

Evaluating Eco-Brand Communication Strategies on Facebook and Instagram: A Quantitative and Segmental Approach

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Abstract: The paper focuses on analysing the communication strategies of leading eco-brands: Patagonia, Blueland, Kleen Kanteen, Meloria Beauty, Tentree, VEJA, and Who Gives a Crap on the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram. The aim is to compare the performance of these eco-brands across platforms through segmentation and quantitative analysis that combines key metrics such as number of followers, engagement rate, and total volume of interactions. The analysis is based on a multi-level analytical framework that allows for a differentiated interpretation of brand performance and their position within the digital ecosystem. Using visualization techniques, brands are divided into segments based on their relative reach and engagement. A secondary goal is to identify content formats with the highest potential for generating interactions and to distinguish them from less effective approaches. The results contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of eco-marketing in the online environment and offer empirically based recommendations for optimizing the communication strategies of environmentally oriented brands. The study also provides a comparative view of the effectiveness of Facebook and Instagram as platforms for communicating environmental values and brand sustainability.

Keywords: Communication Strategy, Eco-Brand, Facebook, Instagram, Quantitative Approach, Segmentation Analysis

1. Introduction

The growing emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility is fundamentally shaping current consumer behaviour and changing the ways in which brands communicate their values in the digital space. In the context of growing public sensitivity to environmental issues, eco-oriented brands strive not only to present their products, but also to build an authentic identity and long-term relationships with customers. Social media has become a key tool for environmental marketing in this process: it allows brands to communicate instantly and bidirectionally, create community ties, visually represent sustainable practices, and influence attitudes toward environmentally responsible behaviour.

The importance of social media for environmental communication is also growing as consumers shift from passive reception of information to active participation, where decision-making is significantly influenced by visual presentation, source credibility, and social norms. Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook play different but complementary roles in this process – Instagram as a visually dominant platform promoting aspirational behaviour and identification with an eco-friendly lifestyle, Facebook as a tool for community information exchange and discussion on sustainability topics.

The importance of social media in the communication of environmentally oriented brands is confirmed by several empirical findings. A study by Herrmann-Scharnberg, Hall, and Hanbury-Williams (2024) conducted as part of the Kantar & IPG Mediabrands project shows that sustainability is a significant determinant of brand choice, especially among younger generations. They prefer brands with holistically formulated values and seek transparent, easily accessible information about their environmental activities. The authors emphasize that digital channels – especially social media and online video – are key communication touchpoints where consumers naturally expect to find information about the environmental benefits of products. In this context, social media appears to be a strategically important tool for conveying a sustainable message, strengthening brand trust, and supporting purchasing decisions for environmentally responsible products.

Similarly, the international report Sustainable Marketing 2030 (Kantar, 2023) emphasizes the need for comprehensive integration of sustainability into the overall marketing strategy. It points out that communication through digital media – including social networks, online videos, and websites – is a critical component that can increase brand credibility, promote customer loyalty, and stimulate environmentally oriented consumer behaviour. Digitized forms of communication create space for transparent, verifiable, and dynamically updated information about brands' sustainability initiatives, which is essential for building long-term brand integrity.

These findings are echoed in Kantar's Marketing Trends 2025 report, which identifies the integration of sustainability into the core of marketing and communication strategy as one of the key trends for the coming years. The authors of the report point out that social media, livestreaming, and video content will play an increasingly important role as primary touchpoints for effectively conveying sustainable messages across target

groups. These formats are particularly effective in the context of younger generations, who prefer visual and interactive content, thereby helping to strengthen the impact of communicating the ecological values of brands.

Given the importance of social media for communicating eco-friendly brands, it is important to understand how these platforms support engagement, audience building, and overall communication effectiveness. The aim of this study is therefore to compare the performance of leading eco-friendly brands on Facebook and Instagram using key performance metrics. A secondary objective is to identify content formats and communication approaches with the highest potential for generating interactions, as well as to distinguish less effective strategies that do not contribute to engagement growth or brand equity enhancement. The study thus provides a systematic view of the digital communication of eco-brands and creates a basis for strategic recommendations for optimizing their communication strategies in the online environment.

2. Literature Overview

Social media plays a crucial role in promoting eco-friendly products by enabling interaction between brands and consumers and shaping their perceptions and purchasing decisions (Krajcovic, 2022; Singha, 2024). Platforms such as Instagram and Facebook allow brands to visually and interactively present their sustainable activities, which can enhance consumer engagement and brand loyalty (Grubor et al., 2017; Luna García et al., 2025). The visual orientation of Instagram and the multimedia features of Facebook are particularly effective in communicating sustainability-related content in an accessible and appealing way.

Effective environmental communication on social media requires building trust and a positive brand reputation. According to Singha (2024), this is achieved through transparency in sustainability claims and alignment with consumer values. Das and Mukherjee (2025) further highlight the importance of influencers and user-generated content, which tend to be perceived as more authentic and credible, thereby increasing the reach and effectiveness of environmental messages.

Despite these advantages, social media also presents several challenges. One of the most significant risks is greenwashing, which can seriously undermine consumer trust if sustainability claims are not supported by evidence (Yates, 2023). Moreover, the dynamic nature of social media requires brands to continuously adapt to changing user preferences, trends, and modes of interaction (Kubovics et al., 2022).

The impact of social media communication on brand equity has been widely discussed in the literature. Grubor et al. (2017) argue that social media positively influences brand awareness, perceived quality, and loyalty. However, they also note that poorly managed user-generated content can weaken brand equity. Luna García et al. (2025) add that engaging content encouraging positive dialogue strengthens favourable brand attitudes and contributes to long-term brand equity.

Numerous studies identify specific communication strategies used by eco-brands and eco-labels on social networks. These include hashtag campaigns, visual storytelling, community building, and collaboration with influencers. Hashtags play a key role in creating online communities and facilitating discussions around sustainability topics (Pilař et al., 2019; Lee & Weder, 2021). Milanese et al. (2022) emphasize that Instagram's visual nature allows even complex sustainability issues to be communicated effectively. Huber et al. (2022) further underline the growing role of eco-influencers, who often rely on personal experience and empirical evidence to influence consumer behaviour.

Social media communication by eco-brands significantly affects consumer behaviour and brand perception. Communicating sustainable practices enhances the perceived competence and "warmth" of a brand, which in turn encourages responsible consumption (Sarkar et al., 2022). Social networks also offer considerable potential for raising awareness of sustainable development and strengthening relationships with stakeholders (Us et al., 2022).

However, the prevalence of misleading or exaggerated environmental claims remains a major concern. Studies show that a substantial share of green advertising on social media is misleading, contributing to increasing consumer scepticism (Kwon et al., 2023; Ktisti et al., 2022). As a result, brands must carefully balance marketing objectives with authenticity and credibility. Azmi et al. (2025) note that increasingly sophisticated greenwashing practices further intensify consumer distrust.

Social media marketing has a particularly strong influence on younger consumers. Khan et al. (2025) demonstrate that social media marketing significantly affects green consumer behaviour, especially when

supported by techniques rooted in environmental psychology. Personalized communication and high levels of engagement further strengthen trust and consumer–brand relationships (Rosário & Dias, 2025).

Instagram has proven especially effective in promoting aspirational consumption through visually appealing and emotionally engaging content (Horrich et al., 2025). Its younger user base is generally more receptive to environmental messages (Asmara Dewi et al., 2020). Influencers, including so-called greenfluencers, play an increasingly important role in this context by promoting sustainable lifestyles and consumption patterns (Apaydin, 2025). Facebook, by contrast, is particularly valuable for community building, enabling users to participate in groups, discussions, and information exchange related to sustainability (Horrich et al., 2025). Kane et al. (2012) note that Facebook can also influence purchasing decisions by reducing barriers such as low awareness or perceived high prices. The combined use of Instagram and Facebook thus supports the formation of pro-environmental attitudes and behaviours (Khan et al., 2025).

In addition, advanced tools such as big data, artificial intelligence, and analytical platforms allow brands to better segment audiences, personalize green communication, and monitor engagement, thereby increasing campaign effectiveness (Widiastuti et al., 2024; Daoud et al., 2024). Accurate demographic targeting, particularly of younger consumers such as Generation Z, further enhances campaign success and green purchasing intentions (Malik & Tass, 2025).

In conclusion, the literature clearly confirms the growing importance of social media in green marketing. Instagram and Facebook serve as key platforms for disseminating sustainability information, building communities, fostering engagement, and influencing environmentally conscious consumer behaviour. At the same time, the findings highlight the critical importance of authenticity, transparency, and cultural sensitivity, as rising scepticism toward greenwashing can significantly undermine consumer trust. Successful eco-campaigns increasingly combine visual storytelling, personalization, data-driven strategies, and influencer collaboration, making social media a strategically essential tool for eco-brands seeking to build strong brand equity and promote sustainable consumption.

3. Methodology

Segmentation and quantitative analysis were used to analyse the data, tracking audience dynamics, interaction levels, and user engagement through a multidimensional analytical framework. The data was collected using ZoomSpehere.

Data from the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram of the following eco-brands were analysed: Patagonia, Blueland, Kleen Kanteen, Meloria Beauty, Tentree, VEJA, and Who Gives a Crap for the period from September 25, 2024, to November 2, 2025. The selected brands represent leading eco-brands defined by a combination of environmental integrity, active social media communication, and international relevance. The sample is thematically representative of the eco-brand sector, diversified in terms of product categories and geography, and methodologically suitable for quantitative analysis of engagement, segmentation, and clustering. This selection supports the study's goal of analysing the mechanisms of successful environmental communication on social networks. We used following data to calculate:

1. Total interactions (TI)
 - Facebook: $TI = Likes + Comments + Shares$
 - Instagram: $TI = Likes + Comments$

2. Engagement Rate (ER)

$$ER = \left(\frac{TI}{F_t} \right) \times 100$$

- TI = Total Interactions
- F_t = number of followers on a given day

3. Follower Change (FC)

$$\Delta F_t = F_t - F_{t-1}$$

For each brand and platform were calculated:

- average daily interactions

- average engagement rate
- average daily change in followers
- last known number of followers

Relative performance metrics were also used for better interpretation:

$$\text{Relative to Avg} = \left(\frac{ER_i}{ER_{mean}} \right) - 1$$

A value of 0 indicates above-average performance, a value of < 0 indicates below-average performance.

The brands were further segmented using tertile segmentation (qcut) based on the engagement rate (ER) value, with the following interpretation:

- Top performer (top third)
- Average performer (middle third)
- Underperformer (bottom third)

In order to identify segment patterns, we clustered brands according to multidimensional performance profiles. The following key metrics were included in the model:

- Follower Trend (to determine audience size)
- Total Interactions (to determine activity volume)
- Engagement Rate (to determine relative communication effectiveness)

We normalized the data using StandardScaler:

$$\frac{x' = x - \mu}{\sigma}$$

We used the Silhouette Score method to determine the optimal number of clusters:

$$\text{Silhouette} = \frac{b(i) - a(i)}{\max(a(i), b(i))}$$

- $a(i)$ – average intracluster distance
- $b(i)$ – best average distance to another cluster

The optimal value of clusters selected according to:

$$k = \text{argmax}(\text{Silhouette})$$

We have identified the following research questions:

RQ1: What differences exist in the level of interaction, engagement rate, and follower growth among eco-brands on Facebook and Instagram?

RQ2: How can eco-brands be segmented based on engagement rate, and what characteristics distinguish the best-performing, average, and below-average brands in terms of interactions and audience growth?

RQ3: What typical performance profiles of eco-brands can be identified using cluster analysis based on interactions, engagement rate, and follower trends?

4. Results

An analysis of the selected eco-brands on Facebook and Instagram provided important insights into their digital communication strategies and the effectiveness of their interaction with the public. The results also highlighted several specific features that reflect the heterogeneity of environmentally oriented brands' approaches to social media use. Although these are leading eco-brands operating in different industries, their communication strategies and metrics vary significantly. More detailed results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Metrics achieved by individual brands on social media platforms Facebook and Instagram

Brand	Platform	Engagement Rate	Relative To Avg	Brand	Platform	Engagement Rate	Relative To Avg
Blueland	FB	0.077486559	-0.361005749	Patagonia	FB	0.020649007	-0.829717604
	IG	0.48923076	3.034449933		IG	0.161882103	0.334963569
Kleenkanteen	FB	0.004857303	-0.959944167	Tentree	FB	0.079925538	-0.340892664
	IG	0.018133686	-0.850460242		IG	0.058928999	-0.514040992
Meloria	FB	N/A	N/A	Who Gives a Crap	FB	N/A	N/A
	IG	N/A	N/A		IG	N/A	N/A
VEJA	IG	0.18027585	0.486647917				

In terms of engagement rate, Blueland achieves the best results on Instagram (Engagement Rate = 0.49%). In general, most of the brands analysed show a higher engagement rate on Instagram than on Facebook. For example, Blueland scores 0.49% on Instagram, while only 0.08% on Facebook. Similarly, Patagonia scores 0.16% on Instagram and 0.02% on Facebook. The exception is Tentree, which shows slightly higher engagement on Facebook (0.08%) than on Instagram (0.06%), although the difference is minimal. Kleen Kanteen achieves negligible engagement on both platforms. The Meloria and Who Gives a Crap brands show no interaction, which may be due to their inactivity or the unavailability of data. Figure 1 provides a clear overview of this data.

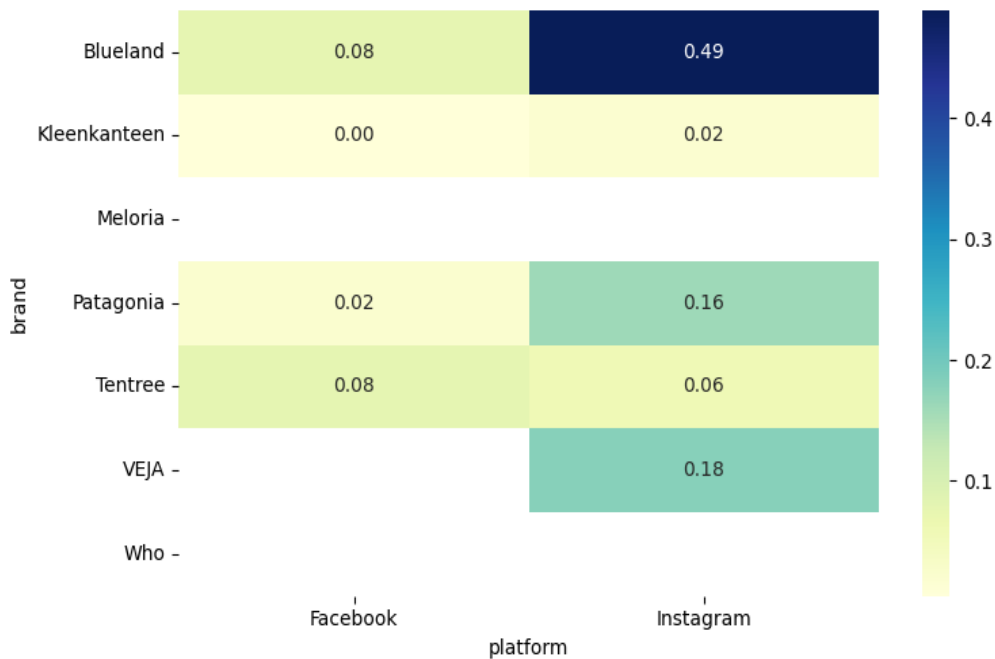


Figure 1: Heatmaps of engagement rate

The results suggest that Instagram is the dominant platform for achieving effective engagement for eco-friendly brands, likely due to its visually oriented nature, which allows for attractive presentation of environmentally-themed content.

The development of engagement rates over time showed significant fluctuations for most brands, accompanied by occasional extreme peaks. The most significant fluctuations are seen in Blueland, where engagement repeatedly exceeds 30%. This suggests that although average engagement rates may not be the highest, some campaigns or posts have received exceptionally high audience attention. The Patagonia, Tentree, and VEJA brands show a more stable, albeit milder, engagement profile with occasional minor peaks. Kleen Kanteen and Meloria have seen minimal interaction over the long term. Detailed data is shown in Figure 2.

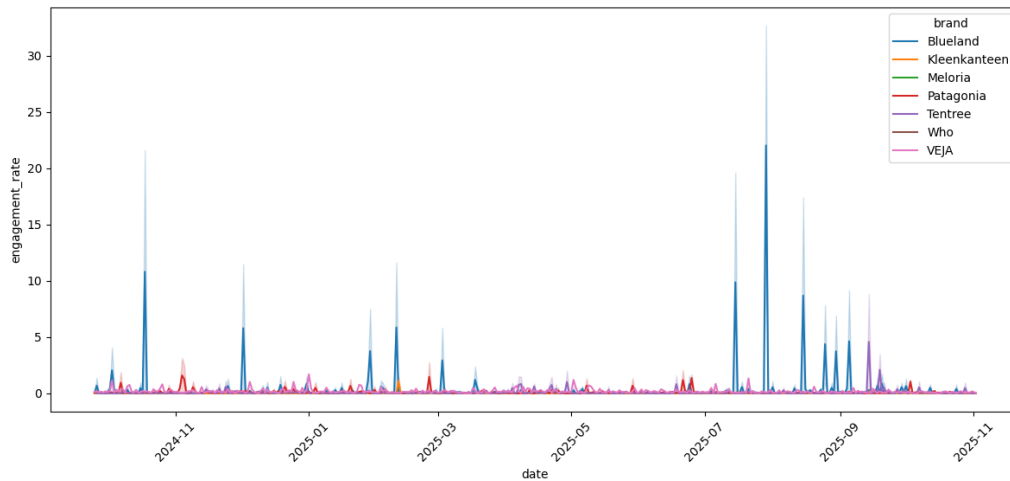


Figure 2: Development of engagement rates over time

An analysis of follower growth identified significant differences between brands and platforms. Patagonia has had the largest audience for a long time, with over 3.5 million followers, which has remained stable during the period under review. Other brands have significantly lower numbers, with Blueiland, Tentree, and VEJA reaching hundreds of thousands to millions of followers. Kleen Kanteen and Meloria have the lowest numbers. However, most brands show a stable or slightly growing trend without significant fluctuations. Details are presented in Figure 3.

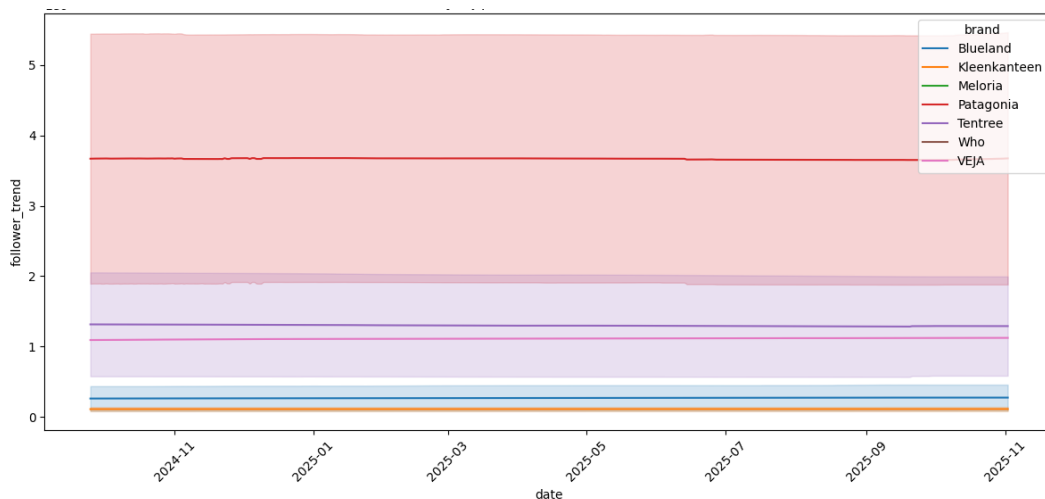


Figure 3: Development of the number of followers over time

From a combined view of engagement and number of followers, it can be concluded that while the number of followers of established brands (e.g., Patagonia) remains stable, engagement is volatile and depends mainly on the quality, timeliness, and type of published content.

Based on the number of followers and the level of engagement, we performed a segmentation analysis using the K-Means algorithm. The optimal number of clusters was determined using the Silhouette Score ($K = 2$; value = 0.678).

K-Means analysis revealed the existence of two clusters. Cluster 0 brings together brands with fewer followers and low to medium engagement levels; these include Blueiland (Facebook), Kleen Kanteen (Facebook and Instagram), Tentree (Facebook and Instagram), and Patagonia (Facebook). These brands may have smaller audiences, limited investment in social media, or less effective content. Cluster 1 includes brands with significantly higher follower counts and above-average engagement, specifically Blueiland (Instagram), Patagonia (Instagram), and VEJA (Instagram). These are high-performing accounts that effectively build community and create engaging content. Subsequent tertile segmentation (qcut) based on engagement rate values identified three performance segments: Top performer, Average performer, and Underperformer. The results are shown in Table 2 and Figure 5.

Table 2: The resulting values of cluster analysis and tertile segmentation

Brand	Platform	Segment	Cluster
Blueland	FB	Average	0
	IG	Top performer	1
Kleenkanteen	FB	Underperformer	0
	IG	Underperformer	0
Patagonia	FB	Underperformer	0
	IG	Top performer	1
Tentree	FB	Average	0
	IG	Average	0
VEJA	IG	Top performer	1

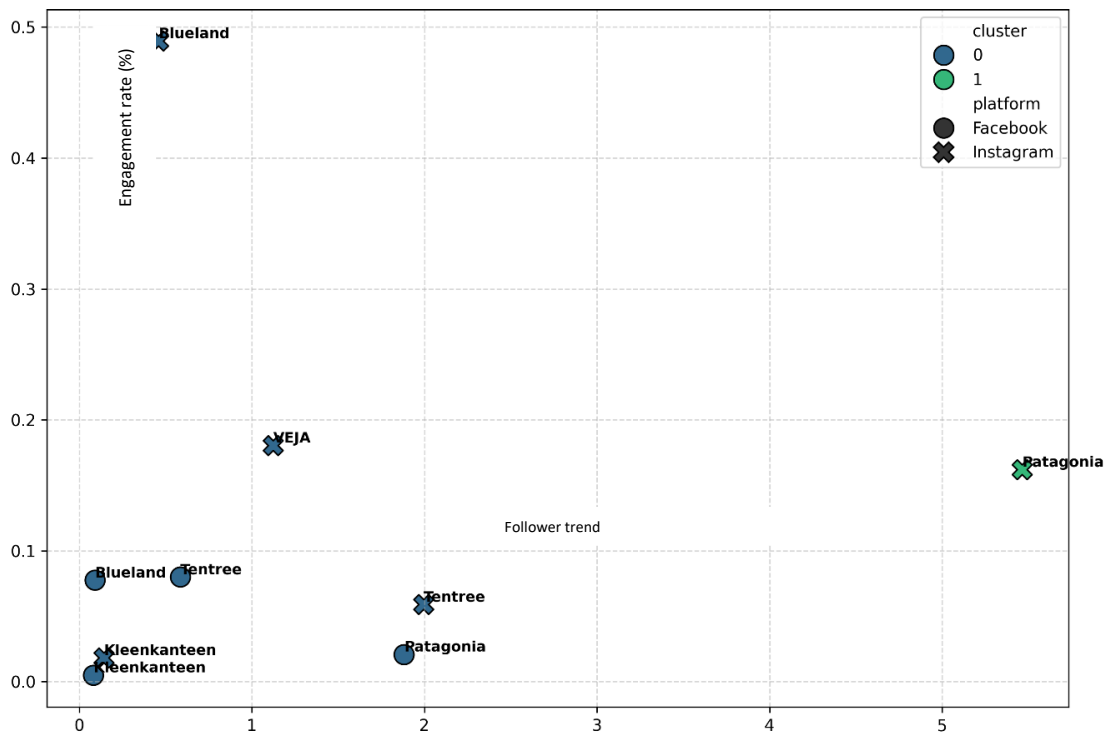


Figure 5: K-Means brand segmentation

An interesting finding is that Cluster 1 consists exclusively of Instagram posts, while Cluster 0 includes mixed data from both platforms, with Facebook profiles predominantly ranked among the less effective ones. This supports the conclusion that Instagram represents the platform with the highest potential for reach and engagement for environmentally oriented brands.

5. Discussion

The results of the analysis are largely consistent with the findings presented in the relevant literature, which emphasizes the importance of social media for communicating eco-friendly brands, shaping consumer attitudes, and building brand equity. The dominant role of Instagram in generating engagement, which was fully evident in the case of the Blueland, Patagonia, and VEJA brands, corresponds with the claims of Luna García et al. (2025), Milanesi et al. (2022), and Horrich et al. (2025), according to whom visually oriented platforms enable more effective communication of ecological messages and promote aspirational consumption. The significantly higher level of interaction on Instagram compared to Facebook confirms that visual aesthetics and multimedia formats can increase the attractiveness of sustainability content and enhance its ability to engage audiences.

The stable and significantly higher number of followers of the Patagonia brand is consistent with the claims of Grubor et al. (2017) and Luna García et al. (2025), who state that long-term environmental communication can

strengthen brand equity, loyalty, and brand awareness. Patagonia, which has a historically strong reputation for sustainability, naturally attracts a larger audience and shows stability in the number of followers, as confirmed by the analysed data.

The significant volatility in engagement rates, particularly in the case of the Blueland brand, is consistent with the claims of Das and Mukherjee (2025) and Huber et al. (2022), according to whom engagement can increase significantly in campaigns based on authentic content, personal experiences, or the involvement of influencers. Extreme peaks above 30% may be the result of effectively targeted digital communication or viral content, which is also supported by the theory of the dynamic nature of social media (Kubovics et al., 2022).

The fact that the Facebook profiles of most brands fall into the less effective cluster (Cluster 0), while the Instagram profiles of the most successful brands form Cluster 1, confirms the claims of Crapa et al. (2023) and Horrich et al. (2025) about the different interaction patterns of the platforms. Facebook may support discussion and community activities, but in the case of eco-friendly brands, it appears to be less effective at generating high levels of engagement. This difference can also be explained by the demographic composition of Instagram, which, according to Dewi et al. (2020), includes a younger audience that is naturally open to environmental issues.

The finding that brands with lower engagement rates may still have a relatively stable follower base (e.g., Tentree and VEJA on Facebook) is consistent with the arguments of Kane et al. (2012) and Rosário and Dias (2025), according to whom a brand's presence on social media can be important for building awareness and long-term trust, even if individual posts do not generate high levels of interaction.

Risks identified in the literature – particularly greenwashing (Yates 2023; Kwon et al., 2023; Azmi et al., 2025) – may partly explain the weak engagement of some brands. Low interaction with Meloria and Who Gives a Crap may be related not only to inactivity but also to low credibility or insufficient authenticity of communication, which the literature explicitly links to a decline in audience trust.

The results of the segmentation analysis, which distinguish high-performing profiles on Instagram from less successful brands operating on both platforms, also support the claims of Widiastuti et al. (2024) and Daoud et al. (2024). They point out the importance of using analytical tools, adapting strategies to different audience segments, and optimizing content, which is especially crucial for brands in the lower-performing cluster.

6. Conclusion

The results of the analysis of the performance of environmentally oriented brands on social networks have yielded several key findings that contribute to a deeper understanding of the digital presentation of sustainability-oriented companies. Above all, it has been shown that Instagram is a significantly more effective communication channel than Facebook, especially in terms of generating engagement and continuously building an audience. This trend is confirmed by the existence of a separate cluster of so-called high-performers, which included brands such as Blueland, Patagonia, and VEJA, characterized by above-average reach and interactions.

At the same time, segmentation analysis showed that environmentally oriented brands can be divided into two main performance groups. The first consists of brands with high engagement and a robust community of followers that effectively work with visual identity and storytelling on Instagram. The second group consists of lower-performing brands that should optimize their content and publishing strategy to increase their visibility and interaction with followers.

It has also been shown that engagement rates are an extremely variable indicator, sensitive to specific campaigns, content types, and current social issues. These fluctuations highlight the importance of continuously testing and adapting communication strategies. In contrast, the number of followers remains relatively stable, with globally established brands – especially Patagonia – maintaining a dominant position in terms of absolute reach.

The findings suggest that it is strategic for environmentally oriented brands to prioritize Instagram as their primary platform for digital marketing. Brands in the below-average cluster should specifically review the typology of published content, its quality, thematic focus, frequency of publication, and the appropriateness of using multimedia formats. Identifying the content elements that generate the highest engagement is a promising area for future research and can provide valuable recommendations for streamlining communication.

Overall, the analysis provided a comprehensive framework for understanding the digital footprint of green brands and revealed key opportunities for its optimization. The results contribute to expanding knowledge about

how sustainability-oriented companies can effectively use social networks to strengthen their brand, increase audience engagement, and build long-term sustainable relationships with consumers.

7. Limitations

The analysis has several limitations that affect the interpretation of the results. The data comes from a limited period and only covers the social media platforms Facebook and Instagram, which limits generalisation to other platforms and long-term trends. The quantitative metrics used (engagement rate, number of followers) do not capture the quality of interactions, sentiment, or user motives, and content analysis was not part of the research. Clustering is influenced by the selection of variables and the small number of brands included, which reduces the robustness of the results. Unaccounted external factors – such as marketing budgets, paid campaigns, or collaborations with influencers – can significantly shape the performance of brand communication on social networks. These limitations suggest the need for broader and methodologically more complex future research.

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Ethics Declaration

Ethical clearance was not required for the research.

AI Declaration

No artificial intelligence tools were used in the creation of this paper.

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