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AUSTRALIA / NEW ZEALAND

Two Sides global Anti-Greenwash Campaign: Over 810 Companies Removed Misleading Anti-Paper Statements

Since the campaign began in 2010, Two Sides has successfully challenged over 810 global organisations that subject their customers to repeated greenwashing messages which are damaging to the paper, print and mailing industry.

With huge pressures on the economy; banks, telecom providers, utility companies and even governmental organisations are increasingly focused on switching their customers from paper to digital services to cut costs. All too often their customer communications attempt to mask these cost-saving efforts, justifying the switch with unfounded environmental marketing appeals such as “Go Green – Go Paperless” and “Choose e-billing and help save a tree.”

“Not only are these greenwash claims in breach of established environmental marketing rules, but they are hugely damaging to an industry which has a solid and continually improving environmental record,” says Two Sides Executive, Kellie Northwood. “Far from ‘saving trees,’ a healthy market for forest products such as paper encourages the long-term growth of forests through sustainable forest management. Many of the organisations we engage are surprised to learn that Australia alone has two million hectares of working tree farms and this is growing and New Zealand’s total planted tree farm’s standing volume is estimated to be 519 million cubic metres with an average forest standing age (area weighted) of 17.38 years.

Globally, Two Sides has engaged over 1,690 organisations making misleading statements about paper. So far, over 810 of them have removed such statements from their communications and Two Sides continues to engage and inform the remaining organisations. The organisations were located throughout Europe, North and South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. This brings the total to over 810 companies that have removed misleading greenwashing statements across 2021.

“It remains vital that greenwash is challenged to ensure that the industry’s great environmental record is recognised and that the livelihoods of thousands of industry employees, as well as print, paper and postage volumes, are not damaged by the spread of misleading and opportunistic greenwash marketing,” Northwood says.

Because of the huge reach of some of these greenwashing organisations, their unsubstantiated claims have a damaging effect on consumer perceptions of paper and threaten a sector that

employs ~301,000 people in more than 8,519 businesses across Australia and New Zealand . The financial impact of greenwash on the paper, print and mailing industry is of global concern if these messages continue without challenge. Recent research, found that in Australia and New Zealand alone, greenwashing threatens the loss of \$8.27 billion of value annually to the paper, print and mailing industry.

This is why the Anti-greenwash Campaign continues to be a priority for Two Sides, and we will continue to urge companies to reject the use of unsubstantiated and misleading environmental claims about going paperless in all of their communications.

“We are grateful for the cooperation of the hundreds of organisations that have changed or eliminated greenwashing claims from their messaging, and we are also thankful for the many industry stakeholders and members of the public who send Two Sides examples of greenwash,” Northwood concludes.

Two Sides continues to actively challenge major organisations found to be misleading consumers by using environmental claims about the use of paper. Please send any instances of greenwash to hell@thermc.com.au

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About Two Sides

Two Sides is a not for profit, global initiative promoting the unique sustainable and attractive attributes of print, paper and paper packaging. Two Sides’ members span the entire print, paper and paper packaging value chain including: forestry, pulp, paper, packaging, inks and chemicals, finishing, publishing, printing, envelopes and postal operators.

The Real Media Collective, an industry association representing the paper, print, mail, packaging, publishing and distribution sectors across Australia and New Zealand, operate the Two Sides campaign regionally.

For more information about the anti-greenwash campaign, or to learn more about Two Sides, please contact hello@thermc.com.au.

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