

# **PAY ATTENTION(!) TO THE ENVIRONMENT CAMPAIGN: CONNECTING A COMPANY, LOCAL COMMUNITY AND THE YOUTH IN RAISING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

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**Abstract:** The company's cohesion with the local environment is of key importance for its successful operation. Organisations need to strive to establish mutual cooperation with stakeholders in the local community, for only a successful co-existence and partnership can bring mutual long-term benefits. In order to maintain an excellent relationship between the organisation and local communities, needs, demands and expectations of all the stakeholders involved need to be taken into consideration. Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires has responded to the needs of its local communities with an environmental campaign *Pay Attention(!) To the Environment* campaign, which was launched in 2010. In its local environment, the campaign connects stakeholders from local administration, secondary schools, municipal companies, health care, technical and non-governmental organisations. The campaign, already carried out for the third year in the school year 2012/2013, has gained dimension on a national level as well, since secondary schools from other Slovenian regions joined the partnership of the campaign. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment also joined the partnership of the campaign which gathered together as much as 36 partner institutions.

**Keywords:** environmental awareness, recycling, partners, communication

## **PROJEKT POZOR(!)NI ZA OKOLJE: OZAVEŠČANJE O ODGOVORNEM RAVNANJU Z OKOLJEM, RAZPETO MED PODJETJE, LOKALNO SKUPNOST IN MLADE**

**Povzetek:** Povezanost podjetja z lokalnim okoljem je ključnega pomena za njegovo uspešno poslovanje. Organizacije si morajo prizadevati za vzpostavitev medsebojnega sodelovanja z deležniki v lokalni skupnosti, saj lahko le uspešno sobivanje in sodelovanje prinaša obojestranske koristi na dolgi rok. Za odlične odnose organizacije z lokalnimi skupnostmi je nujno vzajemno upoštevanje potreb, zahtev in pričakovanj vseh vpletenih deležnikov. Družba Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires je kot odziv na potrebe lokalnih skupnosti v letu 2010 zasnovala okoljsko kampanjo Pozor(!)ni za okolje. S kampanjo je v svojem lokalnem okolju povezala deležnike iz vrst lokalne uprave, srednjih šol, komunalnih podjetij, zdravstvenih, strokovnih in nevladnih organizacij. Kampanja poteka, ki v šolskem letu 2012/2013 poteka že tretje leto zapored, je v letošnjem letu dobila razsežnost tudi na nacionalni ravni, saj so se s partnerstvom h kampanji pridružile tudi srednje šole iz ostalih slovenskih krajev. Kampanji se je pridružilo tudi Ministrstvo za kmetijstvo in okolje. Skupaj v partnerstvu tako nastopa že 36 institucij.

**Ključne besede:** okoljsko osveščanje, recikliranje, partnerji, komuniciranje

### **1. Introduction**

Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires is one of the leading tire manufacturers in South-Eastern Europe with 90 years of experience in the rubber industry, and solely owned by Goodyear Dunlop Europe since 2004. Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires manufactures and markets tires for passenger cars and trucks, industrial and construction machinery and motorcycles. The company is committed to protecting the environment and the communities in which it operates.

In line with efforts and successes in the field of environmental and health protection as well as safety at work, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires launched the *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* campaign in 2010.

### **2. What is »Pay attention (!) to the environment« Campaign?**

The main goal of the campaign is to encourage the local and wider society to reflect about what they themselves can contribute to the environment and their own safety. The goals of the campaign are based in its entirety – to point at irregularities at our everyday relations with the environment, to raise awareness among individuals about proper behaviour towards the environment and to finally encourage them to contemplate what they can do for the environment.

It focuses on secondary school pupils who represent one of the most demanding focus groups since they have already developed their opinions and beliefs. According to Jacquelyn A. Ottman, the so called generation Z is the first one to be growing up in an environmentally informed society. It concerns adolescents between the ages of 16 and 20 who are constantly exposed to warnings about pressing environmental problems (2011, 7). Despite this fact, the additional awareness rising among young people of proper conduct with the environment is of key importance since it can reinforce good practice that will be used in their adult life as well. According to ARSO, Slovenia still needs to evolve environmental awareness among its population (Arso, 2010).

### **3. Social Responsibility and Local Communities side by side**

Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires pays equal attention to the concern for the environment and for reducing its negative influences on the environment. Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires environmental policy does not only meet legal requirements, but also strives for higher standards, set by the Goodyear Corporation. As a part of Goodyear Corporation, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires aims at fulfilling the goals of corporate social responsibility. World Business Council for Sustainable Development defines corporate social responsibility as continuous alignment of the company to ethical behaviour, economic development, improvement in life quality of its employees, their families, the local communities and the society as a whole. Orientation towards social responsibility affects all aspects of companies' operation. Namely, consumers prefer products of companies which can be trusted, retailers wish for business relations with reliable partners, employees want to work for companies, that respect them, and non-profitable organisations wish to cooperate with companies they share the same goals with (Werther, Chandler, 2011).

Concern for the environment is almost always incorporated in social responsibility programmes. Companies who do not pay attention for the environmental issues in their business strategies risk great local communities' resistance (Etsy, Winston, 2009).

Among key publics within programmes of environmental communication are also local communities, where not only local population in vicinity of the company is relevant, but also other publics on defined geographical area are equally relevant. Primarily the organisations show their environmental responsibility by assuring quality life environment to inhabitants; however, nowadays this does not suffice. Dimensions of environmental communication reach increasingly to concrete projects of responsible environmental treatment (Drapal, Drevenšek, Drapal, 2004).

### **4. »Pay attention(!) to the environment« Starting Points**

In Gorenjska region municipalities and communal companies have only recently started dealing with the issue of recycling, by which the awareness campaigns focus mainly on households, yet young – pupils are mostly left out of the target groups. For that reason, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires has decided to transfer their best practice in waste management, as well as their knowledge to this most demanding target group.

For this purpose, the campaign *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* was created, initially intended for secondary school pupils in Gorenjska region only. The campaign was designed as partnership between numerous local institutions, which co-developed its content. For the main activity, the partners chose recycling competition, which was accompanied by many activities, intended to additionally draw the attention of the young to the meaning of responsible waste management, and to offer partner organisation the opportunity for exchange of opinion and experience in the area of waste management.

### **5. Objectives of the Campaign**

Main challenges of *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* campaign at the launch of the project were:

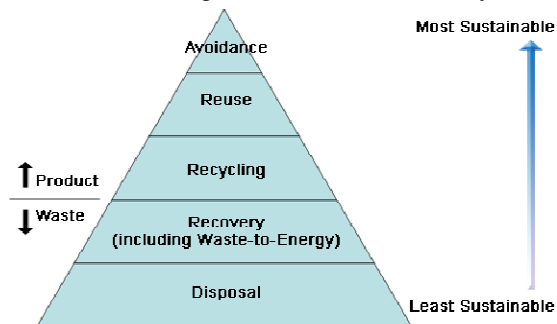
- Draw in as many participants as possible
- Coordination and management of activities in cooperation with numerous partners
- Raising awareness of the demanding target group
- Informing the media and target groups about the campaign
- Generate positive media publicity
- Engaging users through social networks (Facebook page: Pay attention(!) to the environment)
- Positioning Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires as a social responsible company, which is developing its relations with the local community

- Consolidation of Goodyear corporation reputation as a global innovative company as a trend setter in the area of safety and environment within its industry.

## 6. Project Continuation

The *Pay Attention(!) to the Environment* campaign has become well recognized among secondary-school pupils and key local organizations in the Gorenjska region. Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires provided schools with basic infrastructure (waste bins) and know-how regarding waste management. Both enable schools to carry on teaching their pupils how to recycle waste properly.

The new EU Directive on waste management introduces a binding five-step waste hierarchy (picture) where prevention is the preferred option followed by re-use, recycling and other forms of recovery, with disposal such as landfill used only as the last resort. EU policy aims to move waste management up the waste hierarchy taking into account the environmental impacts over the entire life cycle.



*Picture 1: A binding five-step waste hierarchy where prevention is the preferred option followed by re-use, recycling and other forms of recovery*

Additionally, the arguments for focusing on waste prevention and recycling as well as waste separation were the following:

- The amount of produced waste is still rising
- As the world's population is set to grow, pressures on natural resources will increase together with global extraction of resources. This means that in order to meet this future demand, ambitious new policies will be needed to promote sustainable consumption and production and encourage waste prevention and recycling.
- Without additional waste prevention policies, waste generation is expected to increase by 7% from 2008 to 2020 in the EU
- In Slovenia, 80% of waste ends up on waste dumps, whereas the European average is 40%.
- Only 12% of waste is being recycled in Slovenia

Therefore, the next logical step was to upgrade the campaign with focus on topics that will emphasize other important aspects of waste management, namely waste prevention, recycling and reuse. Due to positive response of participants and their willingness to continue with the initial activities, two more municipalities from the Gorenjska region – Radovljica and Jesenice – participated in the second year of the campaign (2011/2012). Therefore, the project of raising awareness and responsible conduct with the environment has already linked together 22 partner organisations. In the school year 2012/2013, schools from other Slovenian regions have also joined the partnership and the project has been endorsed for the first time by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment. The campaign has spread across the entire country and by today joined by 36 partner organisations and more than 10 thousand Slovenian secondary school pupils.

As for reaching of goals set at the launch of the campaign and its expansion to the national level, the goals set in school year 2012/2013 were upgraded to:

- Increase recognition of the campaign
- Increase engagement of the associates into the campaign
- Inform secondary internal audiences about communication activities in Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires.
- Inform the key publics about the efforts of Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires to promote an environmentally friendly behaviour, regarding natural environment and increase recognition of the campaign

- Increase recognition of Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires in local community:
- Strengthen the professional/business and media network of Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires

## 7. Representatives in the Campaign

The representatives of participating secondary schools are mentors and secondary school pupils, namely ECOfriends. They were chosen in September 2011 for the first time; this school year a second group of ECOfriends was chosen. Secondary school professors offered their pupils to participate at the *Pay Attention(!) to the Environment* campaign as volunteers that would advise their classmates about the proper waste collection, inform their colleagues about the events of the campaign and also participate in ECOMitee.

Their task is to additionally encourage an active participation at the *Pay Attention(!) to the Environment* campaign by behaving responsibly to the environment and therefore setting a good example to their schoolmates. All partners are actively involved in the activities. They inform classes about environmental protection for partner school pupils. The pupils are invited to join several excursions within the project, where they learn about good practice of individual companies and institutions in the field of waste management.

## 8. Activities in the Campaign

The first agenda of the campaign is to raise awareness of proper waste usage. So the central campaign activity is a recycling competition between partner secondary schools. This concept is still a central activity among high school students in Gorenjska, whereas schools applying for the project for the first time had to hand in programmes of reducing the quantity of waste at their schools. Also, all students are competing in managing the so called ECOcorners (areas dedicated to environmental topics) at schools. The recycling competition in Gorenjska is monitored by the so called ECOMitee composed of representatives of local municipal services, Dinos, schools, the Institute of Public Health Kranj and Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires.

### 8.1 Announcement of the campaign: signature of the letter of intent of partnership

The letter of intent of partnership is signed by the partners that agree to participate in *Pay Attention(!) to the Environment* in 2012/2013. It is a legally binding document and necessary for Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires in order to formally establish the cooperation with participating partners.

### 8.2 Recycling competition between partner secondary school in Gorenjska

Students from Gorenjska region, who have been cooperating in the campaign for the third year, have once again engaged in recycling competition between partner secondary schools. This means that secondary school pupils and school employees are competing in the knowledge of successful separate collection of waste, from November 2012 until April 2013. Their efforts are being evaluated by ECOMitee, which pays three unannounced visits to all schools during the competition and evaluates the system and successfulness of waste sorting in containers inside and outside of school.



Picture 2: The visit of ECOMitee

### 8.3 Programmes of Reducing the Quantity of Waste

Pupils of secondary schools from other Slovenian regions who joined the project for the first time in 2012/2013 are competing in the implementation of the plan for the reduction of waste reduction plan of individual school. Schools have developed their plan when assigning to the project. Within the activities, implemented for reduction of waste amount, the secondary school pupils will deliver reports three times within the duration of the campaign. The report is evaluated by representatives of Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires and Ministry of Agriculture and Environment. The school which will collect the highest number of points by the end of this year's campaign will become the winner.

### 8.4 Establishing and Preparing the ECOcorners

High school pupils of all schools involved in the project in 2012/2013 also compete in arranging the so called ECOcorners. ECOcorner is located within the school, chosen by ECOfriends with the help of their classmates and mentors. Within the campaign, ECOfriends are submitted a specific topic for three times, which relates to waste or ecology; after that ECOfriend have to fill the ECOcorners with different awareness-raising contents in accordance with the current topic. ECOcorners are evaluated by the organiser of the campaign on the basis of photos, sent to *Pay Attention(!) to the Environment* campaign Facebook page. The group of ECOfriends with the highest number of points will become the winner.



Picture 3: ECOfriends in front of their ECOcorner

### 8.5 Education of the Pupils from Gorenjska Region

Lectures are an important source of information about environmentally friendly behaviour for the pupils. With the aim of raising awareness among secondary school pupils, the partners of the campaign prepare various information and promotion materials and offer them lectures on waste sorting and related environmental topics. Apart from already established topics, including the content regarding waste prevention, this year's lectures will be also focused on recycling and reuse. The campaign organiser Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires also arranges fieldtrips to companies, with basic activity related to waste separation or waste re-use.

### 8.6 Final Event – Announcement of the Winner – April 2013

For the occasion of announcing the winning school and the prize for the pupils, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires will organize an event for the participating partners, ECOfriends and the media.

### 8.7 Web Activities

Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires is providing full support for the campaign on Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires website ([www.sava-tires.si](http://www.sava-tires.si)) and on Facebook page *Pozor(!)ni za okolje* (*Pay attention(!) to the environment*) (<https://www.facebook.com/pozorni.za.okolje?fref=ts>) sharing the content related to the campaign.

### 8.8 Research on Pupils' Attitudes Toward Separate Waste Collection

After the last evaluation of ECOMitee and last reports from schools a survey about pupils' attitudes towards separate waste collection will be held among the pupils of all the participating schools for the third time. This survey will be implemented by the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Maribor. The results of this research bring a specific added value to all partners in this project in terms of measuring the success of the project. Meanwhile, they serve also as a starting point for further project planning.

## 9. Communication Strategy

### 9.1. The Campaign Addresses the Following key Stakeholders:

- **Secondary School Pupils** (primarily secondary schools from Gorenjska region; secondary schools from other cities in Slovenia)

Activities in the campaign *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* are designed in a way to gain attention from secondary schools pupils to social responsible actions in the environment, since this age group is often ignored in such awareness campaigns.

- **Local Community** (municipalities; institutions for waste management and other non-profit organizations, related to protecting the environment)

Participation of the local organization is crucial for achieving Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires' goal – strengthening the cooperation with local community and positioning the company as an important partner of the local community, as well as social responsible company.

- **Governmental Institutions** (Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment)

The support from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment represents special recognition to this project and gives it weight on the national level.

- **Employees in Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires**

Communicating with the internal audiences means that this campaign builds upon the existing activities in the field of protecting the environment which, in Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires, are being performed every day.

### 9.2. Key Messages in the Campaign

- Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires is the initiator of the campaign for informing young people about the responsible practices within the environment (especially with the waste) – purpose: to raise awareness of students and other target groups who represent an important part of community.
- In the field of protecting our environment, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires developed exemplary practices in order to share them with the local community – purpose: to build and strengthen the relationships with the local community, strengthening employees' commitment.
- Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires is a social responsible company and, therefore, an important partner in the local environment who is taking care of the environmental development – purpose: to strengthen the company's position in being social responsible.

### 9.3. Raising Awareness Through a Variety of Communication Tools and Channels

Reaching the goals of campaign requires communication with different target groups therefore communication tools represent an important part of the campaign and can be categorized according to the key stakeholders groups:

- **Secondary School Pupils**

- Facebook page *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* and Facebook-related activities
- Promotion, information and learning materials (news about the activities, a brochure explaining the campaign, posters reminding about environmental care, self-standing bulletin boards inside the schools, branded T-shirts and caps)
- Lectures about waste management, implemented by partner organizations

- **Partner Organizations**

- Workshops with partners

– **Employees**

- Informing employees about the campaign through internal channels (intranet, bulletin boards, TV, internal newspaper Profil): employees were informed about the campaign's launch, its development and the results
- Different award-winning ECO polls and quizzes
- Event for employees – cleaning Šmarna gora within the action *Let's clean Slovenia* in one day!
- Informing employees about the appropriate behaviour with waste on a daily basis by using the campaign's slogan *Pay Attention(!) to the environment*

The project is marked by the accompanying logo, which from the beginning until today appeared in a revised version. The name combines two elements: a warning that our daily behaviour towards the environment is often not appropriate. At the same time, it presents the appeal that we are sending to secondary school pupils – to pay attention to their environment. The name can be used when drawing attention toward properly managing the natural environment, but at the same time, it can also be applicative to the working environment, therefore, to the communication with the internal public.



Picture 4: The logo of the campaign

## 10. The Success of the Campaign

According to inputs for the campaign the success of this project is undoubtedly significant. In the project, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires managed to include relevant local institutions, and established a basis for active and balanced integration of local stakeholders in all project's phases – planning, implementing, measuring. Through working close with partners, there was a large potential of the campaign which is mainly seen with the project's extension into other regions in Slovenia. With implemented communication practices, the company has achieved a visibility of the project among the key stakeholder groups, but at the same time, Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires has strengthened its relationships with local community and its reputation within this community.

*Pay Attention(!) to the environment* represents an upgrade of organizational goals and Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires' mission, because the campaign is implementing both within a broader public. Corporate social responsibility is namely written into the corporate business strategy and is a part of the overall product cycle, from developing the tires to their sustainable and environment-friendly removal. Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires strategically follows the policy, which combines quality policy, protecting the environment and occupational health and safety at work. At the same time the company wants to be a social responsible member of the local community. The campaign *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* combines the principles written above, and it successfully transfers them to the local community.

Along the recognition in local community and employees accepting the project well, it turned out that the project also had its broader impacts:

- In the first year of the project, which was held in Gorenjska region, there were 5.000 pupils and 13 partners participating in the project.
- In the following year, more than 6.000 pupils and 22 partner organizations were participating.

- In school year 2012/2013, the company Goodyear Dunlop Sava Tires increased the number of partners to 36, and overall, there are more than 10.000 pupils participating in the campaign
- The campaign was supported by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Environment
- In schools, that compete in separate waste collection, the system of separating waste has improved
- More than 60 media publications about the campaign *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* in year 2012 alone
- More than 2.000 fans on *Pay Attention(!) to the environment* Facebook page

## 11. Conclusions

The campaign *Pay Attention(!) to the Environment* is an example of an overall awareness of the key stakeholders in the company. The number of partners and pupils, who are participating in the campaign, surely shows popularity of and interest in the campaign, and also demonstrates how important it is to talk about environmental issues. Beside this, the upgraded campaign focuses on a broader social problem as it also points out other important perspectives of handling waste – not only separating it.

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