

From Sustainability Claims to Consumer Action: A Comparative Study of Sustainable Branding Strategies among Indonesian Cosmetic Brands

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Abstract

The global cosmetics industry is undergoing a decisive shift toward sustainability, as consumers increasingly evaluate brands not only on product efficacy but also on environmental and social responsibility. Indonesia's local cosmetics sector offers a compelling case for examining how sustainability claims translate into brand equity and consumer behavior. This paper presents a comparative qualitative case study of three leading Indonesian cosmetic brands widely recognized for sustainable branding: Avoskin, NPURE, and Base. Using secondary data. The findings reveal a key strategic divergence: native sustainable brands center their digital messaging on green chemistry, material innovation, and vegan purity, whereas conventional pivoting brands drive engagement through action-oriented campaigns, such as incentive-based packaging take-back programs and reforestation pledges. Furthermore, consumer trust and positioning are heavily mediated by third-party verification, which directly dismantles greenwashing skepticism. While native brands foster deep niche loyalty among clean beauty purists, conventional pivoting brands achieve broader consumer action by balancing sustainability messaging with established product efficacy and accessible pricing. The paper concludes with a tiered set of recommendations that other cosmetic and personal care brands, both local and multinational, can adopt to imitate these strategies according to their available resources, while avoiding the reputational risks associated with greenwashing.

Keywords

Sustainable branding, green marketing, Indonesian cosmetics, comparative case study, consumer trust, greenwashing.