



Product-marketing with a declaration of intent (cf. also similar initiatives at IKEA).

*Greenwashing* is becoming part of a standard repertoire of *product-marketing*. The arguments for including repair, reuse and recycling into product-marketing, is that ads “rub off” on consumer-attitudes, and make way for a *greener* future. It is likely contradicted by the pressure on *sales* worldwide.

The volume, speed and distribution needed to run a *viable* business depends on worldwide *logistics*, in which the *internet* is a major player. In awarding the *Greenwasher of the Year* our concern is not to select a *major* culprit, but one that brings more *precision* to the current *readability* of advertisement/profiles.

There is a family-resemblance between [greenwashing](#) and [fake news](#). But the [frictions](#) between the two are likely to come out only as we *shift* from *products* to *ecosystems*. The Internet *will* eventually emerge as an ecosystem: an evolving [architecture of images and events](#) surfacing in *advertisements*.



The [Dalles dam](#) in the Columbia river (Oregon)

For example, is Google a greenwasher? In the present context, the example is intended as a *pedagogical* one—to give our participants of the range of what greenwashing can be—because it may *not* strike us as obvious. Google advertises itself through its services. Which is basically any area of *search*.

In a preview by brand-documentary Magazine B, Google's SVP Ben Gomes stated (2013): [to me Google is a search-company](#)! The company built its first mega-server in Oregon ([2006](#)). Its scope of data-search has since expanded into new fields. Including the content-patterns of its *users*: i.e., *metadata*.

They are used to *enhance* the contents we access, by measure of *relevance*, which includes an increasing share of *targeted* advertisement: the *bundling* of our user-data, is operated by *learning algorithms*—artificial intelligence (AI)—which in principle are automatic; featuring the [invisible hand](#) of the market.

What makes Google a relevant case in searching *greenwashing*, is that it presents itself as *free of cost*. From a *products* perspective this is true, since we—for a range of Google services—[do not pay](#) anything. But from the perspective of *ecosystems*, the environmental cost is becoming more evident.

The services we enjoy every day, our smart homes and the files we share on the web have a [hidden electricity bill](#). When Google's first mega-server was built in Dalles (Oregon), it depended on large amounts of electricity from the Columbia river. It is located near the [Dalles dam](#), and constructed in 1952.

Since then, a number of similar servers—or, Google plants—have been built around the world. Recently, the company acquired a property for this purpose outside of the ancient industrial town [Skien](#) (N). The public attention caused by the plants, makes it presently difficult to consider cyberspace *abstractly*.

In its current functions as an expanded search-engine, the Google-net is tied to the existence of mega-servers acting as information *hubs*. Without such hubs it presently not possible to collect meta-data (which are enormous quanta of non-same data bundled, and used for targeted contents/ads).

Our cultural awareness of the Internet is accordingly moving from satellites [down to earth](#): the servers that leave an environmental footprint, by demands on clean/renewable energy, water-cooling and [CO<sub>2</sub> emissions](#). Compared to the environmental cost, the creation of jobs remains but a small contribution.

If Google's integration into the local [value-network](#) remains modest, its demands for business confidentiality will soon build a [democratic deficit](#). A [local newspaper](#) in Skien reported that the company's meeting with the municipality was surprisingly not only confidential, but also *anonymous*.