



**Case study for Brand
Activism**

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Rationale

This case study will cover brand activism, which is when an organization pursues an interest to advocate social justice that relates to the company's primary brand ideals. The business seeks to improve humanity while gaining customer trust through lobbying in the following sectors: economic, social, and governmental. Companies are deeply immersed in the fabric of society and the decisions of people. Since they are so involved in people's lives, the business must take action. Customer attraction is not just dependent upon a good product. Still, it also relies upon a company to forge a connection between the consumer and the business itself by showing interest in the realities of life. I chose to work on the Nike campaign titled "Dream Crazy", featuring Colin Kaepernick. The very basis of the campaign is grounded in a popular movement, the power to protest injustices in society. Nike's "Dream Crazy" focuses on solving a problem with one man's story, the freedom to have beliefs, and the power and determination to pursue them at all costs.

As a viewer, this piece is appealing and interesting; it is a prevailing showcase of advertising. The campaign did not just follow the story of Kaepernick, but it showed the entirety of the story and situation; the way it was shown is consistent with Nike's Brand. Nike has focused on relating the product to the consumer by using the company slogan "Just Do it". When one connects the mantra of Nike "just do it" with the essence and intention of "Dream Crazy," one finds that there is a parallel between the two; its purpose is to solve a problem, and that is what the campaign does by tackling society's big questions on injustice.

Most brands have brand ambassadors, and it's not enough to utilize them to sell your merchandise. Still, it's essential that a business use brand representatives also to address social issues. Marketing and advertising become powerful and captivating when a brand develops relevance by creating space for conversations that strike a chord with consumers and brand enthusiasts. People buy from those with that they can relate.

Executive summary

Nike is a North American global company known worldwide for its sports goods, including shoes and active accessories (Danahue, 2018). In 2018, Nike saw a decrease in sales in the market; the loss resulted in a 4% decline in revenue. At that specific time, the business faced fierce competition from sportswear companies like Adidas and Lululemon. When there was a plummet in profit, other companies with similar products benefited from Nike's downfall, and many of these businesses seized shares of the market. One of the significant problems for Nike was that its image struggled to produce interest in its items (Winson, 2018).

With a decrease in sales, it is essential that Nike quickly shift and adapt to the needs of the open market. In addition, millennials are expected to surpass the baby boomers as the most significant living generation in the United States (Winson, 2018). In 2018, the past Brand president of Nike, Trevor Edwards, stated, "it is vital that Nike find ways to connect the Brand directly to the consumer's daily realities, and we can do this by believing in the Brand's capacity to solve problems through linking the image of the company with real-life stories which are compelling and relevant. These stories will make the Nike brand more visible by driving conversation; in the process, it will create stronger relationships with customers" (Danison, 2018).

The mentality behind this strategy is to become the center of dinner-time discussion; to do this, the business must be controversial in tackling sensitive topics. Nike pursued a partnership with Colin Kaepernick in September of 2018 and made him a brand ambassador. The move was supposed to showcase the 30th anniversary of the company and its mantra "Just Do It." There is a risky and very detrimental balance when taking a political position on a topic. You can either succeed or fail miserably, but the Brand decided to put its trust in the ex-quarterback, who was cut from his football team for

kneeling during the American anthem. His reasoning for this was to protest police brutality, increasing in the country in recent years. The campaign by Nike projects that its relationship and display of Colin Kaepernick influences Generation Z and millennials, as this is a topic commonly discussed in those circles. The original reaction by viewers was unwelcoming and unsupportive of the Brand; Nike initially noticed a decline in market value within the stock market after publicly presenting the campaign (Danison, 2018).

The company also had to deal with people boycotting the Brand through social media by using hashtags, such as #JustBurnIt and #BoycottNike. When it appeared that no good could come from this pursuit, suddenly, revenue for Nike products increased by 45% rapidly. In addition, it has been documented that the profit made during the campaign was record-setting, and the brand engagement on all social networks was at an all-time high.

"Dream Crazy," featuring Colin Kaepernick, is a prime example of the purpose of the case study. It is essential to find and discover the power of brand activism and how it relates to increased customer behavior dynamics and viewership of Generation Z and Millennials; this is done to analyze trends and patterns conducted by the business to establish and create more brands that will attract more activist partnerships. This case study will be connected to a research question, and to address it, various research methods are predictive, explanatory, and exploratory. Research examining the hypothesis through brand activism shows how Millennials and Generation Zs are influenced by marketing and branding associated with activism. Research that details "why" and "how" brand activism impacts different types of generations are referred to as explanatory.

In conclusion, finding and pinpointing specific patterns created success during the Nike campaign. There are various objectives, and it was essential to utilize a mixed methodology. Reports and tables are known as quantitative research. It is also crucial to involve in this document studies, articles, and books. Data analysis retrieved from a source apart from an interview is referred to as primary data. An example of primary data is when Daniel Smith, past

Head of Marketing for Nike UK, was interviewed. Statistics and data gathered through polls and surveys are classified as secondary data. The case study will further introduce concepts in branding; there will be an analysis of various theories that relate to brands and equity, image, and activism within branding. It is imperative to explore the connection between promotion and activism and how they coexist. Another vital element is understanding customer behavior, emphasizing Generation Z and Millennials; the primary point of interest to understand is how those two groups of people take action and perceive. Additionally, the case study should present the relationship between consumer behavior and brands in relation to social media as a space or platform of opinion that drives public views.

The research and examination of findings have resulted in critical findings. Customer behavior that exists among Generation Z and Millennials is motivated by brands that exhibit a deep commitment to taking positions against social issues. If a brand wants to address a problem in society, it must have a real connection with the topic discussed. If there is a lack of genuine compassion for the subject being announced, this would be considered non-genuine positioning or "woke washing." Consumers and brand supporters will criticize and escalate the situation with a negative view on social media, negatively impacting brand equity.

Generation Z and Millennials desire to have brands exemplify their interests and personalities while connecting to the consumer on a deep level; this will create a relatable feeling.

Constructing a strong emotional relationship between the public and the Brand is an essential function of activism in branding. Nike's predicament is unique, but specific trends and patterns contributed to the overall success of brand activism in Nike's "Dream Crazy" campaign among Generation Z and Millennials. Using Nike as an example, before producing and introducing any form of brand activism, generating superficial messaging is unnecessary, but the company must create branding that resonates with those viewing it. The marketing approach needs to substantiate your intent with your viewership. A company should produce an emotional marketing strategy that facilitates an intense and profound relationship.

References

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