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The Power of Example

Over the past few years, many people have thought about alternative energy sources such as solar power, wind energy, and natural gases. As the level of awareness on the urgency and the importance of saving the Earth's resources has increased, the search for new sustainable energy is now at a very advanced stage. However, a sustainable society cannot exist without a positive, proactive attitude from **the people**.

So instead of thinking of new ways to completely revolutionize modern industry and to make it sustainable and energy saving, our strategy is to concentrate on educating the public and changing the mentality of a consumer society on both short term and long term. We need to make people understand that living in an ecologically friendly way does not mean that they will have to endure a decrease in their living standard. Therefore, consumption will not decrease, instead it will undergo an ecological shift and in this way the economy will not be harmed.

How can we make people think green? Our short term plan is to increase the level of awareness by implementing ad campaigns that illustrate the need for sustainable living. One way to do this would be to introduce "green" television programs into mainstream media in order to promote a positive attitude towards sustainability. Our long term strategy is to educate the youth and all future generations about sustainable living. This would be accomplished by introducing a more eco-friendly educational program into all public schools.



Short term

Our plan is to introduce ad campaigns sponsored by Intelligent Energy Europe that promote and educate citizens about energy saving techniques. Such techniques include the installation of solar panels, automatic lights, decreasing thermostats and increasing insulation within homes. Outside the home, these campaigns will also promote car pooling and increasing the use of public transportation. In this day and age, Internet and television are the two most efficient ways to influence people. This is why we will introduce eco-friendly games and websites in the Internet, similar to The Sims or Second Life.

Also, in order to touch the masses and to give a positive view towards energy saving, a reality show called "Eco Pimp your House" will be introduced into mainstream television. It will be a competition designed to implement energy saving techniques into everyday homes. There will be three different high consuming households, with a team of seven people in each one. These competitors will be smart or dumb but of course young and attractive, so that viewers will stay interested in the reality show. But several middle aged competitors will also be included, so that the average citizen will also be able to relate to them. The goal will be to transform these energy consuming houses into green, sustainable abodes. The teams will also have to use eco-friendly products. Each team will be allocated a certain budget to transform their house, one that is not too high, so that viewers will realize that moving towards sustainability is indeed feasible. The teams will have briefings twice a week and weekly goals that they will have to attain. In the end, the teams will compare how much energy they have saved compared to how much energy their house used to consume, as well as the differences in electrical, gas, and water bills. The team with the most successful outcome will receive €100.000, as well as the installation of free solar panels in their personal homes. Viewers who are watching this reality show will be interested by the fact that the winners have not only saved energy, but most importantly have saved money in their monthly bills. This will give families living in everyday average households the incentive to imitate the energy saving techniques they saw on television and implement them into their daily lives. The home is the keystone of everyday life, so by starting with their households, citizens will realize that pursuing an eco-friendly way of life is very beneficial for them both socially and economically. And even the people who do not watch this reality show will be influenced by this new trend to shift towards sustainable living.

Long term

Our long term goal is to change the mentalities and behavior of citizens towards a positive eco-friendly way of life. This will be achieved by introducing sustainable education programs for the youth in both obligatory education and higher education. Thus, children who are born into consumer nations and future generations thereafter will learn in their earliest years how to live green and about the benefits that arise from this life style. This ecological education will continue after primary school, into secondary school and then into higher education. The government will not only subsidize the schools to sponsor these educational programs, but will also be pressured to adhere to the many treaties they have signed such as the Kyoto Protocol, in order to set a good example for its citizens.

Thus, the informal form of education brought upon by the short term action plan will be complimented by the formal education introduced in the long term. The generation that is affected in the short term will acquire an eco-friendly attitude which will be passed on to their children, thus ensuring a perfect transition between the consumer generation to the future sustainable generations to come.

