

Corporate Sustainability: Greenwashing or Business Opportunity?

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The image features a white background with several thin, light gray concentric circles and dashed lines. A large, solid blue shape is centered, consisting of a horizontal bar at the top and a larger rectangular area below it with a downward-pointing triangular tip at the bottom center. The word "Background" is written in white, sans-serif font within the larger blue area.

Background

About me 😊

- **Hi! I'm Caroline Bordeaux**
- **Director, Sustainability, Impact & Engagement Practice**
- **Canderel**
- **Neoma Business School (2007) & Mines ParisTech (2008)**
- **+10 years of experience in corporate sustainability as a in-house counsel and consultant**



About Canderel

- Canadian real estate developer, manager and investor
- A team of 320 professionals from Montreal to Vancouver
- Founded in 1975 in Montreal
- 60 million s.f. of owned, developed & managed properties



Sustainability @ Canderel



2.7M kWh

OF ELECTRICITY SAVED
IN 2018 VERSUS 2017

*Equivalent to 245 Canadian
households*



1.75M litres

OF WATER SAVED
IN 2018 VERSUS 2017

*Equivalent to 7 Olympic-size
swimming pools*



729 tons

OF CO₂EQ SAVED
IN 2018 VERSUS 2017

*Equivalent to taking
155 gasoline-powered vehicles
off the road for a year*



12.2 tons

OF ELECTRONIC WASTE
DIVERTED IN 2018

*A total of 80 tons diverted
since 2011*

The background features several concentric circles of varying radii, some solid and some dashed, creating a ripple effect. A large blue speech bubble is centered on the page, containing the text.

Corporate Sustainability

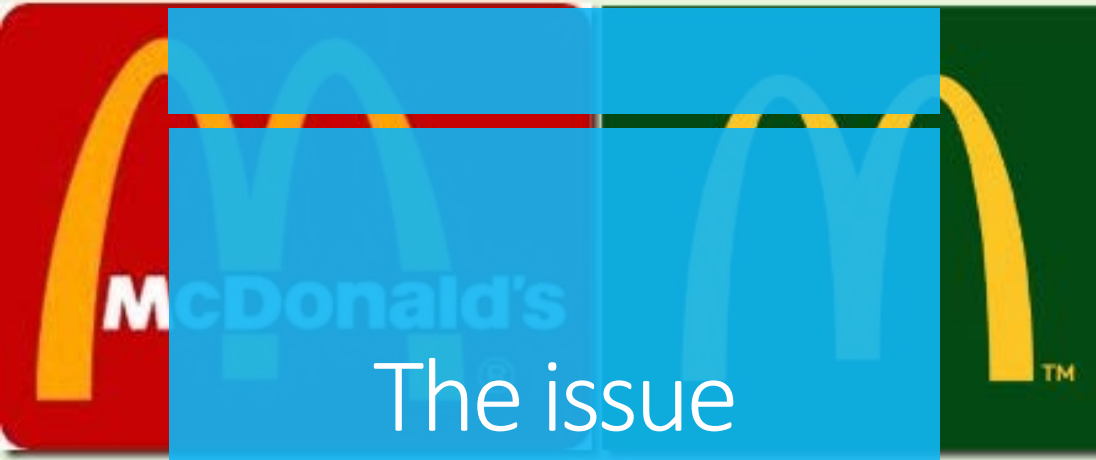
*Greenwashing or Business
Opportunity?*

Ice Breaker

Can you name a “sustainable” business?

Can you give an example of greenwashing?





The issue



- Companies are pushed to be more eco-friendly
- Becoming a sustainable business isn't easy
- Risk to claim more green credentials than reality
- False green benefits can seriously damage a company
- ➔ *How to leverage the business opportunities of sustainability without jeopardizing your business?*

Definitions

Corporate sustainability: business strategy that focuses on the ethical, social, environmental, cultural and economic dimensions

Greenwashing: practice of making an unsubstantiated or misleading claim about the environmental benefit of a product, service, technology or company practice



1. Fluffy language

Words or terms with no clear meaning; e.g. 'eco-friendly'

2. Green products v. dirty company



Such as efficient light bulbs made in a factory which pollutes rivers



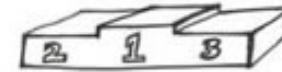
3. Suggestive Pictures

Green images that indicate a (un-justified) green impact e.g. flowers blooming from exhaust



4. Irrelevant claims

Emphasising one tiny green attribute when everything else is un-green



5. Best in class?

Declaring you are slightly greener than the rest, even if the rest are pretty terrible



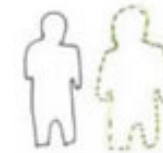
6. Just not credible

'Eco friendly' cigarettes anyone? 'Greening' a dangerous product doesn't make it safe



7. Gobbledygook

Jargon and information that only a scientist could check or understand



8. Imaginary friends

A 'label' that looks like third party endorsement...except it's made up



9. No proof

It could be right, but where's the evidence?

10 Signs of Greenwash

by Futerra Communications

www.futerra.co.uk/services/greenwash-guide



10. Out-right lying

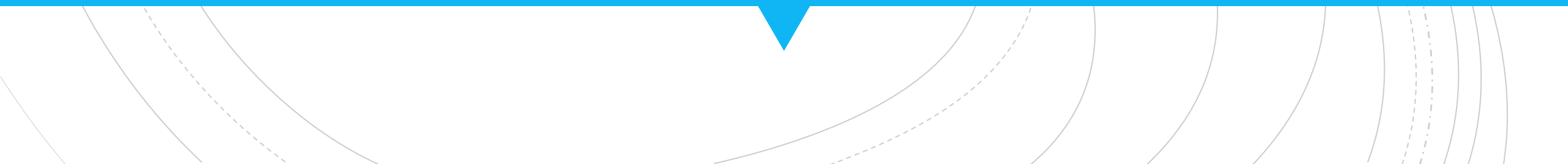
Totally fabricated claims or data

Customer Appeal

- Sustainability resonates with customers
- Nielsen Global Survey on Corporate Social Responsibility:
 - 55% of over 30,000 consumers from 60 countries are willing to **pay more** for good and services from companies showing commitment to creating **positive social and environmental impact**
- Risks: transparency, accountability



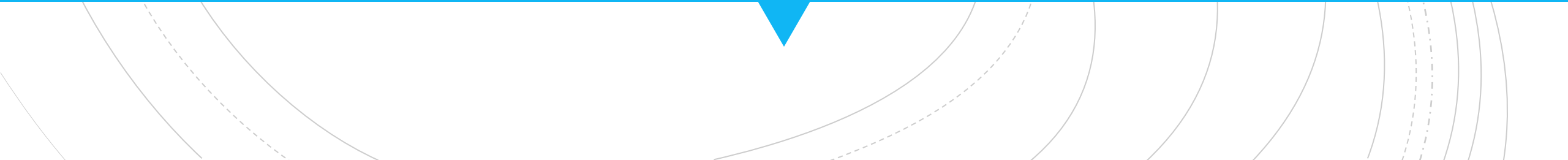
Green Success - Product





 **TESLA**
Tesla reveals
new solar panels

Green Success – Portfolio



Green success: Repositioning Strategy

UNILEVER SUSTAINABLE LIVING PLAN
GLOBAL GOALS BY 2020



In 2017 our sustainable living brands grew

46%

faster than the rest of the business, and delivered

70%

of Unilever's turnover growth

[UNILEVER.COM/sustainable-living](https://www.unilever.com/sustainable-living)





**DON'T BUY
THIS JACKET**

patagonia
patagonia.com

Green Success
Business Model

Green Scandal



Volkswagen's false greenwashing claims about "clean diesel" engines cost the company over US\$30 billion.



From scandal to opportunity: Nike & child labour issues

How to avoid greenwashing?

1. Define what sustainability means for your company
2. Ensure company-wide commitment
3. Establish goals and monitor results
4. Dialogue with customers and stakeholders
5. Collaborate with NGOs, policymakers and industry peers

Opportunities

- **Benefits of including more sustainable practices in your business**
 - Achieve savings and reduce operational costs
 - Capture new market shares
 - Innovation in products, services and processes
 - Bolster employee morale, loyalty & productivity
 - Enhance brand image & protect license to operate
 - Anticipate and adapt future market changes

Value Creation

- **Cost saving measure or growth opportunity?**
- **Shift from the bottom line to the top line**
- **Purpose-driven brands outperform conventional brands and report on average:**
 - 25% higher stock performance
 - 11.7% higher public returns

Lessons learned

- Emergence of “green giants” who are making sustainability profitable
- Key success factors
 - Iconoclast leader
 - Disruptive innovation
 - Higher purpose leads to higher returns
 - Sustainability is built in, not bolted on
 - Mainstream appeal
 - New supply chain model

Source: “Meet the nine billion-dollar companies turning a profit from sustainability” by Freya Williams



How about
you?

- Corporate sustainability trend is not going away
- How can you take advantage of this opportunity?
- As a professional:
 - Include sustainable thinking in your job
 - Build your skillset
- As a business leader:
 - Sustainability & change management
 - Innovation
- As an entrepreneur:
 - From design to manufacturing to delivery



Questions?