

MARKETING

We're Not Selling Out > Chris Barrett & Luke McCabe, First "Corporately-Sponsored" University Students

Chris

Yeah we got a lot of emails from, not a lot. We get tons of emails but couple of people who email us or just don't understand what we're doing and they think that we're just selling out to the corporations. And we're not selling out we're just getting our education in a different way than going out and getting loans and stuff like that.

Luke

Corporations aren't all bad. I mean you just find a happy medium between business world and like real life and then you just figure out that as long as you don't slap advertising like everywhere and make it look too tacky and stupid and make it all about money then it's not that bad.

Cool Hunting > Naomi Klein, Author, NO LOGO

The cool hunting industry didn't even exist before 1993. It sort of exploded just over the course of the decade. And the idea behind cool hunting is that, essentially the premises that corporations don't understand what young people want. And that there needs to be a kind of middle man, middle man industry that will be the liaison between youth culture and the brands. To explain and decode so that these companies are better able to create brand images that are direct reflections of youth culture. And of course the time span between when something is a genuine idea, genuinely sort of independent organic idea within youth culture, and when it is sold back as a brand has become so compressed that it's completely insignificant.

But cool hunters sort of comb the back alleys of our culture, interview kids, video tape them. It's basically corporate journalism. But what's interesting to me is that in reading the literature of the cool hunters, what they predict is that because young people are so cynical about marketing. This is of course the premise of all marketing, that we all hate marketing and that we need a new campaign that's going to break through that cynicism. So nobody is more aware of the backlash against marketing than the marketers themselves. It's the guiding principle behind all cutting edge marketing.

And so now that impulse is now just being applied to anti-corporate politics. Okay so you're cynical, your angry at corporations you feel they're taking over your lives. We'll just co-op that and sell that back to you. And I am really not convinced that it's going to be effective. I believe that what young people in

particular are reacting against is this very process of co-optation. And that co-opting that feeling, that anger at being co-opted only makes it more militant.

Mainstream Dissidence > Naomi Klein, Author, NO LOGO

Of course there are individuals in all of these corporations who care about this, care about these issues. I mean, my book for instance is published by a large corporation that went through a major merger while I was working on the book. And it was the fact that there were individuals within that corporation who were concerned about these issues who made sure that the book came out. And made sure that the book wasn't censored.

So I think it's really important that we don't talk ourselves into a corner where we're convinced that things are so bad that it isn't even worth trying to get our message out there into the mainstream. And we sort of recede into just publishing on our own web site and that's it.

Big Fat Inc. > Jonathon Ressler, CEO, Big Fat Inc., Undercover Marketing Specialist

Hi, my name is Jonathon Ressler. My company's called Big Fat Inc. The big question that always everybody asks is why Big Fat Inc? Pretty straightforward, I'm big, I'm fat and we're a corporation, so Big Fat Inc. That's it.

On the undercover marketing side, we really never talk about clients because the second we talk about them, we have basically sold them out. We like to say if you talk, as soon as I talk about a client, like I'm pressing the self-destruct button. However, on the overt stuff, I mean we work with very big companies, we work with small companies. We work with companies like Nestle, and Nintendo, and Pepsi and Evian. We work with some very big companies and we also work with some small companies you probably haven't heard of. We work with company called U-Pock which is web technology. We've worked with a couple of new product launches. So I mean we kind of really run the gambit. On the undercover side, you've got to figure it out.

Everyone Does It > Jonathon Ressler, CEO, Big Fat Inc., Undercover Marketing Specialist

I was doing a live radio show and a woman called there and said, well, this has been going on forever. My grandfather, 50 years ago, he had the concession at the local carnival and he paid my sister and I in popcorn and cotton candy to walk

around the carnival and eat popcorn and cotton candy so the other kids would see it and they would want it. So really, you do it everyday, you just don't realize that you are doing it. We are kind of just paying people to do it. I can guarantee you'd like us to pay you to do what you do every day.

Undercover Case Study > Jonathon Ressler, CEO, Big Fat Inc., Undercover Marketing Specialist

Have you ever been in a crowded bar? All the bar stools are taken and you know, when you get a bar stool, you are kind of lazy, you don't want to get up. You don't want to lose that good spot right at the bar so you kind of sit there. Well we would send in what is "leaners", what we call "leaners" and what the "leaner" does, they kind of lean over because the bar is crowded, maybe three deep. And they kind of tap the person on the shoulder and say, hey would you mind getting me a brand X cosmopolitan or whatever. So that person, most times would say sure.

So our leaner would give that person money and that person sitting at the bar would call the bartender, and say hey can I have a brand X cosmopolitan. The bartender makes the drink, whatever it may be, they hand it back to the person, the person then pays the bartender and has interaction with the brand and then they take the drink and hand it back to the leaner. And if they are even remotely human, they are going to say, hey what is brand X? I've never heard of it. And bang! They just opened the door for us to deliver that somebody that sound bite of knowledge, and if they like that product, let's say it is a vodka, if they like vodka, they might order it the next time. If they hate vodka, they'll never order it.

So it's kind of undercover and then again, when you go with leaners, you can watch. Send in three leaners into a busy bar, you can watch within an hour everybody's ordering that drink. Anybody whose ordering that category with a vodka, gin, scotch, whatever, they are all ordering that brand as a result of the leaner. Because again, it's very real, it's very natural and if they don't like the taste, they will never order it again.

Infiltrating Protests > Jonathon Ressler, CEO, Big Fat Inc., Undercover Marketing Specialist

A protest, hopefully of not a corporation we like, but there could be protests, and we could use a protest and may be in the future would use a protest as a place to do undercover marketing. Again if it fits, if it fits into what those people are protesting about, it would be an ideal place. Remember any place, and that really would be a good place because people are passionate. They might be misplaced passionate, but they are passionate about what they are protesting about. So if you can take that passion and funnel it and focus it and get them talking about

something, yeah it would be a great place for undercover marketing. Don't hate me for that but it would be a great place for undercover marketing.