

Sustainability Series



Summer. The sun is out, the weather is warm, the days are long. Summer is the time

of year when life moves largely outside. More than any other time of year, we experience the beauty, splendor and abundance of the earth. And so, as we pass Memorial Day and look ahead to the meteorological first day of summer, it is time to kick off our 2021 Summer Sustainability Series.

The [Oxford English Dictionary](#) defines "sustainability" as "[t]he property of being environmentally sustainable; the degree to which a process or enterprise is able to be maintained or continued while avoiding the long-term depletion of natural resources." Efforts to pursue industrial and environmental sustainability continue to be at the forefront of the outdoor retail industry conversation, as well as the broader retail and business conversation. Larry Fink has stated that we are experiencing a fundamental and lasting shift to stakeholder capitalism that should not be ignored and that the "[net zero economy](#)" is the long-term future of business. Earlier this year, more than 60 business leaders committed to the [World Economic Forum's Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics](#), which focus on people, planet, prosperity, and governance. [Leading companies](#) including Patagonia, Timberland, and Kering Group are investing in regenerative agriculture, including regenerative rubber and cotton farms, while [local governments](#) are partnering with companies and nonprofits to grow textile recycling programs.

Companies and governments are developing these programs because [consumers](#) continue to focus on, and indeed demand, more sustainable practices and products from the brands and retailers from which they buy products. [Recommerce](#) is expected to grow meaningfully over the next three years as consumers' awareness of their environmental impact grows along with their desire to reduce their own footprints. Sustainability is the present and the future.

Cultivating a sustainability program and communicating it to investors and consumers is no simple task. It requires attention and often adjustment to every element of the business, from supplier relationships, marketing

and advertising, to strategic partnerships, branding, and other core operations and governance matters. Last year we discussed threshold ideas relative to developing a sustainability program and then presented deeper analysis on various topics, including supply chain compliance, marketing strategies and pitfalls, branding strategy and enforcement, and corporate governance.

This year, we'll discuss topics including Chinese cotton and slave labor, key components of the circular economy including issues in upcycling and product modification, sustainability litigation, and advertising related to sustainable products and programs. We will also touch on the way the sustainability discussion is moving beyond environmental components and expanding to address other elements of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria such as social justice.

We hope you enjoy your summer and awe-inspiring natural places, and in between those experiences, we look forward to actively engaging with the outdoor industry community and the broader consumer goods space throughout this series. Please [subscribe to this series](#) and share your opinions. To see past issues, please click [here](#).

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