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The Walt Disney Company and Corporate Social Responsibility
By Kristen Wisneski

WHAT ROLE, IF ANY, DOES CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAY IN THE MARKETING STRATEGY OF THE TOP AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY, THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY'S SBUS: CONSUMER PRODUCT, STUDIO ENTERTAINMENT, AND PARKS AND RESORTS, AND IF SO, DOES IT HAVE A COMMUNITY IMPACT?

ABSTRACT

The Walt Disney Company emphasizes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and has been determined to reduce its impact on its community and its environment ever year. While many entertainment companies focus on their brand image, Disney is dedicated to making a difference in three of its largest SBUs in terms of environmental and community impact: Consumer Product, Parks and Resorts, and Studio Entertainment. As a significant player in the entertainment industry, Disney's overarching approach to CSR is holistic in satisfying stakeholder interests, as well as operational effectiveness and financial objectives of the business. Disney's CSR strategy ensures an ethical Walt Disney Company that markets itself by its CSR values and provides valuable entertainment, products, and experiences to customers worldwide. By defining Disney's values of CSR and sustainability, it sets the basis for further analysis of CSR and sustainability. By analyzing the CSR trends in the entertainment industry and how CSR is integrated into The Walt Disney Company, it shows how much Disney's CSR values are reflected in its marketing strategies. My research focused on the role of CSR in many of Disney's marketing strategies and campaigns in the three largest SBUs and to what extent they are influenced by it. This research reflects that Disney's marketing strategies can be examined through Promotion, Product, and People.

DEFINITIONS: CSR AND ENTERTAINMENT

Overview

Philanthropy is defined as the goodwill to fellow members of the human race or an active effort to promote human welfare¹. Many individuals, along with millionaire local

¹ Merriam-Webster, 2020.

businessmen, donated to private colleges and hospitals in the 19th century. These donations did not rely on others—government, an aristocracy, or the church—to solve a public problem; rather, the donators did it themselves, through voluntary associations.

CEO's thought that they could make a more significant impact by using their company's funds to support the community their businesses were in. In the late 19th century/ early 20th century, individuals began to donate through their companies. These individuals wanted to maximize the environmental, social, and economic impact of their business for the better². A company that supports one or more of these impacts for the better of his/her business will need to show a better understanding of its effects on its community and environment first. CEOs or other individuals believed that a company and its values must represent the founder and the founder's values (Rodgers). Hence, his/her business must showcase such responsibilities that the founder has for his or her surroundings.

In the 1920s, Robert Hay coined the term "Profit maximizing management," which was a result of the changing relationship between business and society³. This was known as the first phase, where society and business started to merge. The second phase, which they dubbed the 'trustee-ship management' phase, emerged in the 1920s and 1930s, resulted from changes that occurred both in business and society⁴.

In the late 1930s, corporate managers took on the responsibility for maximizing stockholder wealth and creating and maintaining an equitable balance among other competing claims, such as claims from customers, employees, and the community⁵. The 1950s were the

² Carroll, "Managing Corporate Social Responsibility."

³ Carroll, "A History of Corporate Social Responsibility: Concepts and Practices."

⁴ Carroll, "A History of Corporate Social Responsibility: Concepts and Practices."

⁵Robert and Gray, "Social Responsibilities of Business Managers."

‘philanthropic’ era in which companies donated to charities more than anything else. The period 1953–67 was classified as the ‘awareness’ era, in which there became more recognition of the overall responsibility of business and its involvement in community affairs⁶.

This period led to the merging of values between societies and businesses, where businesses wanted to have similar views and beliefs as the society and community that it was a part of. In 1971, George Steiner emphasized that business is fundamentally an economic institution in society but that it does have responsibilities to help society achieve its basic goals. The concept was referred to more often as just Social Responsibility (SR) rather than Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a general belief that a business has a responsibility to society. By understanding its history and why scholars believe CSR is of great importance for a successful company, one will realize how CSR is prominent in almost every business model today. Friedman was one of many scholars who analyzed how companies should act and behave responsibly. At the same time, Carroll’s Pyramid and Corporate Social Performance, which is used to evaluate social responsiveness toward a given situation, allowed individuals to understand how a company can have a broader range of responsibilities, which includes: Economic, Legal, Ethical, and Philanthropic.

Companies today, specifically in the entertainment industry, are moving toward CSR based business models as they want to understand how it could potentially help their own company as well as others. Understanding the use of green technologies, sustainability, community and employee engagement, philanthropy, and diversity and inclusion can help a company define what it values and what it wants to embrace in its brand image.

⁶ Murphy, “An Evolution: Corporate Social Responsiveness.”

Corporate Social Responsibility

There are many concepts of CSR. By examining the original scholars who first contributed to the development of CSR and its importance in a business, one will be able to investigate how the foundation for CSR was created and how it is attributed today. CSR is the current terminology for defining the role of business in the well-being of society and refers to the general belief held by many that modern companies have a responsibility to society that extends beyond the stockholders or investors in the firm.

The 1953 publication by Howard R. Bowen of his landmark book *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* is argued by many to mark the beginnings of the modern period of CSR⁷. As the title of Bowen's book suggests, Bowen argued that as a business or organization became larger, there is an idea entrusted to it that they were vital centers of power and that their actions could touch the lives of any US citizens⁸. The first theorist, Howard Bowen, believed that businessmen should serve society instead of pursuing personal interests of shareholders and argued for a more dominant economic view according to which the purpose of a business should maximize profits⁹.

The second scholar to mention social responsibility within a business was Milton Friedman, who claimed that there is a conflict of interest between employees and a general social purpose¹⁰. Arguing for shareholder primacy and profit maximization within a business during the early 1970s, his viewpoint mainly consisted of the scope of corporate social responsibility through a principal and an agent. Claiming that social responsibility is voluntary to an individual, but not to a company, his basis of this claim relates to individuals, such as a CEO or manager, who

⁷ Bowen, "*Social responsibilities of the businessman.*"

⁸ Bowen, "*Social responsibilities of the businessman.*"

⁹ Marisol Sandoval, "Corporate Social (IR)Responsibility in Media and Communication Industries."

¹⁰ Griffin, J. J., & Mahon, J. F. "The corporate social performance and corporate financial performance debate: Twenty-five years of incomparable research."

voluntarily assume responsibilities to his/her conscience, family, community, the military, etc¹¹. He claimed this process of responsibilities, known as “social responsibilities,” were done as individuals, and that he/she is considered a principal and not an agent. He argued that increasing a product’s price will create consequences for consumers, and that cannot be socially responsible as it is a burden for consumers. Friedman claimed that increasing the price of a product to donate to another societal cause wouldn’t be helping social objectives. Friedman revokes the idea of Corporate Social Responsibility as a principal and instead encourages companies to focus on their own profit¹². However, by understanding that social norms are evolving to where a company is viewed similarly to an individual is important because the company must incorporate company values and culture and will hence become an accurate representation of it¹³.

A business must ask itself: “whom do we serve?” Shareholders and stakeholders often conflict with each other because shareholders believe that a company’s purpose is to earn the highest returns possible, which reflects Milton Friedman’s view. However, the stakeholder view claims that a company serves society, not a business. The growing belief that a company’s responsibility is to benefit all-internally and externally- those who have a stake in the company and those who don’t¹⁴.

Both shareholders and stakeholders react in many ways when a company directs its resources toward CSR programs. When this happens, a company “sends a signal to investors about the overall health and financial performance of the company”¹⁵. Specifically, companies whose CSR spending exceeds investor expectations experience positive stock returns. The opposite is

¹¹ Friedman, “Capitalism and Freedom.”

¹² Friedman, “Capitalism and Freedom.”

¹³ Albinger, S. J. Freeman, “Journal of Business Ethics.”

¹⁴ Harrison, J. S., & Freeman, R. E. “Stakeholders, social responsibility, and performance: Empirical evidence and theoretical perspectives.”

¹⁵ Kohler, Thomas Lys, and James Naughton, “Take 5: How Companies Benefit from Corporate Social Responsibility.”

true if the CSR spending is less than investors had expected. This investor response occurred, although, as the research found, overall, CSR expenditures do not generate a return on investment, so in isolation, they would be expected to reduce shareholder value. When investors see a firm withholding or devoting resources to CSR initiatives, consumers and investors infer that its executives are acting on private information about future earnings and cash flows of the firm¹⁶. In other words, CSR is what financially stable companies do.

There is evidence that the relationship between CSR efforts and the market-to-book of assets ratio (a proxy for the market valuation of firms) is not mediated by financial distress, but rather CSR has a direct impact on market value¹⁷. Therefore, his results support the stakeholder theory. Stakeholder Theory believes that it is a manager's duty to balance the shareholders' financial interests against the interests of other stakeholders such as employees, customers, and the local community, even if it reduces shareholder returns¹⁸. Results point out that this effect of CSR on market value varies with a firm's investment in intangibles¹⁹. Hence, CSR initiatives in a large company directly affect stakeholders and investors.

Carroll's Pyramid Model- CSR and CSP

The idea that a company must have a broader range of responsibilities other than merely economic allows the company to move from shareholder to stakeholder centric²⁰. The first model for CSR was Carroll's nonlinear model in 1979, which was then readjusted to the pyramid model in 1991.

¹⁶ Kohler, Thomas Lys, and James Naughton, "Take 5: How Companies Benefit from Corporate Social Responsibility."

¹⁷ Rodgers, "Stakeholder influence on corporate strategies over time."

¹⁸ Smith, "The Shareholders vs Stakeholders Debate."

¹⁹ Rodgers, "Stakeholder influence on corporate strategies over time."

²⁰ Carroll, A. B, "A three-dimensional conceptual model of corporate social performance."

Carroll categorized his pyramid into levels: Economic, Legal, Ethical, and Philanthropic. Starting at the base of the pyramid was Economic. The second level is legal, followed by the third, Ethical, and at the top of the pyramid is Philanthropic. By sorting through these categories, one would understand how economics is the basis for all arguments. In addition, Corporate Social Performance (CSP) evaluates the degree to which organizations involve social responsiveness in certain situations.

First, and foremost, businesses have a responsibility that is economic in nature or kind. Before anything else, business institutions are the basic economic unit in society. As such, a business has a responsibility to produce goods and services that society wants. The economic level of Carroll's Pyramid was designed at the base because businesses were created as economic entities²¹.

Businesses have legal responsibilities and must adhere to government rules and regulations. The law, in its most rudimentary form, represents the basic rules of the game by which business is expected to function²². Society expects a business to fulfill its economic mission within the framework of legal requirements set forth by the society's legal system. Carroll attempts to specify the nature of responsibilities that go beyond law and economics in the third level of his pyramid.

Businesses have a responsibility that is ethical in nature. Ethical responsibility was claimed "to represent the kinds of behaviors and ethical norms that society expected business to follow,

²¹ Carroll, "In Search of the Moral Manager."

²² Carroll, "A three-dimensional conceptual model of corporate social performance."

and these ethical responsibilities extended to actions, decisions, and practices that are beyond what is required by the law”.

Discretionary responsibilities, otherwise known as Philanthropy, represent voluntary roles and practices that business assumes but for which society does not provide as clear cut an expectation. These are left to individual managers' and corporations' judgment and choice and refers to the discretionary spending on cultural goods to improve the quality of life in communities²³. Specifically, strategic philanthropy has moved from a passive to an active approach in philanthropy. It is a strategic partnership linking the resources that the company has to offer with a variety of partners on the ground. It implies a shift from volunteerism to sharing technical expertise, from product donation to unlocking a more efficient system together with partners. Furthermore, strategic philanthropy and investments are tied to more extensive global standards and goals, often those set by the World Health Organization (WHO) or, now, through the Sustainable Development Goals²⁴.

Carroll differentiates Corporate Social Responsibility and Corporate Social Performance (CSP). CSP is a construct to evaluate the degree of how well organizations have met their social responsibilities and involves social responsiveness and how a company will act in the context of social norms in particular situations²⁵. An organization should meet its responsibilities in CSR, and these responsibilities are measured using Corporate Social Performance²⁶. Critics argue social

²³ Ackerman, “Corporate Social Responsiveness.”

²⁴ National Academies Press, “The Roles of Corporate Philanthropy, Corporate Social Responsibility, and Shared Value.”

²⁵ Albinger, and Freeman, “Journal of Business Ethics.”

²⁶ Albinger, and Freeman, “Journal of Business Ethics.”

responsiveness is vague and that there is little guidance for practice; however, the triple bottom line shows that CSP can be put into practice successfully

Corporate Social Responsibility refers to a company's commitment to practice environmental and social sustainability and to be good stewards of the environment and the social landscapes in which they operate. Often, CSP is referred to as the triple bottom line. The triple bottom line refers to the economic, environmental, and social value of an investment and is related to the concept of sustainable development²⁷. Companies in today's society represent the values of all their stakeholders (owners, employees, suppliers, communities), and work to leverage those values to maximize the economic and social impacts on society while minimizing the environmental impact²⁸.

As a smaller part of CSP's influence on CSR, sustainability is a term that describes the ability to maintain various systems and processes — environmentally, socially, and economically — over time. Sustainability originated in natural resource economics but has since gained broader currency in terms of “sustainable development and social equality.”²⁹ Some companies and economists rejected the idea of CSR because it implied an obligation to society and future generations beyond those contained in the binding legal requirements of business³⁰. However, most companies now embrace some notion of CSR and place sustainability under the Triple Bottom Line as an environmental investment value for a company.

The Entertainment Industry

²⁷ Hammer, “The Triple Bottom Line and Sustainable Economic Development Theory and Practice.”

²⁸ Anderson, “Social Responsibility & Business Ethics: What Is CSR?”

²⁹ McCombs School of Business, “Sustainability & CSR.” *Ethics Unwrapped.*”

³⁰ McCombs School of Business, “Sustainability & CSR.” *Ethics Unwrapped.*”

CSR has played a significant role in companies' success in the media and entertainment industries. The media and entertainment industries consist of media, cinema, and communication groups, which includes: theme parks, consumer goods, film, print, radio, cinema, audio, and television. These segments include: movies, TV shows, radio shows, news, music, newspapers, magazines, and books³¹. A US-based entertainment company can be defined as a media or entertainment company or conglomerate primarily operating inside the USA with a majority of its revenue stream from their enterprises or subsidiaries in the USA. However, within industrial discourses, entertainment is defined by a commercial business model. Entertainment has a cross-sectoral definition as 'audience-centered commercial culture'³².

Many companies such as NBCUniversal, The Walt Disney Company, Viacom, and CBS are considered conglomerates in the entertainment industry because a conglomerate, media group, or media institution is a company that owns numerous companies involved in mass media enterprises, such as television, radio, publishing, motion pictures, theme parks, or the Internet³³. In addition, financial revenues must be accounted for, and a majority of fiscal revenue must come from their company and USA subsidiaries.

Communication and media companies also fall under the category of entertainment. The entertainment industry is often generalized as industries that entertain audiences and consumers. However, by providing a more specific definition, we can categorize companies and have a more thorough understanding of how CSR can potentially affect how successful they are and how it could influence their marketing strategies. More specifically, entertainment companies focus on

³¹ Variety, "Corporate Citizenship Programs Seize the Chance to Give Back."

³² Mckee, "Defining entertainment: an approach."

³³ Moglen, Eben, Pertschuck, and Sherman, "Editorials."

3 SBUs in which prove to be the most significant and most impactful: Consumer Product, Parks and Resorts, and Studio Entertainment.

SECTION 3: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TRENDS IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

There are many US-based entertainment companies, such as the top five: NBCUniversal, Viacom, Disney, CBS, and AT&T, which are focused on increasing both their influence and their profits. CSR has become intertwined in companies' mission statements and their value propositions as a way to increase the perception of their brand and their company. CSR trends have steadily increased over the last five years³⁴ and have created a standard in society and pressure others to value CSR. With the values of Sustainability, Philanthropy, and Employee Relations increasing due to society's pressure on companies to create their own CSR plans, many companies now view CSR as a vital attempt to decrease its negative impact and help others. Entertainment companies are adjusting to trends in Green Technology, Community Engagement, Philanthropy, and Diversity and Inclusion.

CSR Trend: Sustainability and Investing in Green Technologies

The long-term benefits of Sustainability and CSR are analyzed by understanding how eco-friendly activities affect companies' operating performance—a range of measures that include: costs, revenues, margins, and profits. An alternative to green technologies and alternative energy sources, fossil fuels accounted for 80% of the energy production in 2019³⁵. Consumers have started to see sustainability and the lack of fossil fuel use becoming popular in large companies.

³⁴ Chong, Kelsey. "Millennials and the Rising Demand for Corporate Social Responsibility."

³⁵ DeSilver, Drew. "Renewable Energy Is Growing Fast in the U.S., but Fossil Fuels Still Dominate."

Companies who want to make a difference and to hop on the bandwagon of sustainability want to reshape their brand in order for them to be aligned with sustainable values and practices.

By 2023, Live Nation Entertainment pledged to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 50%³⁶. Also, when the researchers analyzed the operating performance of specific companies for two years before 2011, and the two years following it, they found that, overall, eco-activities paid off; companies that pursued the eco-activities and sustainability initiatives performed better than those that did not, and the difference was especially striking in the second year following the announcement³⁷.

NBC's "Green is Universal" campaign is meant to reflect NBC's values toward sustainability and reduce its environmental impact by 2025³⁸. When NBC surveyed employees on NBC's practices in 2017 after the campaign release, it had an overall higher score for sustainability rankings by consumers than they did the previous year. This was primarily due to NBC's LEED-certified buildings, and its promise to reduce its use of fossil fuels in their marketing and advertising materials.

Other companies have seen this trend as well. Nickelodeon, owned by Viacom, saw an increase in stakeholder satisfaction when it implemented sustainability practices, reduced plastic on sets, attained LEED certifications for its buildings and changed lighting fixtures³⁹. The most significant long-term benefit went to companies that engaged in more complex activities, such as those that followed the directives of a standard-setting organization like LEED or required collaboration with other companies. Focusing on renewable energy or green energy is a CSR

³⁶ Live Nation Entertainment. "Live Nation Sets Sustainability Goals For Concerts And Live Events As Part Of Ongoing Green Nation Program."

³⁷ Chopra, Sunil. "Can Going Big on Eco-Friendly Practices Really Pay Off?"

³⁸ United States, Congress, Securities and Exchange Commission, and Comcast Corporation. "ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2017."

³⁹ GSA, "Green building performance A Post occupancy evaluation of 22 GSA buildings."

initiative many companies are participating in due to the nature that was merely participating without much of a company benefit in terms of profit can benefit the company's brand image⁴⁰.

CSR Trend: Community and Employee Engagement

Local and community engagement within large corporations have gained popularity since 2015 as well. Viacom Corporation encouraged its employees and community goers to volunteer over 40,000 hours in 2013 and increased this by double in 2014⁴¹. For community engagement, Verizon has a *Team Fundraising Program* that is open to teams of ten or more Verizon employees who participate in cause-related walk, run, or bike events. Verizon will match up to \$1,000 in funds raised per team member and up to \$10,000 per team event⁴². Verizon is one of many media companies in the entertainment industry that matches employee donations and pays charities for employee community service hours.

Paramount established *Kindergarten To Cap & Gown*, which allows employees in Los Angeles and the United Kingdom to provide as partners in reading and career exploration, sharing what they do best in film and entertainment, which is sparking imagination, creativity, and exploration through storytelling⁴³.

Many companies, such as The Walt Disney Company, DreamWorks, and LucasFilm, have programs where employees can donate time, money, and resources into charities and nonprofits. Compared to 2013, NBC has come far from where it started. In 2016, the company's employee retention rates decreased as their importance and call for action of CSR increased⁴⁴.

⁴⁰ McGraw Hill. "Green Trends Driving Growth."

⁴¹ Venuta, "The 22nd Annual Viacomcommunity Day Was All Good, All Around (the Globe)."

⁴² Double The Donation, "51 Popular Companies That Donate to Nonprofit Organizations."

⁴³ Paramount Pictures, "Giving Back."

⁴⁴ Satell Institute. "INSIGHTS."

In 2015, 30,000 volunteers worked during Comcast Cares Day. In 2018, more than 115,000 volunteers worked on 1,200-plus projects in 23 countries during Comcast Cares Day⁴⁵. The growth in employee involvement is attributed to the company's importance and value of CSR.

Numerous media and entertainment companies are placing higher importance on employee involvement, community giving, and volunteerism. NBCUniversal, Paramount, Lucasfilm, and Verizon are just four out of the many companies that have put in a considerable effort to show stakeholders and shareholders and how much they value and want to correct their previous actions that had negative impacts on their surrounding communities.

CSR Trend: Philanthropy

Corporate philanthropy is the act of a corporation or business promoting the welfare of others, generally through charitable donations of funds or time⁴⁶. Viacom Corporation committed \$116 million in goods and services to campaigns and nonprofit partners in the last two years, such as donating to Puerto Rico's Earthquake Disaster Relief Program⁴⁷. Comcast's Vice President, Dalia Wilson-Scott, stated, "We recognize our responsibility in the private sector to step in and partner with public agencies. Service has always been fundamental to our culture and is at the core of what we stand for as a company"⁴⁸.

Time Warner followed CBS's footsteps and in 2019, began matching employee donations to nonprofits in education, health organizations, and nonprofits⁴⁹. The NBCUniversal Foundation partnered with the NBC-owned television stations to launch a new signature program to provide a total of \$1.2 million in grants to nonprofit organizations⁵⁰. This contribution allowed for nonprofits

⁴⁵ Comcast Corporation, "Building a Community through Civic Engagement."

⁴⁶ Viacom, "Viacom Releases Annual Viacomcommunity Social Responsibility Report."

⁴⁷ Viacom, "Viacom Releases Annual Viacomcommunity Social Responsibility Report."

⁴⁸ Comcast, "We've Achieved 500,000 Environmentally-Friendly Volunteer Hours."

⁴⁹ WarnerBros, "Community Giving."

⁵⁰ Comcast. "We've Achieved 500,000 Environmentally-Friendly Volunteer Hours."

such as The Trevor Project to focus entirely on attaining necessary resources for others. Companies mixing CSR within their business model have made contributions, resources, and community involvement very easy. With a company now including its stance on sustainability and CSR, the company is making a statement that it supports the positive trend in businesses today.

Netflix has launched a \$100 million philanthropic fund aimed at supporting education groups and initiatives. The Hastings Fund's first gift was \$1.5 million in 2016 that will go to the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and the Hispanic Foundation of Silicon Valley "to provide students of color with exceptional post-secondary educational experiences"⁵¹. In 2005, AT&T did not have any CSR plan set in place. Currently, AT&T is one of the few companies that donate to the Trevor Project. AT&T donated approximately \$250,000 a year since 2012⁵². With the understanding of new societal values and norms, consumers became more aware of how AT&T began donating to the Trevor Project as a Platinum Level Donor.

CSR Trend: Diversity and Inclusion Trend

Inclusion refers to a dynamic state of operating in which diversity is levered to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community⁵³. Diversity refers to the variety of similarities and differences among people, including but not limited to: gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socio-economic difference, appearance, language and accent, disability, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, thinking style, and personality type⁵⁴.

⁵¹ Jr, Tom Huddleston, "Netflix Is Making a Huge Donation."

⁵² The Trevor Project, "The Trevor Project, AT&T & Tyler Oakley Help LGBTQ Youth Find Support 24/7."

⁵³ "Diversity & Inclusion in Corporate Social Engagement."

⁵⁴ O'Mara, "Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World."

There are many recent trends in CSR that focus on a wide variety of topics. Since 2017, companies are focused on concrete change, both in terms of internal reporting policies and addressing workplace inequality as well as diversity. From a business standpoint, inclusive companies enjoy 2.3 times the cash flow of other companies and are 1.7 times more likely to be innovation leaders and 70% more likely to capture new markets⁵⁵. Citizens' voices are also strong and clear in demanding more from businesses, while the power and speed of social media are adding a unique sense of intensity and urgency to it all.

We are likely to see companies take a hard look at the gender makeup of their leadership teams and boards, and implement real steps to increase the number of women on both⁵⁶. Focusing specifically on how women leaders might impact CSR, researchers from The Harvard Business School conducted a follow-up analysis. Compared to companies without women executive leaders, they found that companies with gender-inclusive leadership teams contributed, on average, more to charitable funds⁵⁷. Cecily Joseph defines inclusion as “creating a workforce that embraces every culture, language, age, sexual orientation, disability, background and experience – and giving a voice to those differences”⁵⁸. As the population and workforce continue to grow more diverse, companies need to focus on creating company cultures, experiences, and products that speak to a wide range of identities and perspectives. Companies surveyed by CCEP cited their “desire to achieve social impact/ greater good” as one of their top three motivations for addressing diversity and inclusion through CSR. In fact, 100% of 120 respondents cited it as one of their top three choices⁵⁹.

⁵⁵ Bersin, “High-Impact Talent Management: The New Talent Management Maturity Model.”

⁵⁶ McPherson, “8 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Trends To Look For In 2018.”

⁵⁷ Catalyst, “*Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter.*”

⁵⁸ McPherson, “8 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Trends To Look For In 2018.”

⁵⁹ Boston College, “The Power of All of the People.”

Benefits of CSR: Brand Image

Knowing that a company has behaved ethically can cause customers to perceive that company's products as performing better. "This is a different story than just saying, 'People like the company more'"⁶⁰. "The increase in positive perception is not based on advertising. Consumers actually experience the product in a different way." Chernev created a series of experiments in which consumers were able to sample a product and found that the charitable giving was entirely unrelated to the company's core business. Nonetheless, participants who were told about giving consistently rated product performance higher than those who did not learn of any charitable giving. Yet, not all corporate giving is rewarded with a benevolent halo, the researchers found.

A company's image is the way the public perceives the company, versus brand image, which is the perception of the promise from the point of view of the consumers/customers. A positive image created by a company investing in CSR can attract potential employees and customers because individuals tend to identify with firms that are socially responsible and are more likely to seek employment from these firms⁶¹. An increase in current employees' goodwill can improve productivity and financial outcomes⁶². Customers need to have some uncertainty about a product's performance—otherwise, there is no need to infer information about the product based on the company's CSR.

In one study, participants who considered themselves to be inexperienced wine drinkers were more affected by the charitable donations than those who had more self-reported expertise⁶³. Moreover, consumers must believe the company's motives to be authentically benevolent, rather

⁶⁰ Journal of Consumer Research

⁶¹ Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science

⁶² Davis and McGuire

⁶³ Journal of Consumer Research

than merely self-interested. Many companies lack authenticity when they are pressured to by social norms and trends⁶⁴.

Literature suggests that consumers' perceptions of the motives behind a firm's CSR activities influence their attitudes toward the firm and buying intentions of the products of a sponsoring firm⁶⁵. When consumers perceive CSR motives are genuinely altruistic for society, namely authentic, firms' CSR actions positively influence consumer attitudes toward the company and its products⁶⁶.

SECTION 4: DISNEY'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The Walt Disney Company's CSR initiatives and programs support and manage the expectations of stakeholders of its SBUs: Consumer Product, Parks and Resort, and Studio Entertainment. Disney's Small Business Units (SBUs) are profit centers that focus on a specific product or offering. On the surface, it is all about the natural environment and support for solutions to community and societal issues. Disney's CSR initiatives and programs are part of an overall strategic positioning that benefits the entire organization, including many of its SBUs. As a major player in the entertainment industry, The Walt Disney Company successfully addresses and manages stakeholders' demands. The company's overarching corporate citizenship approach is holistic in satisfying stakeholders' interests as well as the operational effectiveness and financial objectives of the business. In this way, the CSR programs ensure an ethical Walt Disney Company that profits from providing valuable entertainment, products, and experiences to customers worldwide.

⁶⁴ Becker-Olsen, "The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on consumer behaviour."

⁶⁵ Becker-Olsen, "The impact of perceived corporate social responsibility on consumer behaviour."

⁶⁶ Ellen, "Building corporate associations: consumer attributions for corporate socially responsible programs."

Disney groups its CSR efforts into two categories: Environment and Philanthropy. These CSR categories address two main concerns of the media and entertainment company's stakeholders: environmental impact and community impact. Thus, in general, Disney's corporate citizenship is two-pronged. However, an examination of the specific programs and initiatives show that the company's approach is multi-faceted and holistic in considering the conglomerate's operations and stakeholders.

Environmentalism

The Walt Disney Company's commitment to environmental stewardship focuses on using resources wisely and protecting the planet as Disney operates and grows its business. The scarcity of natural resources and threats to ecosystems and biodiversity are serious environmental issues. These challenges demand fundamental changes in the way society, including the private sector, uses natural resources. In recognition of these challenges, Disney has committed to the following long-term environmental stewardship goals: zero net greenhouse gas emissions, zero waste, and to conserve water resources⁶⁷.

Emissions

Disney's strategy for meeting its long-term emissions goal of zero net greenhouse gas emissions follows the hierarchy of avoiding emissions, reducing emissions through efficiencies, replacing high-carbon fuels with low-carbon alternatives, seeking alternative technologies, then using certified carbon credits for remaining emissions. While Disney is focused on improving

⁶⁷ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility Update."

existing assets, the company also drives sustainability in new projects by integrating the evaluation and selection of sustainable solutions into the capital funding process⁶⁸.

Disney's Theme Parks and Resorts segment has maintained its emissions at the 2012 level, through efficiencies allowing growth and expansion without increasing emissions⁶⁹. For example, at Walt Disney World Resort, the conversion of the guest transportation bus fleet to renewable diesel made from used cooking oil and non-consumable food waste cut the fleet's emissions in half. Disneyland Paris purchased half of its electricity from renewable sources in 2017. The newest destination, Shanghai Disney Resort, opened with many efficiencies, pioneered by other locations, with two buildings receiving the China Green Building Evaluation label. Disney's target was to reduce its emissions from 2012 by 50% by 2020. By 2017, Disney had reduced its emission by 41% and continues to reduce every year⁷⁰.

In 2018, Disney began to use a 50-megawatt solar power facility composed of more than a half-million solar panels, just outside Disney's Animal Kingdom. The move was aimed at helping Disney achieve its broader plan to reduce its net greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent worldwide by 2020, compared to 2012⁷¹. Disney World's solar facility consists of a 270-acre designated renewable energy area. It produced enough energy to supply 10,000 homes annually and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by more than 57,000 tons per year⁷².

In Disneyland's Tokyo and Orange County locations, the Electrical Parade light shows are fueled by solar panels from eight building rooftops, which generate more than 600 kilowatts of power. The Electrical Parade was the first in California to be entirely powered by solar panels.

⁶⁸ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2017 Update."

⁶⁹ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2013 Update."

⁷⁰ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update."

⁷¹ Horovitz, "The Magic Kingdom Is Going Green."

⁷² Horovitz, "The Magic Kingdom Is Going Green."

In addition, Disney also is building three new cruise ships. These three ships, built by Meyer Werft Shipyard Company based in Germany, will run on clean-burning liquified natural gas and will be complete in 2021, 2022, and 2023⁷³. This is a technological innovation in which Disney will be the first to premier. Under the Theme Parks and Resorts SBU, these cruise ships will offer resort-like amenities and experiences similar to Disney's Destination Cruises, which docks at the Disney's Castaway Cay Resort and Park in the Bahamas.

Waste

The definition of waste includes recycling metal, paper, plastics, and cardboard. Important strides in composting have also occurred⁷⁴. This component of Disney's corporate citizenship efforts addresses stakeholders' interests about the environmental impact of the company's business operations. Disney's waste initiatives include diversion programs and limiting and regulating food and water waste.

Waste diversion programs further aim to reuse and recycle materials from Disney's operations, such as in Disney's Theme Parks and Resorts, to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills. Disney's waste targets include achieving 60% of their waste diverted from landfills and incinerated by 2020⁷⁵. By 2017, Disney achieved a 46% diversion rate of operational waste, generated from the Theme Parks & Resorts, ESPN, Studios, and office locations⁷⁶. To achieve its waste diversion targets, Disney observed the waste management hierarchy of reducing, reusing, recycling, composting, non-thermal waste-to-energy, and thermal waste-to-energy programs. Developing a robust recycling program was a priority at the Theme Parks and Resorts. Disney is

⁷³ Offshore Energy, "Disney Cruise Line Reveals More Details on Its LNG-Powered Trio."

⁷⁴ SIG, "Sustainable Practices at Disney."

⁷⁵ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2014 Update."

⁷⁶ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update."

focused on using clear signage for cast members, as well as increasing the amount of materials collected that can be processed for recycling.

Managing food and water waste is also a priority, with Disney's Theme Parks and Resorts diverting twice as much food waste from the landfill in 2016 than in 2013⁷⁷. While the target focuses on operational waste, Disney also diverts waste from construction, achieving a 92% diversion rate from construction projects in 2016⁷⁸. Thus, environmental stewardship makes the CSR strategy enhance the sustainability and greening of the global business, with the natural environment as a stakeholder in business ethics considerations in Disney's strategic management. In addition to managing food and water waste, Disney does not sell certain products within its parks and resorts. An example would be chewing gum, which all Disney parks and resorts do not sell. This is due to the hassle that comes with cleaning up these products as well as the need to limit waste in the park that could be stuck to surfaces.

In addition, Disney announced the next step in its commitment to environmental stewardship. By 2019, Disney eliminated single-use plastic straws and plastic stirrers at all owned and operated locations across the globe, which amounted to a reduction of more than 175 million straws and 13 million stirrers annually⁷⁹. Disneyland Paris became the first Disneyland Theme Park to ban plastic straws in 2017. All Disneyland Theme Parks and Resorts banned plastic straws in 2018 and now offers only a biodegradable paper version at guests' request⁸⁰. The request for alternatives to plastics began in the Animal Kingdom, Disney World's nature-friendly zoo-theme park hybrid. This park was well ahead of the trend of banning plastics, instituting a plastic straw ban years ago

⁷⁷ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2017 Update."

⁷⁸ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2017 Update."

⁷⁹ Penning, "Disney Expands Environmental Commitment By Reducing Plastic Waste."

⁸⁰ Ellefson, "Disney Is the Latest Company Doing Away with Plastic Straws."

to further align itself with its sustainability initiatives to save marine wildlife and habitats from plastic pollution in the oceans⁸¹.

Disney also shared additional plans to reduce plastic waste across its businesses over the next few years by transitioning to refillable in-room amenities in Disney's hotels and on cruise ships, reducing the number of plastic shopping bags in its parks and on the Disney Cruise Line and by completing its work to eliminate 80% of its polystyrene cups across all of its global owned and operated businesses⁸². In addition to its long-term effort to reduce single-use plastics, the company will continue to recycle and responsibly dispose of single-use waste that cannot be eliminated. "Eliminating plastic straws and other plastic items are meaningful steps in our long-standing commitment to environmental stewardship," said Bob Chapek, Chairman, Disney Parks, Experiences, and Consumer Products⁸³. These new global efforts help reduce our environmental footprint and advance our long-term sustainability goals.

Product Footprint

Disney strives to minimize its product footprint through several efforts. A product footprint can be defined as an assessment of the impact a particular product has on the environment and is a primary concern of product lifecycle sustainability, which is "an approach to managing the stages of a product's existence so that any negative impact on the environment is minimized"⁸⁴.

All Disney consumer product stores outside of Disney Theme Parks removed plastic bags in 2020. Disney switched to branded reusable bags for all of its retailers as well. This change was

⁸¹ Ellefson, "Disney Is the Latest Company Doing Away with Plastic Straws."

⁸² Ellingson, "Disney's Ban on Plastic Straws."

⁸³ Fox News, "Disney to Eliminate Plastic Straws, Stirrers at All Resorts by 2019."

⁸⁴ Rouse, "What Is Product Footprint?"

designed to minimize Disney's plastic bag usage and enforce a sustainable lifestyle among all of its consumers. Plastic bags in retailer outlets owned by Disney accounts for over 20% of Disney's plastic usage per year. By eliminating plastic bags in retail stores, Disney hoped to remove this effect on the environment altogether.

Many of Disney's products are made of plastic or a variation of polymers and are sourced from outside the USA. The Zhen Yang Toy factory in Dongguan, China, is the main factory where current Disney consumer products and toys are produced. For example, all Frozen 1 and 2 figurines are produced out of this manufacturing plant⁸⁵. Frozen raked in over \$1.3 billion at the box office in 2013, and this has risen to \$107.2 billion from the figurines and licensing segment of entertainment⁸⁶. These toys feature over five different types of plastic, which makes it more difficult to recycle effectively⁸⁷. Disney has begun to produce products that are more circular by design. This is beneficial because products made of only one material or designed for easy disassembly, do not require complex processing before the materials are recycled. Disney's Frozen dolls featured speakers and multiple plastics; however, Disney's Frozen 2 figurines and plastic dolls have been simplified. In most of their new dolls, electronics and speakers are easier to remove. Disney listened to its consumers and focused on the effects of creating these toys during the holiday seasons. Focusing on the circularity of design, Disney hasn't released future plans to enhance and redesign other large product lines associated with its movies; however, Frozen figurines and dolls have been a great example of how Disney has begun to implement changes.

⁸⁵ "Disney Manufacturing ."

⁸⁶ Robehmed, "The 'Frozen' Effect: When Disney's Movie Merchandising Is Too Much."

⁸⁷ EPA, "Plastics: Material-Specific Data."

Disney's Smart Packaging Initiative, an innovative, industry-leading online design tool to help improve the environmental performance of packaging and create a better experience for consumers, received the 2017 Environmental Leader Project of the Year Award⁸⁸. The online design tool's goal is to limit excess packaging and to limit extra packaging models that don't make it to theme park shelves. Disney has engaged its top licensees and vendors and shared the tools so that they can apply the design principles to their packages.

The company continues to invest in the implementation of its Paper Sourcing and Use Policy, which guides paper selection throughout the company⁸⁹. Disney's Paper Sourcing policies and regulations were adopted in 2012 to reduce the environmental footprint of The Walt Disney Company, its subsidiaries, and related and affiliated companies, through the responsible use of forest resources and eliminating unwanted and illegally harvested fiber⁹⁰. The Walt Disney Company requires certain countries to produce recycled fiber products or 100% FSC certified fiber products⁹¹. Disney restricts which countries produce these products for them and hold them to higher standards to avoid illegal harvesting and to promote the regulation of these products in the countries' economies.

Philanthropy

The Walt Disney Company believes that the work to operate an honorable and socially responsible company is a long-term investment that benefits people today and has the potential to achieve an even greater impact in support of kids and families around the world in the future.

⁸⁸ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2017 Update."

⁸⁹ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update."

⁹⁰ The Walt Disney Company, "*Disney's Paper Sourcing and Use Policy Paper Specifications.*"

⁹¹ The Walt Disney Company, "*Disney's Paper Sourcing and Use Policy Paper Specifications.*"

Targets are an essential tool that helps measure the progress and guides Disney's ambitions and goals as the company continues to support outside organizations. Disney regularly evaluates them to assess its alignment with its overall strategic vision⁹². Disney's Philanthropy effort can be further divided into Conservation, Charitable Giving, and Opportunity Development.

Conservation

Disney's Conservation Fund awarded more than \$8 million in grants to leading nonprofits organizations that are working across the globe to protect and provide experiences to inspire a love of nature for younger generations. The Disney Conservation Fund celebrated "Pandora: World of Avatar" by launching *Connect to Protect*, which is an in-park mobile app which committed up to \$1 million to protect and restore habitats critical to threatened animals⁹³. Disney's Conservation Fund extends CSR initiatives to stakeholders and parties that are not necessarily directly impacted by the Media and Entertainment industries, or Disney Theme Parks, Resorts, and Consumer Goods.

This CSR strategy component involves programs for saving wildlife, protecting the planet, and facilitating community involvement. For example, through the Conservation Fund, the media and entertainment conglomerate financially supports and cooperates with conservation organizations to improve the populations of endangered or at-risk species.

The Walt Disney Company has Corporate Citizenship Programs that encourage and enable communities to participate in greening and sustainability activities via nonprofit organizations. Disney also promotes environmental conservation literacy in this manner, along with related

⁹² The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update."

⁹³ Palmer, "Disney Parks To Give Up To \$1 Million To Protect & Restore Wildlife Habitats."

literacy programs included in its theme parks and resorts operations⁹⁴. This CSR strategic component expresses Disney's interests in managing and satisfying communities as stakeholders of the multinational business. Also, in 2018, Disney collaborated with the National Recreation and Park Association on *Meet at the Park*, which was a campaign that gave sixteen community park projects \$20,000 grants to connect children with nature⁹⁵.

Charitable Giving

Disney is a longtime supporter of scholarship organizations that make it possible for high-achieving students to pursue their dreams by earning a college education. Since 2014, Disney has “committed more than \$4 million to support scholarships administered by the American Indian College Fund, The Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund, Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Student Veterans of America, and UNCF”⁹⁶. This year, the company provided a grant to *My Brother's Keeper Alliance* to support the organization's work with boys and young men of color.

Disney has a long history of supporting children's hospitals, dating back to Walt Disney himself in the 1930s who would visit with sick children, often accompanied by Disney characters and animators. Disney delivers unique experiences that are powered by their greatest resources: the cast members and characters. For example, in the U.K., Disney raised more than £10 million for Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity as well as bringing the Disney magic into the hospital environment⁹⁷.

⁹⁴ The Walt Disney Company, “Environmental Sustainability.”

⁹⁵ NRPA, “The Walt Disney Company to Make \$1.5 Million Investment to Meet Me at the Park Program: National Recreation and Park Association.”

⁹⁶ The Walt Disney Company, “Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update.”

⁹⁷ Great Ormond Street Hospital Children's Charity, “The Walt Disney Company Ltd.”

ESPN, owned by The Walt Disney Company, raised over \$9 million for the V Foundation for Cancer Research during 2015-2016⁹⁸. ESPN and Disney employees donated their time and resources to bring smiles to kids in children's hospitals around the world. Through an event hosted by *Star Wars: Force For Change*, *Star Wars* characters visited Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) to transport kids and families from the hospital, to a galaxy, far, far away⁹⁹. Since the *Force For Change* began, *Star Wars* has been incorporated into countless children's hospital events around the world. For example, through Disney's collaboration with the Starlight Children's Foundation, the company announced that *Star Wars* themed hospital gowns would be distributed to thousands of pediatric patients across the country¹⁰⁰.

In 2017, Disney completed three Disney Fun House therapeutic play activity rooms in children's hospitals located in Beijing, Guangzhou, and Chengdu. This was a part of Disney's commitment to build 50 activity rooms across hospitals in China by 2022¹⁰¹. As the only entertainment company to show first-run movies at children's hospitals in the US, Disney brought films from The Walt Disney Studios to 45 children's hospitals through the Disney Movie Moments Program. Disney has a similar initiative with children's hospitals in Australia, and in the U.K. and Italy, they collaborated with MediCinema to offer movie viewings. In addition, Disney sent care packages to 445 hospitals across North America, filled with DVDs, toys, and games to provide entertainment to children and families faced with serious illness¹⁰².

⁹⁸ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2017 Update."

⁹⁹ The Walt Disney Company, "Starlight Children's Foundation and Star Wars: Force for Change Deliver New Star Wars-Themed Starlight Brave Gowns."

¹⁰⁰ The Walt Disney Company, "Starlight Children's Foundation and Star Wars: Force for Change Deliver New Star Wars-Themed Starlight Brave Gowns."

¹⁰¹ Walt Disney Company Corporate, "Disney Announces \$3 Million (RMB 20 Million) Donation to Create Play Spaces in Children's Hospitals Across China."

¹⁰² The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update."

The Walt Disney Company began donating annually to UNICEF in 2006. With what started as a \$1 million donation, enabled UNICEF to continue its progress behind five key priorities for the world's children: child protection, immunization, early childhood support, fighting HIV/AIDS and girls' education¹⁰³.

In addition to The Walt Disney Company Foundation's charitable efforts, Disney Worldwide Outreach brightens the lives of children and families through key partnerships with philanthropic organizations, including the Make-A-Wish Foundation, First Book, Toys for Tots, Starlight Starbright and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, to name a few. In 2005, Disney contributed more than \$190 million in cash, in-kind support, and public service airtime globally, while Disney VoluntEARS contributed more than 442,000 hours to outreach projects around the world¹⁰⁴.

Providing Opportunities

Disney has continued to work to equip this next generation with the skills, confidence, and tools needed to create the future they imagine. Disney's Musicals in Schools program builds sustainable theater programs in often under-resourced public elementary schools¹⁰⁵. Beyond the joys of storytelling on-stage, musical theater fosters creativity, collaboration, communication, problem-solving, empathy, and much more. By providing performance materials and professional development to participating teachers free of charge, Disney Musicals in Schools has helped more than 21,000 students, 600 teachers, and 200 schools in 13 cities¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰³ Citizenship, Disney Corporate, "The Walt Disney Company Foundation Donates \$1 Million to UNICEF."

¹⁰⁴ Citizenship, Disney Corporate, "The Walt Disney Company Foundation Donates \$1 Million to UNICEF."

¹⁰⁵ The Walt Disney Company, "Charitable Giving."

¹⁰⁶ Arnegger, "Disney Musicals in Schools Brings Broadway Dreams to Students Across the Country."

Disney has continued to expand this program. In 2017, Disney Musicals in Schools launched in four new U.S. cities: Omaha, Boston, Madison, and Orlando, introducing musical theater to over 1,000 students who performed in their very first musical. In 2018, Disney Musicals in Schools launched its first international program with Eastside Charitable Trust in London, along with programs in the U.S. in Louisville, West Palm Beach, Chicago, and Los Angeles¹⁰⁷.

The Walt Disney Company lent its support to the nonprofit Sandy Hook Promise as it expanded its successful *Start With Hello Program*, which promoted inclusion and combatted the growing epidemic of social and educational isolation among young adults. In 2019, Disney directly contributed to the development of new curriculums and digital platforms for grades K-5 and grades 9-12. It reaches over 2.8 million youth and adults from over 6,000 schools and youth organizations in the first year, enabling Sandy Hook Promise to extend the reach of its program to even younger students. By giving back to nonprofits, Disney has expressed its values as a company for enabling ongoing development of education and curriculum reforms among communities with limited resources¹⁰⁸.

The Walt Disney Company has also partnered with Pixar to create opportunities for children and families to learn more about animation. Pixar is not owned by Disney but has participated in multiple partnerships with the company. *Pixar in a Box* is a partnership between Pixar Animation Studios and Khan Academy, sponsored by Disney, which provides a behind-the-scenes look at how Pixar artists bring stories to life. Disney's financial support allowed Pixar filmmakers to offer free lessons on everything from storytelling to how to animate bouncing balls,

¹⁰⁷ Arnegger, "Disney Musicals in Schools Brings Broadway Dreams to Students Across the Country."

¹⁰⁸ The Walt Disney Company, "Disney Supports Expansion of Sandy Hook Promise's Start With Hello Program."

using subjects learned in school, including math, science, computer science, and the humanities. Adding to their existing library, in 2017, Pixar released new lessons with videos and hands-on activities sponsored by The Walt Disney Company, which takes students of all ages through the concepts of storytelling. More than 1.8 million learners were reached, recording nearly 20 million minutes of learning time¹⁰⁹.

SECTION 5: DISNEY'S MARKETING STRATEGIES: FINANCIAL AND COMMUNITY

IMPACT

Disney's CSR goals are interlinked with the strategic objectives of the company's different SBUs. Environmental and philanthropic impact policies ensure business sustainability and related stakeholder interests, while also supporting Disney's operations in terms of maintaining the Theme Parks and Resorts' greenery and natural balance. In this way, such CSR efforts also directly enable the effective implementation of "Disney's generic competitive strategy and intensive growth strategies"¹¹⁰.

This multifaceted CSR approach helps the company compete against other firms, including Sony, Viacom, Time Warner, and Comcast (parent company of Universal Studios). Disney's CSR strategy, associated initiatives, and programs are part of an overall strategic positioning that benefits the entire organization, including subsidiaries like Marvel Studios and Pixar Animation Studios¹¹¹. As a major player in the entertainment industry, Disney's overarching corporate citizenship approach is holistic in satisfying stakeholders' interests as well as the operational effectiveness and financial objectives of the business. In this way, the CSR strategy ensures an

¹⁰⁹ The Walt Disney Company, "Disney Supports Expansion of Sandy Hook Promise's Start With Hello Program."

¹¹⁰ Williams, "Disney's Generic Competitive Strategy & Intensive Growth Strategies."

¹¹¹ Williams, "Disney's Generic Competitive Strategy & Intensive Growth Strategies."

ethical Disney that profits from providing valuable entertainment products and experiences to customers worldwide. Examining Promotion, Product, and People will show how Disney's CSR values and initiatives influence Disney's marketing efforts.

Promotion

The promotional strategy of The Walt Disney Company is targeted at specific segments and can be seen through partnerships, advertising, and public relations. The brand engages the customers through movie teasers, competitions, commercials, billboards, online ads, etc. Disney's products are also promoted through partnerships and their own channels. In this part of the marketing mix is sponsorship and partnerships, which refers to the company's sponsoring of various activities, such as community development programs of nonprofit organizations.

Partnerships, Synergy, and Sponsorships

A Partnership is defined as a commercial entity with which another commercial entity has some form of alliance, and this relationship may be a contractual, exclusive bond in which both entities commit not to ally with third parties¹¹². Synergy is defined as the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects¹¹³. A Sponsor is an individual or organization that pays some or all of the costs involved in staging a sporting or artistic event¹¹⁴. The Walt Disney Company has partnered with many companies such as Siemens, UL, USASwim, and Girl Up.

The Walt Disney Company has released many marketing campaigns through its Studio Entertainment SBU. Throughout the years, Disney has created content to combat diversity,

¹¹² Merriam-Webster, "Partnership."

¹¹³ Merriam-Webster, "Synergy."

¹¹⁴ Merriam-Webster, "Sponsor."

inclusion, stereotypes, healthy eating, and sustainability. This kind of partnership and sponsorship promotes the company's business and helps manage stakeholders' expectations, as detailed in Disney's CSR strategies. Additionally, higher affiliate revenue, strong performance in Parks and Resorts segment by partnerships and sponsorships, increased theatrical distribution, and higher sponsorship revenue, partially offset by pressure in home entertainment and licensing revenue, is set to boost revenue growth for Disney in 2019.

One of Disney's biggest and most impactful partnerships started in 1982 with Siemens. When The Walt Disney Company opened its science-based theme park, Epcot, in Florida in 1982¹¹⁵, it took corporate partnerships to a new level. The park is split into pavilions dedicated to subjects such as space, energy, and the seas, and almost all of them had a sponsor. This helped ease the gigantic overheads of what was then the world's largest construction project. The park's flagship attraction, Spaceship Earth, sits inside a 180 feet high silver geodesic dome at the heart of the park and is renowned the world over¹¹⁶. A sign saying 'presented by Siemens' is prominently displayed outside the entrance to the attraction which takes visitors through model scenes explaining the history of how each generation's innovations led to man's most significant discoveries. At the end of the attraction, there are high-tech educational interactive exhibits themed to some of Siemens' business units such as healthcare, mobility, and energy. The brand's reach and application of expressing the brand are very different.

In entertainment, Siemens has more flexibility for how it frames its message. In many cases, the company has the option to frequently change the creative and content to evolve with its story. Partnering in the entertainment category allows Siemens to have more brand visibility 365 days a year and allows the brand to touch a broader portion of the general public. The partnership

¹¹⁵ Walt Disney World Resort Public Relations, "Epcot."

¹¹⁶ Walt Disney World Resort Public Relations, "Epcot."

with Disney Parks and Resorts allows Disney and Siemens to target key stakeholders relevant to both of their growth strategies: Customers, STEM students [Science – Technology – Engineering – Mathematics], Employees and Society. The results of this partnership to date are found on several fronts.

Siemens sparked interest in the topic of STEM and sharing its legacy of innovation through interactive exhibits with millions of park guests and customizing a technology solution as part of a new experience. At the theme park and resort, the opportunities to share Siemens' Ingenuity for Life message is unlimited. Encouraging diversity in STEM fields and giving back to hospitals are some of Siemens' goals¹¹⁷. Siemens launched a campaign called the 'Baton Pass' to support Stand Up To Cancer, a charitable program of the Entertainment Industry Foundation. The kick-off of the campaign was launched on ABC's Good Morning America broadcast, followed by a large audience baton pass inside and outside the ABC Studio in the heart of Times Square. To support what was happening in real-time at the ABC Studio, a special Baton Pass promotional advertisement was simultaneously aired on nine large digital billboards in Times Square, including the ABC SuperSign, which is sponsored by Siemens and is located on the building where Good Morning America is televised¹¹⁸. It was the team at the ABC SuperSign that made the Baton Pass presence across the nine digital screens become a reality. Disney continued their support of the Baton Pass on the west coast at their studio lot in Burbank, California, where several celebrities with the ABC Family Channel passed the baton between breaks in filming and shared via social media¹¹⁹. This partnership example demonstrates a best practice of how two organizations with a shared vision can achieve amazing results.

¹¹⁷ Sylt, "Inside Disney's Tech Partnerships."

¹¹⁸ Sylt, "Inside Disney's Tech Partnerships."

¹¹⁹ Corless, "Today Marks the End of the Siemens & Disney Parks Sponsorship, Attractions Left Sponsor-Less."

Disney's Studio Entertainment is responsible for Disney's Dream Big Princess Campaign. Disney partnered with Girl Up, which is an initiative of the UN Foundation, that works across a global community of partners to achieve gender equality worldwide¹²⁰. Disney's 'princess culture' has come under fire in recent years, with some calling out the stereotypical and outdated tropes of its most popular female characters. In response, Disney has taken steps to position its princesses in a more empowering light, using marketing campaigns such as #DreamBigPrincess initiative to do so. The campaign involved 19 female photographers from 15 countries creating positive images of strong female role models, including a surfing champion from Brazil and the youngest female to speak at the UN. Disney donated \$1 to the campaign every time one of the images was shared on social¹²¹.

As well as doing good, the campaign also allowed Disney to combat any negative stereotyping and shine a light on the positive and strong characteristics of its princesses, like the feisty nature of Moana and the bravery of Merida. Disney's Dream Big Princess Campaign targeted young girls who were minorities to show them role models like themselves that typical media doesn't portray. By targeting families that were a minority, Disney exemplified its value of diversity and inclusion. The result of this campaign included \$1 million being donated by Disney¹²². Girl Up was featured on press releases and PR in multiple languages in over twenty countries. Disney and Girl Up's collaboration resulted in hundreds of articles and press releases about both companies and how their work is helping the world. Positive articles generated other

¹²⁰ Disney Partners, "Dream Big Princess Global Video Campaign."

¹²¹ Econsultancy, "10 Examples of Great Disney Marketing Campaigns."

¹²² Econsultancy, "10 Examples of Great Disney Marketing Campaigns."

news and media outlets to cover the campaign, which increased the brand awareness of Girl UP and showed how Disney is helping nonprofits around the world.

One way Disney encouraged guests to stay safe and enjoy their visit to Disney's theme parks and resorts was through *Disney's Wild About Safety* initiative. Two of Disney's most popular characters – Timon and Pumbaa from *The Lion King* – told safety stories by demonstrating the potential consequences of unsafe behavior. Underwriters Laboratories (UL), known worldwide for its not-for-profit safety testing and certification, is a founding participant in this safety education campaign¹²³. This synergy allowed both Disney and UL to educate families and their children on behavior and the importance of safety in theme parks. Timon and Pumbaa shared important safety reminders through children's activity books with safety-themed activities, collectible tip cards and reminders in-park guide maps, and a website.

Timon and Pumbaa also took their *Wild About Safety* message to schools across the United States and around the world. UL, with the assistance of various business units of The Walt Disney Company, developed an education initiative to improve children's awareness and understanding of safety and health. Using a curriculum-based approach, children learn safety in the same way they learn reading, writing, and math¹²⁴. *Disney's Wild About Safety Smart* lessons are delivered through a series of DVDs covering topics such as home safety, water safety, environmental safety, and fire safety. DVDs featuring popular characters have been translated into 17 languages. This campaign started as an advertisement on Disney Channel. However, the campaign grew to having its own lessons, DVDs, and showtimes. From 2009 to 2013, these smart lessons won numerous

¹²³ Laughing Place Disney Newsdesk, "Disney's Animal Kingdom Becomes Classroom for Local Students."

¹²⁴ Underwriter Laboratories, "Safety Smart: It's a Match From the Start."

awards, including the Teacher's Choice Award, Learning Magazine's Teacher Choice Award, and the Parent's Choice Silver Award¹²⁵. Disney promoted its *Wild About Safety* series throughout its theme park with merchandise: stickers, pins, posters, coloring sheets, and informational pamphlets.

As of 2015, The Wild About Safety App in the UK has over 1 million downloads and a 3.7 star rating¹²⁶. According to Disney's 2019 Annual Report, Home Entertainment earned the highest annual revenue of 2019¹²⁷. Home Entertainment includes the sales of Disney's motion pictures to retailers and distributors in physical (DVD and Blu-ray), and electronic formats, which includes revenue from *Wild About Safety*.

Advertising

Advertising is a paid marketing tactic that involves paying for space to promote a product, service, or cause. Advertising can be ads on television, product placement, newspapers, and magazines. The Walt Disney Company has continued to advertise through many mediums while continuing to stick to its environmental and philanthropic values. Disney's advertisements have focused on promoting its CSR values and can be seen through its campaign on SwimToday and Disney's *Magic of Healthy Living* marketing campaign.

Disney has also worked with SwimToday and USA Swimming. The collaboration was the centerpiece of the SwimToday campaign's first phase, where ten industry partners banded together to show non-swimmers and their parents why swimming is the *#FunnestSport* and provided an invitation to join in¹²⁸. Lindsey Collins said, "As everyone knows, Dory's best advice to those in

¹²⁵ Disney Wild About Safety Staff, "Wild About Safety With Timon and Pumbaa."

¹²⁶ PPS, "Disney Wild About Safety App - Free Offline Download: Android APK Market."

¹²⁷ Walt Disney Co, "Walt Disney Co."

¹²⁸ Brien, "USA Swimming Teams Up With Disney-Pixar's 'Finding Dory' For 'Just Keep Swimming' Marketing Campaign."

a tough spot is to, ‘Just keep swimming.’ The producer of Finding Dory stated, “We are all truly honored that the organization has made this relationship possible, and we wish them much luck at the Olympics this summer.” A “Finding Dory” ad was the commemorative Olympic preview edition of Splash Magazine that was delivered to nearly 300,000 USA Swimming member homes¹²⁹.

Other elements included an advanced screening of “Finding Dory” for U.S. National Team members in conjunction with the Arena Pro Swim Series in Santa Clara, cross-promotion on Disney, Swim Today, and USA Swimming social media channels and group sales opportunities for USA Swimming teams and SwimToday partners¹³⁰. “Dory and SwimToday have one important key message in common – we want everyone to ‘Just keep swimming,’ but more importantly, we want moviegoers to join a swim team,” said USA Swimming’s Chief Marketing Officer Matt Farrell. ‘Finding Dory’ was instrumental in SwimToday’s invite for non-swimmers to be a part of the ‘funnest’ sport and be more like Dory, Nemo, and friends.

USA Swimming will collaborate with Disney to send SwimToday kits, including materials on the benefits of swimming and the “Finding Dory” movie, to the 3,000 USA Swimming registered teams¹³¹. The kits will include Disney, SwimToday, and co-branded items, such as posters and informational materials. As part of this alliance, Swim Today’s website featured a Dory-themed landing page from mid-May leading up to the June 17 opening of “Finding Dory”¹³².

¹²⁹ Chin, “USA Swimming, Disney and Pixar Make a Splash for ‘Finding Dory’.”

¹³⁰ Chin, “USA Swimming, Disney and Pixar Make a Splash for ‘Finding Dory’.”

¹³¹ Brien, “USA Swimming Teams Up With Disney-Pixar’s ‘Finding Dory’ For ‘Just Keep Swimming’ Marketing Campaign.”

¹³² Stewart, “Disney Pixar’s ‘Finding Dory’ Team up with USA Swimming.”

In September 2010, Disney's *Magic of Healthy Living* campaign used celebrities and Disney characters to inspire families and children to eat healthily and value nutrition¹³³. For a decade, Disney has been using nutritional guidelines when choosing which partners to work with. This content campaign showcases an effort that fits seamlessly into Disney's marketing strategy, one that necessitates engagement with parents as much as it does children. Disney's partnerships are meant to create engaging content- for both parents and their kids. Interactions among families and movie characters create relationships that can influence a child's mindset and activities.

Through this campaign, Disney influenced families to choose healthier foods at stores and to spend time making food as a family. This allowed Disney to further develop its brand image as a family brand. Currently, American children see an estimated \$1.6 billion a year worth of food and beverage marketing, and many of those ads are foods that are high in calories and sugar, but low in nutrition¹³⁴. Disney released its guidelines for advertising on any of its channels and its affiliates, which include all of the foods marketed on Disney's television and radio channels will be required to meet Disney's nutrition guidelines – which align with federal standards to promote fruit and vegetables and limit calories, sugar, sodium, and saturated fat – by 2015.

By 2015, Disney had: a growing portfolio of “better for you” Disney-branded foods at grocery retailers including more than 1.3 billion servings of fruits and vegetables sold in the United States alone, embedded healthy lifestyle themes in Disney Channel and Disney XD programming (available in 99 million and 77 million homes respectively across the U.S. and to millions of viewers on Disney Channels around the world), and healthier food options to choose from in

¹³³ The Walt Disney Company, “Corporate Social Responsibility 2018 Update.”

¹³⁴ License Global Staff, “Disney Launches the Magic of Healthy Living.”

Disney parks including fruits for snacking, the elimination of added trans fats and healthier default sides and beverages that families opt for in nearly 60% of kids' meals¹³⁵.

In addition, a year-long series of inspirational television public service announcements featuring Mrs. Obama and Disney Channel stars, including Nick Jonas and Brenda Song, among others¹³⁶. The PSAs (public service announcements) were presented daily on Disney Channel, Disney XD, Radio Disney, and Disney.com. They were featured on ABC in addition to being distributed through the Ad Council's network of 1,700 broadcast, network, and local cable stations for use in donated media¹³⁷. All of the ads on these channels promoted the campaign and encouraged viewers to go to Disney's two new websites, which featured their guidelines and resources. All of our television stations are affiliated with ABC and collectively reach approximately 20% of the nation's television households¹³⁸. Reaching 20% of the nation's television households is an important factor because Disney has the top four television network rankings from 2016-2019¹³⁹.

Public Relations

Public Relations is the strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics¹⁴⁰. Public Relations is one of the promotional strategies that The Walt Disney Company uses for The Food and Wine Festival, *The Happiest Celebration on Earth* Campaign, and for the *Year of a Million Dreams* Campaign.

¹³⁵ The Walt Disney Company, "Corporate Social Responsibility 2019 Update."

¹³⁶ Disney Magic of Healthy Living, "Disney Magic of Healthy Living Introduces New Standards."

¹³⁷ Nielsen Media Research, "U.S. Television Household Estimates."

¹³⁸ Nielsen Media Research, "U.S. Television Household Estimates."

¹³⁹ Walt Disney Co, "2019 Annual Report."

¹⁴⁰ PRSA, "Public Relations."

Disney's California Adventure Park's Food and Wine Festival happens every spring and is considered a service created by Disney. It showcases foods from different cultures and countries coming together in one location. The Food and Wine Festival highlights cultural diversity and education, teaching consumers about the background and cultural importance of the traditional food items chosen for each food cart. These food products in the California Adventure Park are just one of many ways that Disney is trying to intensify diversity and inclusion of different people, food, and cultures.

Disney went the educational route and established a month where theme park goers can have access to these different cultural experiences and products. Disney has marketed this service in many different ways. With over hundreds of positive reviews from the San Diego Tribune to the OC Register every year, The Food and Wine Festival has maintained its exclusivity¹⁴¹. The Food and Wine Festival had been reviewed by food critics, tourists, magazines, consumer goods companies, and tourists from the specified regions for that year in multiple blogs, media outlets, newspapers, and online communities, with an overall positive experience and value. Since its opening in at Epcot in 1995, Disney has continuously diversified the menu every year, allowing people and their food to be well represented.

Disney targets its loyal customers and pass holders for its Food and Wine Festival. In 2018, Disney allowed pass holders to gain exclusive access to the festival and offered pass holders and offers free wine glasses to those pass holders who have attended prior festivals over the years¹⁴². In addition to the service of the festival, Disney has rolled out merchandise from 2016-2020,

¹⁴¹ The Walt Disney World Resort, "The Disney Food Blog."

¹⁴² Disneyland Resort, "Disney California Adventure Food & Wine Festival Stirs in the Key Ingredient of Storytelling to Create a Uniquely Disney Experience."

representing the variety of the Food and Wine Festival, which varies per year, as the collection is limited edition. The exclusivity of the Food and Wine Festival makes it sought after every year from tourists around the world. Disney's values of creating a community have been achieved, as many pass holders and ticket-goers flock to it every year, hoping to gain access. Disney's Food and Wine Festival is categorized under the Parks and Resorts SBU, which was partially responsible for Disney's surge in revenue in 2018. International operations growth is driven by an increase in volumes, higher average guest spending, and favorable foreign currency impact, which occur every spring during the Food and Wine Festival dates.

Public Relations has been a large part of Disney's campaigns. For the "Happiest Celebration on Earth" campaign, it was its embrace of modern technology. Specifically, this was through the use of the "Happiest Place on Earth" podcast. According to a press release on PR Newswire, Disney held a three-day podcast from May 3 to 5 of 2005¹⁴³. This official podcast included celebrity interviews, music, stories of Disneyland's history, and finally, live coverage of the official 50th celebration. The Internet audio show was free and available for anyone to listen to through Disneyland's official website. In his interview with Schwartzman, Wardle said that this podcast allowed the company to engage its audience and start a dialogue with them¹⁴⁴. He also discussed how the podcast offered fans the opportunity to get a behind-the-scenes look at the Disney parks. While there was a concern as to whether or not this would spoil the "Disney magic," Wardle explained that the choice to let the audience in on the secrets was something that Walt Disney used to do with the Disneyland show back in the 50s. Thus, this podcast was a great opportunity to follow in the footsteps of their founder and offer that same look behind the curtain.

¹⁴³ PR Newswire, "Disneyland resort to "podcast" launch of its 50th anniversary celebration."

¹⁴⁴ Schwartzman, "On the Record Online with Disneyland VP PR Duncan Wardle."

This podcast was primarily made to show part of the Disney Magic, but also focused on Disney's efforts on diversity, inclusion, and CSR. Disney interviewed celebrities but also spent a large portion of its time on the podcast speaking on topics that affected its communities, values, and environment.

As part of the advertising campaign for "Year of a Million Dreams," Disney commissioned American portrait photographer Annie Leibovitz. She created a series of photographs using celebrities to recreate famous Disney scenes, such as Scarlett Johansson as Cinderella running away from the ball as the clock strikes twelve¹⁴⁵. Other notable celebrities used for the advertisements included Beyoncé Knowles, Whoopie Goldberg, and David Beckham¹⁴⁶. These portraits appeared as print advertisements in the March 2007 issues of several popular magazines including Vogue, Vanity Fair, and GQ. The glamorous Disney photos gained quite a bit of recognition in the press. William Keck, in 2007 of *USA Today* wrote, "When it comes to wishing upon a star, Annie Leibovitz has far more influence than Jiminy Cricket."¹⁴⁷ Leibovitz focused on capturing the diversity of Disney. Disney gained publicity as a result of many reporters reporting on the portraits and their artist. Photographing Disney princesses, which featured them as strong, independent women, was something that Disney wanted to showcase in their park and online. Though the "Year of a Million Dreams" campaign ended in 2008, Leibovitz's photos are still available to view online.

Product

¹⁴⁵ Macleod, "Disney launches Year of a Million Dreams with Annie Leibovitz."

¹⁴⁶ Keck, "Disney's dazzling Dreams."

¹⁴⁷ Keck, "Disney's dazzling Dreams."

Disney uses product differentiation as a marketing strategy. Porter's model states that this strategy involves unique products offered to many market segments. Disney's products and services are defined differently. Most goods are tangible products, while an intangible product is a product that can only be perceived indirectly, such as an insurance policy. More specifically, product marketing is a process of promoting and selling a product to a customer. Product marketing is defined as being the intermediary function between product development and increasing brand awareness. A service can be defined as activities, benefits, and satisfactions which are offered for sale or are provided in connection with the sale of goods. The defining characteristic of a service is intangibility because services are intangible and do not have a physical existence. An example of a service provided by Disney would be Disney's new streaming service, Disney+.

For example, the corporation offers its entertainment products to practically every person in the world, especially with the core emphasis on family-oriented programming¹⁴⁸. In this competitive strategy, quality and uniqueness through innovation differentiate the company's products from competitors. The subsidiary Walt Disney Imagineering Research & Development, Inc. has dedicated teams to ensure the uniqueness of entertainment experiences in the company's theme parks and resorts. The company's intensive growth strategies and associated strategic objectives are applied alongside this strategy, with emphasis on differentiated competitive advantage to support and manage business growth.

Product development is The Walt Disney Company's primary intensive growth strategy. This strategy involves offering new products in the company's current or existing markets. For example, the company releases new movies with corresponding merchandise to generate more profits from its target customers worldwide. This company analysis also sheds light on the

¹⁴⁸ Sorrentino, "Disney Plus: Rise of Skywalker Arrives Early, and Everything Else to Know."

importance of Disney's organizational structure, which provides the organizational design to manage product development effectively. This intensive strategy links to the differentiation of generic competitive strategy in emphasizing uniqueness in product development. A related strategic objective is to achieve business growth by effectively persuading customers to purchase Disney's products based on their unique attributes, such as in entertainment experience.

Disney Plus is an example of a service provided by Disney for purchase on a subscription basis. Disney Plus was launched on November 12th, 2019, in the USA¹⁴⁹. According to Disney's TREFIS, Disney's total revenue increased 26% from \$55.1 billion in 2017 to \$69.6 billion in 2019, driven by a sharp rise in 2019 due to the acquisition of Fox Studios¹⁵⁰. Revenue is likely to increase another 25% to \$86.6 billion by FY 2021, following the launch of Disney+ and consolidation of Hulu¹⁵¹. Disney Plus has been a competitor of Netflix even since its launch in the fall of 2019 but hasn't surpassed Netflix's annual revenue yet. Disney said that its new streaming service, Disney Plus, garnered 26.5 million subscribers in its first six weeks of existence, a strong start for the closely watched digital effort¹⁵². The number nearly triples what the company said it had just after launch. Citing "extraordinary demand," the company said that it reached a "major milestone," with the Disney+ subscriber rolls exceeding 10 million signups when the service debuted¹⁵³. With Disney's CSR goals in mind, it released *Elephants*, a Disneynature film exclusively on Disney Plus, on April 4th.

¹⁴⁹ Media Center, "Disney+ Moves up EMEA Launch Date."

¹⁵⁰ Trefis Corporation, "Walt Disney Revenues: How Does Disney Make Money?"

¹⁵¹ Trefis Corporation, "Walt Disney Revenues: How Does Disney Make Money?"

¹⁵² Vena, "Disney Stock Surges to All-Time High as Disney+ Subscribers Top 10 Million."

¹⁵³ Vena, "Disney Stock Surges to All-Time High as Disney+ Subscribers Top 10 Million."

The Walt Disney Company has collaborated with many brands that share its values of sustainability, diversity, and product quality. In 2020, The Walt Disney Company collaborated with Columbia Sportswear. Columbia is known for its strict values regarding the environment, labor laws, and sustainability. Columbia's partnership with Disney was a special-edition collection that celebrated a true *Disney* original with gear designed for enjoying the outdoors on magical adventures near and far¹⁵⁴. Columbia is known for the measures it takes as a company to: ensure product quality and manufacturing regulation, and this partnership associates Disney with Columbia's strong brand image. A product line collaboration with a sustainable company further drives Disney's commitment to the environment as well as increases the company's brand image. This collaboration focused on bringing the two brands together to create something greater. This synergy allowed both brands to come together to create an exclusive collection. Disney products are valued due to their exclusivity. Columbia Sportswear's diluted earnings per share increased by 20 percent, and by 2020, management estimated that the company's net sales would be \$3.23 billion, representing net sales growth of 4.5 to 6.0 percent from 2019 to 2020¹⁵⁵.

In honor of the 60th anniversary of Walt Disney's classic film *Sleeping Beauty*, Bésame Cosmetics collaborated with Disney to create an exclusive collection inspired by the artwork and story of the beloved Princess Aurora. Through extensive research with the Disney Archives and Disney Ink and Paint Department, Bésame matched the colors and artwork to bring consumers beautiful and authentic recreations from the classic 1959 film. Bésame and Disney debuted the *Sleeping Beauty* collection at the D23 Expo in 2019¹⁵⁶. Cosmetic products, including mirrors,

¹⁵⁴ Ismael, "Columbia Has Launched a Mickey Mouse-Themed Collection of Technical Clothing for Adults and Kids - Here's How to Style the Pieces as Streetwear."

¹⁵⁵ Columbia Sportswear Company. "Investor Relations."

¹⁵⁶ Shapouri, "This Snow White Beauty Collection Is the Stuff Dreams Are Made Of."

lipsticks, eyeshadows, and blushes, can be purchased in the park. However, it is not just the brand's uniqueness that attracted Disney to this collaboration. Bésame is family-owned, made in the USA, cruelty-free, and not tested on animals¹⁵⁷.

The Walt Disney Company has been known to use animals throughout its theme parks; however, Disney has been slowly taking steps toward animal welfare. Disney's collaboration with Bésame encouraged and educated customers on cruelty-free cosmetics within the park. In addition to being sold within the theme parks and stores, this makeup collection was also sold online through channels which included Bésame and Disney's websites. Disney's support and marketing for Bésame increase its reach in the cosmetic industry and its consumers. The Cosmetics Industry is worth over \$532 Billion¹⁵⁸. Disney's collaboration with Bésame supported a small business owned by an Argentinian woman, which helped boost Disney's image. The cosmetic company CEO, in a recent interview with *The Disney Blog*, revealed that she valued creating relevant historical cosmetic products and packaging back into use for new generations to appreciate the beauty and the styles of past decades¹⁵⁹. Bésame Cosmetics announced the *Snow White* collaboration on its Instagram and Facebook accounts in June of 2017, and did the same for its Sleeping Beauty collaboration, in addition to announcing it at the D23 Expo to Disney fans.

With hundreds of fans at the D23 Expo, social media usage increased as fans posted and reposted the collection with the hashtag, #Bésame+Disney¹⁶⁰. The Bésame launched involved a multi-channel strategy, social media, events, and consumer goods. The collection was primarily sold online and in the theme park in Southern California. At the theme park, the collection allowed

¹⁵⁷ Besame Cosmetics. "Collections- Aurora."

¹⁵⁸ Biron, "Beauty Has Blown up to Be a \$532 Billion Industry - and Analysts Say That These 4 Trends Will Make It Even Bigger."

¹⁵⁹ Ward, "The 1959 Sleeping Beauty Collection: An Interview with Gabriela Hernandez."

¹⁶⁰ Shapouri, "This Snow White Beauty Collection Is the Stuff Dreams Are Made Of."

Bésame to get more brand visibility. Disney's content marketing strategy goes in reverse compared to most brands. When most brands start with a physical product, Disney does not. Disney builds a storyline and a brand story first, then it creates and builds products around that story. Disney's collaboration with Bésame allowed both Disney and Bésame to lock into the Sleeping Beauty theatrical distribution during the release of the Maleficent Movie in late 2014.

The Walt Disney Studios' label, DisneyNature, is dedicated to telling compelling stories of the natural world as well as letting people know how they can make a difference for the environment. Moviegoers, who saw DisneyNature's second film, *Oceans*, during its theatrical opening week in 2010, helped conserve more than 40,000 acres of coral reef in the Bahamas. By partnering with cinemas and movie theaters across the world, DisneyNature was able to help local nonprofits with funding to support their initiatives.

The film, produced in association with the Census of Marine Life, explores the marine species of Earth's five oceans and reflects on the negative aspects of human activity on the environment. DisneyNature's goal is to educate its audience on the environmental impacts the world is enduring and to showcase animals in their rightful habitats. *Oceans* grossed over 82.7 million USD worldwide¹⁶¹. The film has received positive reviews from critics. The review aggregation website Rotten Tomatoes stated that the movie had received an 81% fresh rating from overall critics from 62 review¹⁶². Its consensus states, "*Oceans* adds another visually stunning chapter to the Disney Nature library"¹⁶³. Another review aggregator, Metacritic, which assigns a weighted average from 0-100 of top reviews from mainstream critics, gave the film an average score of 79% based on 20 reviews¹⁶⁴. In addition, the film opened briefly at #1, grossing

¹⁶¹ Mojo, "DisneyNature Movies at the Box Office."

¹⁶² Rotten Tomatoes, "Oceans."

¹⁶³ Rotten Tomatoes, "Oceans."

¹⁶⁴ CBS Interactive Inc, "Oceans reviews."

\$2,466,530 from 1,206 theaters on opening day¹⁶⁵. Disneynature's profits go toward helping the environment, and each movie released had a specific goal. *Oceans* helped conserve the coral reef in the Bahamas, while other movies such as *African Cats* helped conserve over 80,000 acres of the Savanna in Kenya to create conservation corridors. Disneynature is a great example of how Disney has created awareness toward the environmental impacts that are currently happening that not many people are aware of and how Disney is helping to conserve it.

People

People is one of the most important categories of the marketing mix. People can include cast members, employees, volunteers, and community members. The Walt Disney Company has been participating in volunteerism and community giving throughout the last ten years by initiating marketing strategies to promote community activism. Disney considers employees as those who work in its corporate offices. Cast members refer to the theme park, resort, and experience employees that interact with consumers inside its parks and resorts.

In 2010, Disney Parks offered an exciting incentive with its "Give a Day, Get a Disney Day" campaign. To celebrate the good deeds of Disney's participating park guests as well as employees, Disney Parks offered each volunteer who completed an eligible volunteer project free one-day admission to a theme park at the Walt Disney World Resort or Disneyland Resort¹⁶⁶. Disney sponsored and hosted charity event days across multiple cities in the USA. In just over two months, Disney Parks reached its goal of inspiring 1 million guests to sign up to make a difference in their communities through the spirit of volunteerism¹⁶⁷. Disney heard many stories

¹⁶⁵ CBS Interactive *Inc*, "Oceans reviews."

¹⁶⁶ Levine, "Give a Day, Get a Disney Day - Free Park Tickets for Volunteering."

¹⁶⁷ Levine, "Give a Day, Get a Disney Day - Free Park Tickets for Volunteering."

of families volunteering together, of new volunteers participating for the first time, and of increased support for local organizations. Alongside the official campaign announcement in September 2009, Disney's organization of volunteer cast members, known as VoluntEARS, joined over 1,000 local community efforts in cities around North America to raise awareness for the announcement¹⁶⁸.

Thousands of volunteers also supported this effort from Southwest Airlines, who, in turn, provided transportation for a 20-city tour of the message. During this tour, Disney in collaboration with Pro Motion! experiential marketing organized guerrilla events all over North America through local events, concerts, and Disney's JAMMitors pop-up performances in front of iconic landmarks across the continent in an attempt to raise campaign awareness¹⁶⁹. The Muppets were the face of this campaign.

The Muppets were also heavily featured in print and digital advertisements. Multiple magazine spreads depicted The Muppets volunteering, usually building a house, as a turn of the page revealed the whole gang enjoying a day at the parks. Alongside all this more traditional advertisement, The Muppets were also heavily featured in digital campaigns spanning across all Disney parks websites and Facebook. With promotions spanning from all digital platforms, such as from Public Relations and Advertising, Give a Day, Get a Disney Day ended after two months while volunteering increased in cities throughout the USA as a direct result. Disney reached its goal of over 1 million volunteers in just ten weeks¹⁷⁰. Volunteers found out about the program through a variety of ways, which included social media posts, social platforms, email, and through HandsOnNetwork, which manages most of Disney's volunteer opportunities.

¹⁶⁸ AE, "Give a Day. Get a Disney Day Program."

¹⁶⁹ BO, "BlakeOnline.com."

¹⁷⁰ Weiss, "Give a Day, Get a Disney Day' at Yesterland."

The team at Disney Animal Programs provides magical experiences for guests every day at Disney's Animal Kingdom and The Seas with Nemo & Friends at Epcot. They also help support the rescue and rehabilitation of hundreds of injured and orphaned animals every year. Disney Animal Programs and The Animal Care Team is often called upon to help distressed animals. In 2010, Disney's conservation and animal professionals, as well as other cast members at Walt Disney World Resort, provided aid to threatened sea turtle populations¹⁷¹. In January of 2018, Disney assisted the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in rescuing sea turtles impacted by record cold temperatures. Cast members who were not a part of the animal care team or rehabilitation program logged more than 10,000 miles throughout the state, carrying more than 500 rescued turtles to rehabilitation centers¹⁷². Disney veterinarians and previous hospital staff worked alongside other surgeons and technicians performing delicate surgeries, and Walt Disney World Resort took in critically injured turtles for long-term care. A few months later, Disney employees and cast members jumped into action again, converting space at Disney's Animal Kingdom and The Seas with Nemo & Friends at Epcot into a temporary rehabilitation facility for 68 sea turtles injured by the Gulf Coast oil spill. Most of these turtles have been released back to their home in the sea. Without the help of voluntEARS and Disney cast members and employees, these recovery efforts would not have been possible.

During April 2010 and the surrounding months, Disney business units around the world inspired and activated cast members and employees as well as its audiences, guests, and fans to take action for the environment. The many global activities included "green fairs," recycling drives, speakers and workshops, tree plantings, beach cleanups, e-waste drives, commuter

¹⁷¹ The Walt Disney World Resort, "Endangered Sea Turtles, Rescued from the Cold, Are Now Being Released."

¹⁷² The Walt Disney World Resort, "Endangered Sea Turtles, Rescued from the Cold, Are Now Being Released."

challenges, and much more¹⁷³. From the cast and guest events held at Disney Parks & Resorts to the “reuse-a-shoe” drive at ESPN to a “no print day” in the Asia Pacific region, business units worldwide made it a priority to get involved in Earth Month and make a difference. At Walt Disney World Resort, cast members made nearly 10,000 pledges to support oceans through their actions¹⁷⁴. On Earth Day in 2019, Disney piloted an opportunity for cast members and employees to use technology and creativity in support of the environment.

Working with Disney-owned 180 Studios, it launched an interactive social network for employees to share their ideas to improve the environment. More than 1,000 employees joined, with 50 cast members and employees taking the leap and sharing their ideas. The result was the “Earth Day Rap,” a video that was featured on YouTube and has been viewed over 60,000 times¹⁷⁵. In addition, Earth Day in 2020 focused on content marketing and showcased the people helping the world. According to an official press release from Disney Channel Media Relations Director, Julie Mitchell, “Disney Channel will commemorate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day and the 25th anniversary of the Disney Conservation Fund with special interstitials highlighting the animal care and wildlife conservation efforts led by Cast Members at Disney’s Animal Kingdom Theme Park”¹⁷⁶. In the same press release, Disney XD was said to offer viewers a full-day marathon of the animated series “Amphibia,” followed by a presentation of the acclaimed DisneyNature film “Born in China.” The DisneyNOW app will feature an Earth Day Collection and a 10-minute extended version of the Disney’s Animal Kingdom interstitials¹⁷⁷. In addition, Disney Channel’s Instagram account will feature interactive Earth Day content with participation from “ZOMBIES

¹⁷³ The Walt Disney Company, “Corporate Citizenship 2010 Report.”

¹⁷⁴ The Walt Disney Company, “Corporate Citizenship 2010 Report.”

¹⁷⁵ The Walt Disney Company, “Corporate Citizenship 2010 Report.”

¹⁷⁶ Walt Disney Television, “Disney Channels to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day.”

¹⁷⁷ Walt Disney Television, “Disney Channels to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day.”

2” stars Chandler Kinney and Trevor Tordjman as well as Simon and Kolker. In addition, @DisneyTVA will present an “Amphibia” IGTV episode highlighting fun facts about amphibians and their importance to their respective ecosystems.

Disney started the Disney Ambassadors program at Disneyland Resort in 1964. Ambassadors serve a vital function: to share the magic, inspiration, and optimism of Disney destinations with the world. Disney Ambassadors, who are full-time cast members at each site, are focused on engaging with our guests, our communities, and our cast members. They bring goodwill in the community by visiting children’s hospitals, participating in VoluntEARS events, and supporting other local efforts¹⁷⁸. Disney’s Ambassadors program encourages adults to give back and volunteer in their communities. Disney continuously encourages employees to donate their time and efforts to make the community that they live in better. By participating in park cleanups, beach cleanups, and feeding homeless at shelters, Disney Ambassadors continue to show the value that Disney holds in volunteerism. Disney markets the Disney Ambassador Program through social media as a cause marketing initiative. A part of Disney’s CSR values, volunteering shows how far Disney has come since the start of their CSR journey- from their first volunteer event with 1,000 employees to 2020s most recent events with over 200,000 participants, also known as “VoluntEARS.” In 2020, the @DisneylandAmbassador Instagram account has over 27.6 thousand followers, reaching a large audience consisting of students, tourists, and California locals¹⁷⁹.

¹⁷⁸ Disneyland Ambassador Program, “Ambassador Program.”

¹⁷⁹ Disneyland Ambassador Program, “Ambassador Program.”

CONCLUSION

The Walt Disney Company focused on its CSR goals, specifically from 2013-2020. After analyzing many of Disney's campaigns, one can see how CSR drives its marketing strategies. Placing an emphasis on CSR allows Disney to address its environmental impact as well as address its community impact, and how Disney is positively influencing them. Disney's dedication to its community is extremely important for each marketing campaign that Disney releases. Disney's CSR strategy ensures an ethical Walt Disney Company that markets itself by its CSR values and provides valuable entertainment, products, and experiences to customers worldwide. Creating campaigns around CSR and sustainability is a driving factor for Disney's success and influence over its community, and the rest of the world. After analyzing Promotion, Product, and People, one can see how The Walt Disney Company is affected by its values of Corporate Social Responsibility.

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