Be kind and they will come

USA Today, March 26, 2013
From Opposing Viewpoints in Context

Big shops with good intention

Byline: Bruce Horovitz, @BruceHorovitz, USA TODAY

At a handful of Panera locations, down-and-out folks pay only what they can afford. Nordstrom recently opened a test store where all profits go to charity. Starbucks has three coffee shops where a big chunk of the money made helps the needy.

Thesis maybe?

This isn't capitalism gone wacko. It's capitalism with a conscience -- and good for the bottom line, too.

For decades, this kind of corporate kindness was the exception, but in the past few years, dozens of America's biggest brands have embraced socially kind deeds as an unusually effective way to sell themselves to consumers, employees, even stockholders. Some are listening to their hearts -- while others are listening to social-media chatter and creating consumable spin.

different sources of good deeds

In either case, there is one particularly desirable audience watching closely: Millennials. This trend-setting, if not free-spending group of 95million Americans, born from 1982 to 2004, live and breathe social media and are broadly convinced that doing the right thing isn't just vogue (mode), but mandatory. With nearly a third of the population driving this trend, kindness is becoming the nation's newest currency.

the new trend — adulthood around 2000s

"Companies can't hide anymore," says Ben Cohen, co-founder of Ben & Jerry's, known for not only devoting a hunk of its profits to charity but also for supporting grass-roots environmental and sustainability causes. Because everything they do becomes social-media fodder, he says, "forward-looking companies are starting to do less bad -- and more good."

another goal

forward-looking companies means smart companies

In an ultra-transparent world, where information zips from Facebook to Twitter to Instagram, just about everything a company does is out in the open, says John Mackey, co-founder of Whole Foods, a groundbreaking company in local community support. "If everything you're doing is seen," he says, "it's human nature to do things that people would approve of."

what does he means?

But it's no longer just outliers such as Ben & Jerry's and Whole Foods doing the right thing. Big consumer brands such as Panera, Starbucks and Nordstrom are members in good standing of the Do-Gooder Society. More likely sooner than later, corporate kindness that doesn't have its origins in the public relations or human resources department may become as common as coupons. Even in a dicey economy, kindness sells.

economic crisis

"Millennials who got burned by the recession feel a resentment (may) to consumerism, but have few alternatives," says Robbie Blinkoff, a consumer anthropologist from Balti-more. "They had to create one: Love one another."

Not love in the '60s hippie sense, but love in the show-me-what-you're-doing-for-others sense.

?

10 Some are doing it at ground level. Some are making genuine, companywide efforts.

Who he means By this?

11 Others are talking the talk but not walking the walk. Several large retailers, for example, embrace the image of kindness by asking customers at checkout to donate to causes. That's, arguably, a far cry from a sustained and deep-seated effort from within. Even then, this national epidemic of corporate kindness is grounded in one rationale: It works.

Popular it may be argued

12 Consider: Some 47% of consumers say they buy, every month, at least one brand that supports a good cause, according to a 2012 global survey by public relations firm Edelman. That's a 47% increase from 2010. What's more, 72% of consumers say they would recommend a brand that supports a good cause -- a 38% increase in two years.

Purpose of this paragraph — a proof of good credibility

13 Just as compelling, consumers say they're more likely to discuss good deeds a company does than they are its financial performance, according to a 2012 Weber Shandwick survey of nearly 2,000 consumers and senior business executives in the U.S, United Kingdom, China and Brazil.

is this connected

14 "It's bigger than a trend," says Marshal Cohn, chief retail analyst at the research firm NPD Group. "It's a powerful marketing tool for brands to use to separate themselves from the competition."

What is NPD

15 When consumers nationally were asked last month by research partners NPD and Civic Science how important a company's "social con-sciousness" was in determining where they shop and what they buy, 74% said it was either "very" important or "somewhat" important.

is should be important?

good discussion question

16 Doing good is becoming ~~less an option~~ and more a requirement. But it's tricky. It's not just about writing checks anymore, and most Millennials have a seemingly innate ability to smell out manufactured kindness. Corporate kindness must be grounded in an holistic sense of good that can't feel, smell or taste like it's been painted on by the corporate spin-meisters. It has to come from within.

17 "You can't hire someone to give you values," says Ron Shaich, founder of Panera Bread, which in the past 18 months has opened a handful of Panera Cares restaurants in urban areas that ask customers to pay only what they can afford -- even if it's just volunteering for an hour. "Kindness can't be a corporate tactic that's buried in the marketing department."

interesting perspective

18 'Why don't you do that?'

19 At the five Panera Cares ~~restaurants, some customers~~ don't pay at all -- but that's OK, because others willingly pay extra. The profits are primarily used to job-train at-risk kids. goal

20 The idea came after Shaich and his wife, Nancy, watched a TV news segment about a Denver entrepreneur who planned to open a cafe where diners paid only what they could afford. Shaich recalls his wife then asking him, "Why don't you do that?"

21 Within a year, he did. He opened the first give-back-to-the-community store in the company's

21 hometown, St. Louis, in 2010. It's still open -- and still profitable.

22 "It's in our DNA," Shaich says. "We didn't get into business just to make money -- not that that's bad. We got into business to make a difference in the lives of our guests." Panera Cares is making that difference in five cities, with plans to expand to more.

creating business to help instead of profiting money

23 Alan Olsen eats two or three times a week -- and volunteers once a week -- at the Panera Cares in the Lincoln Park area of Chicago. "I like what they do," says Olsen, who otherwise works as a waiter at an upscale restaurant in Chicago. "When I first saw Panera Cares, I wondered: How long is this going to last?" More than a year later, he no longer asks that. "It's just good people with good hearts trying to give back."

24 Nordstrom, too, has an eye on helping others with a Manhattan retail store, Treasure&Bond, whose profits -- and sometimes, a portion of its sales receipts -- go to charity.

25 Pete Nordstrom, president of merchandising and great-grandson of the chain's founder, says he got the idea a few years ago when he visited a store in Paris, whose proceeds all went to charity. "Companies have to do more than make money," he says. "It's one thing to do well by the number of customers and another thing to do well by the community." good deeds are a requirement now?

26 He opened a small store in New York's SoHo district with three purposes: to test the New York market, where Nordstrom has no full-service department stores; to test selling merchandise that might not be sold in conventional Nordstrom stores; and to give back to the community.

there are drawbacks

27 But kindness doesn't always come easy -- or cheap. The store has been running in the red since it opened, Nordstrom concedes. On top of that, it may have to change locations -- or even close -- after the lease expires in about six months.

persistance

28 "We will keep doing this as long as we can make it work," he says. "We have to balance making money and fulfilling our mission."

29 As long as the store is there, Jennifer Fisher will keep shopping there. She's an upscale jewelry designer who works about five blocks away.

30 In the past year, she's spent about $1,000 purchasing gifts -- mostly for others -- at the store. The fact that a store like this is in business -- with cool merchandise and a mindful purpose -- is huge, she says.

31 "Stores like this didn't even exist before," Fisher says. "It's a no-brainer when you know that you can buy something special and, at the same time, know you're giving back." ultimate purpose

32 Striving for a 'better place'

33 Some companies have etched kindness into their core for decades and are glad to see others

34 catching up. Among them: The Body Shop; Patagonia; Stonyfield; Timberland; and industry leader Ben & Jerry's, which, in 1985, determined that 7.5% of its pretax profit would go to philanthropy. Since being purchased by global giant Unilever in 2000, the company has continued to give back roughly that same amount.

35 "Anything that adds more kindness to the world is a good thing," co-founder Jerry Greenfield says. "When companies measure social good at the same time they measure how much money they make, we'll be in a better place."

it should come from the heart

36 But if the motivation for doing good is just about selling more stuff or making more money, it's doomed to fail, warns Whole Foods' Mackey, who recently co-authored a best-selling book on the topic, Conscious Capitalism. His natural foods grocery chain runs a foundation that grants loans to aid people in poverty in 55 countries trying to start small businesses. "We do these things because they're the right thing to do."

what are 55 countries

37 Starbucks has been at it for years.

38 The coffee kingpin has operated a "community" store in New York's Harlem neighborhood that's been donating a chunk of its profits to local charities for more than seven years. Recently, it's opened similar stores in Los Angeles and Houston. By 2018, it expects to operate 50 of them.

we're in 2018, is it happening

39 Echoing others, CEO Howard Schultz says, "This can't be done through a lens of marketing and PR, but through a lens of guiding principals." Government simply can't do everything, he says, "so it's incumbent upon business leaders to do more than our share."

what is PR

duty

40 But it's not just big, familiar brands doing the kindness thing. So, too, is the appropriately named KIND Healthy Snacks, a 10-year-old snack maker that claims to have both an economic and social bottom line. The company's founder, CEO Daniel Lubetzky, was born in Mexico to a father who was a Holocaust survivor. That, he says, "defines who I am, what I do." His father's suffering, he says, is the impetus for his company, whose core mission is to "build bridges between people."

41 The key, he says, is that kindness must be genuine. His snacks, he says, not only help do kind things for the body and the taste buds, but also the world. Every month, the company does one big act of kindness, such as buying school supplies for homeless kids. At the same time, it prods its customers to do kind acts -- as simple as writing a thank-you note to a former teacher -- then report the act online. When enough customers report kind acts, the company responds, in kind, with a large act.

42 "Young people don't want to just make money," Lubetzky says. "They want to make a difference." Within two generations, he predicts, corporate kindness will be the rule, not the exception.

43 Inspiration via marketing

the main goal for the text

44 Just the image of kindness can be an effective sales tool.

45 It's no accident that one of Coca-Cola's Super Bowl spots displayed a series of kind acts, such as dropped wallets being returned, as captured by security cameras from around the globe. Fostering kind acts will become a bigger part of Coke's marketing, says Cristina Bondolowski, vice president of global brands. Extensive research shows that performing kind acts -- the act of giving -- makes people feel happier. Future marketing by Coke will show societal acts of kindness, such as a guy who installs swings in parks and a lady who secretly plants flowers at night.

Coca-Cola's responsible for this?/ research by whom?

46 "This is not just telling people to be happy," Bondolowski says, "but inspiring happiness."

47 The makers of Bayer aspirin have gotten in on the act, too. A TV spot for its Aleve pain relief brand features a guy whose back pain hits him while volunteering in a soup kitchen.

48 The idea came from within the brand's marketing group, which for the past four years has donated to -- and had 100 people volunteer at -- a local food bank near the company's headquarters in New Jersey. "We're just reflecting back to our consumers what they're already doing," says Barton Warner, vice president of marketing at Bayer Consumer Care U.S.

49 There's even a magazine about this lifestyle that made its debut last month, appropriately named, Mindful. The first issue, with an initial circulation of 90,000, sold out, editor-in-chief Barry Boyce says. "When we are mindful, we not only reduce stress and enhance performance, but it increases our attention to the well-being of others."

Title:
what is the impact of sweatshops on the economics in countries that have them?

- What is exactly is a sweatshop?

... oil
...fashionably
...ver, they also

Be kind and they will come

big shops with good intention

USA Today, March 26, 2013
From Opposing Viewpoints in Context

Byline: Bruce Horovitz, @BruceHorovitz, USA TODAY

At a handful of Panera locations, down-and-out folks pay only what they can afford. Nordstrom recently opened a test store where all profits go to charity. Starbucks has three coffee shops where a big chunk of the money made helps the needy.

thesis maybe?

This isn't capitalism gone wacko. It's capitalism with a conscience -- and good for the bottom line, too.

For decades, this kind of corporate kindness was the exception, but in the past few years, dozens of America's biggest brands have embraced socially kind deeds as an unusually effective way to sell themselves to consumers, employees, even stockholders. Some are listening to their hearts -- while others are listening to social-media chatter and creating consumable spin.

different sources of good deeds

In either case, there is one particularly desirable audience watching closely: Millennials. This trend-setting, if not free-spending group of 95million Americans, born from 1982 to 2004, live and breathe social media and are broadly convinced that doing the right thing isn't just vogue (mode), but mandatory. With nearly a third of the population driving this trend, kindness is becoming the nation's newest currency.

new trend — adulthood around 2000s

"Companies can't hide anymore," says Ben Cohen, co-founder of Ben & Jerry's, known for not only devoting a hunk of its profits to charity but also for supporting grass-roots environmental and sustainability causes. Because everything they do becomes social-media fodder, he says, "forward-looking companies are starting to do less bad -- and more good."

another goal

forward-looking companies means smart companies

In an ultra-transparent world, where information zips from Facebook to Twitter to Instagram, just about everything a company does is out in the open, says John Mackey, co-founder of Whole Foods, a groundbreaking company in local community support. "If everything you're doing is seen," he says, "it's human nature to do things that people would approve of."

what does it means?

But it's no longer just outliers such as Ben & Jerry's and Whole Foods doing the right thing. Big consumer brands such as Panera, Starbucks and Nordstrom are members in good standing of the Do-Gooder Society. More likely sooner than later, corporate kindness that doesn't have its origins in the public relations or human resources department may become as common as coupons. Even in a dicey economy, kindness sells.

economic crisis

"Millennials who got burned by the recession feel a resentment (may) to consumerism, but have few alternatives," says Robbie Blinkoff, a consumer anthropologist from Balti-more. "They had to create one: Love one another."

Not love in the '60s hippie sense, but love in the show-me-what-you're-doing-for-others sense.

?