

Social Responsibility as a Method to Expand Publics

Crimson & Whipped Cream

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Executive Summary

Crimson & Whipped Cream, a bakery and coffee shop located in Norman, Oklahoma on Campus Corner struggles with a decrease in customer traffic during university breaks such as winter and summer break due to its proximity to the University of Oklahoma. A team of researchers from Dr. Tsetsura's public relations research class conducted secondary and primary research to find strategies that Crimson & Whipped Cream could use to address the lack of consumer traffic during student breaks.

Through secondary research the researchers found that customers are more loyal to businesses they view are socially responsible. The researchers then conducted primary research in the form of surveys and in-person interviews. The overall goal for the survey was to see if Norman residents choose to support local businesses based on if those businesses are engaged in culturally responsible activities. The researchers gathered data online through Facebook and in-person at cultural centers in Norman. The results of the survey suggested that Norman residents value local businesses that are socially responsible.

After conducting surveys, the researchers then conducted eight in-person interviews. From the in-person interviews, the researchers found that Norman residents prefer humanitarian social responsibility, value volunteering time more than donating money and like to see an immediate impact when they or a business participated in socially responsible activities.

From the results the researchers learned that social responsibility is important but not necessarily a deciding factor on whether or not Norman residents will support that business or not. The researchers' findings are useful to Crimson & Whipped Cream because it provides a strategy Crimson & Whipped Cream can use to combat decreases in customer traffic during student breaks.

Background

Crimson & Whipped Cream Bakery and Coffee Shop is a small, locally owned business located on Campus Corner in Norman, Oklahoma. It is a popular spot for students to meet, eat and study. During the school year, Crimson & Whipped Cream stays steadily busy and makes a good profit, but during the summer and other school breaks, the huge decrease in students creates a loss of traffic to the cafe, which results in a loss of revenue. The goals of this research was to find ways to help Crimson & Whipped Cream combat this loss of revenue.

The researchers decided to focus their research on Norman residents who are not students at the University of Oklahoma, as they become the primary customer during the summer and other school breaks. This target also gives Crimson & Whipped Cream an opportunity to learn more about a target which often becomes secondary to students at the University of Oklahoma during the school year.

Based on secondary research, it was found that consumers value social responsibility in businesses and are more willing to go to a new place and will spend more money at a business that is socially responsible. The researchers wanted to explore this phenomenon and find out if Norman residents value social responsibility, and if so, what kinds of social responsibility do they value most. These questions were addressed in the survey administered by the researchers at the Norman Public Library and the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art. After the survey was conducted, the researchers also wanted to know why Norman residents value certain types of social responsibility over others. These questions were explored in the face-to-face interviews conducted by the researchers.

Secondary Research

Peer-reviewed Academic Sources

The academic peer-reviewed sources gathered all related back to the research topic in one way or another. One of the most relevant sources, titled “Barista’s Battle Scars” is about a coffee shop called Barista. This coffee shop is located near a university, much like Crimson & Whipped Cream. The article discusses the decline in business when college students are absent from campus. In order to fix this issue, Barista wanted to focus on fostering a better relationship with the local community by supporting the local children’s museum (Jensen, Seshadri & Carteson, 2013). Increasing Barista’s social responsibility within the community allowed it to build relationships with community members and customers. This article is beneficial to Crimson & Whipped Cream because it is a specific example of how a coffee shop used socially responsible activities to increase their customer base.

Another article the researchers found relevant to the research topic came from the database Business Source Elite and was titled “Starbucks-Investing in People as a Route to Profit and Growth.” This article gave evidence to support the claim that good people make good brands and good brands make money. It used Starbucks as a case study to demonstrate its point. In a general sense, customers want to feel like they are supporting a worthy cause, in this case, the employees. The article also discussed using a benefit package for the employees. The idea behind the benefit package was to ensure happiness within the employees. If the employees are happy, then the customers generally tend to be happy as well. Crimson & Whipped Cream is a smaller local business within the Norman community. If the employees are happy with their jobs and friendly with their customers, the customers will be more likely to come back. This also would probably lead to building stronger relationships with customers, thus increasing social responsibility.

The database Business Source Elite also supplied the researchers with another useful article “Business Involvement in the Community: Everyone.” Trends show that business involvement is now more important than ever. It is important to make a business a fixture in the community by actively volunteering. The article states that it is important to focus on taking an active role and doing more than just contributing financially to a random organization (Berezin, 2011). This article further supports the research topic of social responsibility. It discussed the importance of customer relations and community involvement.

The academic peer reviewed articles used in this section all support the overall research question. They all pertain to coffee shops and different aspects regarding coffee shops. The researchers selected these specific articles in order to gain a better understanding about coffee shop culture and how to relate back to social responsibility.

Professional Sources

Studies have been conducted on hot drink consumption in the U.S. by MarketLine, which helps consumers and people interest in the coffee industry figure out where the market is going (Market Line, 2017). By the year 2021, hot drink consumption in the U.S. will grow by over 13%. Coffee in particular makes up the largest percentage in hot drinks sold in the U.S. (Market Line, 2017). Crimson & Whipped Cream can use this data as an indicator to continue exploring. The coffee industry is moving and increasing in a positive direction this is useful because this information verifies that the coffee industry is a good one to be in.

The researchers also found a research study from the Institute for Public Relations. The researchers thought this would be relevant to Crimson & Whipped Cream because the study discusses how to best understand and connect with stakeholders. It distinguishes between three

different types of stakeholder relationships: the positively engaged faith-holders, the negatively engaged hateholders and fakeholders, (Luoma-aho, 2015).

It was also found through the secondary research that there has been a development of coffee shop culture all across the world, (Quintão, 2017). The connection between coffee and school or coffee and work allow coffee shops to create culture around the industry that focus on more than just the coffee. While larger chains like Starbucks have helped to create this culture, Crimson & Whipped Cream can capitalize on this concept to gain a larger customer base, (Quintão, 2017).

Communication Audit

On Crimson & Whipped Cream's website under the "press" tab there are links to several articles about Crimson & Whipped Cream. The articles come from local publications such as the Oklahoma Daily, Norman Transcript and a review from a local SheKnows user. All of the press listed is positive and provides insight into some of the stakeholders' opinions in the community. However, since all of the articles were published over five years ago, the insight of the stakeholders is somewhat unreliable.

After searching for newer press and publications for Crimson & Whipped Cream, the researchers found a recent Oklahoma Daily article published in 2017 titled, "Crimson & Whipped Cream owner takes public stances on social justice issues to promote goals of love, inclusivity" (Handie, 2017). This article contains a deeper insight into Crimson & Whipped Cream, specifically the owner, Ashleigh Barnett, as it discusses the politically charged topic of equal pay. The article has a positive tone and is the most reliable indicator of the stakeholders' opinions of Crimson & Whipped Cream.

It is also worth noting that Crimson & Whipped Cream's website is the platform that contains the links to the press publications. Unfortunately, the majority of the links do not function anymore. The articles linked on the website do not include recent or relevant information to Crimson & Whipped Cream today. This navigation issue may cause communication problems in the future, but it is not evident that it has at this point.

Besides formal publications, Crimson & Whipped Cream has been reviewed 14 times on TripAdvisor with an average rating of four out of five stars. Reviews from platforms such as TripAdvisor are important when interpreting perceptions of stakeholders who are customers as opposed to perceptions of journalists in the media.

The primary communication channel for Crimson & Whipped Cream is their social media platforms, which are all linked to Crimson & Whipped Cream's website. This allows the social media platforms to have a more personal interaction with stakeholders.

Crimson & Whipped Cream must focus on reaching out to socially responsible and groups. By doing this, it will help them become more involved within the local community and help them foster relationships with community members. Crimson & Whipped Cream's online presence also plays a crucial role in their efforts of establishing a sense of social responsibility.

Stakeholder Attitudes and Opinions

Online, Crimson & Whipped Cream's stakeholders interact positively but rather infrequently on social media. According to LikeAlyzer, Crimson & Whipped Cream's Facebook engagement rate is 12.38% on each post, which is moderately low and supports the claim that Crimson & Whipped Cream's stakeholders interact infrequently.

Crimson & Whipped Cream has been reviewed on websites such as TripAdvisor, Google review and Sheknows. The majority of the reviews are positive about Crimson & Whipped

Cream such as a foodie review from a Sheknows user, which is linked on Crimson & Whipped Cream's website. The Sheknows user talks about how the ingredients are fresh and well-picked at Crimson & Whipped Cream and how she recommended it to other people looking for fresh bakery items and good coffee (Roberts, 2012).

The results of the media search conducted by the researchers revealed that Crimson & Whipped Cream is interacting with few media outlets at low frequency such as OU Daily and Norman Transcript. But the interaction with media outlets is positive, which would allow the public see that Crimson & Whipped Cream is a good local business to visit. The tone about Crimson & Whipped Cream from media outlets is overwhelmingly positive throughout multiple articles and multiple outlets. This is a great indicator of the stakeholders' opinions of Crimson & Whipped Cream overall.

The positive press and reviews is encouraging and provides a solid foundation in connecting better with their customer base and securing business during low-traffic business times, such as the summer. However, if Crimson & Whipped Cream would increase their media presence it would positively influence its view to potential customers who are Norman residents. To capitalize on this positive tone created by media outlets and online reviews, Crimson & Whipped Cream could take advantage and engage with both social and traditional media stakeholders to continue the good relationship.

Periodical Media Analysis

After the researchers conducted a periodical media analysis they found six articles that mention Crimson & Whipped Cream in the OU Daily, which includes "Brewing Good Study Habits"(Carney, 2010). The researchers also found an article published by the Norman Transcript titled "Running on Crimson & Whipped Cream" in 2010 (Light, 2010).

The articles highlight Crimson & Whipped Cream's vegan cookies, cozy atmosphere and the owner, Ashleigh Barnett. As mentioned before in the stakeholder attitude and opinion section of this report, media coverage especially periodical media coverage is overwhelmingly positive.

There are many opportunities for Crimson & Whipped Cream to achieve more coverage in periodical media. Getting featured in local newspapers will help Crimson & Whipped Cream engage more with the community and remind its key stakeholders of its business. Crimson & Whipped Cream should target its periodical media outreach to the Norman Transcript because it would reach a large public and most likely give Crimson & Whipped Cream positive coverage. The Norman Transcript is a good option because its target audience is residents of Norman, Oklahoma. The Norman Transcript also publishes articles online, which if it were to cover Crimson & Whipped Cream, Crimson & Whipped Cream could link the articles back to their social media and website.

Periodical media is incredibly important for many different reasons. Newspapers are transitioning online as well as still being printed. This creates two separate audiences since many people prefer accessing the news online or physically on paper. Reaching an online public is important because it includes a wide variety of people. Periodical media coverage of Crimson & Whipped Cream would benefit the business greatly, especially if it is positive coverage.

Social Media Analysis

The researchers used social media analytic tools for Instagram, Twitter and Facebook to evaluate Crimson & Whipped Cream's social media. Daily interaction on social media is an effective way to influence Crimson & Whipped Cream's stakeholders.

Crimson & Whipped Cream utilizes their Facebook page on a daily basis. According to LikeAlyzer's social media analytics, Crimson & Whipped Cream posts on average 1.58 times

per day on Facebook, which can be effective because it allows stakeholders to visually see content every day. However, Crimson & Whipped Cream's post engagement is only at 12.38%. The low engagement rate indicates Crimson & Whipped Cream's followers are not prompted to engage with the daily posts. The lack of post engagement can also be due to the post not resonating with the target publics. The majority of Crimson & Whipped Cream's content posted on its Facebook page ranks as follows: photos (83.3%), videos (12.5%) and wall posts (4.2%).

Crimson & Whipped Cream posts on its Twitter page an average time of five times per week according to Keyhole analytics. Crimson & Whipped Cream posts a steady amount of content throughout the year, but posts have a noticeable peak around holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. Twitter engagements are the number of times Twitter users look at or engage with the posts. These engagements for Crimson & Whipped Cream actually increase as the frequency of posts decrease. This means the higher frequency of posts does not result in higher stakeholder engagement on Twitter posts. This is important for Crimson & Whipped Cream because the quality of the content grabs the attention of stakeholders instead of the quantity of posts.

Crimson & Whipped Cream's Instagram posts average 46 likes per photo according to Keyhole Instagram analytics. Crimson & Whipped Cream's Instagram has 1,350 followers, follows 77 other Instagram accounts and has a total of 1,739 posts as of May 5, 2018. Keyhole also states that Crimson & Whipped Cream's posts from December are the posts with the most engagement.

It is crucial that Crimson & Whipped Cream has a strong social media presence on all of its outlets. However, due to its low engagement with followers, the researchers concluded that quality of social media posts are more important than quantity. By using the analytic tools, the

researchers collected concise data about Crimson & Whipped Cream's social media statistics. Most of the posts Crimson & Whipped Cream shares pertains to their menu items. It would be beneficial for Crimson & Whipped Cream to start sharing posts that relate to social responsibility. This would aid in forming relationships with community members who may follow Crimson & Whipped Cream's social media outlets.

Environmental/External Analysis

According to Ashleigh Barnett, the owner of Crimson & Whipped Cream, the increase of businesses similar to Crimson & Whipped Cream on Campus Corner such as Baked Bear, Frosty's Rolled Ice Cream, Starbucks and Second Wind Coffee Shop has negatively affected traffic in the shop (Barnett, 2018). Ashleigh mentioned that the increase in similar businesses has prevented growth within the past two years.

As experienced by Barista, mentioned in the peer-reviewed academic sources in this report, the lack of community support can be detrimental to a coffee shop (Jensen, Seshadri & Carstenson, 2013). Without customers other than college students, Crimson & Whipped Cream will not be able to sustain their standards to quality, employment or community involvement.

While Crimson & Whipped Cream's proximity to OU creates steady customer traffic during the fall and spring semesters, Crimson & Whipped Cream has to contend with students creating a huge revenue loss that Crimson & Whipped Cream struggles to overcome. This revenue loss also contributes to low turnover rates because the lack of profits encourages employees to look elsewhere or the employees do not live in Norman during student breaks.

Ashleigh Barnett also said that often when student employees leave during student holidays they do not return to work at Crimson & Whipped Cream, partially due to other

employment opportunities and the increase in competitors (Barnett, 2018). It does not take much time for new coffee shops in Norman to become popular, such as Stella Nova.

In order for Crimson & Whipped Cream to maintain its customers on a regular basis, it needs to find a way to market to multiple different demographics of people. Since students go home during holidays, Crimson & Whipped Cream must reach other people during these time periods in order to keep its revenue where it wants it. The aspect of social responsibility is important because it would give Crimson & Whipped Cream a competitive edge over other local businesses near it. There are multiple groups of potential customers who value social responsibility. Therefore, if Crimson & Whipped Cream were to appeal to different types of social responsibility, they would gain the respect of potential customers.

Competitor Analysis

The researchers determined Crimson & Whipped Cream's standing in relation to its top five competitors based on Google reviews from coffee shop and pastry/bakery shop locations in Norman, Oklahoma. According to Hootsuite, online reviews for small businesses is "social proof," which can increase or decrease the "degree of trust" for people venturing to new small businesses (Sorokina, 2015). Potential stakeholders will make decisions on where to give business based on positive Google reviews.

Crimson & Whipped Cream's top competitors are Starbucks located at Campus Corner, Second Wind Coffee House, Gray Owl Coffee, All About Cha and Stella Nova. On a scale of one out of five, Crimson & Whipped Cream is ranked at two and tied with Second Wind Coffee House. Starbucks at Campus Corner is ranked at five, Gray Owl Coffee is ranked at four, All About Cha is ranked at three and Stella Nova is ranked at one.

The table below shows what Crimson & Whipped Cream’s top competitors’ differentiation factors are as well as their strengths and weaknesses. Crimson & Whipped Cream’s competitors’ strengths and weaknesses were determined based on the competitors’ social media presence, accessibility to an online menu/website, operation hours and what unique quality/qualities they provide to customers. The table also shows the prices of three common menu items at each of the competitors.

Crimson & Whipped Cream performs well in comparison to its top five competitors. Crimson & Whipped Cream is active on social media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and it also has an easily accessible website that provides menu items to stakeholders and potential stakeholders who are curious about menu items. Crimson & Whipped Cream stands up well in comparison to its top competitors’ operation hours. Crimson & Whipped Cream is open Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m., Friday 8:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m., Saturday 9:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. and Sunday 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Something that sets Crimson & Whipped Cream’s aside from its competitors is its homemade bakery items and its welcoming atmosphere.

Competitor Name	Product Summary	Competitor Strengths & Weaknesses	Price Comparison
Starbucks	Starbucks is a national chain that began in 1971. Every Starbucks restaurant serves hot and cold coffee, tea, pastries, sandwiches, packaged snacks and Starbucks merchandise (Starbucks Company Profile).	<p><u>Strengths:</u> strong international brand awareness, strong international brand presence, provides customers with particular “experience” (Dalavagas, 2016)</p> <p><u>Weaknesses:</u> high prices, occasional long lines and slow service, lack of personal relationship</p>	<p><u>Caffé Latte</u> 12 ounces: \$2.95</p> <p><u>Espresso</u> <u>One Shot:</u> \$1.95</p> <p><u>Chocolate</u> <u>Chip</u> <u>Cookie:</u> \$1.95</p>

		with the individual customer	
Second Wind Coffee House	Second Wind is a nonprofit coffee shop located at Campus Corner. It opened its doors in 2008. The First Presbyterian Church of Norman wanted this coffee shop to be an “inclusive space for students at the University of Oklahoma” (Our Mission).	<p><u>Strengths:</u> brand sends strong message outside of selling product, all of the proceeds goes towards a good cause, has local support of Norman community</p> <p><u>Weaknesses:</u> does not have a strong presence on social media, not located in an ideal spot within Campus Corner (not much parking), people have the option to pay for their drink</p>	<p><u>Latte</u> <u>12 ounces:</u> \$3.25</p> <p><u>Espresso</u> <u>One Shot:</u> \$2.00</p> <p><u>Chocolate</u> <u>Chip Cookie:</u> N/A</p> <p>* These prices are recommended all money given is considered a donation</p>
Gray Owl Coffee	Gray Owl Coffee offers a unique coffee experience. Students come to Gray Owl to relax, meet up with friends and work on homework. Gray Owl also has an art curator who changes the artwork in the shop once every two months (Roper, 2017).	<p><u>Strengths:</u> long operation hours (7:30 a.m.-11:00 a.m.), offers cold pressed coffee, eclectic atmosphere</p> <p><u>Weaknesses:</u> Does not have a website, is not active on Instagram. Gray Owl Coffee also has a credit card limit of \$3.00, which can be inconvenient for customers.</p>	<p><u>Caffé Latte</u> <u>16 ounces:</u> \$3.35</p> <p><u>Espresso</u> <u>Double</u> <u>Shot:</u> \$2.00</p> <p><u>Chocolate</u> <u>Chip</u> <u>Cookie:</u> \$1.97</p>
All About Cha	All About Cha serves coffee and tea as well as breakfast, lunch and dinner. It has 15 coffee drinks, 22 tea drinks and 30 speciality Korean drinks (About Us). All About Cha also has multiple locations.	<p><u>Strengths:</u> large menu, serves meals, long operation hours (8:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m.), multiple locations across the OKC area, up to date website</p> <p><u>Weaknesses:</u> Has not posted on Instagram in three years, has not</p>	<p><u>Caffé Latte</u> <u>16 ounces:</u> \$4.15</p> <p><u>Espresso</u> <u>One Shot:</u> \$2.44</p> <p><u>Chocolate</u> <u>Chip</u> <u>Cookie:</u> \$1.62</p>

		posted on Facebook in over ten months	
Stella Nova	Stella Nova baristas are known as “coffee alchemists” who test and study the coffee beans they use, where the coffee beans and ingredients come from and administer coffee taste tests to ensure great tasting coffee (About).	<p><u>Strengths:</u> large coffee menu, active on social media, has multiple locations in the OKC area, longer operation hours (5:30 a.m.- 10:00 p.m.)</p> <p><u>Weaknesses:</u> does not stress the importance of homemade bakery items, does not have Facebook, does not have Twitter</p>	<p><u>Caffé Latte</u> <u>16 ounces:</u> \$3.80</p> <p><u>Espresso</u> <u>One Shot:</u> \$2.00</p> <p><u>Chocolate</u> <u>Chip</u> <u>Cookie:</u> \$2.00</p>

SWOT

Crimson & Whipped Cream is an established small business with good customer relations. It has locally roasted coffee and its bakers use high quality ingredients, which result in better tasting menu items. Crimson & Whipped Cream is located close to the University of Oklahoma, which makes it a popular study spot among students, professors and faculty.

Crimson & Whipped Cream also faces certain challenges because it is located near a university. It has little to no parking and during student holidays the shop goes into a period of low profits due to students’ absence from Norman. Below is a chart that summarizes Crimson & Whipped Cream’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High quality products • Has seasonal menu items • Photo booth • Board games • Owner and employees have strong relationships with customers • Uses high quality ingredients 	<p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor access to parking • Product costs are higher due to high quality ingredients • Employee turnover • Does not participate in paid advertisements • Unaware of competitions’ prices
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has locally roasted coffee • Portions are smaller for health benefits • Provides vegan options 	
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating unique qualities (homemade, vegan products, local coffee) • Expand menu items (offer more tea options) • PR opportunities via social media 	<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition from chains (Starbucks, All About Cha, etc.) • Competition from desert shops on Campus Corner (Frosty's, Baked Bear, Insomnia Cookie) • Student holidays • Price of quality of ingredients (prices fluctuate according to what is in season and higher quality ingredients are more expensive)

PEST

Politically, changes in laws and policies can affect Crimson & Whipped Cream, such as the new tax bill. The new tax bill requires food establishments to provide nutritional information on products. According to Oklahoma Policy Institute, “human services is by far the the largest grant category both nationwide and in Oklahoma, at \$4.2 billion. These grants are designed to ensure that Americans have access to health and nutritional needs and a large range of of services meeting special needs of parts of the population” (Oklahoma Policy Institute, 2018). This new requirement of nutritional labels on food items is crucial to Crimson & Whipped Cream. Many people want to know what ingredients are in the foods they are consuming. The requirements of this new tax bill allow customers to know this information. According to Crimson & Whipped Cream owner, Ashleigh Barnett, any ingredient used in their products is purely natural. There are multiple people who are very conscious about what kinds of foods they are putting in their bodies. This new tax bill makes it easier for these people to full be aware of what they are eating. This political change in the state creates benefits for both the customer and business involved.

The Oklahoma economy goes through a boom and bust cycles. When the economy hits a bust period, it affects both local businesses and its customers. During this time people do not have quite as much flexibility with their discretionary income, so they are probably less likely to spend what they do have on items such as coffee and baked goods. However, when the economy is good, people have more freedom to spend on what they want. The holidays usually prove to be a time of economic boom because a lot of people receive bonuses at work, allowing them to spend on what they want. Coffee and warm baked goods are always a popular seasonal favorite among many people. Since the group's target demographic was Norman residents who are not students, the majority of these people are able to support themselves and spend money at their own discretion. The other economic effect is the constantly changing cost of local and fair-trade coffee and other ingredients needed for baked goods. The price of coffee changes as the season and coffee availability changes. This can affect the amount of coffee Crimson & Whipped Cream customers are able to purchase.

Socially, Crimson & Whipped Cream is a popular study spot for students. It also provides stress relievers such as a photo booth and board games. These extra amenities give Crimson & Whipped Cream an advantage over other local coffee shops. The photo booth and board games create a unique social environment for customers.

Crimson & Whipped Cream is at a technological advantage compared to its competitors. It offers free Wi-Fi and has recently updated Point of Sale system. They also have new coffee equipment, which makes the coffee making process more efficient. The recent renovations the shop has undergone gives it more of a technological edge.

Conclusion of Secondary Research

Based on the secondary research conducted by the researchers, it was found that people value social responsibility in a business and like to see local businesses active in the community. Consumers are more likely to spend their disposable income on local businesses that participate in socially responsible activities (Berezin, 2011). People also enjoy supporting businesses that take care of their employees and are actively involved in socially responsible activities within the businesses' communities (Industrial & Commercial Training, 1997).

With this in mind, the researchers decided to conduct primary research since the types of social responsibility Norman residents value the most was still unknown. The researchers would then use data from surveys and in-person interviews to form an opinion on what specific types of social responsibility are more important to Norman residents.

Primary Research

Purpose of Primary Research

From the researchers' secondary research, they found that customers are willing to spend their disposable income on businesses that have a strong sense of social responsibility. However, no information about which specific types of social responsibility are more important to Norman residents was found in the researchers' secondary research. Thus, the researchers decided to gather primary research through surveying and in-person interviews. This primary research will provide detailed explanations and data on what Norman residents' opinions are on different types of social responsibility they value in local businesses.

The overarching research questions for the survey are: Do Norman residents value social responsibility in a local business? What types of social responsibility do Norman residents value most?

The overarching research questions for the in-person interviews are: Why do Norman residents value certain types of social responsibility over other types? Do Norman residents prefer to see local businesses practicing social responsibility in the place of business or out at community events?

Justification of all Methods

The researchers chose to conduct primary research in the form of surveys and in-person interviews. Surveys were chosen to ask questions to Norman residents about their perceptions towards different types of social responsibility, which can be found in questions 6-10 in the survey in appendix I. The survey also was designed to discover Norman residents' attitudes towards coffee shops, which can be found in questions 1-5 on the survey in appendix I. Finally, the survey was designed to find out demographic/psychographic information about the participants in questions 11 through 15.

The in-person interviews were designed to follow a semi-structured protocol in appendix II so the researchers could explore the participants' views on social responsibility, if there was a topic or question had not been addressed in the survey, but pertained to the research question. The in-person interviews were intended to probe participants to provide a "thicker" description and "thicker" understanding on *why* Norman residents value specific types of socially responsible activities over others.

Methodology

Primary research was conducted to understand how Norman residents think about social responsibility as it pertains to local businesses. The study population for the quantitative and qualitative research was Norman residents over the age of 18. The researchers implemented non-random sampling to select survey and interview participants. Both the in-person quantitative and

qualitative data were collected at cultural centers in Norman, the Fred Jones Jr. Museum of Art and the Norman Public Library. These two locations were selected as cultural centers because they are free to the public and encourage visitors to explore for an elongated period and explore their ideas about culture in their daily life. Cultural centers were chosen for data collection because the secondary research suggested coffee shops have developed into a new cultural center for their customers, (Quintão, 2017).

The quantitative method in the form of a survey was administered to 103 people. The survey was designed to determine if Norman residents value social responsibility and if so what types they value the most. The researchers collected data from 66 respondents in person on paper at one of the cultural centers. The 66 paper responses were then entered into Qualtrics online by the researchers. The remaining 37 responses were collected online through Qualtrics link. The researchers posted the survey in Norman-area Facebook groups to gather the online data. Closed Facebook groups were used to ensure the members were Norman residents and to help diversify the data. The diversity of data is needed to gather the opinions of Norman residents whom frequent coffee shops for the products served and not for the cultural atmosphere.

In-depth interviews were selected as the qualitative method, and all eight interviews were conducted in person at The Norman Public Library. Each of the four researchers conducted two in-depth interviews. Interviews were conducted to answer why Norman residents value certain types of social responsibility over others and to answer if Norman residents prefer to see local business practicing social responsibility in the place of business or out at community events. The interviews followed a semi-structured protocol which allowed for a free-flowing discussion between the researcher and the participant. The interview questions were designed to be in-depth

and thought-provoking. Each participant was asked to answer a series of 13 questions to the best of their ability. The interview questions were personal, yet all pertained to the overall research questions regarding social responsibility.

The first two questions of the interview were used as screening questions to determine if the participant fit the sample frame. The researchers had a 100% response rate, and the researchers protected each participant by using a pseudonym.

As the researchers collected the data, they took notes on the participants' responses. If the participants consented to being audio recorded, then the researcher recorded the interview on their smartphones and took field notes for any thoughts they had. Each interview lasted no more than 10 minutes.

The researchers established a rapport with the participants. The interviews began with an introductory statement to familiarize the participants with the concept of social responsibility. Then the interviewers followed the semi-structured protocol, which began with soft introductory questions. Next, the researchers employed funnel questions to lead the participants toward answering the topical questions about how they value social responsibility.

By establishing rapport and probing the participants, the researchers were able to collect complete and thoughtful responses from the participants. Participants often took time to craft thoughtful responses, which revealed to the researchers that they had strong opinions about the questions they were asked. They responded well to examples provided by the researchers and were able to understand the questions more once they were given concrete examples. These in-depth responses allowed the researchers to gain important insights into how Norman residents value social responsibility.

Results and findings

Primary research was conducted to understand how Norman residents think about social responsibility as it pertains to local businesses. The researchers focused on two question sets to gather the data necessary to provide the Crimson & Whipped Cream with insights into its consumers' attitude toward social responsibility. The first question set dealt with how much Norman residents value social responsibility, as well as, what types of social responsibility they value most. The second question set sought to answer why Norman residents value certain types of socially responsible activities over others, as well as, where Norman residents prefer to see local businesses practicing socially responsible activities.

The researchers were able to gather data about how much Norman Residents value social responsibility and what types they value most by conducting quantitative research. A survey was distributed to 103 participants, which were gathered both online and in-person. The in-person response rate was significantly higher than the online response rate, 66 of the 103 responses or 64% were recorded in person. The participants ranged in age from 40 to 70 years old. 67.96% of the respondents were female, 29.13% were male, 0.97% marked themselves as other, and 1.94% of respondents declined to answer. The respondents also provided information about their employment. Average respondent identified themselves as a self-employed business owner.

The survey suggests that 33.98% of 103 respondents agreed that social responsibility is an important part of their decision to support a local business. This data supports the idea that many Norman residents do value social responsibility. The survey also focused on identifying the types of social responsibility Norman residents value the most. The data showed that 70.3% of 103 respondents value a local business creating an environment that welcomes all people the most. Secondly, 45% of 103 respondents ranked local businesses participating in environmentally friendly activities as being most important. The data collected about the types of

social responsibility Norman residents value the most allowed the researchers to understand how Norman residents perceive social responsibility and if that would affect their decisions on selecting local businesses to support.

The second question set provided explanation for why Norman residents value certain types of socially responsible activities over others, and where Norman residents prefer to see these activities. To answer this question set in-depth interviews were found as the best method to gather data. Of the eight participants, all were in the study population. All participants were over the age of 18, Norman residents and not students at the University of Oklahoma. Only two participants were male, and six were female. The participants were between 22 and 38 years old. One of the participants has children, one of the participants is married, and one is engaged. Seven of the eight participants are religious; one is not. The political views of the participants covered the entire political spectrum. The careers of the participants ranged from teachers to waitresses. Out of the eight participants responses, the researchers found three overarching themes, which include the importance of humanitarian efforts, time volunteered is worth more than a monetary donation and people desire to see the impact from the time the business puts into volunteering in the community.

Overall, the majority of the participants favored humanitarian efforts over other kinds of social responsibility. Jane Webster said, "I like humanitarian efforts because there are lots of people who hurt in the world and need help." Another participant, Caroline Johnson said, "Humanitarian rights are the most important to me, 120%." Six of the eight interviewees chose humanitarian, social responsibility as their preferred type of social responsibility.

Throughout the interviews, it became clear that the participants value the donation of time over the donation of money. They believe even if one does not have a disposable income to

donate to charities, they still should be socially responsible, Suzi Smith said, “I don’t donate money because I am a recent graduate and working on an Oklahoma teacher salary, but I donate with giving my time.” The participants expressed an attitude that suggested being socially responsible is a vital aspect of a successful member of society.

The participants were also clear that being socially responsible should be more than just signing a check. The participants’ perception that being socially responsible is vital to society also influences the way they value small business’ socially responsible actions. John Miller said, “I feel like it would be more beneficial for the organization if those companies did show up and put a face to the name of their organization.” The trends show business involvement in its community is more important than ever. It is necessary to volunteer within the community to establish a business as a fixture in a community, (Berezin, 2011). These results indicate that Norman residents prefer to see businesses out participating in socially responsible activities, rather than simply giving money and not attempting to connect with the people in the community. A business volunteering time will also have more personal connections with Norman residents and can become a staple in the community.

Throughout the interview processes, all of the researchers noticed another common theme that pertained to the satisfaction of seeing the impact had within the community. Regardless of what personal views the participants had, they all agreed that seeing the impact these organizations have on the community is important. The researchers found that the interviewees did not care where the business participated in socially responsible activities, but they wanted to see how the business’s participation had an impact. Some of the participants liked seeing support for local causes. Participants such as Mary Foster also agree with this ideology. In the sense of local businesses, Foster believes “local should support local, local businesses should focus their

attention on giving back to the community.” Gathering data about Norman residents’ preference of why and where local businesses should practice social responsibility allows the researchers to provide insights to Crimson & Whipped Cream about the best way to be involved in the community.

Overall, the primary research concluded that Norman residents do value to social responsibility. The residents also have specific opinions on what types of social responsibility they value as being most important to their community. These findings provide insight into how Crimson & Whipped Cream can best demonstrate that it is a socially responsible business to its publics.

Discussion

After collecting quantitative data through the survey, the researchers concluded that the client, Ashleigh Barnett, should consider that social responsibility is valued among residents in the Norman community, but is not necessarily the deciding factor when choosing a business to support.

The quantitative data shows that Norman residents not only value businesses who are socially responsible, but the residents believe certain socially responsible activities are more important than others. Based on the data collected, the client should focus two main socially responsible activities. Norman residents highly value businesses that create an environment that welcomes all people, as well as businesses which participate in environmentally friendly activities.

Being involved in socially responsible activities would benefit Crimson & Whipped Cream because the majority of survey participants believed that social responsibility is very important in a business setting. Although the researchers did not know what specific types of

social responsibility were important to the participants, the survey gave them a good basic idea of how and why it was important. This information means that Crimson & Whipped Cream should also invest time and attention to promoting the socially responsible activities Crimson & Whipped Cream is involved in.

From a public relations perspective, the researchers believe that Crimson & Whipped Cream should be highly aware of its involvement regarding social responsibility. The qualitative data revealed three main themes concerning how Norman residents view social responsibility in their community. These three themes included: humanitarian work is generally more important than other types. Time spent volunteering is worth more than monetary donations. Norman residents want to see an immediate, measurable impact of a business being involved in socially responsible activities.

The data collected indicated that Norman residents favor local humanitarian organizations where they can see an immediate impact in the community, and value their time over money. Crimson & Whipped Cream can use this information by focusing on this type of social responsibility, supporting local organizations. Norman residents value volunteering time more than money. This information means that simply writing a check to an organization is not going to endear Crimson & Whipped Cream to potential new customers as much as having a physical presence at an organization's event. Norman residents also want to see an immediate impact when donating and will be more likely to support a cause if they know how their actions had a direct effect. Crimson & Whipped Cream can use this information to choose organizations to support that have an immediate, direct impact on the community, which can be measured and demonstrated to potential clients.

The client, Ashleigh Barnett, could use the qualitative data collected from the researchers to focus more on social responsibility as it pertains to Crimson & Whipped Cream. Crimson & Whipped Cream has a unique opportunity to promote itself using social responsibility as the main focus. Posting on social media about social responsibility and connecting those posts to organizations that are involved in similar types of social media will create more and varied interest in Crimson & Whipped Cream.

Social Responsibility is an important issue for businesses to look at when trying to connect with new publics.

Recommendations

The client, Ashleigh Barnett, should consider that social responsibility is valued by the Norman community, but is not the deciding factor for potential customers. Based on the survey data collected, the client should focus on being socially responsible in the Norman community. The client should also invest time and attention toward promoting the socially responsible activities Crimson & Whipped Cream is involved in, such as supporting Oklahoma educators by providing 15% off of their purchases.

By surveying Norman residents, the researchers learned that they value welcoming environments and environmental responsibility the most out of all types of social responsibility that were listed on the survey (see appendix I). One way for Crimson & Whipped Cream to use this information is to focus on these two types of social responsibility when deciding on what types of social responsibility to promote.

The data collected from the interviews indicated that Norman residents favor local humanitarian organizations where they can see an immediate impact in the community, and value time over money. Norman residents will be more likely to support a cause if they know how their

individual actions had a direct impact. Crimson & Whipped Cream can use this information to choose organizations to support that have an immediate, direct impact on the community.

Crimson & Whipped Cream can also use the information that Norman residents value donating time over money to help select organizations, events, and programs it can have a physical presence at, even if it is just giving free baked goods or drinks to volunteers.

Some issues with these strategies are that there will be a much larger time commitment for the client. Attending events and donating time is also not a guaranteed method of bringing in new customers to the business, as people may not remember which business was at the event; it may be better to attend events close to the storefront and direct customers to the store.

Limitations and Recommendations for future studies

Even though the researchers were able to gather a lot of good data, this research did have limitations. For example, the researchers were unable to get a truly random sample of Norman residents to take the survey due to the size of the target public and the lack of sampling frame available. This made the data collected a little skewed in favor of a certain demographic, specifically those who visit the library and art museum during the day. There should also be a larger total number of surveys administered and collected, so that the data collected is more varied.

The main limitation of the interviews conducted for this study is that the target public is so large and so diverse that interviewing eight people is not a true indication of how the majority of Norman residents view different types of social responsibility, and the researchers were unable to reach saturation. The researchers know this because while the answers they received

did have common themes, there were many differing opinions about specific issues and questions.

Some recommendations for future research are to have a better method of diversifying responses. Norman is a large community, and has varied demographics, and the survey should consist of equal percentages of all demographic groups, which means the researchers would need a very comprehensive sampling frame. There should also be a larger number of participants for both the survey and interviews. One other recommendation is to administer the surveys only online, as that would significantly shorten the amount needed to collect and analyze the data.

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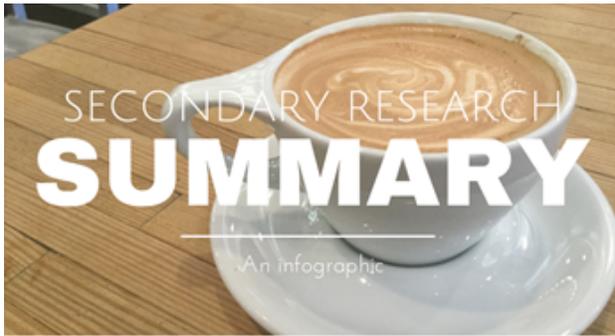
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Appendix I



SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE ACTIVITIES

- COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
- INVESTING IN PEOPLE
- ACTIVE VOLUNTEERING

STARBUCKS AS AN EXAMPLE OF CSR

STARBUCKS

KNOW YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

- POSITIVE
- NEUTRAL
- NEGATIVE

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IS BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT TO CONSUMERS

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- DO NORMAN RESIDENTS VALUE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A LOCAL BUSINESS?
- WHAT TYPES OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY DO NORMAN RESIDENTS VALUE MOST?

SURVEY

- CULTURAL CENTERS
- ONLINE ON FACEBOOK
- NORMAN RESIDENTS
- NON-STUDENTS
- 14 QUESTIONS

103 people RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY IN TOTAL

RESPONDENTS FROM CULTURAL CENTERS

64%

INTERVIEW

8 people WERE INTERVIEWED

- SEMI-STRUCTURED
- 13 QUESTIONS
- 10 MINUTES
- NON-STUDENTS
- 100% RESPONSE RATE

75% FEMALE **25%** MALE

DESIGNED TO CREATE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF NORMAN RESIDENTS ATTITUDES ABOUT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Appendix II

The Survey

Social Responsibilities in Small Businesses

You are invited to join 100 respondents from around the Norman, Oklahoma area because you are likely someone in the demographic we are interested in. You must be 18 years old or older to complete this survey.

The purpose of this research is to gather information about how Norman residents view social responsibility as a determining factor for supporting a small, locally owned business. There will be no follow-up questions after your participation in this survey. Your participation will approximately take 10 minutes. There are no risks associated with this research. Participants will be entered into a drawing to win a \$20.00 Target gift card.

The information you provide will be shared with Crimson & Whipped Cream, which is a cafe and bakery located on Campus Corner in Norman, Oklahoma. No personal identifying information will be shared. This survey is voluntary, which means that you may stop the survey at any time. The results of this study will inform public relations students from the University of Oklahoma about Norman residents' attitudes towards social responsibility in small, locally owned businesses.

PART I

1. Are you a Norman resident?

Yes

No

2. Do you drink coffee?

Yes

No

3. How often to you visit coffee shops?

1

2

3

4

5

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Often

All the time

4. What is your preferred coffee shop in Norman, Oklahoma?

Starbucks

Second Wind Coffee House

Crimson & Whipped Cream

Gray Owl Coffee

Stella Nova

Other _____

5. Why do you choose this coffee shop? You can choose multiple answers.

Friendly staff

Great quality coffee

Atmosphere of the coffee shop

The coffee shop's involvement in the community

Other _____

6. If there is a promotional event that benefits the community at another coffee shop other than your preferred choice, would you purchase coffee from it instead?

Yes

No

PART II

7. Social responsibility is the idea that businesses should participate in activities that benefit society and build a positive relationship with their community. Please evaluate each type of social responsibility on the scale from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important).

Type of Social Responsibility	Least Important 1	2	3	4	5 Most Important
A local business using fair trade/cruelty free products	Least Important 1	2	3	4	5 Most Important
A local business involved with local charities	Least Important 1	2	3	4	5 Most Important
A local business providing financial assistance to a specific family/ individual in need	Least Important 1	2	3	4	5 Most Important
A local business hosting a donation drive for a particular charity at the place of business	Least Important 1	2	3	4	5 Most Important
A local business providing products to be used at a charity event	Least Important 1	2	3	4	5 Most Important

A local business sponsoring youth activities

Least 2 3 4 5 Most Important

Important 1

A local business participating in environmentally friendly activities

Least 2 3 4 5 Most Important

Important 1

A local business creating an environment that welcomes all people

Least 2 3 4 5 Most Important

Important 1

A local business offering incentives and/ or a severance package to employees

Least 2 3 4 5 Most Important

Important 1

8. I believe that social responsibility is an important part of my decision to support a locally owned business.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

9. I research whether or not a locally owned business is socially responsible before I support that locally owned business.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

10. If a locally owned business is **NOT** socially responsible, I will not support that business.

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

PART III

11. You are primarily employed by... (choose one)

The government

A corporation

A non-profit organization or nongovernmental organization

I am a self-employed business owner

Teacher/Professor

Unemployed

Other (please specify) _____

12. You are:

Female

Male

Other _____

Prefer not to answer

13. How old are you? _____

14. What is your zip code? _____

Thank you for completing this survey!

Thank you for participating in this study. If you would like to be entered into a drawing

to win a \$20.00 Target gift card, please put your email address below. Your information will be kept confidential and will not be used for any purpose other than informing the winner of this drawing. Your response will inform Crimson & Whipped Cream about preferences Norman residents have regarding social responsibility in small, locally owned businesses.

What is your email address? _____