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Eco-sellers gaining momentum with mainstream buyers

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By Alexandria Sage - Analysis

LAS VEGAS (Reuters) - The move to more sustainable, earth-friendly clothing, shoes and other consumer goods may be at a "tipping point" of mainstream acceptance, and major companies like Nike Inc (NKE.N: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)) and eBay Inc (EBAY.O: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)) are recognizing their growing importance among global shoppers.

Green is now a major marketing tool, with companies from British Petroleum (BP.L: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)) advertising alternative energy to Wal-Mart Stores Inc's (WMT.N: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)) offering more organic goods. Moreover, the green movement is no longer the exclusive domain of the granola-eating, Birkenstock-wearing crowd, insiders say.

"I believe we're at a tipping point in the green market," said Marci Zaroff, president of clothing, home goods and spa line Under the Canopy, who first coined the phrase "ECOfashion."

Other companies who have recognized the shift include Clorox Co (CLX.N: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)), which sees its new higher-margin, eco-friendly line of cleaning products as a multi-hundred million dollar business over time, or Whole Foods Market Inc (WFMI.O: [Quote](#), [Profile](#), [Research](#), [Stock Buzz](#)), which has built its business on organic foods.

On Tuesday, global auction giant eBay said it was launching WorldofGood.com by eBay that will offer "socially responsible" goods verified by third parties, whether animal-friendly cosmetics, fair trade coffee, organic apparel, or home decor made from recycled materials.

"The market space right now is large but highly fragmented," said Robert Chatwani, general manager of the new venture. "Consumers cannot discover these products very easily through traditional channels."

Last week, the Magic Marketplace apparel trade show, the largest such show in the United States, held its first-ever ECOollection in Las Vegas with some 70 exhibitors showing off their eco-friendly wares.

One exhibitor, Nadine Curtis, owner of the Be Sweet line of clothing and accessories, works with South African job creation programs to support local artisans using handcrafted yarn. [Continued...](#)

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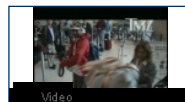
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