN-STORE AUDITING**PROCESS**

Lastly, why not offer in-store auditing to review the final packaging when it's made it to shelf? That way you can collect all sustainability inconsistency data by quality, listing and location.

RESULT

- Don't let your ESG efforts go to waste.
- Make sure your ESG compliance stays on track.

Ready to tick these steps to sustainability off your list?

A greener future awaits.

WHO WE ARE

We're BRANDED. The brand creation and implementation agency that does and has done it all.

With 40 years of experience, we're experts in mega brands and meteoric growth. There's a reason our track record breaks records.

CONTACT US

Let's skip the small talk

And get straight to the big thinking. Tell us what you need and we'll recommend the right services for your goals. Contact george.essex@branded-agency.com to learn more.

US

78 SW 7th St Suite 500,
Miami, FL 33130
United States
+1 (904) 635-9619

UK

10 Dallington St,
London EC1V 0DB,
United Kingdom
(+44) 7803 194354

Hong Kong

EGL Tower Unit D, 23/F,
EGL Tower, 83 Hung To Rd,
Kwun Tong, Hong Kong
(+852) 3997 3505