

Balancing Consumer Perspectives and Environmental Responsibility in the Adoption of Sustainable Products



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**Electric
vehicles
promise a
greener
future, but...**

...consumers worry about charging infrastructure, battery technology, and safety



THEME:

Trust in EV Battery Technology's Maturity

UNDERLYING SYMBOLISM:

Battery longevity as metaphor for EV reliability

KEY INSIGHT:

Consumers are skeptical about new EV battery tech, associating extended life and reliability with overarching EV adoption.



"How long will the batteries last, and are they reliable enough yet? The answers to these questions weigh heavily on my decision to switch."

THEME:

Anxiety Over EV Safety and Risks

UNDERLYING SYMBOLISM:

Negotiating the terrain of innovation versus risk

KEY INSIGHT:

Despite the appeal of electric vehicles, potential safety risks generate anxiety, with safety of passengers being a primary concern.



"While the idea of EVs excites me, I can't help but fixate on the safety risks. How safe is the technology for my family during travel?"

Creating innovative materials and technologies is not sufficient on its own.

To succeed, we need to increase the attractiveness of these new materials and technologies to consumers. Otherwise, we may not have a significant impact on the world or our financial success.

In addition to considering their environmental effects, novel materials and technologies must meet consumer expectations to thrive in the market.

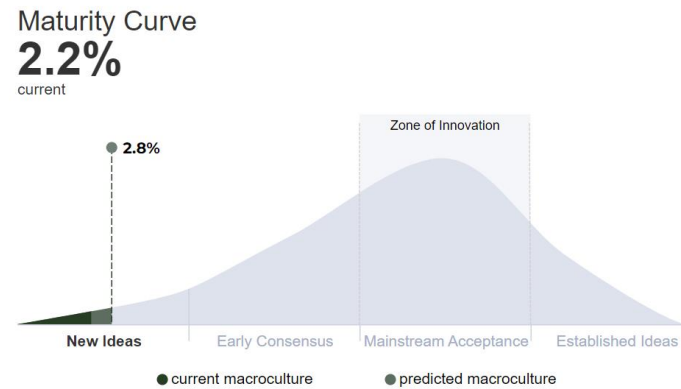
Let's examine the case of
CO₂-based plastics
through the lens of
anthropology

The idea is still very nascent in the minds of American consumers but...

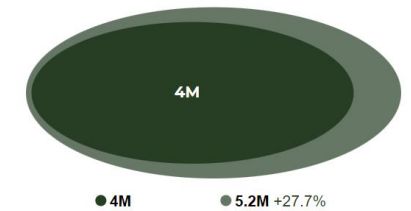
They believe that CO₂-based plastic is most sustainable when used in products and applications with a long life span.

Consumers believe long-lasting plastic products generate less plastic waste and may also act as a carbon store when made from captured-carbon material.

The small size of this culture reflects the fact that CO₂-based plastics are still very much in the experimental phase.



Population



This topic scores 2.2% on the [maturity curve](#) and is expected to expand to 2.8% in 5+ years.

This culture is currently relevant to 4M [people](#) and is expected to grow by 27.7% in 5+ years.

This topic has only recently begun to stabilize. Hence could be considered to exhibit some amount of [volatility](#).

Functional and durable plastics

This is where it all begins for the consumer

Even though the industry seems to be focused on packaging applications...

Consumers feel that plastics made from CO₂ may be more durable and associate it with materials that can withstand harsh temperatures. They also hope it could improve food storage, leading to less food waste at home.





END-OF-LIFE MANAGEMENT

Consumers still worry about CO₂-based plastic causing harm and pollution in the long run



The
Deciding
Factor

Consumers worry about plastic pollution and their carbon footprint

Consumers' concerns about CO₂-based plastics are similar to their concerns about traditional plastics

THEME:

Waste and Carbon Footprint Concerns

UNDERLYING SYMBOLISM:

Plastic waste as a symbol of environmental neglect

KEY INSIGHT:

Perceptions of carbon dioxide based plastics are linked to the global challenge of plastic waste management and its climate implications.



"Plastic just ends up in landfills or the ocean. Our carbon footprint isn't just about what we emit; it's also what we leave behind."

THEME:

Eliminating Microplastics and Related Toxins

UNDERLYING SYMBOLISM:

Microplastics carry a metaphor of hidden harm

KEY INSIGHT:

Consumers are aware of microplastics' pervasive nature and their potential to introduce toxins and disruptors into the environment and food chain.



"Every time I hear about microplastics, I'm reminded that my daily choices may contribute to health issues like cancer, it's concerning that even our drinking water isn't safe."

The biggest barrier to the adoption of CO₂-based plastics:

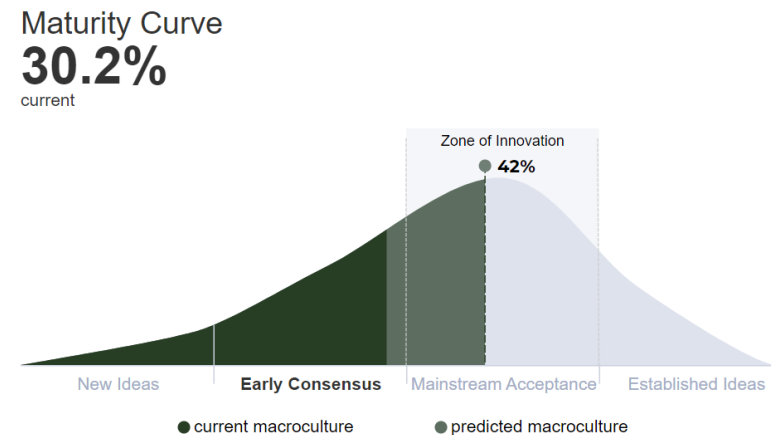
People worry that they will be greenwashed again. They aren't sure this novel plastic is better for the environment or their health. They worry the benefits of this novel plastic are overhyped.

Let's examine the case of
paper packaging
through the lens of
anthropology

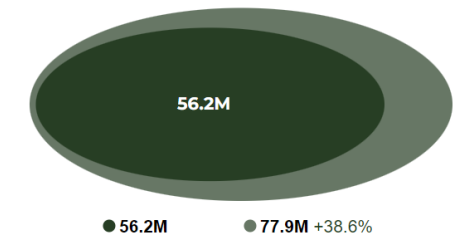
The idea is in the early consensus stage of maturity in the U.S. but rapidly moving to the mainstream

Consumers believe that paper packaging can help reduce reliance on single-use plastics and want to create a new moral standard for consumption that prioritizes sustainability.

But they worry that paper packaging is messy and inconvenient.



Population



This topic scores 30.2% on the maturity curve and is expected to expand to 42.0% in 12-24 months.

This culture is currently relevant to 56.2M people and is expected to grow by 38.6% in 12-24 months.

Convenient and functional

This is where it all begins for the consumer

Consumers need assurances that paper packaging is convenient, functional, safe, and sanitary

Consumers feel that paper packaging allows them to overcome some of the concerns they have about single-use plastics but worry that it's flimsy and prone to leaks and damage, and they worry about product contamination.





END-OF-LIFE CONCERNS

Consumers still worry about paper waste



The
Deciding
Factor

Consumers need assurances that paper packaging does not end up in landfills and want to minimize waste overall

Consumers wonder if paper packaging should be compostable to be even more sustainable

THEME:

Excess Packaging as Environmental Sin

UNDERLYING SYMBOLISM:

Wastefulness as a moral and ecological concern

KEY INSIGHT:

Consumer frustration with excessive packaging highlights a desire for minimalism that respects resources, suggesting moral and environmental implications in packaging choices.



"I'm tired of all the unnecessary boxes and wrappers. It's not only a waste of resources, but it also makes me feel guilty for contributing to the world's growing trash problem."

THEME:

Evolving Preferences for Sustainable Packaging

UNDERLYING SYMBOLISM:

Yearning for sustainability and environmental stewardship

KEY INSIGHT:

Consumers increasingly favor compostable packaging as they seek eco-friendly solutions, indicating a shift towards sustainable living and shopping habits.



"I love the idea of buying grains and teas in compostable packages or glass bottles. It's not just about food; it's about making a sustainable choice for the planet."

The biggest barrier to the adoption of paper packaging:

People worry that they will give up convenience without making a real dent on sustainability issues, such as waste. They worry they will be greenwashed again.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

It's not enough to simply develop novel materials and technologies.

Beyond their environmental implications, novel materials must also align with consumer expectations to truly thrive in the market.

Functional and durable solutions are key.

Consumers expect innovative products and materials to deliver a good user experience and expect sustainable products and services to be convenient, durable, and functional.

Consumers are getting smarter about sustainability.

They're asking questions about energy utilization, safety, and more.

Consumers are cautious about waste and wary of greenwashing, seeking genuine progress toward sustainable materials.

Thank you

A link of the webinar recording will be emailed within 24–48 hours.

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The
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