

marketing teams, to name a few.³² No other airline has ever committed to something like this, they argued.

CONCLUSION

Neeleman, who was known for personally answering every customer letter or e-mail he received, viewed the Customer Bill of Rights as absolutely vital to restoring JetBlue's image. He contended that the bill of rights would reaffirm the public's perception that JetBlue viewed air travelers as human beings, not cattle to be shipped from Point A to Point B. "This is going to be a different company because of this," Neeleman said. "It's going to be expensive. But what's more important is to win back people's confidence."³³

In numerous interviews over the weekend, Neeleman promised that he would reveal JetBlue's redemption plan to the world by Monday, February 19. If a customer bill of rights was going to be part of that plan, the CEO still

had to convince many influential people inside the company.

CASE QUESTIONS

1. How could JetBlue have better communicated with its internal stakeholders across the country on Valentine's Day and during the days that followed to enhance its image with customers?
2. Should the corporate communications team at JetBlue have arranged for CEO David Neeleman to appear on the national television news and talk show circuit following the crisis? What might be the potential benefits and risks to the company's reputation?
3. Would you recommend a corporate advertising program for JetBlue?
4. If implemented, how would you market the JetBlue Airways Customer Bill of Rights to external and internal stakeholders? How would this affect JetBlue's reputation?

organizations and good Samaritans. At the time, many considered businesses to be purely self-interested entities. Positioned in a corner directly opposite charities, the purpose of a corporation was profit maximization, with any efforts to give back to the community limited to check-writing and philanthropy at an arm's length. Milton Friedman, a University of Chicago economist, embodied the belief that businesses should be strictly economic, whereas governments and nonprofits should handle social and environmental issues. In the 1970s, Friedman's doctrines became famous through his *New York Times Magazine* article "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits," in which he declared: "What does it mean to say that 'business' has responsibilities? Only people can have responsibilities. A corporation is an artificial person and in this sense may have artificial responsibilities, but 'business' as a whole cannot be said to have responsibilities, even in this vague sense."

In the 1970s, society began to more actively question the means by which corporations generate profits, acknowledging for the first time that corporate practices and society's well-being are closely linked.³ Corporations became more environmentally aware once large-scale disasters such as Union Carbide's chemical leak in Bhopal, India, in 1984 and the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989 sparked wide-

Milton Friedman, "The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits," *The New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1970.

³ Joshua Daniel Margolis and James Preuss Wilson, *People and Profits: The Search for a Link Between a Company's Social and Financial Performance* (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2001).

³² White, personal interview.

³³ Bailey, "Chief 'Mortified.'"