

Plastic pollution: today's world environmental crisis



By: Sandra Pedro, CMMP

The world is facing a new environmental crisis. As the world's population continues to grow, so does the amount of plastic trash that people produce. On-the-go lifestyles and industries require easily disposable products, but the accumulation of these products has led to increasing amounts of plastic pollution around the world.

Erik Solheim, UN's Head of Environment, stresses that up to 12 million

tonnes of plastic enters our oceans every year. According to him, "global plastic production, roughly one-third of which is non-recyclable and sometimes used for just seconds before being discarded, is rising fast. This year, it is estimated that 360 million tonnes will be produced. By 2025, this will grow to nearly 500 million and by 2030 we could be looking at a staggering 619 million tonnes of plastic being produced globally."

According to the World Economic

Forum, by 2050 there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish and 1.124 million tonnes of plastic will be produced.

Since plastic is composed of major toxic pollutants, it has the potential to cause great harm to the environment. Plastics and their by-products are littering our cities, oceans and waterways, contributing to health problems in humans and animals.

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The problem with plastics is they do not easily degrade and they are toxic. They may break down, but only into smaller pieces. The smaller those pieces get, the more places they can go. Land, groundwater and reservoirs are susceptible to leaking environmental toxins from plastics. Burning plastic in the open air leads to air pollution due to the release of poisonous chemicals found in plastics and causes respiratory problems. Animals are dying due to plastic ingestion and microplastics.

Actually, toxicologists are sounding an urgent alarm about microplastics; smaller fragments whose dimensions are measured in fractions of a millimetre. Many of these "microbeads" are added for a slightly abrasive character

to health and beauty products, including toothpastes and exfoliating creams.

Plastic pollution is an economic blister that costs millions each year to clean affected areas after exposure, not to mention the loss of life to plants, animals and people. Excess pollution leads to an increase in health expenses and a decrease in tourism for the affected areas, significantly impacting those economies.

We, as consumers, have a role and a voice. Next time you go shopping; don't forget to carry a paper, reusable or cloth bag. Also, try to avoid bringing plastic bags home and pur-

chasing items with too much packaging. Use reusable containers for water or coffee. Bring your own bottle and refill.

Business has a role and a voice too, by reducing packaging and replacing it with other materials. Many companies are starting to develop excellent low-cost replacements, such as bamboo utensils in place of plastic ones. Innovation is also [helping companies](#) to find new ways to fight plastic pollution and reduce garbage and packaging.

This way you and I can help in contributing towards the environment by reducing plastic pollution whose ill effects are irreversible.

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Creating memorable experiences with today's consumers

Caroline Berryman, CMMP



Consumers are demanding more and brands are stepping up to deliver. One way is through experiential marketing, a brand and audience interaction that creates a memorable experience for participants. An experiential marketing campaign can be used to promote art, culture and innovation but it also provides interactive learning experiences.

The increase in experiential marketing as part of an overall strategy is growing. A recent study found that 77 per cent of brands believe experiential marketing is an important marketing strategy, especially popular with millennials, who enjoy hands-on opportunities to connect with their favourite brands.

There are numerous examples of brands thinking outside the box to engage with consumers in very creative ways. Here are a few good examples worth noting. To help build interest in Google's personal virtual assistant, the Home Mini, Google opened pop-up donut shops across the United States and one in Toronto in fall 2017. Why a pop-up donut shop? The Home Mini is about the same size as a donut so Google gave consumers an opportunity to walk

into a converted Google-branded donut shop where they not only had delicious donuts, but they had donuts carrying Home Minis moving along a conveyor belt. Participants could ring a bell and ask a question from the Google Home Mini Donut Shop Menu. This was a memorable way to experience how the device worked and it gave participants the ability to share their experiences on their social networks - giving Google great exposure and top of mind awareness.

Another great example is the Glenfiddich Experimental Series (which started in 2016). Glenfiddich is a whiskey company that created a tasting event in a London bar where consumers logged into an app, answered questions about themselves and were matched with a drink that reflected their personality profile.

Canadian grocer Loblaw held experiential events across Canada

from May to July 2017. The objective was to bring people together with food. Loblaw hosted free picnics, delivering premium brand experiences for its consumers. The events included vendor markets and community eating areas in a festive atmosphere that included partnerships with local community groups and entertainers. The events were successful in bringing people together as they shared delicious free samples together and participants made purchases immediately afterwards, resulting in an increase in sales for the featured products.

Staying true to the brand story, leveraging strategic partnerships and technology are the keys to creating successful experiential marketing interactions that leave deep impressions on consumers.

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**Alexis Trotman-Regret, Associate CMMP
Marketing Coordinator at The Terra Group
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