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TRENDJACKING: A SOCIAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS

An Undergraduate Honors Thesis
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by

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to look at the intersection of trendjacking and social justice within five specific advertisements targeted at an American audience from well-known brands. A variety of success in utilizing this intersection is presented and explained through an analysis of the advertisement, people highlighted, the brand's financial giving and history, social media response, etc. The five brands examined are Pepsi, Dove, Nike, Airbnb, and Levi's.

To successfully utilize social justice trendjacking, brands must be genuine and specific with their message, be prepared to explain their reasoning for their decisions, have the advertisements checked by many people from diverse backgrounds to check for potential issues that could arise from public viewing.

Keywords: trendjacking, advertising, social justice, Pepsi, Dove, Nike, Airbnb, Levi's

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Trendjacking: A Social Justice Analysis

Rachel Finnegan

Introduction

Trendjacking is when brands combine their product with emerging trends “by inserting their brand messages into social media conversations around trending topics”(Lambretch, 2018, p. 177). Brands utilize this with the intent that consumers will share their content as they do with trending content (Lambretch, Tucker, & Wiertz, 2018). It can range from a brand wishing its followers a “Happy Holidays” to making a statement about a current political movement. Done right trendjacking can help brands build a connection with their consumers, done poorly brands can ruin their reputation with one post and spend years trying to rebuild it.

Social justice is defined as both a goal and process: “The goal of social justice is full and equitable participation of people from all social identity groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. The process for attaining the goal of social justice should also be democratic and participatory, respectful of human diversity and group differences, and inclusive and affirming of human agency and capacity for working collaboratively with others to create change.” (Adams & Bell, 2016, p. 3). Brands pull from these ideas to connect with audiences on trends that are happening. Brands like Aerie used International Women’s Day to connect with its consumers tweeting a photo along with the caption “Happy International Women’s Day, #AerieREAL fam! YOU inspire every day” (Aerie, 2019).

Method

No research framework was found on this topic. However, two studies have identified trends by using Twitter’s public API to identify daily popular trends and tweets within those as it

is currently happening (Antonakaki, Polakis, Athanasopoulos, Ioannidis, & Fragopoulou, 2016; Lambretch et al., 2018). This study finds advertisements with time correlations to trending topics on Twitter where both the advertisement and the correlated trend address topics within the Adams and Bell (2016) social justice definition. Dehghani and Tumer (2015, para. 5) say “The success of advertising should be measured taking into account consumers’ evaluations of the interest aroused by the advertisements.” For this reason, the analysis will look at the social response to the spot, as well as the company’s legitimate claim to support the social justice issue based on its historic actions, which often impacts the social response.

Trendjacking and social justice play a role in each of the five advertisements analyzed below. The advertisements used for this analysis are targeted towards American audiences from large, well-known brands. The selection of advertisements was chosen to minimize the variables of cultural differences and brands making controversial advertisements under the premise that “any publicity is good publicity.” According to Berger, Sorensen, and Rasmussen (2010), negative publicity will hurt sales for products with prior awareness but will increase sales for products with low prior awareness. The advertisements analyzed offer a variety of experiences with social justice trendjacking.

Facts

The first is Pepsi’s advertisement “Jump In” for its “Live for Now” campaign featuring Kendall Jenner (Schultz, 2017). Next, Unilever’s Dove’s Facebook advertisement for a new body wash is analyzed (Quackenbush, 2017). Then, Nike’s “*Dream Crazy*” advertisement narrated by Colin Kaepernick is analyzed (Nike, 2018). Then, Airbnb’s “*We Accept*” Superbowl advertisement follows (Airbnb, 2017). Finally, Levi’s “*Circles*” is the last advertisement in this

analysis (Levi's, 2017b). Each utilizes trendjacking of a trend related to social justice, based on the definition above. The differences in these advertisements, the social media responses, and the reasons for their success or lack thereof will be discussed in detail. It is important to take into consideration that according to Hobbs (2017), 42 percent of marketers believe the brands they work for are failing to reflect a contemporary, racially-diverse, society in their marketing and advertising and on the agency side only 13.1% of staff currently come from a black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) background.

Pepsi

“Jump In” was an advertisement created by Creators League Studio, Pepsi's in-house creative team and aired on April 4th, 2017. The 2 min 40 s spot follows Jenner modeling in a photo shoot. Upon seeing a nonspecific march in the streets, she removes her wig and lipstick, marches to the front of the march, and hands an officer a can of Pepsi ending the march as everyone cheers. Pepsi has said the ad “captures the spirit and actions of those people that jump into every moment. It features multiple lives, stories and emotional connections that show passion, joy, unbound and uninhibited moments. No matter the occasion, big or small, these are the moments that make us feel alive.” (Schultz, 2017)

The impact of the spot did not match the positive intent of the advertisers (Schultz, 2017). Jakeman, a Senior Advisor and Consultant to PepsiCo, “suggested that many research techniques place ‘very little focus on the social impact that’s going to be [happening] among different audiences’” (WARC, 2017, para. 4). In this instance, the lack of awareness of the social impact becomes apparently quickly (WARC, 2017).

The release of the advertisement was following several marches for nation-wide movements for social justice. The first annual worldwide Women's March was in January 2017 (History.com Editors, 2018). The Women's March was trending on Twitter with over 40 march-related hashtags (Whaling, 2017). Additionally, the Black Lives Matter movement was holding many marches and protests to fight the injustice and inequality of black members of society. According to Anderson, Toor, Rainie, and Smith (2018, para. 2), "#BlackLivesMatter hashtag has been a relatively consistent presence on Twitter for the last five years." During one of these marches, Jonathan Bachman/Reuters photographed Iesha Evans as she stood solemnly in front of many police officers at a Black Lives Matter march in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in June 2016. She stood without moving or backing up, which led to her eventual arrest. (Sidahmen, M., 2016) Pepsi wanted to capture the spirit and action of those that jump into every movement (Schultz, 2017). These nationally covered marches showcased those who were fighting for equality and jumping into the movements. Though never stated, Pepsi was likely pulling from these marches for equality for its inspiration for the advertisement.

Pepsi received a multitude of public feedback on social media. Many respondents on social media compared the photograph of Evans with a shot of the advertisement where Jenner is handing the officer the Pepsi. These individuals claimed the spot was making light of a serious event that leads to the arrest of many individuals, including Evans (Sidahmed, 2016). The experience of the protestors and the idyllic resolution in the advertisement is unrealistic to the experiences from protests in reality. Bernice King, daughter of Martin Luther King Jr. shared a photo of her father in a confrontation with police including the caption "If only Daddy would have known about the power of #Pepsi" (King, 2017). The last prominent social response theme

was a call for preemptive checks on advertisements by people of color and people with different perspectives before they are released to the public so this does not happen, though no specific information could be found on the demographics of Pepsi employees or those that created the advertisement.

Pepsi said it was “trying to project a global message of unity, peace and understanding. Clearly, we missed the mark and apologize... We did not intend to make light of any serious issue. We are pulling the content and halting any further rollout” (Pepsi, 2017) Jenner shared “I would never purposely hurt someone ever,” she said. “And I would, obviously, if I knew this was gonna be the outcome, like, I would have never done something like this. But you don’t know when you’re in the moment.” (Lang, 2017, para. 5)

Pepsi made several grievous mistakes with this advertisement. The march or protest portrayed was generic and without purpose, which was intended to connect with a broad audience. Instead, it came off as distanced from society and social issues. This lack of substance was noted by many social media users and one of the primary complaints of the advertisement. However, the PepsiCo corporation gives money philanthropically to the focus areas of nutrition, water, women, and waste (Philanthropy, n.d.). This shows that PepsiCo is passionate about topics and dedicated to making a change in these areas. The company could have capitalized on any of these and directed the march around a specific issue it supports. Any specific issue would have connected with many more individuals and made the brand seem more genuine and relatable to viewers.

Similarly to the neutrality of the march, Kendall Jenner hasn’t taken strong stances on any social justice issues. Jenner is a celebrity famous for being the child of a former Olympic

athlete, owning a clothing line, and being related to the Kardashians (Weber, 2017). Her social justice presence is lacking (Weber, 2017). Her only notable social justice involvement includes attending a lunch for Everytown, a group that works with victims of gun violence, and posting a video encouraging people to vote and she has never attended a protest (Weber, 2017). Had Pepsi chosen a spokesperson who had gone to a march or protest, the person would be able to speak to their experiences and help the team to understand that the ending is unrealistic and minimizes the experience of so many (Weber, 2017).

Dove

Unilever's Dove released a Facebook advertisement for a new body wash as a part of a larger campaign incorporating Facebook and TV (Quackenbush, 2017). The campaign was released in October 2017 (Astor, 2017). Initially, the Facebook advertisement aired a 3 s video clip featuring a black woman: Lola Ogunyemi, a white woman, and an Asian woman removing their skin-colored tops and changing into each other. After that, the 30 s TV spot aired displaying seven women of different races and ages answering the question of what their skins' wash label would say. The TV spot ends with the narrator saying "regardless of differences, all skin types deserve gentleness" (Dove, 2017a).

Naomi Blake saw the Facebook advertisement and thought it contained a racist message as an individual with black skin turned into an individual with white skin (Blake, 2017). She commented on the original Facebook video and asked if Dove consulted black employees before posting and said: "please think deeper everything has a subliminal message...what are you telling the little black girls who watch this" (Blake, 2017). Dove responded to the comment explaining that the product is body wash for every skin type, providing some additional information of the

products, and concluding with “We are committed to representing beauty of all ages, ethnicities, shapes, and sizes and listen to all women's needs to create great products” (Blake, 2017).

Additionally, Blake took stills from the video to display Ogunyemi taking off her shirt and turning into a white woman with the Dove logo in the bottom corner. Blake compiled the photo's and posted them to her own page. This photo was shared thousands of times and became a viral photo on the internet. It became nearly impossible to find the original clip, as the image created by Blake became so popular and well-known.

In a Facebook and Twitter statement, Dove said "An image we recently posted on Facebook missed the mark in representing women of color thoughtfully. We deeply regret the offense it caused." On October 9, 2017, Dove (2017b) posted on its Facebook saying:

As a part of a campaign for Dove body wash, a 3 s video clip was posted to the US Facebook page which featured three women of different ethnicities, each removing a t-shirt to reveal the next woman. The short video was intended to convey that Dove body wash is for every woman and be a celebration of diversity, but we got it wrong. It did not represent the diversity of real beauty which is something Dove is passionate about and is core to our beliefs, and it should not have happened. We have removed the post and have not published any other related content. This should not have happened and we are re-evaluating our internal processes for creating and approving content to prevent us making this type of mistake in future. We apologise deeply and sincerely for the offence that it has caused and do not condone any activity or imagery that insults any audience.

Dove followed through on its word to reevaluate internal processes. A month after this campaign aired, the company acquired Sundial Brands. Sundial Brand's purpose is to serve the

unmet needs of consumers of color (Unilever, 2017). The press release stated, “Agreement accelerates Unilever’s Beauty & Personal Care category growth by addressing under-served needs of multicultural and millennial consumers” (Unilever, 2017).

There were several notable responses to the Dove campaign and Blake’s photo. Ava DuVernay, director of *Selma*, replied to Dove’s apology tweet saying “You can do better than ‘missed the mark’. Flip + diminishing. Deepens your offence. You do good work. Have been for years. Do better here.” (DuVernay, 2017)). Munroe Bergdorf, a black, transgender model, and activist tweeted at Dove “Diversity is viewed as a buzzword or a trend. An opportunity to sell product to women of color. Dove – Do better.” (Bergdorf, 2017)

This was not the first time Dove was accused of having a racist advertisement. In 2011, Dove received backlash for an advertisement that was released; people called the advertisement and the company racist. The advertisement showed skin before and after using dove products photos featuring three models in front of the pictures. The models were positioned in such a way that the model with darker skin color was on the before side, a model with middle skin tone color was in the middle, and the model with the lightest skin color was on the after side. People claimed the advertisement was insinuating that lighter skin is better as the before is darker and the after is lighter. In 2014, Dove released a product for “Normal to Dark Skin” (Snider & Jones, 2017). The line claims that lighter skin is normal and darker skin is abnormal. Additionally, Unilever, Dove’s parent company, is selling skin lightening products to people in India (Unilever, n.d., Fair).

However, Ogunyemi, the black model in this campaign came forward. She wrote an opinion article for *The Guardian* called “I am the woman in the 'racist Dove ad'. I am not a

victim.” She said she received very positive feedback from those close to her saying she was representing “Black Girl Magic.” She said that had she felt at all like she would be portrayed as an inferior she would not have accepted the gig. She said her experience with Dove at the shoot was positive (Ogunyemi, 2017). Ogunyemi (2017) had a message relevant for advertisers:

There is definitely something to be said here about how advertisers need to look beyond the surface and consider the impact their images may have, specifically when it comes to marginalized groups of women. It is important to examine whether your content shows that your consumer’s voice is not only heard, but also valued.

While I agree with Dove’s response to unequivocally apologise for any offense caused, they could have also defended their creative vision, and their choice to include me, an unequivocally dark-skinned black woman, as a face of their campaign. I am not just some silent victim of a mistaken beauty campaign. I am strong, I am beautiful, and I will not be erased.

No information could be found on the racial demographics of Dove employees. Dove did not publicize if the spot was created internally or by an outside agency. Unilever’s “Advancing Inclusion and Diversity” page of the website focuses almost exclusively on gender, with a few other topics like confronting stereotypes, with almost no mention of race (Unilever, n.d., Advancing).

Nike

Nike released an advertisement called “Dream Crazy” by Wieden & Kennedy featuring Colin Kaepernick as a part of the “Just do it.” campaign (Nike, 2018). The 2 min spot was aired on YouTube on Wednesday, September 5, 2018 (Nike, 2018). Kaepernick narrates the ad

encouraging people to believe they are more and to dream big (Nike, 2018). It highlights other Nike athletes like Serena Williams and LeBron James who have exceptional accomplishments (Nike, 2018). The spot includes a shot of Kaepernick saying “Believe in something. Even if it means sacrificing everything” (Nike, 2018). It ends with Kaepernick saying “So don’t ask if your dreams are crazy, ask if they are crazy enough.” and displaying the Nike slogan “Just do it.” followed by the Nike logo (Nike, 2018).

Kaepernick is a former quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, an NFL affiliated football team (Biography.com Editors, 2014). In 2016, Kaepernick became a household name because he knelt during the national anthem played at his football games (Biography.com Editors, 2014). He was exhibiting his first amendment right to peaceful protest reporting his reasoning, “I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color” (Wyche, 2016) He was specifically referencing police actions towards and unequal treatment of people of color, including shooting and killing unarmed individuals. His silent protest began a movement with players all over the nation joining him in kneeling during the national anthem (Wyche, 2016). As stated above, “#BlackLivesMatter hashtag has been a relatively consistent presence on Twitter for the last five years” (Anderson et al., 2018). Reactions were mixed. He had the support of his team and coaches as the 49ers released a statement saying “The national anthem is and always will be a special part of the pre-game ceremony. It is an opportunity to honor our country and reflect on the great liberties we are afforded as its citizens. In respecting such American principles as freedom of religion and freedom of expression, we recognize the right of an individual to choose and participate, or not, in our celebration of the national anthem,” (Wyche, 2016). Some praised him for using his

privilege to bring attention to this issue; some took issue with it and said kneeling is unAmerican or that the football field is no place for politics (Masters & Mezzofiore, 2018). President Trump joined the conversation in an interview with Fox News saying he believes that Kaepernick should have been suspended after he kneeled the first time (Fox News, 2017).

This continued to be controversial throughout the 2016 season. Kaepernick did not get recruited for any team in the 2017 season and in October of 2017 filed a lawsuit against the NFL and its owners stating that they had “have colluded to deprive Mr. Kaepernick of employment rights in retaliation for Mr. Kaepernick's leadership and advocacy for equality and social justice and his bringing awareness to peculiar institutions still undermining racial equality in the United States” (Biography.com Editors, 2014). On February 15th, 2019, this dispute ended in a confidential settlement (Biography.com Editors, 2014).

Nike as a company has given money to support underserved populations which have included grants that have been awarded specifically to groups of color, but no money is set aside to help this population specifically (Nike, n.d.). However, in 2015, Nike provided a discount for law enforcement officers of 30 percent coinciding with National Police Week, which received negative social media feedback as it was during the Black Lives Matter movement (Mani, 2015). Nike signed Kaepernick in 2011 but did not use him in advertisements until after his time in the NFL (Moore, 2018).

Nike and Kaepernick created an unlikely pairing that lead to a plethora of responses. According to a survey by Morning Consult, “The results indicate that black Americans, Democrats, and younger generations were much more receptive to Kaepernick’s involvement and message than white Americans and Republicans,” (Morning Consult, 2018). Some of the

more receptive audiences included Serena Williams saying she was especially proud to be a part of the Nike family that week (Williams, 2018). Ana DuVernay opted out of watching or supporting the Superbowl to support Kaepernick and uphold her own beliefs (DuVernay, 2019).

Alternatively, the advertisement sparked an almost immediate negative response with the popular hashtag #boycottNike trending on Twitter (Thomas, 2018). Sean Clancy tweeted “First the @NFL forces me to choose between my favorite sport and my country. I chose country. Then @Nike forces me to choose between my favorite shoes and my country. Since when did the American Flag and the National Anthem become offensive?” with a video of Nike shoes on fire which gained over 24,000 retweets and over 60,000 favorites (Clancy, 2018). Social media users continued the trend using the #boycottNike and posted photos of burning their Nike gear or cutting the Nike logo from their merchandise. John Rich tweeted a photo of the Nike logo cut out of socks with the caption “Our Soundman just cut the Nike swoosh off his socks. Former marine. Get ready @Nike multiply that by the millions” (Thomas, 2018). Dinesh D’Souza tweeted a photo calling people to boycott Nike using the caption “The @Nike slogan is all about the importance of conviction! So if you love your country and respect its anthem and flag, show some conviction” (D’Souza, 2018).

Beyond this binary, there are those who point out the inconsistencies with Nike and its support of Black rights and equality. One study found “of those who felt positively about the advertisement, 73% of respondents indicated this was an appropriate topic for Nike to engage in. Yet importantly, only 45% indicated they felt Nike had a genuine commitment to these value” (Vigaray, 2018).

Nike took a stand on a divisive and prominent social issue and, in this instance, it worked out for the brand. Vigaray (2018) reported the company earned \$6 billion and received national news coverage earning media and receiving increased brand awareness. The company has earned at least \$43 million in free advertising (Creswell, Draper, & Maheshwari, 2018). According to Nielsen (2015), “Seventy-three percent of millennials and 72 percent of Gen Z are willing to pay extra for products and services from companies dedicated to social and environmental change.” However, these consumers need to see that the brand truly stands for that change and isn’t jumping on a prominent social issue to increase sales (Nielsen, 2015). With less than half of the respondents believing Nike had a genuine commitment to this cause, it was a risky advertising campaign but ultimately paid off (Vigaray, 2018).

Airbnb

Airbnb published a 30 s spot called “We Accept” on Youtube on February 5th, 2017 (Airbnb, 2017). The spot was created for and aired during the Superbowl on the same day and it consisted of copy being displayed as different, diverse faces were shown in the background (Airbnb, 2017). The copy displayed “We believe no matter who you are, where you're from, who you love or who you worship, we all belong. The world is more beautiful the more you accept.” The spot ended with “#weaccept” on the screen as the Airbnb logo appears (Airbnb, 2017).

Airbnb does not have an openly accepting past but is working toward a more accepting future. According to Edelman, Luca, and Svirsky (2014), non-black hosts charge approximately 12% more than black hosts for the equivalent rental. In 2016, Airbnb received many claims of racial bias and discrimination; on September 8, 2016, CEO Brian Chesky personally apologized for the slow speed at which the company addressed discrimination claims and announced a new

anti-discrimination policy including an “Airbnb Community Commitment” (Fitzpatrick, 2016). This commitment explicitly states a non-discrimination policy that hosts agree to, a new process for accommodating those who believe they have been discriminated against, and anti-bias training that hosts can participate in and be publicly acknowledged for (Fitzpatrick, 2016). In July of 2017, NAACP announced that it is partnering with Airbnb to reach out to communities of color to help people use their homes to earn more income and to promote tourism to communities of color (NAACP, 2017).

This advertisement comes a little over a year after the new anti-discrimination policy was announced and within the month that President Trump announced plans to build the border wall between the US and Mexico (Smith, 2017). After this announcement, the hashtag “#resist” was trending on Twitter (Wenzke, 2017). With the wall announcement so fresh in mind and the discrimination issues almost a year in the past, this spot was seen as a statement about the border wall and not Airbnb attempting to rebuild its reputation as an inclusive and welcoming company (Lopez-Medel, 2017).

Airbnb reported its social interactions after the campaign in its Shorty Awards Entry. The reported statistics come from an Airbnb internal tracker: “#weaccept was the #1 used advertiser hashtag used during the Super Bowl, reactions to the overall campaign were 85% positive, there was a 13% increase in site visitors (US and Canada) the week following the super bowl,” and the advertisement did well with conservative audience segments on Facebook (#WeAccept, n.d.). In Adweek’s “Year in Review: The 22 Most Engaging Pieces of Brand Content on Social Media in 2017,” Airbnb’s #weaccept spot was one of two advertisements listed in the month of February (Main, 2017). However, the 15% percent that had negative reactions seem to be those who

pointed out the discrimination issues that Airbnb experienced the year prior including Kristyn Wong-Tam (2017) tweeting that Airbnb is trying to distract from the racial issues it was facing.

Levi's

Levi's "Circles" full 1 min and 30 s advertisement was a continuation of the company's "Live in Levi's" campaign (Levi's, 2017b). The video that was published in August 2017 features "real people getting their groove on in real locations around the world" (LS&Co., 2017). Though these groups are diverse and different in many ways, each forms circles as they dance and are wearing Levi products (Levi's, 2017b). The boppy tune played during the spot is "Makeba" by Jain (Levi's, 2017b). The advertisement ends with the copy "Men, Women, Young, Old, Rich, Poor, Gay, Straight, Let's Live How We Dance, Live in Levi's" flashing across the screen (Levi's, 2017b).

Earlier in the month on August 11th, 2017, there was a white nationalist march called "Unite the Right" in Charlottesville, North Carolina, only a month after a Ku Klux Klan rally in the same city (Ide-Reuters, 2017). The march resulted in violent riots and clashes between protesters and counter-protesters (Ide-Reuters, 2017). It earned national media coverage and a presidential response (Ide-Reuters, 2017). This event demonstrated the division in the United States at that time. After the event, the hashtag "#ThisIsNotUs" began trending on Twitter (Mosbergen, 2017).

The Circles advertisement aired only a week after this occurrence (Levi's, 2017b). Levi's says the spot is "a message of joy and togetherness that crosses countries and cultures" (LS&Co., 2017). An Adweek article describes the spot as "The ad is the latest in Levi's long-running "Live in Levi's" campaign and possibly its best execution yet as it feels timely in the wake of recent

events, but the spot is delivered in a way that doesn't feel tied to recent turmoil. Its call for unity is a sentiment that is universal and timeless" (Oster, 2017).

The brand has a history of standing up for what it believes and voicing its opinions about topical political issues. According to Anne Field (2018) with ANA Magazine, "the company was one of the first to desegregate factories in the South, doing so before the passage of the Civil Rights Act. In 1992, it ended financial support of the Boy Scouts of America after the group refused to admit gay Scoutmasters. In 2007, the company filed an amicus brief with the California Supreme Court in support of same-sex marriage. Six years later, it joined a coalition of supporters urging the Supreme Court to overturn the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)." The brand released a #Levi'sPride collection that supports the Stonewall Foundation and the Harvey Milk Foundation (Levi's, 2017a).

AdAge has the spot listed as #9 on the "10 most watched ads of 2017" (Slefo, 2017). Most videos on Levi's youtube page have under 100,000 views. The Circles series has many more, with the original video totaling 25 million views (Levi's, n.d.). The top comments on the Youtube video are all positive with some pointing out the general diversity and others referencing specific parts and cultures that are represented (Levi's, 2017b).

Discussion

Pepsi lacked a specificity that would have connected with many consumers and felt more genuine. It hosted a spokesperson who was famous but did not match the statement it was trying to make. Pepsi could have improved by selecting a better individual to star in its advertisement. It would have benefitted from an actual social justice advocate and someone who has actually

attended a march. The spot paralleled several ongoing movements without reflecting any of the severity or risk that individuals face.

Dove is a brand that is well-known for its body-positivity and desire to represent “real women.” However, it has had several blunders in regards to racial issues with appearing to normalize whiteness and othering darker skin colors. In a brand so focused on diversity and inclusion, there should be systems in place to stop content like this before it gets published. The system could be hiring more diverse employees and ensuring they have a voice and feel comfortable sharing if a campaign, or parts of a campaign, could be offensive to some group.

Alternatively, if a brand like Dove has a system in place and an advertisement has been deemed appropriate and inoffensive, there is a reason for that. As Ogunyemi said in her response, she said the brand could have apologized for offense but defended its decision to use her in the placement it did (Ogunyemi, 2017). Brands that are pushing to create social change and acceptance of ideas like inclusion and body-positivity must be prepared to defend their actions when situations arise while making sincere apologies for the offense caused. As always with public relations, the cost of educating must be weighed with more bad publicity if the audience, consumers, or social media users disagree with the explanation.

In summary, Dove needs to put in place or increase its use of preemptive checks, specifically by individuals of color so that the saga of racial insensitivity does not continue. Because the brand is claiming inclusion, it must support it in all aspects and not use it as a buzzword. Its apology needs to be better, both more genuine and including its reasoning for its decisions if they exist.

Nike could have improved by showing more genuine support for the cause and showing support earlier on. Nike's support would have meant more had it come when Kaepernick was first kneeling during the anthem. The more timely response would show that the brand genuinely supports and stands for Kaepernick's cause and is not a hyper-calculated political move to sell more items. Additionally, Nike could show support beyond featuring Kaepernick in the campaign and fiscally supporting the Black Lives Matter movement or other black activist organizations fighting social injustice for people of color and police brutality.

Nike ran a risky, yet successful campaign. While some pointed out inconsistencies, the message of the advertisement connects with both Nike and Kaepernick's message so it felt genuine to those who support the message. While the advertisement sparked a divisive social movement, it brought more awareness to the platform that Nike was giving Kaepernick and ended with an overall increase in sales. However, there was still room to improve. Nike could have more thorough and genuine support for the rights and equal treatment of people of color.

There are highs and lows with the Airbnb advertisement. Airbnb has struggled with racial discrimination in the past and now has a campaign with the sole message of acceptance. While to some this appears a double-standard, the company has taken clear, genuine steps to apologize for and address this issue which will hopefully, eventually overcome it. The campaign was relevant to recent political events and echoed the changes in policy the company was making, which is likely why it received such positive reactions, even across politically diverse viewpoints. Ultimately, the spot was as successful as it was because consumers connected it to their stances on current political issues, and some who knew about the Airbnb discrimination issues saw a genuine attempt to improve which this advertisement echoed.

Levi's advertisement was so successful because it sent a message that was genuine to the brand and brand identity. The message, though taking a stance, spoke to all people about coming together because everyone knows and can relate to the concept of getting together and dancing. The message on unification is supported by its historic actions and political stances in the past. Additionally, it maintained a balance between connecting with all, yet still being clear on the stance it was taking. It seamlessly included the brand name and its connection to the message and story. The advertisement aired directly following a divisive and violent event and contrasted it beautifully with a unifying message. It was relevant, inclusive, engaging, and genuine.

Conclusion

Trend-jacking has been around for most of mass marketing history. It can be a great way for brands to be and stay socially relevant. However, there are some precautions brands should consider before engaging in this, especially when jacking social justice trends.

The message must be genuine. The social justice trendjacking must not feel like a marketing ploy, but the brand standing up for what it believes in and sending a message to show and represent its values. The message must be well timed. Depending on the nature of it, it cannot be too early or too late. The social repercussions can be hurtful, for instance, social media users calling out Nike for only supporting Kaepernick after he was no longer in the NFL. The spokesperson or person must have a genuine investment in the social issue proven through prior words or actions. Anyone who cannot prove such investment is going to demonstrate the brand's detachment and lack of concern for the real issue. Whereas brands that can prove their investment in the issue, the spokesperson's actions, and the timeliness of the message will receive positive press and feelings toward its brand.

The message must be specific. A vague message comes off to consumers that brands do not know what they are talking about. It can convey that brands are apathetic and do not really care, just want to be involved. A specific message, conveying the values and beliefs of brands, even if some don't agree, will be more respected than a generic message.

Brands must be prepared to explain their reasoning for how they represent their values and beliefs. Dove failed to explain why it chose the placement of its individuals, so consumers had space to assume the intent and came to the conclusion of racism. Brands can apologize for impact while defending intent and why they made that decision. A note of caution, the apology must be sincere and immediate. The reasoning must be sound so the consumers do not feel like the brand is just making excuses.

Finally, advertisements must be checked by many people from many different backgrounds with diverse experiences to help identify issues before public audiences view the advertisement. This step will hopefully help prevent the negative social backlash and/or help brands prepare to address potential issues if they are going to arise. To accomplish this, brands need to employ a diverse workforce who can speak to a multitude of experiences and perspectives.

Essentially it comes down to brands be honest and transparent with consumers and audiences. The brands that struggled to utilize social justice trendjacking to boost their identity failed to be true to what they are, be consistent in their beliefs, or be honest about their choices. Brands that excelled were clear with their beliefs, timely in their publishing, and genuine to their identity and consumers.

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