Cause Marketing: A New Direction in the Marketing of Corporate Responsibility Smith, Scott M;Alcorn, David S

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CAUSE MARKETING: A NEW DIRECTION IN THE MARKETING OF CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY

Scott M. Smith David S. Alcorn

"The wave of the future isn't checkbook philanthropy. It is a marriage of corporate marketing and social responsibility." An increasing number of corporations have discovered a new marketing strategy that simultaneously demonstrates a sense of social responsibility and satisfies shareholders' demands for increased profits and market share. This strategy combines the best elements of traditional marketing with the well-established concept of corporate social

responsibility. As with traditional marketing strategies, differential product advantage continues to be emphasized. However, the new strategy links product benefits with creative promotional appeals that encourage charitable giving. Proponents of this quid pro quo philosophy of corporate social responsibility and philanthropy have labeled this integrative strategy cause marketing.

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Professor Smith serves on the editorial board for several journals and is the author of articles appearing in Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Journal of Marketing Education, and Journal of Business Ethics. He has just completed books on Multidimensional Scaling, and Computer Assisted Decisions in Marketing, and has books on marketing research and conjoint analysis that will be published in 1992.

In addition to his current writing activities, he is actively engaged in exchange activities with Moscow State University. He anticipates returning to Moscow (for short periods of time), where he has lived and presented marketing lectures to business executives and directors of economic institutes.

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Cause marketing may be the most creative and cost-effective product marketing strategy to evolve in years, and one that directly addresses the issue of measured financial returns. It offers distinct benefits for an effective marketing campaign that fulfills social responsibilities, satisfies specific market-related objectives, and enhances corporate image (Figure 1).

The obligation, responsibility, and even legal prerogative of corporations to make charitable contributions have been debated for years. Nobel Laureate Milton Friedman has forcefully stated that the purpose of a business is to make profits and return those profits to the shareholders. He has suggested that corporations have neither the mandate nor the competence to deal with social problems. Although many corporations maintain this limited vision of social responsibility, others have actively supported charitable organizations, believing that direct and measurable benefits accrue to the corporation.

This discussion of "enlightened self-interest" is currently an ethical and not a legal issue, since the legality of **unrestricted** corpo-

rate giving has been resolved. In a declaratory judgment, the New Jersey Supreme Court allowed that corporations may make unrestricted charitable donations directed at bettering social and economic conditions. Although 35 years have passed since this landmark decision, the moral philosophy and ethics of "enlightened self-interest" continue to be questioned, largely because of the difficulty of measuring financial returns from the support of charitable organizations. 4.5.8,12,15

How Cause Marketing Works

Cause marketing strategy is implemented through one of three forms of corporate sponsorship (see Figure 2).

Media support is the most common form of cause marketing strategy. Telethons operate with the help of corporate sponsors, who promote the telethon, its cause, and the company's products. The organization purchases the media time for the telethon, and in return the corporate sponsor links its products with the cause.

Media Support (advertising) plus conditional donations includes promotional strategies

Figure 1 Benefits of Cause Marketing

Market Control: Market objectives are established and stated about measurable goals such as specified increases in sales volume or in consumer traffic.

Purchase Incentives, such as increased corporate contributions to a charitable cause, are linked to consumer support of company products.

Global Advertising Appeals are developed to jointly benefit the company, the cause-organization, and the well-being of the consumer.

Review and Evaluation procedures place contingencies on continued participation. Does the campaign pass the criterion of return on promotional investment?

Strengthened Employee Motivation and Morale through personal involvement with important social causes having universal appeal.

Enhanced Company and Product Images result from association with the cause.

A Pre-Defined Marginal Cost Structure links contributions to consumer demand and satisfaction with the product and sponsorship.

Ability to Generate Testable Research Hypotheses Involvement with universally esteemed causes increases sales force motivation and morale.

that specifically advertise the cause but tie consumer activity (response) to corporate donations. Here, cash donations to the cause are contingent upon product purchase or service subscription. American Express donated 50 cents to the Broward County (Florida) Public Library each time a shopper at Fort Lauderdale's Galleria Shopping Mall used the company's credit card. Two dollars were also added for each new credit card application submitted to American Express.

As a second example, American Express card usage increased by 25 percent during a three-month period when a cause marketing campaign linked credit card usage to the centennial restoration of the Statue of Liberty. The American Express company's donation of one cent for each credit card purchase resulted in a total of \$1.7 million for the Lady.

Media support plus dual incentive donations uses two forms of incentive to gain support for the charitable organization. Redeemable money-saving coupons are offered to the customer as an incentive to purchase the product. In addition, each coupon tendered results in a pre-specified corporate donation to the cause (Figure 3). This proof-of-purchase or coupon incentive is often identified as a tie-in to the telethon or cause-related advertising campaign. (See next page).

Employing this strategy, General Foods tracked a 13 percent increase in wholesale

distribution of Tang during a four-month coupon tie to MADD, Mothers Against Drunk Driving. MADD has increased its base of support, extending the coupon tie-in to other manufacturers, and expects to raise over \$2 million in 1991. In 1990, corporate sponsors of the Children's Miracle Network Telethon (including International Dairy Queen. Johnson & Johnson, Heinz USA, Kimberly-Clark, Kraft, Marriott Hotels, Nestle, General Foods Post Division, and Sunny Delight) helped to raise \$89.5 million for children's hospitals throughout the United States and Canada. In addition, coupon and proof-ofpurchase tie-ins offered by sponsors resulted in the Children's Miracle Network Telethon receiving another \$3 million.

Consumer Motivations and Cause Marketing Strategies

Product-centered promotional strategies have long been used to motivate the purchase of products and the use of services in diverse marketing applications, including cause marketing. From the marketer's perspective, the objective of cause marketing is to strengthen consumer demand, regardless of whether such activity is motivated by economics or by pure altruism.

Altruism is a complex phenomenon which has many motivational dimensions. Two comprehensive reviews of the altruistic literature

Figure 2 Forms of Corporate Sponsorship

- 1. **Media Support:** A jointly sponsored media plan focuses on the charitable cause and the company's products/services.
- 2. **Media Support Plus Conditional Donations:** Media advertising supports the cause and is accompanied by corporate contributions, the amount of which is contingent upon the purchase or use of the company's products/services.
- 3. Media Support Plus Dual Incentive Donations: Media promotion of the cause is provided and accompanied by corporate sponsorship of dual incentives to the customer. The corporation makes contributions to the cause in amounts contingent upon purchase or subscription of the company's product or service, or coupon/point-of-purchase redemption. In addition, cents-off coupons are offered as further cash saving incentives to the customer.

Figure 3 Join Canad help donate \$100,000 to Hospitals for Children Here's how you can help POST* help hospitals for children Use the coupons below and POST* will donate 25¢ for each coupon you redeem. • Look for Miracle Seals on specially-marked packages of POST® Alpha-Bits,® Honeycomb! Super Golden Crisp,* and Pebbles* cereals: -Mail-in one seal and POST* donates 25¢ -Mail in 3 seals and POST* donates \$1.00 PLUS you'll receive a \$1.00 coupon good on any of the participating cereals. ADULES"

suggest that consumers may be motivated to respond to cause marketing appeals by economic motivations, social norms that encourage charitable behavior or enduring values which have been internalized and result in appropriate behaviors. 10,14 Figure 4 identifies the key motivational elements responsible for altruistic behavior and links them to successful marketing appeals for cause marketing. Altruism may be motivated by simple reactance to situations and actions of others, by the influence of individual and group models, or by internalized values. For cause marketing, the most important of these elements is economic motivation.

Economic motivation for altruistic behavior is mediated by many factors. Charitable contributions are sensitive to the real cost of giving: The higher the cost to the giver, the lower the rate of helping behavior. However, the economic motivations to contribute appear to differ with the type of organization receiving help. As part of the Report of the National Commission on Philanthropy, it was estimated that eliminating charitable gift tax deductions would reduce contributions to churches by 10 to 14 percent, but to hospitals and educational

institutions by almost half.⁶ This inelasticity of church donations is presumably related to internalization of values dictating religious contributions.

Consumer responsiveness to economic and value-laden appeals leads to support of cause marketing efforts that reduce the real cost of purchase through the redemption of coupons. Coupon redemption provides a strong economic motivation for purchase. In 1989, customers redeemed 7.13 billion coupons, for over \$3.12 billion in savings at the checkout counter. As a tie-in between product purchase and altruistic behavior, cause marketing has been successful primarily because of the strength of the customer's economic motivations.

Altruistic motivations often result from either social norms or a learned personal commitment to the specified recipient (e.g., children in hospitals). In contrast to norms that emphasize group behavior, social responsibility is directed by personal norms that influence the individual's behavior. True social responsibility occurs when an individual feels responsibile or increases personal involvement in securing the safety and well-being of another. From an empirical perspective, norms are diffi-

	Figure 4 Motivations for Altruistic Behavior						
Range of Altruism	Behavioral Situations	Stages in the Behavioral Process	Applicable Marketing Appeals				
Temporary	Temporary psychological states Economic motivations Reciprocity	Reactance to situations and actions of others	 * Telethons, poster children, movie stars * Coupon tie-ins, tax deductions * Benefit appeals 				
	Dependency of Others Interpersonal attractiveness and individual behavior Models of Group Helping Behavior	Identification with individual and group others	 * Use and demonstration of dependency and equity * Appeals using attractive models * Publicizing support by dollar total or name 				
Enduring	Norm of Social Responsibility Organizational commitment	Internalization of behavior into value system	* Value laden appeals* Public recognition				

cult to measure. It may be argued that behavior cannot be predicted from stated norms in that, if the desired response does not occur, the behavior is considered to fall outside the norm.

Commitment is more enduring than a norm, and it involves the internalization of a value, making the value more stable and resistant to change. The degree of individual commitment is mediated by such variables as confidence in one's ability and the degree of identification between the person and the behavior. Commitment occurs when two basic requirements are met: the behavior must be irrevocable, and it must have cost-reward implications to the individual.

Cause marketing may be the most creative and cost-effective product marketing strategy to evolve in years.

Within the cause marketing framework, we are concerned with two forms of commitment. The first, commitment to an organization, focuses on resisting change in all positive attitudes about giving to that organization. The second, commitment to giving behavior, focuses on resisting conforming to a nongiving mode.

This article will present, not a comprehensive review of altruistic behavior research, but rather the results of a nationwide study investigating consumer intentions to respond to a dual-incentive cause marketing program. The following research questions were addressed:

- 1. Are consumers willing to switch brands to support a manufacturer who funds charitable causes?
- 2. Are consumers altruistic enough to support the causes themselves without manufacturer donations?
- 3. What relationships exist between donation amount and intention to purchase?
- 4. What is the importance of dual-incentive cause marketing strategies to the success of cause marketing appeals?

Methodology

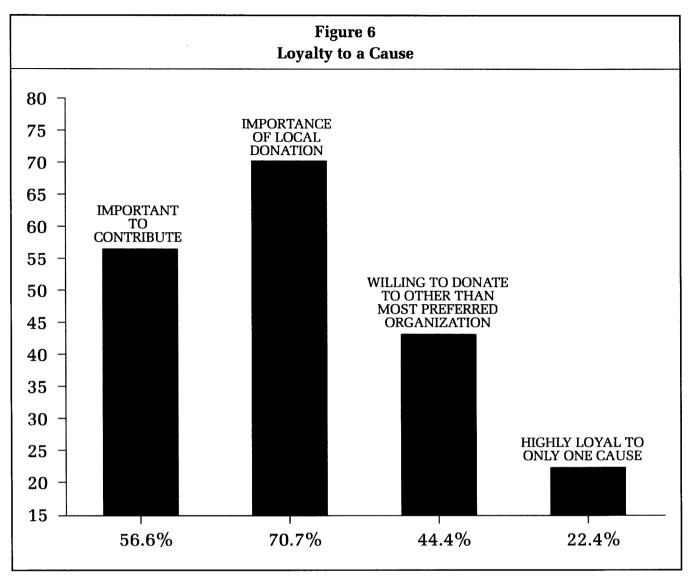
Data Collection

The data for this study were collected as part of a nationwide telephone survey of adults 18 years and older. (Full details of the sample selection is in the Appendix.)

Measures

The intention to engage in altruistic behavior

Figure 5 Attitude and Importance Measures				
Charitable Cause Support:	Importance of and intention to donate to charitable causes (other than church), in which the money remains in the local area; importance of making donations to support charitable causes.			
	Attitudes about personal selectivity of making charitable contribution; intention to contribute to causes other than most preferred; loyalty to a single cause.			
Company Support:	Importance of and intention to buy from companies that support Charitable causes; intention to buy from companies that support charitable causes, even if it means switching brands.			
Coupon Use Situation:	Importance of and intention to use coupons when shopping at your supermarket when visiting your favorite fast-food restaurant, and when attending a local sports event.			
Coupon Amount:	Importance of and intention to use coupons when the amount of the coupon is 10, 25, and 40 cents.			



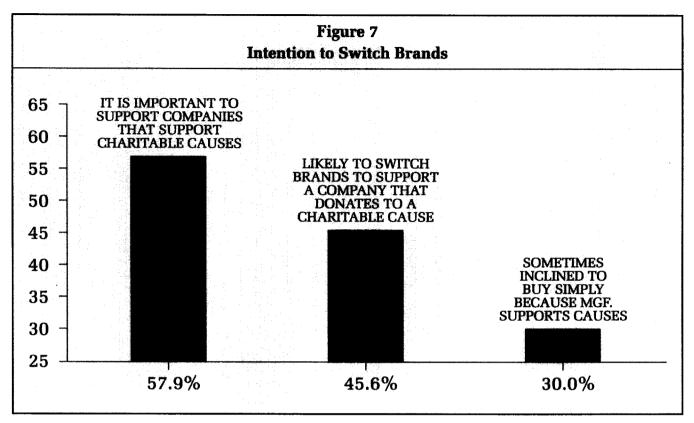
was measured by a series of questions, about attitudes and intention to support a cause (Figure 5). In addition, respondent intention to switch brands was measured through scenarios describing three different product purchases (cold cereal, hamburger and drink, sports event), each with three different levels of manufacturer donations (10 cents, 25 cents, 40 cents). The items in the survey instrument were selected after an exhaustive review of the research related to charitable giving.

All scales were measured as five-category Likert type statements with the appropriate headings (Strongly Agree-Strongly Disagree; Very Likely-Not at All Likely; Very ImportantVery Unimportant). The order of item presentation was rotated to reduce response bias.

Results

General Attitude Toward Altruism

The analysis of the descriptive variables profiling respondent attitudes toward altruistic behavior showed that about one-half (56.6%) of the sample believed it was very or somewhat important that they make charitable donations (Figure 6). However, this support appeared to be conditional, since 70.7 percent of the respondents indicated that it was very or somewhat important that the local area be the beneficiary of these contributions.



When asked about making donations, respondents did not consider themselves to be loyal to a single cause but were selective in the causes to which they contribute. Less than half (44.3%) of the respondents indicated that they would contribute to charitable causes other than their most preferred. It is important to note that this selectivity is not exclusivity, in that only 22.4 percent of the sample indicated that they were highly loyal to a single charitable cause (Figure 6).

Intentions to Switch Brands: Product Category and Coupon Amount

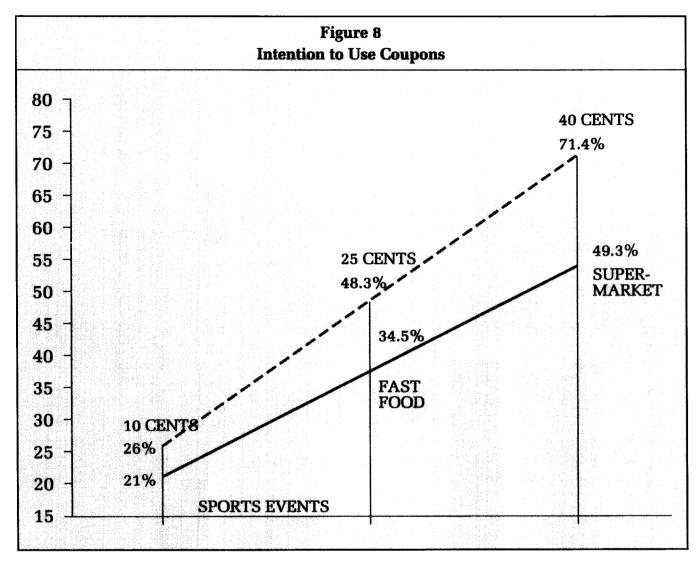
Respondents believed it important both to make donations to a local charity and to buy products from companies that support charitable causes.

When considering loyalty or willingness to support a manufacturer simply because it supports charitable organizations, 30.0 percent of respondents agreed that they are **sometimes** inclined to buy such products. This percentage is less than was expected, because the question makes no claim regarding the quality of the

product. Overall support is high. Almost twice as many respondents (57.9%) believed it somewhat or very important to support companies that support charitable causes.

Respondent intention to switch brands to support a manufacturer who donates to a charitable cause was higher than expected, with 45.6 percent of the respondents indicating they were somewhat or very likely to switch brands (Figure 7).

The economic incentive to switch brands was evaluated jointly with the context of coupon use. Intention to use coupons was greatest when shopping at the supermarket (49.3%), but less likely at a fast-food restaurant (34.5%) or a local sports event (21%). However, the value of the coupon appeared to have a greater impact on intention to use than did the coupon usage context. The intention to use a 10-cent coupon was reported to be somewhat or very likely by only 26.0% of the sample, but increased to 48.3 percent for the 25 cent coupon and to 71.4 percent for the 40-cent coupon (Figure 8).



The combination of the right market segment and adequate financial incentives are of primary importance in increasing brand switching, even when altruistic appeals are present.

Figure 8 shows that respondent intentions to switch brands increase in a near linear fashion with the amount of manufacturer donation. This finding further accentuates the finding that financial incentives are of primary importance in increasing brand switching, even when altruistic appeals are present. The intention to engage in brand switching also differed across product categories.

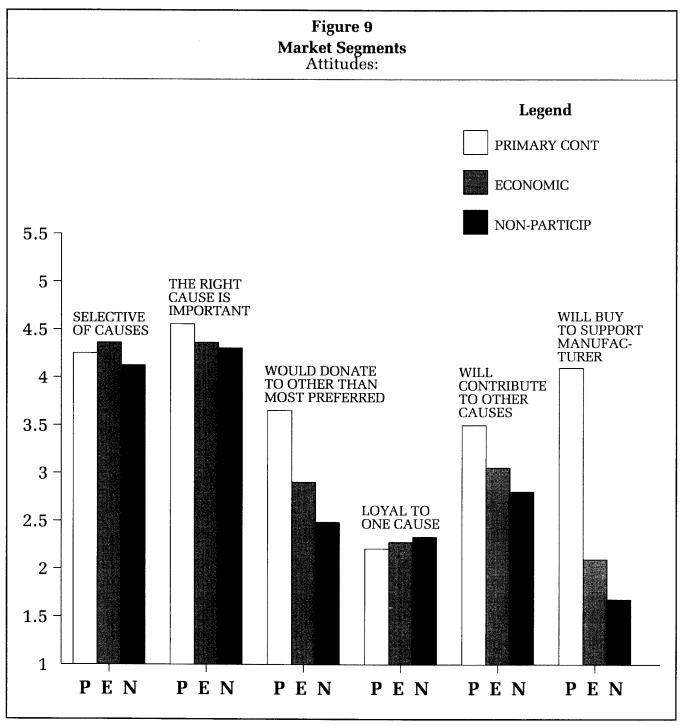
The Identification of Cause Marketing Segments

Perhaps the most important component of

this study is the identification of market segments that differ in their response to altruistic appeals. A segmentation analysis was used to verify this hypothesis and identify the respondent clusters to which cause marketing appeals could be directed.

First, the Howard-Harris clustering algorithm was used to identify the market segments. After the segments were identified, they were profiled by testing for differences on attitude, importance, and behavioral intention statements. (See Appendix Figure 2.) Then, the attitudes and intentions of the segments were portrayed graphically.

The segmentation analysis was based on four measures of altruistic intention: (1) intention

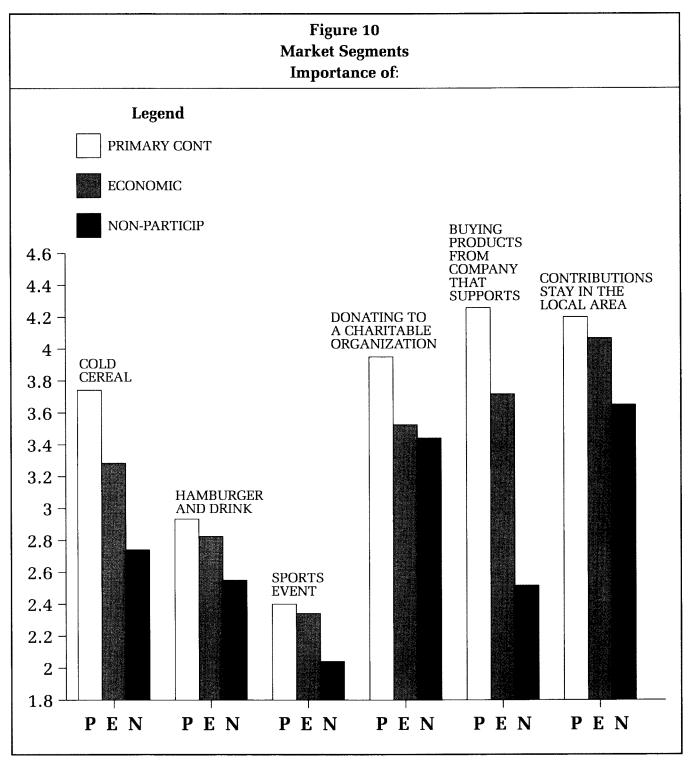


to support a charitable cause, (2) intention to support charitable causes even if brand switching is required, (3) intention to donate to a charitable cause given that the money would be retained in the local area, and (4) intention to buy a brand simply because the manufacturer supports charitable causes. The cluster anal-

ysis produced three distinct market segments (see Figure 9).

The "Primary Contributor" Segment

Segment 1, comprising 34.7 percent (n = 104) of respondents, is characterized as the "Primary Contributor" segment. This segment has the greatest intention to contribute to a



cause, especially if the cause benefits the local area. This is the most likely segment to switch brands or make purchases to support a manufacturer who supports a cause. The Primary Contributor would be the segment most likely to use coupons for cereal and hamburger/drink

products. The coupon amount does not appear to be critical to the switching decision.

The "Economically Motivated" Segment

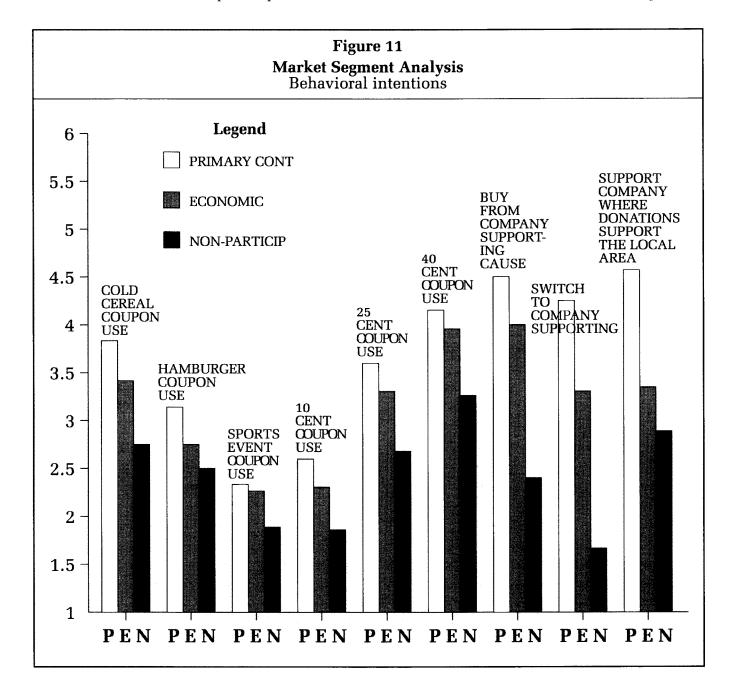
Segment 2, consisting of 40 percent of the respondents (n = 120), is best described as the

"Economically Motivated Contributor." This segment is closely associated with the use of high-value coupons (25 and 40 cents) and specific products (cold cereal). This respondent believes it is important to contribute to local causes, but has only moderate intentions to contribute and is selective in choosing the cause. Members of this segment are more willing to buy from a manufacturer that supports causes than is the "Nonparticipator." The

coupon user may also switch brands of cereal or toothpaste, but this willingness to switch seems dependent on availability of a 25- to 40-cent coupon incentive. (See Figure 10.)

The "Non-Participator" Segment

Segment 3, consisting of 25.3 percent (n = 76) of the respondents, is best described as "Nonparticipator." The Nonparticipator believes that donating to charitable organizations that benefit the local area is important,



but does not hold this belief as strongly as the other two segments. This group is the least likely to make donations. The Nonparticipator is not likely to use coupons, regardless of value, a finding indicating that coupons are not a motivating force, at least when their value is less than 40 cents. This segment is the least likely to switch brands in support of manufacturers who support causes.

Figure 10, the graph of respondent intention to use coupons, shows how the Primary Contributor segment differs from the Economically Motivated and Nonparticipating segments. The level of intention diverges as the coupon amount increases: segment 2 is increasingly likely to use coupons and segment 1 is relatively less likely to use them as the amount increases to 40 cents.

These findings suggest that the market segments are of primary importance in explaining intention to use coupons. Segment identification is influenced by coupon amount, but less so for coupon use occasion.

Managerial Implications and Recommendations

This research investigated consumer intentions to respond to dual incentive cause marketing programs. The results of the study are useful in explaining to the manager of both charitable organizations and products why cause marketing may be the most creative and cost-effective product marketing strategy to evolve in years. Simply stated, three contributor segments exist: the Primary contributor, the Economically Motivated, and the Nonparticpator.

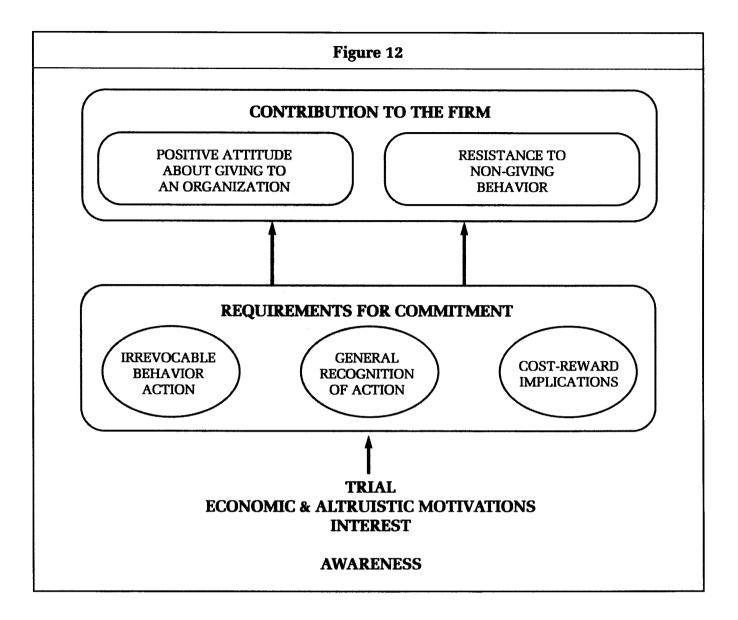
The Primary Contributor segment is the current mainstay of charitable fund raising. Members of this segment are motivated by altruism and donate to a broad range of organizations when asked. The Primary Contributor segmen is also financially motivated, the most willing to use coupons, and the most willing to switch brands. The combination of financial and altruistic cause marketing appeals promises

large increases in product sales for this segment.

For the marketing manager interested in getting started in cause marketing, the initial steps are quite simple. The manager contacts the cause and will present a proposal identifying the goals of the company and their compatibility with the cause. Upon approval, the company becomes a participant by paying a fee to cover marketing costs. If the firm's strategy is to use coupon incentives similar to those tested here, the coupon ads are produced by the cause's marketing firm. Often, non-package goods firms (e.g., Dairy Queen, Marriott, Walmart) are participants, but produce their own coupons or incentives for their own distribution. As part of the participation fee, the firm receives use of the celebrities and poster children for the ads, they are recognized and provided ad space in campaign advertising, they receive advertising time on the local markets, are given use of celebrities at sales events or conventions, and receive audience/viewership information on the campaign.

Cause marketing managers are well versed in promotional planning. They recognize that cause marketing with dual incentives is a unique strategy that joins altruistic and financial appeals so as to be doubly effective in motivating distinct market segments. Cause marketing managers understand the needs of the product manager and are dedicated to leading them through the steps required to produce and effective campaign.

Although we must recognize that managers of products of fund raising organizations may have different measures of success (market share, sales, or donations), the objective of their marketing efforts is the same: to increase the level of the consumer commitment. This objective translates to a sequence of behavioral changes that moves the non-contributor or non-purchaser through initial contribution or trial, to a planned purchase or contribution (Figure 12). The motivational objective of this process is to achieve a commitment to the product or organization.



APPENDIX

The sample frame was composed of respondents living in 316 primary metropolitan statistical areas (PMSAs) identified in the **Survey of Buying Power**. A cluster sample procedure with quotas within the clusters was used to randomly select respondents. First, 10 percent (32) of the PMSAs were randomly selected for sampling. Next, the number of random interviews to be completed in each market was computed, with the number being proportional to market size. Finally, telephone prefixes were identified for each of the 32 selected PMSAs. For each prefix, a list containing 300 four-digit

random numbers was generated, and these constituted the numbers dialed by telephone interviewers. Three hundred interviews were completed. Field procedures were implemented to control time of day and day of week of interviewing. This random sampling and dialing method was implemented to increase the statistical likelihood that the sample of respondents represent the population at large. We note in Appendix Figure 1 that the figures differ slightly from national percentages. The sample over represents the younger (18-39 years) and educated (some college) respondent.

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VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE PERCENT	SAMPLE n	PERCENT OF U.S.A.
GENDER	Male	40%	121	48.5%
	Female	60%	179	51.5%
	*X ² =3.57, 1 d.f., p<.10			
MARITAL STATUS	Never married	21%	62	18.3%
	Married	63%	190	60.5%
	Previously married X ² =3.19, 2 d.f., p=n.s.	16%	47	21.3%
EDUCATION	Less than high school	13%	38	25.3%
됐겠겠다.	Completed high school	33%	100	38.4%
	Some college	39%	161	37.3%
	X ² =22.48, 2 d.f., p<.05			
AGE	18-29	30%	91	24.9%
B를 가게하는 이번 하셨다.	30-39	28%	82	23.2%
	40-49	11%	32	15.4%
	50-59	12%	36	13.0%
	60-69	10%	29	23.4% **
	70 and older	9%	28	
	X ² =22.6, 4 d.f., p<.05			
INCOME	Less than \$10,000	12%	37	12.4%
	\$10,000 - 19,999	22%	67	19.4%
	\$20,000 - 29,999	23%	68	20.0%
	\$30,000 - 39,999	14%	43	15.0%
	\$40,000 - 49,999	11%	33	33.2% **
	More than 49,999	12%	35	
건물이 있다면서 중요한 요요 하나요 한다.	Refused to answer X ² =3.20, 4 d.f., p=n.s.	6%	17	

^{*} Chi-Square values were computed based on a comparison of frequencies observed in the sample and frequencies that exactly represent the population of the U.S. as a whole, given a similar set of 300 respondents.

** Collapsed to 5 levels for this comparison analysis.

Further analysis did not show the younger vs. older or some college vs. no college dichotomies to be predictive of coupon usage

or willingness to support cause marketing appeals.

End Notes

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APPENDIX
Figure 2
One-Way Analysis of Variance: Market Segments by Mean Attitude,
Importance and Intention Scores

ITEM:	NON- PARTICIP	ECONOMIC MOTIVATED	PRIMARY CONTRIB.	TOTAL SAMPLE	F	d.f.	Prob
Coupon Importance:					- 10 to 10 t		
Cold Cereal	2.75	3.27	3,77	3.31	11.34	2,297	.000
Hamburger-drink	2.57	2.82	2.92 1	2.79	1.32	2,296	.268
Sports Event	2.09	2.37	2.41	2.31	1.29	2,293	.276
Importance:							
Donating to Char. Org.	3.45	3,55	3.94	3.66	5.04	2,297	.007
Buying Products	2.52	2.73	4.24	3.61	69.12	2,296	.000
Local Contributions	3.64	4,08	4.19	4.01	5.00	2,297	.007
Behavioral Intentions:							
Cold Cereal Coupon Use	2.75	3.43	3.83	3.40	10.62	2,293	.000
Hamburger/Drink Use	2.51	2.77	3.14	2.82	3.87	2,290	.022
Sports Coupon Use	1.88	2.32	2.37	2.23	2.89	2,287	.057
10 Cent Coupon Use	1.83	2.35	2.62	2.31	6.48	2,296	.002
25 Cent Coupon Use	2.75	3.28	3.54	3.24	6.70	2,297	.001
10 Cent Coupon Use	3.24	3.97	4.11	3.83	9.42	2,297	.000
Buy	2.45	4.00	4.49	3.78	8.69	2,294	.000
Switch	1.64	3.32	4.20	3.21	184.30	2,295	.000
Local	3.00	3.38	4.54	3.89	54.49	2,294	.000
Attitudes:							
Selective of Causes	4.17	4.35	4.25	4.27	.57	2,296	.000
Right Cause is Import	4.30	4.34	4.49	4.38	.92	2,297	.401
Other than Most Prefer.	2.51	2.91	3.64	3.07	18.95	2,289	.000
Loyal to 1 Cause	2.37	2.33	2.29	2.33	.07	2,297	.928
Will Contrib. to Other Causes	2.91	3.06	3.55	3.19	7.04	2,297	.001
Buy to Suppor tMfg.	1.69	2.06	4.05	2.67	176.74	2,293	.000
Percent Women	51.3	53.8	72.1				
Average Age	41	34	37 1 1	1 LEGEND: Duncan Multiple Range Lines indi- cate significance between groups at .05 level.			

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