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Just Cause: Finding the Perfect Cause-Marketing Fit

by [Patti Minglin](#), Wednesday, July 29, 2009, 12:32 PM

During the early 1980s, American Express created a marketing campaign to help restore the Statue of Liberty. A penny for each use of the American Express card and a dollar for each new card issued were given to the Statue of Liberty Restoration program. In just four months, \$2 million was raised and transaction activity increased by 28% -- proving that doing good could also be good for business.

This particular American Express campaign is often thought of as the official start of the "cause-related marketing" movement and, thanks to today's rise in interest for all things socially and environmentally friendly, the cause-marketing trend has become an important part of many marketing strategies - most notably in marketing to moms.

A 2008 Cause Survey from Barkley found that 86% of women and moms say it is important for companies to support a cause. Sixty-nine percent of moms stated they will try a brand because it supports a cause, and 58% will actually pay more for a brand that supports a cause she cares about. "In this troubled economy, cause branding is one of the best relationship and business builders available to marketers, says Barkley president Mike Swenson and a presenter at the [2009 M2Moms@-The Marketing To Moms Conference](#), "especially with one of the most coveted demographics today, women and specifically moms."

But, what makes for a good cause-marketing campaign? Here are some tips for how brands can create the perfect marketing-to-mom cause partnership:

Support an issue or a cause that is appropriate for your business.

A great example is the recent "1 Pack=1 Vaccine" program from Pampers. For every pack of specially marked Pampers diapers and wipes purchased in the U.S. and Canada, Pampers donated the cost of one tetanus vaccine to the U.S. Fund for UNICEF. In its inaugural year, the brand increased sales and donated funding for over 45 million vaccines.

Be authentic and transparent.

You must integrate your cause efforts with your overall business strategy and truly tap into the needs (and passion areas) of your consumers. General Mills' Box Tops for Education program is "a key part of their business model," states the site "Cause Marketing." In addition to placing the box top coupon on all its packaging - which allows moms to donate back to their local schools -- the brand has an entire website dedicated to the cause - giving consumers an easy way to learn about its efforts and accomplishments.

Engage moms in the movement.

While hunger has always been an important issue to Kellogg Company (it has donated more than 224 million pounds of food to Feeding America), it was important for Kellogg to break through all the recent corporate donations and directly reach consumers, particularly moms, to encourage action.

With the help of "Dancing with the Stars" host Samantha Harris, consumers were directed to [Facebook.com/kelloggcares](#) where they could receive \$5 coupons for Kellogg's cereal in return for making a donation of \$5 or more to Feeding America. This was especially appealing to moms who used blogs, Twitter and other social media networks to encourage friends and family to donate. To date, the program has generated more than 200,000 "fans" to its Facebook page and donations to Feeding American are on the rise.

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