

Social Responsibility Of The Whole Foods Stores And Walmart

Posted on October 17, 2019

Abstract

Businesses are increasingly revising their corporate philosophies as the old-fashioned, conventional ways of operating business are no longer enough to bring success to the firms in today's era of conscious and fully aware consumers and other concerns. State governments, non-profit organizations, health care associations, and the general public now expect corporate businesses to serve society with not only innovative products but with more socially responsible codes of conduct. Socially responsible corporations are taking steps to work in collaboration with the communities they are operating in, investing in the projects in more responsible and ethical ways, developing relationships with customers and employees, and adopting policies that are environmentally protective and sustainable. Critiques assess the success of the companies more on socially responsible operating methods, and organizations tend to achieve long-term strategic goals by being socially responsible and ethical. Being a food supplier, Whole Food Stores is behaving well and socially responsible in its operations and is consistent in taking into account the value of serving humanity along with the business. Whereas, Wall Mart is also a supermarket providing many foods and beverage products but with little [social responsibility](#).

Introduction

Businesses today need to act participative with their stakeholders for mutually shared benefits of sustainable businesses. The preferable way for such practice is to follow socially responsible guidelines for operating a business. The contribution to saving energy, reducing land waste size, and caring about the health of consumers are becoming morally obligatory for food product retailers (Attaran, 2007). The present essay will look into the success and failure of two different food products retail stores (The Whole Food Stores and Walmart) behaving socially responsible.

Discussion

Whole Foods Stores is currently behaving benevolently and socially responsibly by adding the value of humanity to the operations of the business. The company has evolved its operations' design in an overall socially responsible theme day-to-day operating activities tend to allow all stakeholders to benefit from the devised business plan. Whole Foods stores have certain core values which they follow through their business operations, exemplifying the initiatives of a non-market nature. For

instance, the company provides the customers with only organic and natural products available for the supply that promotes the benefits of organic food eating and defines the quality of a product regarding freshness, nutrition, and ingredients. *"We are buying agents for our customers and not the selling agents for the manufacturers."*

Selling organic food only is expanding the market for organic and natural products that give support to sustainable agriculture. Dealing with only natural and healthy products empowers the production of health-supportive and nutritional products. Besides, the company is contributing to a healthy life on Earth by reducing land waste through recycling methods. Such policies indicate the strength of the company in behaving socially responsible as per environment and nutrition and also earning a great deal of goodwill by keeping their customers as prior stakeholders, eventually turning them into advocates for their business.

The Wholefoods store enjoys high recognition for their [corporate socially responsible](#) performance, depicting thorough concern towards the health of the customers and environment. An instance of a company's stewardship in environmental concern is that it bought worth over \$4.3 billion megawatt hours of energy produced by windmills. One of their distribution centre and fourteen of their stores use solar power, and the company has a commissary kitchen running with biofuel energy that is generated internally from waste cooking oil. Whole Foods earned certifications for "Leadership in Energy and Environment Design" to twelve company stores and is participating actively in the "green movement" that shows high concerns for social responsibility.

Wall Mart is one of the world's largest companies, leading its competitors successfully at the top in generating revenue. Despite all its economic success, Wall Mart is not considered successful as per [corporate social responsibility](#) performance. Over its history, the company has demonstrated little concern for the social welfare and benefits of the stakeholders (Dauvergne & Lister, 2012).

News stories have been appearing about protests by Walmart employees. Suppliers of Walmart have also been complaining of being dented by the company and forced out of their contracts by the company. According to Michelle Chen (2015), *"Walmart's sustainability record is anything but ethical"* She further reported that agricultural subsidies back all the price tags on food products in Walmart, exchanges of commodities on a financialized basis, and overblown marketing. What was the real cost of the products sold at lower prices at Walmart? The "Food Chain Workers Alliance" tracked down the supply chain to investigate "violations" against "ethical sourcing."

Walmart faced a huge amount of public pressure on ethical issues and resultantly came up with guidelines for sustainable and ethical sourcing, pledging that all associated suppliers and outlets must comply with laws and regulations applicable to [health and safety](#), environment, and labour. Though the company, in the past decade, has demonstrated much positive behaviour from the perspective of [social responsibility](#), it is still lagging in many ways on sustainability. Especially on climate change, which is a crucial environmental issue, Walmart has hardly made any progress (Coote, 2006). Even after the promising in 2010, the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions, the company's stores, and

fleet emitted huge amounts of greenhouse gases in 2012. Overall, as per the sustainable approach toward climate change, Walmart has failed to set scientifically achievable targets.

Conclusion

Compared to Whole Foods Stores, Walmart is way behind in building a reputable image of sustainable business in the market as it is moving too slowly towards its social responsibility goals, such as buying 100% renewable energy and controlling greenhouse gas emissions. Efficient ways of renewable energy use and positive contributions to environmental sustainability by The Whole Food Store are quite advisable practices to adopt by retail food stores such as Walmart.

References

Kannel, C. (2012). Corporate Responsibility Spotlight: Whole Foods Market. *The Motley Fool*.

Chen, M. (2015). Here Are All the Reasons Walmart's Business Is Not Sustainable. *The Nation*.

Attaran, M. (2007). RFID: an enabler of supply chain operations. *Supply Chain Management: An International Journal*, 12(4), 249-257.

Dauvergne, P., & Lister, J. (2012). Big brand sustainability: Governance prospects and environmental limits. *Global Environmental Change*, 22(1), 36-45.

Coote, A. (2006). What health services could do about climate change: They must embrace sustainable development and reduce their ecological footprints. *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, 332(7554), 1343.