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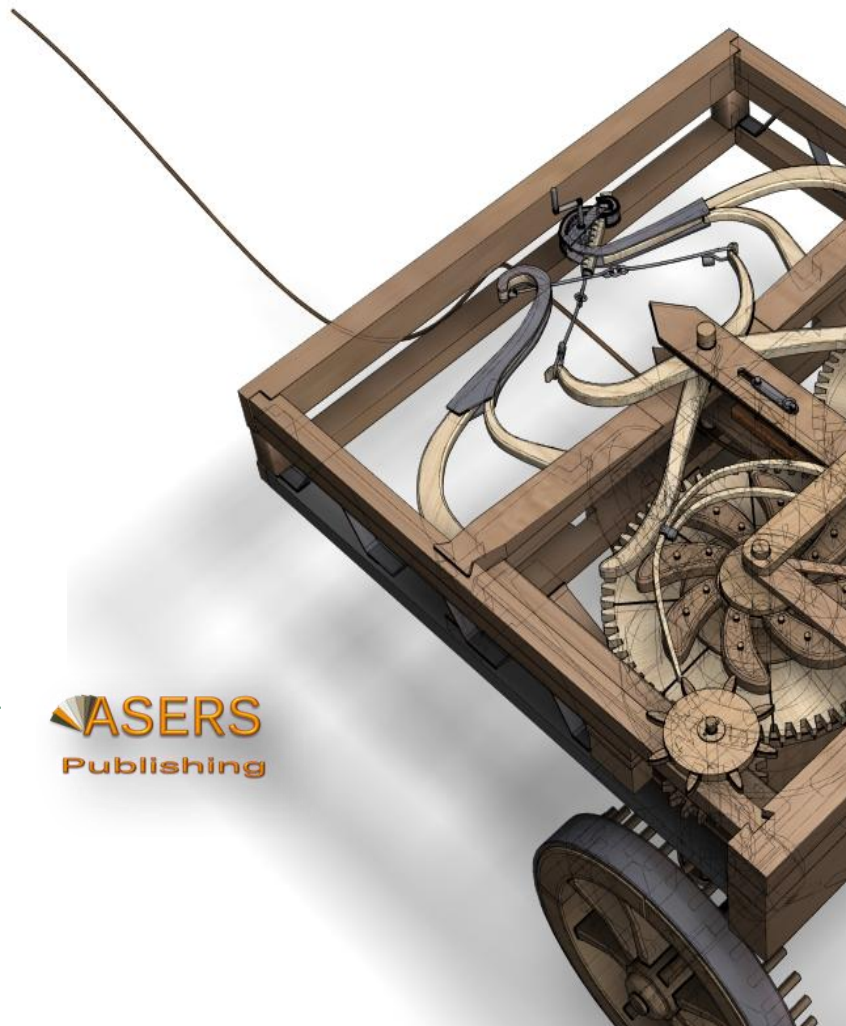
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Table of Contents

1	Environmental Challenges and Innovations in the Asia-Europe Rail Transport Corridors in the Context of the ESG Concept <i>Miroslaw Antonowicz, Jakub Majewski</i>	191
2	The Place of Technology in the Evolution of Modern Trade Fairs <i>Anita Proszowska</i>	206
3	The Environmental CSR Awareness-Satisfaction Paradox: Understanding Customer Perceptions and Behavioural Intentions in Hospitality Services <i>Huzaifa Ahmad</i>	218
4	Impact of Marketing Activities on the Image of an Energy Company: A Case Study of Electricity Suppliers in Poland <i>Jakub Dąbrowski, Edyta Gołąb-Andrzejak</i>	227
5	Expo 2020 Dubai as Experiencescape to Build Image of Exhibiting Countries: Perspective of Polish Pavilion Personnel <i>Marcin Gębarowski</i>	237
6	Sustainable Marketing in the Sharing Economy: Strategies for Promoting Responsible Consumption <i>Justyna Ziobrowska-Sztuczka, Maciej Lewandowski</i>	250
7	Examining the Impact of Demographics, Travel Patterns, and Awareness on Sustainable Tourism and Cultural Preservation in Coastal Karnataka <i>Bhaskar Sailesh, Nagarjun Nayani</i>	264
8	Tourism and Circular Economy: A Case Study from Kumaon Himalayas <i>Syed Asghar Mehdi</i>	279
9	Tourism and Inequality in the European Union: Exploring the Determinants of Tourism Spending through a Multivariate Approach <i>Alicja Grzenkowicz</i>	287
10	Insights from Malaysian World Heritage Sites on Heritage Sustainability <i>Geetha Krishnapillai, Filzah Md. Isa</i>	301
11	Mental and Hedonistic Determinants Shaping Physical Activity Engagement among Generation Z <i>Zygmunt Waśkowski, Liwia Delińska, Tomasz Wanat</i>	323



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Sustainable Marketing in the Sharing Economy: Strategies for Promoting Responsible Consumption

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Article info: Received 12 July 2025; Received in revised form 19 July 2025; Accepted 28 July 2025; Published 29 August 2025. Copyright© 2025 The Author(s). Published by ASERS Publishing 2025. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of CC-BY 4.0 license.

Abstract: The study aims to analyze the role of sustainable marketing in supporting the development of the sharing economy. In particular, it focuses on its role in shaping consumer behavior, promoting the idea of responsible consumption, and building trust in sharing platforms. The explanatory research design enabled the identification of sustainable marketing activities of the selected companies. The study used purposive sampling, selecting four sharing economy companies representing different segments related to urban mobility: Lime, BlaBlaCar, Traficar and Bolt. Data was obtained from the official websites of these entities. A qualitative methodological approach was used to comprehensively assess the communication strategies of the sharing platforms within a specifically defined framework. Our results indicate that sustainable marketing is key in promoting sharing platforms as tools to support the transition to a low-carbon economy and more responsible consumption patterns. The study also highlights challenges such as authenticity in communications and building long-term consumer trust. Purposive sampling limits the possibility of generalizing the results. Analysis is based solely on materials published by the companies themselves, which may lead to an incomplete picture of reality, as firms may selectively present information, highlighting positive aspects of their activities. Assessing the impact of communication strategies on consumer behavior poses a methodological challenge due to the lack of direct data from consumers. Findings and recommendations from the study can contribute to a better understanding of how to effectively use sustainable marketing to promote the sharing economy and achieve sustainable development goals.

Keywords: sharing economy; responsible consumption; sustainable marketing

JEL Classification: M31; O33; Q56.

Introduction

Sustainable development is a crucial concept in modern business management aimed at improving the quality of life and welfare of society, while ensuring long-term economic stability and environmental protection (Gadomska-Lila and Wasilewicz, 2016). In an era of growing environmental challenges, social inequalities, and dynamic market transformations, companies increasingly recognize the need to integrate sustainability into their core strategies. Implementing these ideas requires the active involvement of enterprises that perceive them not only as a moral obligation but also as an opportunity to respond to contemporary market challenges, enhance brand reputation, and strengthen their competitive advantage (Misztal, 2024). Sustainable development has evolved into a dominant paradigm of modern management, linking economic, social, and ecological dimensions to foster long-term business resilience and stakeholder trust (Adamczyk, 2018). This approach encourages companies to go beyond short-term profit maximization and consider the broader impact of their operations, including

responsible resource management, fair labor practices, and the reduction of negative externalities. As sustainability-oriented strategies gain prominence, family businesses, particularly those led by younger generations, emerge as natural allies in their implementation, driven by a long-term perspective and a commitment to ethical business practices (Domańska *et al.* 2024). In the face of escalating geopolitical tensions, economic instability, and climate change, concepts such as sustainable development, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) have become essential tools for businesses seeking to mitigate risks, ensure regulatory compliance, and build more resilient operational models (Miształ, 2024). By integrating sustainability principles into their strategies, organizations can not only prevent environmental degradation and promote social inclusion but also enhance innovation, attract impact-driven investors, and strengthen relationships with conscious consumers. As a result, sustainability-oriented business management is increasingly recognized as a necessity rather than an option, marking a shift toward more responsible and future-proof economic practices.

The novelty of this study lies in combining the perspective of sustainable marketing with the analysis of sharing economy platforms. Its importance stems from the growing role of sustainability-oriented marketing in shaping consumer attitudes and building trust in sharing-based business models.

Our study aims to analyze the role of sustainable marketing in supporting the development of the sharing economy. In particular, it focuses on its role in shaping consumer behavior, promoting the idea of responsible consumption, and building trust in sharing platforms. The study used purposive sampling, selecting four sharing economy companies representing different segments related to urban mobility: Lime, BlaBlaCar, Traficar and Bolt. The explanatory research design enabled the identification of sustainable marketing activities of the selected companies. Data was obtained from the official websites of these entities. A qualitative methodological approach was used to comprehensively assess the communication strategies of the sharing platforms within a specifically defined framework.

This research opens with a comprehensive literature review integrating sustainable marketing and sharing economic concepts. We then present the methodological approach and the data sources used. Subsequent sections present our key findings in combination with detailed analysis and interpretation. The paper concludes with a summary of the main contributions, while acknowledging the limitations and constraints of the research.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Evolution and Value Dimensions of the Sustainable Marketing Concept

Sustainable marketing is becoming an increasingly important research topic, and its definitions are undergoing new interpretations. Among the most frequently indicated tenets of this concept is the environmental orientation of the organization (Pooja *et al.* 2022). Current research on the subject, conducted by authors all over the world, demonstrates the pivotal shift of the concept toward delivering a much broader package of value, not only for the customer but also for the organization itself and its stakeholders (Yadav *et al.* 2024). Up-to-date scientific publications demonstrate the transformation from a classical marketing approach to a concept incorporating sustainability dimensions (Kurtishagai, 2024). Through a systematic literature review covering two decades, author Matthew B. Lunde proposed the following extracted definition of sustainable marketing: "Sustainable marketing is the strategic creation, communication, delivery, and exchange of offerings that produce value through consumption behaviors, business practices, and the marketplace, while lowering harm to the environment and ethically and equitably increasing the quality of life (QOL) and well-being of consumers and global stakeholders, presently and for future generations" (Lunde, 2018).

This concept has evolved from a marginal pro-environmental activity to a core strategic activity of companies (Sheth and Parvatiyar, 2021). Specific organizations are currently treating sustainability as a strategic part of their market positioning, being one of the key factors for success (Jovanovic *et al.* 2018). Entities incorporating sustainability into their marketing activities report positive effects in terms of brand perception and strengthening their relationships with customers (Lorgnier *et al.* 2022; Rastogi *et al.* 2024).

The evolution of sustainable marketing is moving towards holistically offering value. Opportunity for a holistic approach stems from the growing importance and availability of digital technologies and their use in the sustainable marketing process (Peterson, 2020). Measuring marketing activities' environmental and social impact is carried out using advanced analytical tools (Ziegler *et al.* 2023). Studies have identified validated methods for measuring sustainability, such as assessing the carbon footprint left by a company's activities (Angrisani *et al.* 2023). Sustainable marketing is noticeable in the corporate culture and influences decision-making processes (Khan *et al.* 2024). Despite the growing importance of technology in sustainable marketing, there is a clear gap

between the potential of digital tools and their actual use. This is not only due to the limited competence of companies but also due to a selective approach to the sustainable development goals (Duś-Prieto, 2024).

Aforementioned technological developments, the growing environmental awareness of consumers, and the need to integrate business objectives with the global sustainability mission are just some of the reasons for the wider use of the concept in practice (Kemper and Ballantine, 2019). Organizations oriented towards values consistent with sustainable development will be forced to continuously adapt and implement innovative solutions for strategic marketing (Kue Na *et al.* 2019). Based on sustainable marketing concepts, strategy implementation takes place in three dimensions: environmental, social and economic (Danciu, 2013).

The environmental dimension focuses on thoughtful resource management and reducing the negative effects of the organization's actions on the environment (Trojanowski, 2021). These actions can be seen in the purposeful selection of biodegradable components used in the design of products, the energy efficiency of their production processes, or the responsible management of waste generated in the process (Choudhuri, 2023). In response to increasing stakeholder demands for sustainability, distribution and entire supply chain management must be adapted accordingly (Jedynak, 2023).

Another dimension, the social dimension, is the promotion of conscious, sustainable consumer behavior and collaborative value creation (Padhi, 2018). Actions taken under this aspect include educating consumers about responsible consumption, extending support to the local community, offering decent employment conditions, or supporting diversity (Matharu *et al.* 2020). The inclusion of this aspect is evident in creating products and services accessible to different social groups (Brescia-Zapata, 2023) as well as in supporting initiatives oriented towards tackling social problems (Dyck and Manchanda, 2021).

Long-term outcome-oriented activities, focused on generating stable value for both the organization and consumers, reflect the economic dimension. The results of these efforts can be seen in two areas: in the combination of cost optimization with a quality offering and in a transparent pricing policy (Trivedi *et al.* 2018). The organization's investment budgets are allocated to innovations that meet sustainable characteristics, and among the novel solutions to be highlighted is the creation of business models based on the sharing economy (Nosratabadi *et al.* 2019). In an economic context, the researchers point to transparency in finances and fair trade as key elements for maintaining customer trust (Ionica *et al.* 2020).

However, the application of the sustainable marketing concept faces challenges. Organizations must balance meeting short-term sales targets and a long-term sustainability strategy (Kamiński, 2019). On the other hand, consumers point to the inconvenience of sustainable solutions as a factor demotivating their participation in the process (Ober and Karwot, 2022). It is essential to continuously educate consumers and consistently promote sustainable attitudes and solutions (Szymoniuk, 2015). Key to the effectiveness of sustainable communication is transparency and verifiability of declarations. The communications should be supported by facts, preferably by specific company actions that the company can claim and use to prove its sustainable activities (Pimonenko *et al.* 2020).

1.2. Sustainable Marketing's Contribution to the Sharing Economy

The sharing economy is a business model that is gaining ground in the context of sustainability and marketing. It answers the question: *How can resource utilization be optimized, negative environmental impact be reduced, and the accessibility and inclusiveness of goods and services increased?* The sharing economy implements this through three primary relationships: client to client (C2C), business to client (B2C), and business to business (B2B). The first type enables users to operate as both producers/suppliers and consumers, creating the "prosumer" category (someone who both consumes and produces specific goods), enhancing resource efficiency (Chen, 2024; Czernek *et al.* 2018; Treitler, 2024; Ziobrowska-Sztuczka, 2023). The model pursued in this relationship can outperform traditional sales, combining consumer needs and lowering production costs, benefiting producers and the environment (Chomachaei *et al.* 2024). A crucial element, however, is to build trust among users by ensuring the security of transactions and the high quality of shared assets (Diallo, 2023). The B2C relationship is prioritizing face-to-face interactions with consumers, often using platforms that enable consumers to share resources or services, increasing accessibility and convenience (Bazrafshan *et al.* 2021). B2B relationships, on the other hand, focus on sharing resources between companies, especially SMEs, to access scarce resources and reduce costs (Huber *et al.* 2022). Building dynamic networks allows companies to predict behavior and optimize partnerships, increasing the efficiency of B2B transactions (Quintero *et al.* 2018).

As numerous studies show, resource sharing, which is a key element of the sharing economy, contributes to more efficient use of available goods and waste reduction, which aligns with sustainable development

principles (Avdokushin and Kuznecova, 2022; Carlborg, 2024; Kawa and Nesterowicz, 2022; Rathnayake *et al.* 2024; Suci *et al.* 2024; Sztokfisz, 2017).

An essential aspect of the sharing economy is the role of technology, which enables efficient management of resources and facilitates interactions between users. Using digital technologies, such as mobile applications and GPS systems, plays an essential role in securing safe and efficient exchanges, which is particularly evident in the transport services sector (Allen and Berg, 2014).

Digital platforms that support the sharing economy can promote sustainable marketing through transparency, accessibility of information and creation of trust between users (Griffiths *et al.* 2019; Martin *et al.* 2017; Szpringer, 2020). For instance, platforms can inform users about the environmental benefits of sharing services, which can increase their commitment to sustainable practices (Dellaert, 2018; Mi and Coffman, 2019). Studies have shown that consumers who use sharing services often experience positive changes in their consumption behaviour, leading them to be more reflective about their choices and their environmental impact (Lan *et al.* 2017; LLi *et al.* 2023). Thus, the sharing economy is not only changing the way consumers view ownership but also influencing their attitudes towards sustainability.

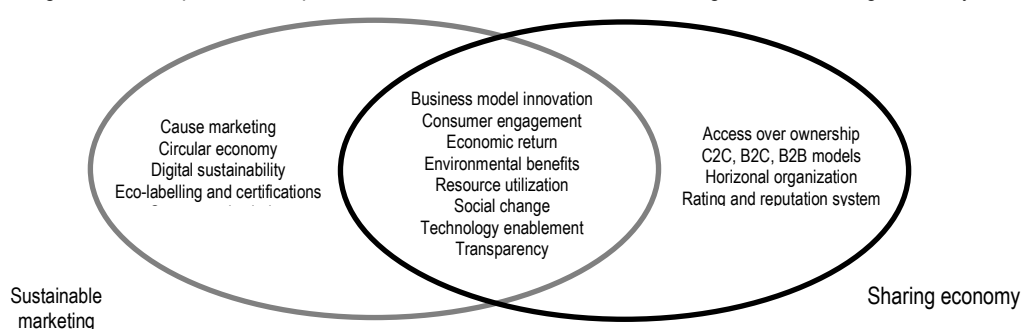
In the context of marketing, the sharing economy presents new challenges and opportunities for businesses. Sustainable marketing, which focuses on long-term social and environmental benefits (Rudawska, 2012), can be effectively integrated into the concept of sharing (Kamiński, 2019). Examples such as carsharing (Traficar, Panek CS and others), or flat rental platforms such as Airbnb, show how marketing can promote the idea of sharing while supporting local communities and reducing the negative impact on the environment (Banaszek, 2016; Kawa and Nesterowicz, 2022).

From a sustainability perspective, the sharing economy can contribute to a paradigm shift in consumption, moving from an ownership-based model to an access-based model (Stępnicka and Wiączek, 2018). Such a shift in consumer perceptions can lead to reduced demand for new products, reducing production and CO₂ emissions (Michalak *et al.* 2020). Therefore, the sharing economy primarily responds to Sustainable Development Goal 12 on responsible consumption and production but also contributes to Goals 13, 11, and 9¹⁵.

It would not be possible for the sharing economy to operate effectively without a high level of trust and transparency in the relationships between its users (Czernek *et al.* 2017, 2018; Waśkiewicz, 2022). However, the development of the sharing economy also presents challenges, such as legal and tax regulations. In Poland, as in other countries, there is a need to create an appropriate regulatory framework that will enable the development of this model while protecting the interests of consumers and entrepreneurs (Klimczuk, 2024; Kochel, 2018). Hence, sustainable marketing should consider these aspects, promoting both economic and social and environmental benefits, which is crucial for the long-term success of the sharing economy (Kamiński, 2019; Szołtysek and Otręba, 2019).

The sharing economy and sustainable marketing demonstrate strong interdependence (Figure 1). They not only support resource efficiency but also promote new, more sustainable consumption patterns. This model's future will depend on its ability to adapt to the changing legal environment and build trust in user relationships.

Figure 1. Conceptual interdependencies between sustainable marketing and the sharing economy



Source: own elaboration based on Haqqani *et al.* (2022) and Muchenje *et al.* (2023)

¹⁵ Goal 13: Climate action - reduce production and CO₂ emissions by reducing demand for new products and optimising the use of existing resources.

Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities - support efficient use of space and resources (e.g. shared mobility, housing, utilities).

Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure - development of innovative business models to support a sustainable economy.

2. Research Methodology

This study was conducted to analyze the contribution of sustainable marketing to the sharing economy, with a particular focus on its role in shaping consumer behavior, promoting responsible consumption, and building trust in sharing platforms. The study analyzed communication strategies highlighting environmental, social, and economic values that influence the perception and adoption of sharing models. Given the phenomenon's complexity, a qualitative methodological approach was used to comprehensively assess the communication strategies of sharing platforms within sustainable development. The explanatory research design enabled the identification of sustainable marketing mechanisms and practices within the sharing economy.

The study used purposive sampling, selecting four leading sharing economy companies: Lime (operator of electric scooters and bicycles), BlaBlaCar (ride-sharing platform), Traficar (car-sharing service), and Bolt (personal transport and micromobility platform). The actors selected for the study represent diverse segments of the sharing economy related to urban mobility. This allowed a comparison of sustainable marketing strategies in similar yet different business contexts.

Data was collected from the official websites of the selected companies. In analyzing these sources, data was structured to include official messages relevant to the analysis and company sustainability reports. These digital platforms provided information on the organizational goals, strategies, and outcomes of sustainable marketing initiatives reported by the selected actors. The methodological procedure encompassed a systematic material review and documentation of sustainability-related marketing content.

Qualitative content analysis was employed using four analytical frameworks. The first was used to identify sustainable marketing activities of individual companies, cataloging initiatives, campaigns, and marketing messages. The second involved analyzing the effects of these activities and identifying the measurable results declared by companies. The third categorized the activities according to the values promoted (environmental, social, economic). The fourth analyzed the nature of the relationships in the identified marketing activities (C2C, B2C, B2B) to underline the company's character as contributing to the sharing economy.

The research process was conducted in four stages. It began with a literature review on sustainable marketing and the sharing economy to build a theoretical foundation. In the subsequent stage, companies suitable for analysis were identified, and relevant source materials were collected. The third stage concerned the study of the collected materials. In the final stage, the results were interpreted in terms of the impact of sustainable marketing on shaping consumer behavior, promoting responsible consumption and building trust in sharing platforms.

3. Research Results

In the analysis of the marketing activities of sharing economy platforms in the context of sustainable development, we used four tables (Tables 1-4) presenting the strategies used by Lime (Table 1), BlaBlaCar (Table 2), Traficar (Table 3), and Bolt (Table 4). Each table contains the key initiatives of these companies, their impact, the dimension of value (environmental, social, economic), and the type of business relationship (C2C, B2C, B2B). The selection of tables was based on the need to synthetically present the activities of brands in a comparative perspective, which allows for identifying similarities and differences in their strategies. The comparison includes CO₂ reduction programs, social initiatives, and innovative cooperation models with institutions and users. This made it possible to capture the multidimensional nature of their activities and assess their impact on the perception of sustainable mobility.

Table 1. Sustainable marketing activities communicated by Lime

Promoted activity	Effect	Value dimension	Relationship type
Implementation of renewable energy infrastructure	100% facilities powered by renewable energy, 59.5% CO ₂ reduction since 2019	Environmental	B2C, B2B
Car trip replacement program implementation	180 million car trips replaced, 33 million litres of gas saved, 77 million kg CO ₂ avoided	Environmental	B2C
Zero-emission operations fleet development	More than 140 electric operational vehicles integrated into service	Environmental	B2C
Partnership with Science Based Targets Initiative	Validated emission reduction goals of 76,000 tons CO ₂ by 2030, transparent reporting framework	Environmental	B2B

Promoted activity	Effect	Value dimension	Relationship type
#RideGreen promotion	Building community around sustainable transport	Environmental, Social	C2C, B2C
Safety system implementation	99.99% incident-free rides, 99.99% safe parking, reduced urban clutter	Environmental, Social	B2C
WWF strategic partnership development	Joint promotion of zero-emission urban mobility, validated environmental impact assessment	Environmental, Social	B2B
Long-lasting vehicle design	Increased vehicle lifespan (>5 years), swappable batteries, modular parts reducing waste	Environmental, Economic	B2C
Lime Hero community support program	\$665,000 raised, more than 75 social partners, direct community impact	Social	B2C, B2B
Lime Access program implementation	More than 850,000 discounted rides for qualifying users, increased transportation equity	Social	B2C
Lime Times blog	Stakeholder education and communication	Social, Economic	B2C, B2B
First Ride Academy safety program	Structured safety training system for new users, increased user competence	Social, Economic	B2C
Lime Ads program implementation	Mobile advertising in 280 cities, 30 countries	Economic	B2C, B2B

Source: own elaboration based on data from li.me (access date: February 2025)

As shown in Table 1, Lime focuses on sustainability, reducing emissions and raising public awareness of green mobility. The introduction of infrastructure based on renewable energy sources, the development of a zero-emission operating fleet, and car travel replacement programs effectively reduce the carbon footprint. Collaborations with WWF and the Science Based Targets Initiative help reinforce environmental messages and increase transparency. Additionally, Lime implements social programs (e.g., Lime Access and Lime Hero) that provide access to mobility for economically disadvantaged people. The company's holistic marketing strategy encompasses individual customers, institutions, and NGOs, allowing for broad community involvement.

Table 2. Sustainable marketing activities communicated by BlaBlaCar

Promoted activity	Effect	Value dimension	Relationship type
Better use of space by carpooling, "Zero empty Seats"	80 million optimised seats in cars (2023)	Environmental	C2C, B2C, B2B
Offering shared rides as eco-friendly	Reduction of CO ₂ emissions by 2 million tons globally (in 2023 alone)	Environmental	C2C, B2C
Using renewable, green energy sources. Joining the ACT Pas-à-Pas program to define a decarbonization trajectory	About 5% of the BlaBlaCar Bus fleet is to be converted to biofuels in 2024/2025 Paris headquarters powered by 100% green energy	Environmental	C2C, B2B
Government and Sustainability Initiatives	The French government invested €150 million to support carpooling, including a €100 carpooling bonus for new drivers Carpooling is now recognised in European public policies, with initiatives in Spain and other countries	Environmental, Economic	B2B
Growing community of platform users, forum readers	Nearly 27 million active members across 21 countries	Social	C2C, B2C
Diversity and Inclusion	BlaBlaCar's RISE mentoring program supports female leadership	Social, Economic	B2C, B2B

Promoted activity	Effect	Value dimension	Relationship type
Verified Profiles and Super Drivers	26% of active members have verified profiles, and 580,000 drivers hold Super Driver status, improving trust and reliability	Social, Economic	B2C
Employee Well-Being	837 employees in 6 countries, with a strong culture of innovation and flexibility	Social, Economic	B2B
Programs offer rides that are cheaper than using traditional transit	Users have saved more than 1.4 billion euros since BlaBlaCar's inception	Economic	C2C, B2B
M&E operating model (evolve application from a carpooler matching service to a multimodal Service)	Offers from more than 5,000 carriers are available on a single platform (e.g., Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Brazil)	Economic	B2B

Source: own elaboration based on data from blablacar.pl (access date: February 2025)

As Table 2 shows, BlaBlaCar successfully integrates the principles of the sharing economy with sustainable development's environmental and social aspects. Optimized vehicle utilization (Zero Empty Seats) significantly reduces CO₂ emissions.

Table 3. Sustainable marketing activities communicated by Traficar

Promoted activity	Effect	Value dimension	Relationship type
Access to a greener fleet of vehicles (5,000 cars, including more than 300 vans)	Using Traficar can save, on average, 500g CO ₂	Environmental	B2C, B2B
Traficar blog, app	It actively shapes public attitudes, showing that caring for the common good can benefit and reward all users. It is available in 28 cities in Poland	Environmental, Social	C2C, B2B
Micromobility program (electric scooters)	Increase the accessibility and flexibility of urban transportation while complying with the city's regulations for cleaning up public space and promoting sustainable mobility	Environmental, Social	B2C
Traficar Spot service	In 2024, more than 2,000 orders for passenger and commercial vehicles were completed, and the service already has more than 1,600 active users	Environmental, Social, Economic	B2C, B2B
Traficar Ogarnia program	From its inception until the end of 2024, the program has accumulated more than 100,000 active users, granted more than 1,300,000 discounts, and committed users have performed more than 90,000 service activities	Environmental, Economic	B2C
Activities for the Szlachetna Paczka; helping those who experienced floods	The company provided over 20 passenger and commercial vehicles that generated over 6,000 kilometres in five cities	Social	B2C
Traficar Recommended	For recommending Traficar's services, you can earn £30 towards your next ride, building a community	Social, Economic	C2C, B2C
New partnerships or continuation of existing ones with the Bolt app, Lidl Benefit Plus, Żabka, CCC club, Mastercard Priceless Moments and PZU club	As part of Traficar Business' B2B offering, several thousand employees of various companies have taken advantage of the ride-sharing benefit program. Between 2021 and 2024, the customer base in the business segment increased by 91%	Social, Economic	B2B

Source: own elaboration based on data from traficar.pl (access date: February 2025)

Collaboration with governments (such as the French government's Carpooling Plan) strengthens the impact on the transportation sector. Diversity and inclusivity efforts, such as RISE's mentoring program for women, build trust and engagement with the user community. BlaBlaCar's business model encompasses both B2B (with carriers and governments) and B2C and C2C collaborations, allowing the company to engage a broad spectrum of audiences while achieving the goal of more accessible and greener mobility.

Table 3 shows that Traficar's area of activity is urban mobility, combining environmentally friendly transport solutions with economic benefits. Its 5,000 vehicles, including vans and electric scooters, significantly reduce CO₂ emissions. Collaborations with brands such as Bolt, Lidl Benefit Plus, and Mastercard Priceless Moments demonstrate a strong commitment to B2B marketing and value creation for business customers. Loyalty programs (e.g., Traficar Ogarniam and Polecam) strengthen user relationships, building an active community of drivers and passengers. Through social initiatives (e.g., support for the Szlachetna Paczka charity program), the company emphasizes its commitment to corporate social responsibility, which positively impacts its image.

Table 4. Sustainable marketing activities communicated by Bolt

Promoted activity	Effect	Value dimension	Relationship type
Validation of emission reduction targets by the Science Based Targets Initiative (SBTi)	Increasing the credibility of environmental commitments, conformity assurance with the Paris Agreement goals through independent verification	Environmental	B2C, B2B
Certification of the environmental management system according to ISO 14001:2015	Ensuring compliance with environmental management practices, building consumer trust through internationally recognised standards	Environmental	B2C, B2B
Strategy to achieve carbon net-zero by 2040	Demonstration of commitment to environmental responsibility, influencing consumers of the platform as a sustainable mobility provider	Environmental	B2C, B2B
Obtaining CarbonNeutral certification for micromobility services	Neutralization of CO ₂ emissions generated in the vehicle lifecycle, legitimization of environmental actions	Environmental	B2C
Introduction of electric vehicles to the fleet in Warsaw	Promotion of electric cars, raising environmental awareness among customers	Environmental	B2C
Platform of shared mobility as an alternative to private cars	Reduction in the number of car trips, decrease in traffic congestion and pollution	Environmental, Social	C2C, B2C
Pilot programs encouraging the use of micromobility	Reduction in the number of cars in cities	Environmental, Social	C2C, B2C
"Proper Parking of Bolt Scooters" contest	Promotion of responsible behaviour among users, reduction of the problem of improperly parked scooters	Environmental, Social	C2C, B2C
Incentive program for drivers encouraging the replacement of cars with electric vehicles	Increase in the number of zero-emission rides, educating drivers about the benefits of electric vehicles	Environmental, Economic	C2C, B2B
Partnership with Eleport to install 750 electric vehicle charging points	Increased infrastructure availability for electric vehicle drivers, facilitation of the transition to zero-emission transport	Environmental, Economic	B2C, B2B
Introduction of the Bolt Urban Fund	Support for third-sector partners promoting sustainable transport and activating local communities	Social	B2C, B2B

Source: own elaboration based on data from bolt.eu (access date: February 2025)

Table 4 shows that Bolt's marketing communication is based on building trust in the platform, clearly focusing on encouraging users to adopt sustainable transport behavior. The company effectively uses external

validations and certifications (e.g., SBTi, ISO 14001:2015, CarbonNeutral) to authenticate its environmental goals while engaging consumers in responsible mobility through C2C initiatives. This is particularly evident in programs encouraging micromobility and contests promoting responsible behavior, which directly affect the user experience in urban spaces. Bolt strives to integrate environmental objectives with social and economic values, creating a multi-dimensional strategy that shapes the brand's perception as a leader in sustainable mobility. Specific infrastructure activities reinforce the long-term commitment to carbon neutrality by 2040. Indicating the establishment of a partnership with Eleport (network of electric vehicle charging stations) and the introduction of electric vehicles into the fleet, Bolt demonstrates the consistency between declarations and actual initiatives. This serves to build trust among existing and potential users and business partners.

Each company – Lime, BlaBlaCar, Traficar and Bolt uses sustainable marketing, engaging in environmental, social, and economic activities. Lime focuses on electrification and access to sustainable transportation, BlaBlaCar on reducing emissions through ride-sharing. Bolt focuses on transforming urban mobility through shared transportation alternatives and micromobility solutions, and Traficar combines urban mobility with cutting-edge technology and business partnerships. Communicating environmental and social values that attract customers and reinforce their position as leaders in sustainable transportation is critical to their success.

4. Discussions

Our results confirm that digital platforms play a significant role in the sharing economy, which is in line with the findings of Faraji *et al.* (2023). An analysis of the strategies of Lime, BlaBlaCar, Traficar and Bolt indicates that these companies not only adapt their business models to ecological requirements but also successfully shape user attitudes through educational activities and loyalty programs. According to research by Prihatiningrum *et al.* (2024), clearly communicated sustainability initiatives can increase trust in brands and minimize greenwashing. We see this particularly in the case of Lime and Bolt, which use environmental certificates (e.g., SBTi, ISO 14001:2015, CarbonNeutral) in their activities and transparently present their emission reduction targets.

In addition, the results of our research indicate that companies engage users in pro-environmental activities through loyalty programs and social initiatives, which confirms Sielicka-Różyńska's (2024) observations on the impact of such activities on the promotion of collective responsibility. Traficar, through CSR campaigns (e.g. Szlachetna Paczka) and partnership discount programs, builds strong relationships with customers and strengthens their commitment to the idea of sharing. Similarly, BlaBlaCar, thanks to its "Zero Empty Seats" strategy and cooperation with governments to promote carpooling, implements the principles of the sharing economy in a way that simultaneously responds to social and environmental needs.

Remarkable is the fact that the companies examined are driving the essentials of their business model by addressing social and environmental challenges (e.g. resource sharing, the need for micromobility) and transforming them into business goals. This is indicative of cause marketing, an important initiative within the framework of sustainable development (Bhatti *et al.* 2022). However, these activities are not just biased and suggestively promoted, but represent actual, measurable contributions within the value dimensions mentioned. The analyzed companies have elaborate sections with content about the sustainable actions taken and provide a detailed description of them. Such communication influences transparency, the multiplicity of activities undertaken emphasizes the sincerity of intentions, and the accessible form of the content communicated influences consumer trust (Schamp, *et al.* 2023).

In the context of shaping consumer behavior, it is also necessary to mention the communication of activities such as expanding the fleet of micromobility vehicles and extending the availability zone of charging stations. Explicitly promoting the socio-environmental advantages of this type of infrastructure, contributes to attracting those consumers who consciously select responsible solutions (Musova *et al.* 2021). Additionally, the active promotion of the utilization of this infrastructure, visible in activities such as "Proper Parking of Bolt Scooters" or #RideGreen from Lime, is characteristic of a user-generated content (UGC) strategy. The aggregation of user experiences of operating green and micromobility solutions, transmits into the promotion of responsible consumption. The UGC strategy itself has the potential to influence brand trust and reliability, as demonstrated by Niu (2025).

An interesting aspect that arises in the context of our results is the role of social validation and its potential consequences. As other researchers (Ballara, 2023) have pointed out, social media and rating systems can lead to an information bubble effect and affect the authenticity of user behavior. Our analysis suggests that platforms such as Bolt and Lime effectively manage this phenomenon by using social validation mechanisms to promote green behavior and transparent CSR activities. At the same time, to avoid the adverse effects of data

manipulation or hyper-commercialization, it seems crucial to use clear evaluation criteria and emphasize the real impacts of pro-environmental actions. BlaBlaCar is addressing this phenomenon by allowing a rating to be given to a driver only after a ride has been made. Organizing the process of providing ratings in a conditional way increases credibility not only of the company but also of the platform users themselves, which is a social translation within the C2C relationship.

Conclusions and Further Research

In summary, our results confirm that sharing economy platforms can effectively integrate environmental, social, and economic objectives, thus contributing to the promotion of sustainable development. However, their effectiveness depends on several key factors, including transparency of operations, responsible management strategies, and active user engagement in sustainable practices.

In the context of previous research, our analysis provides new insights into the synergies between business strategies and the social perception of brands. We show that platforms that successfully communicate their values and engage their user community can build more substantial social capital, which, in the long term, translates into greater customer loyalty and willingness to adopt more sustainable consumption practices.

Furthermore, our study suggests that future initiatives in sustainable mobility should consider technological and infrastructural aspects and social mechanisms for building trust and cooperation between users. This can be an essential reference point for further research into the long-term impact of sharing platforms on urban development, mobility, and changes in consumer attitudes towards new sharing economy models.

The adopted methodology has certain limitations. Purposive sampling limits the possibility of generalizing the results. Analysis is based solely on selected materials published by the companies themselves, which may lead to an incomplete picture of reality, as firms may selectively present information, highlighting positive aspects of their activities. Assessing the impact of communication strategies on consumer behavior, poses a methodological challenge due to the lack of direct data from consumers. Research on consumers perspective could seriously refine the study. Despite these limitations, the methodology allowed for achieving research objectives and provided valuable insights regarding the role of sustainable marketing in the sharing economy.

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Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

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Maciej Lewandowski: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Formal analysis, Writing – original draft, Data curation, Validation, Writing – review and editing

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Declaration of Use of Generative AI and AI-Assisted Technologies

The authors declare that they have used generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process before submission, but only to improve the language and readability of their paper and with the appropriate disclosure.

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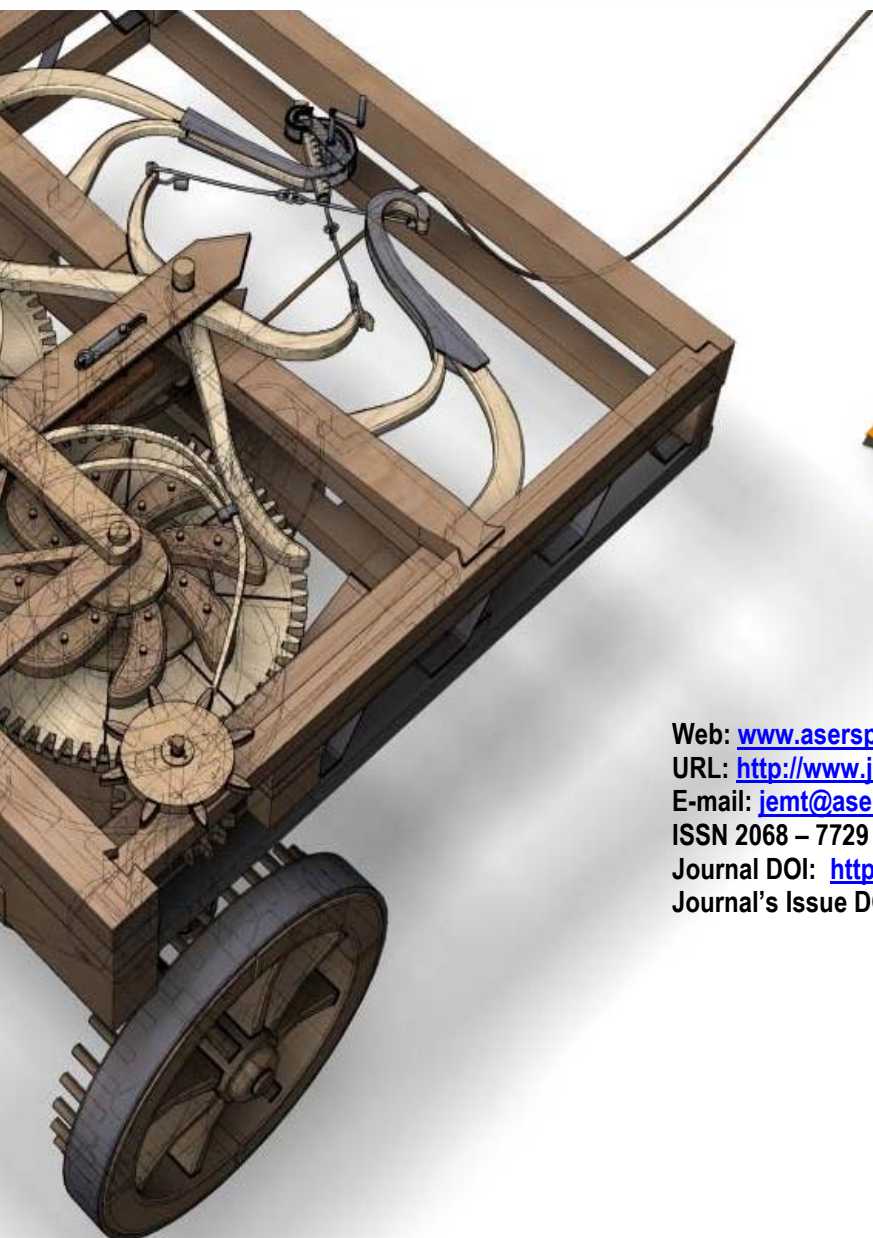
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