

ABSTRACT

Over recent years, plastic waste has developed to become a problem for society and the environment. The properties of the material, that drove its widespread usage, such as mechanical strength, durability and low manufacturing costs, are also what make plastic a problem as waste – it is highly durable and takes a long time to degrade. When it degrades, it breaks down to so called micro-plastics, that can be found virtually everywhere on earth. Problems arising from these micro plastics have not yet been researched thoroughly. Waste treatment presents another problem, as recycling of plastic only happens for less than 10% of plastic waste, while the production of the material has continually increased over the last 70 years. While the problem of plastic waste has grown over recent decades, so have the possibilities of marketing and innovative digital solutions have come up, that present rather cost-effective ways to reach a wide audience when it comes to influencing consumer behavior. In this way, digital marketing presents one possibility to tackle the problem of plastic waste by influencing consumer behavior to reduce plastic waste generation.

This thesis looks at the problem of plastic waste through application of an interdisciplinary approach, that combines the domains of sustainability, consumer behavior and marketing in the form of digital marketing. Quantitative data is gathered from an online survey, that utilizes different types of digital marketing to communicate the issues of plastic waste. The gathered data is used to draw conclusions whether digital marketing is a fitting tool to foster change in consumer behavior toward more sustainable consumption in society.