



## SC Johnson and the Greenlist™ Opportunity

In the spring of 2006, Scott Johnson, vice president of Global Environmental and Safety Actions at S.C. Johnson & Son, Inc. (SCJ), wondered how he could maximize the impact of the company's recently patented Greenlist process. Having worked at SCJ for more than 20 years, primarily in marketing and new product development roles, Johnson had recently become an advocate for incorporating sustainability into SCJ's business. In fact, by 2006, Johnson's primary role was to increase the number and scope of projects the company undertook with a social and environmental (in addition to a financial) payoff. The company's Greenlist process, an approach to weave social and environmental considerations into the process of determining the best chemical composition for its products, was a leading example of such projects.

Having successfully developed the Greenlist process, Johnson and his team faced several opportunities and challenges. Although Greenlist was known well internally, it still had a limited brand impact and did not serve to differentiate SCJ in the marketplace. As a consumer packaged goods company, SCJ relied on the effective branding and marketing of its products to a mass consumer base. Some members of the marketing team were reluctant to use an environmental positioning for their products, questioning whether such a positioning would have niche appeal but would limit mass interest in a product.

Johnson also needed to track whether Greenlist helped the company meet its stated internal environmental goals. Greenlist was intended to ensure SCJ products contained materials that were the best available for the environment without compromising the final product's performance, aesthetics, or cost.

Johnson was able to point to many success stories from Greenlist, including the results of two reformulations of Windex that had eliminated 1,800,000 pounds of VOCs\* and increased the product's cleaning power by 30%, without incurring a cost increase. Despite such success stories, it was difficult to calculate whether Greenlist, in aggregate, provided the company with a competitive or financial benefit. Therefore, it was necessary for SCJ to identify which financial metrics would be used to evaluate the process' effectiveness. If Johnson had clearly defined metrics to track the impact of Greenlist, he would be able to articulate the benefits the tool had on the company's financial position as well as its stakeholders.

\* VOC is an abbreviation for volatile organic compound. VOCs vaporize into the atmosphere under normal conditions. The term is often used in a legal and regulatory context, as they can contribute to air pollution as well as become soil and groundwater contaminants.

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