

GC3 Retailer Project Group

**Project Break Out Group Discussion, May 30, 2014**

Agenda for session: provide input to Retailer Leadership Council and suggest possible speakers/topics for GC3 webinars over the next year

Discussion:

- How to help retailers communicate that a product is greener, better, safer? Issues: What does this message indicate about older, legacy products – are they not safe? How to not run afoul of FTC guidelines in making claims?
- One suggestion was to explain these changes as incremental. Introduction of seat belts in cars was provided as example of incremental change.
- How to help retailers with marketing of green products? How best to sell green chemistry? Who should do this awareness building?
- Marketing department decides how to message about products. It is also a legal, technical discussion. Claims need to be documented and also need to resonate with customers.
- Although there may be disagreements about risk from products, it may be easier to get agreement about reducing hazard. Example of low odor paint (low VOC)
- It was suggested that companies strive to use legitimate certification programs. (EPA's Green Guides may help here). Important to use ecolabels that are multi attribute.
- There was a brief discussion about alternatives to receipt paper with BPA and the option of using electronic receipts.
- One participant asked about where else in the supply chain could a dialogue be helpful? Dialogue with merchants is needed. Merchants need education so that they are not at mercy of suppliers. This is a challenge as merchants move around and do not stay in one product category. In broader supply chain – need to have dialogue with brands, component manufacturers.

Suggestions for possible companies to consider for webinars:

Marks and Spencer – Michael Barry – striving to be the world's most sustainable retailer – Plan A as there is no Plan B – company has developed a list of 100 activities and business metrics for them. This program makes money for the company.

Boots

Kingfisher

H& M

Patagonia

REI

Mountain Equipment Coop – in dialogue with its supply chain

Columbia sportswear

Keene footwear

Apple – has implemented aspirational goals

Solidaridad – program in China (Bob Buck to provide info)