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1. 2015

1.1 November

Religion In Unsuspecting Places (2015-11-18 14:08)

Business. It seems like a straightforward concept. Open a company, sell a product, and make money. While, there is a lot more to it than that the one thing that I never thought about, when it came to business, is religion. It is a lot more common than I thought. For example, Chick-fil-A is closed on Sunday, Forever 21 has a bible verse on its bags, and Starbucks has holiday cups. In today's society, with media coverage the way it is, a company that is openly religious could be seen as controversial. That kind of attention could be good for business because it is free advertising but, it could also deter some people away. Through my research I intend to make this blog focus on specific examples of businesses that are openly religious. I want to see how people respond and see if it is the best way to run a business. Does the religion drive people away? Are the profits less because of certain practices? Is the company better because of their strong moral beliefs? These are all questions that I intend to answer as I make my posts.

Before I begin looking at all of the different companies and opinions I wanted to start off with my what I think before I conduct any research. I do think that religion should be a part of the business world. I think that if a company has strong moral beliefs that they will be perceived as honest and trusting. However, I do think that there should be some reservations. I don't think that a company should be too boisterous about it. They can believe what they want and have a bible verse on a bag or closed on Sundays but, not push their beliefs on others. Companies, especially consumer based industries that deal with a lot of people from different backgrounds. So, it is good to be mindful of your customers and respect what they believe in.

Religious and Business Savvy! (2015-11-22 17:26)

I think that everyone has experienced waking up on Sunday morning and wanting a chicken biscuit, only to realize that Chick-fil-a was closed. This is a tradition that the owner, Truett Cathy, implemented since the restaurant first opened its doors. He claimed that it was as just as much of a practical decision as it was religious. On the Chick-fil-A website it states that, "He believes that all franchised Chick-fil-A Operators and their Restaurant employees should have an opportunity to rest, spend time with family and friends, and worship if they choose to do so." Truett Cathy believed that everyone should have a day off and relax whether it is because of work or religious beliefs. While, This is a great idea and most certainly improves his employees' morale it is still a business. So, how much profit does Chick-fil-A not generate due to their day of rest? According to reddit they would lose about \$857,142,832 a year. This is where the company would have to evaluate and decide if the forgone profit was acceptable or if they needed to change their policies. Chick-fil-A generates more than enough money to keep its doors closed every Sunday. They decide that the values the company believes in and that were set by the founder are more important than the money that they would earn on Sundays. This is an example of a successful company that sticks to their values, and still makes a large profit.

References:

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It's Just A Cup (2015-11-26 11:47)

I'm sure by now that most people have heard about the new Starbucks coffee cups and the anger people are expressing about them. The company was trying to go a different route than the usual holiday theme. Instead of being affiliated with one religion they wanted to accommodate people from all different backgrounds. Christians in particular took offense to this seasonal cup. They wanted something that represented a more traditional Christmas. The purpose of the plain cup is to let people personalize their holiday traditions on their cup. Starbucks released a statement confronting the controversy over the plain cups. They said, "The cup is meant to be a 'blank canvas' that encourages 'customers to tell their Christmas stories in their own way.' " They also talked about wanting to be a community that welcomed all different types of people and had a positive atmosphere. People on social media started a hash tag that says #itsjustacup. They continued to discredit the complaints listing out issues that are more important than the color of a cup. There are also a few photos that people created online depicting the Starbucks cups with different religions holiday decorations. I think that the company is in a no win situation. If they had Christmas cups people would be offended and want other religious decorations as well. That would be great to have but is very unrealistic. Instead they came up with a plain cup that people could put their own holiday touch on and yet, people are still upset. Starbucks is not affiliated with any religion but, they are still faced with controversial situations concerning religion. Maybe circumstance this is telling us that no matter if a company claims a specific religion or not; religion is a part of business no matter what.

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My Shirt Is Religious? (2015-11-29 21:56)

I never knew that forever 21 was a company that openly advertised their religious affiliation. Honestly, I never looked at the bottom of the bag before. The owners of Forever 21 regularly attend church, give to charities, and incorporate religion in the business. While, they claim to be Christian their actions do not reflect that. Their clothes are noticeable

revealing. There are also insinuations of not above board business practices. There have been reports about the company stealing designs off of runways and putting them in stores before the bigger companies. Another insinuation is that they steal designers from other companies and if they are Christian they can work for the company. There was also a scandal where Forever 21 was trying to cut back workers hours so that they wouldn't be full time. Actions like these do not represent what the company claimed to be. They are a negative reflection and people take notice to things like this. With that being said, Forever 21 is still a very successful company and despite their actions people still shop there. So, if the product is in demand people may be willing to let go the digressions because they want the products. So maybe it doesn't matter how you are viewed as long as people are buying from your company.

References

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1.2 December

How My Thoughts Have Changed (2015-12-03 18:03)

In my research I have looked at three different successful businesses that each had a different experience with religion. Some were open about religion and others were not and still faced the effects. With that being said, I think that it is inevitable that religion is involved in business. Religion is a controversial topic and therefore will always have positive and negative implications associated when a problem arises. I think that the decision to openly publicize a company's religious beliefs can have its benefits and problems. I think that if you have a good product and it is something people want no matter The benefits can be seen in Chick-fil-A. People admire that Chick-fil-A is closed on Sundays. Their tradition respects all people. It is a day of rest for any person at the company to do with as they please. And yes, some people go to church and some have a relaxing day. What matters most is that it can be applied to all people of any religious belief. An example of a problem would be Forever 21. They claim to be religious and print the bible verse John 3:16 on their shopping bags. When you affiliate with a religion people are mindful of that. So, when you act differently then what you claim people will notice and it can become a big news report. Lastly, there is Starbucks who tried to be non-affiliated and faced controversy anyway. This proves that religion is a factor even though Starbucks was trying to be respectful of their customers there are always people who will get upset.

It is important to understand the role religion has in business because it shows the repercussions of what you put out in public. Maybe you may not want to go to a certain store because you don't like what they represent. Businesses are on a larger scale but the same concepts can be applied to everyday life. What you say and make public can affect your life and the people around you. Social media is a huge industry today and people often post without thinking. If you are not careful you can face some of the same problems that the businesses did. People will judge you based on how you act and who you are as a person or company.

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