



# SUSTAINABLE BRANDS '13 CONFERENCE RECAP

JUNE 3-6, 2013  
SAN DIEGO, CA



“

*There's an explosion in new businesses built around turning waste into valuable assets or leveraging big data to optimize water and energy use or support healthy behavior change, or helping us further optimize our supply chains or engage our employees and customers in creating social value through individual action.*

”

**KoAnn Skrzyniarz**  
Founder, Sustainable Brands

## OVERVIEW

### THEMES

- How does one define sustainability?
- Responsibility: Consumer vs. Brand?
- Global citizenship
- “Do less, be more”
- More ideas, less waste
- Behavior change (the change starts with me)
- Upcycling
- Meaningful messaging + storytelling
- Innovation (inside + outside the box)

### KEY ISSUES

- Environmental impact
- Social impact
- CSR in supply chains
- Ignorance is bliss + lack of awareness
- “American Dream” (stuff will make you happy)
- Consumers want the cheapest
- Shift in values

### KEY SUSTAINABLE BRANDS + RETAILERS

BMW  
Coca-Cola  
Target  
Unilever  
Nestle  
Mattel  
Disney  
Sprint  
hp  
Green Mountain Coffee Roasters

### OVERALL COMMENTS

Attendees of the SB '13 conference are forward-thinking, “let’s go change the world” type of individuals that truly want to do good. Speakers and panelists were all very passionate in spreading awareness and sharing insights about sustainability successes and failures.

With over 2,000 attendees from 26 countries, it is evident that companies and retailers are concerned about sustainability and how it can be integrated into their business models as a positive and “good” differentiator.

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## RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE: LATEST CONSUMER INSIGHTS FROM SB'S TOP RESEARCH PICKS

### TOM LaFORGE

Coca-Cola | *Global Director, Human & Cultural Insights*

- 70% of brands could disappear and no one would care
- Brands are integrating new social and cultural layers to align with the well-being of the community
- Brands that care for other people are going to be successful

### AMY du PON

MPG/Havas Media | *SVP, Head of Strategic Planning*

- Meaningful brands is a new metric of brand strength
- Today's paradigm- most people would not care if 73% of brands disappeared and only 20% notably improve people's quality of life
- Changing social contracts:

FROM:	TO:
more	→ smarter
bigger	→ fitter
faster	→ wiser
cheaper	→ tougher
now	→ closer

- 71% of large companies should be actively involved in solving social and environmental problems
- 70% of companies and businesses should play a role in improving quality of life
- 45% of people surveyed in one study genuinely trust brands
- Meaningful brands outperform the market by 120%

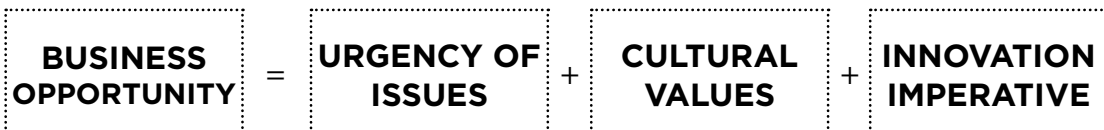


- Top performers are delivering on both personal + collective well being
- More than half of the 2013 top performers are in technology (Google, Microsoft, Sony)

### RAPHAEL BEMPORAD

BBMG | *Founding Partner & Chief Strategy Officer*

- Notes taken from free [Slideshare presentation](#)
- 15% willing to pay for "green" products however people who consider themselves "green" are not really interested in consuming
- 66% "as a society we need to consume a lot less"
- 65% "I have a responsibility to purchase products that are good for the planet"
- Aspirational (37% society) care about social status and social connections, they are the trend-setters and have the power to influence cultural shifts (driven by style + identity)
- The new alignment:



### LEE ANN HEAD

Shelton Group | *VP Research*

- The power of purpose: what is it and why is it important?
- People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it

## RESEARCH ROUNDTABLE: LATEST CONSUMER INSIGHTS FROM SB'S TOP RESEARCH PICKS

- Most important steps companies can take (2013 Ecopulse study):
  - Manufacture in the USA
  - Remove chemicals of concern from products
  - Recycle
  - No animal testing
  - Create no chemical waste
  - Make recyclable products
- Connecting with “Actives” (24% of Americans, male or female, ages 45+, well educated)
  - 95% searching for greener products
  - driven by health concerns
  - label readers (especially when it comes to what their children are consuming)
  - research online prior to shopping in-store
  - materialists, brand loyal
  - will regularly pay more for brands they trust
- Opportunities to connect with “Actives”:
  - Consistency and transparency in operations, product lines, and social practices
  - building community, engagement, and brand ambassadorship
  - connect with their values
  - teach/create opportunities for awareness

### RENEE LERTZMAN

Royal Roads University | *Consultant and Faculty*

- Compassionate research design: what is it that we really want to know? Really?
- When we measure values, world views, and beliefs we are measuring how we channel and express our underlying anxieties, affects, and resistances.
- Where does this get us?
  - The ability to connect with people where they actually are
  - The ability to soften/disarm the defenses that can impede our work

### KATHLEEN GASPERINI

Label Networks | *Senior Vice President*

- Discussion about youth culture (ages 13-25)
  - They are the generation of hope:
    - grew up with recycling
    - fresh set of eyes
    - most tech-savvy generation
    - they care and implement changes in their lives
  - 22/100 top metro areas are now “majority-minority”
    - tech-driven
    - influence on household income spending
    - future consumers
  - Demographic changes:
    - 56 million 13-25 year old's
    - new meaning of success, hope, happiness (having a job you love)
    - DIY culture
    - entire demographic of teens spent living in recession (participated in a savings culture)
  - Generally, 75% of youth culture concerned with the environment (females more, ages 15-20 most concerned)
  - 87% taking steps to make life more environmentally friendly
  - New paradigms = new platforms
    - do-it-yourself/earn-it-yourself generation
    - sustainability inherent
    - sports, music evolution
    - digital lifestyle
  - \*Social media increases traffic\*
- (Label Networks located in Los Angeles)

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### JASON BURNHAM

Burnham Marketing | *Partner & Social Engineer*

- Cultivating empathetic relationships
- Success happens when past, present, AND future thinkers work together

#### PAST:

rational  
risk-adverse  
fears change  
quality driven  
seeks truth  
skeptical  
prudent

#### PRESENT:

practical  
realistic  
controlled  
process driven  
seeks order  
methodical  
plans/compares  
organized  
more social

#### FUTURE:

optimistic  
aspirational  
impulsive  
hope driven  
individualistic  
enthusiastic  
proactive

- Web development + usability: create dynamic experiences that provide people with the info they need, when and how they need to receive it

### LIZ GORMAN

Cone Communications | *SVP, Sustainable Business Practices*

- Global CSR study (I have a printed copy):
  - CSR (corporate social responsibility) is a must-do for companies
  - social media is an accelerator
  - consumers are more astute about both corporate and consumer impacts
- 94% of consumers believe businesses must do more than turn out a healthy bottom line

## SUSTAINABLE BRANDS 101: INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY AT THE BRAND LEVEL

### JENNIFER RICE

Fruitful Strategy | *Principal*

- See attached PDF for workshop content.
- Disney is looking to define its corporate citizenship strategy (what is their unique sustainability messaging opportunity?)

[GOOD GUIDE \(Safe, healthy, and green online product reviews\)](#)

## OPENING NIGHT + MOVIE SCREENING: TOM SHADYAC'S "I AM"

- "Do less, be more" advice from Rich Fernandez, Senior People Development Lead at Google
- Change starts with me

**TUESDAY** 6.4.13

## BREAKFAST SESSION: imperative: RE-IMAGINING IMPACT

### DAR VANDERBECK

imperative: | *Community Organizer*

- Measuring what matters: not deficits, but rather assets
- Design is always an opportunity to intentionally create and contribute
- Genuine change does not happen through a commitment to an idea

[www.imperative.com](http://www.imperative.com)

## OPENING REMARKS: TRENDS & DRIVERS

- Theme: From Revolution to Renaissance
- Companies that are sustainably moving forward: KingFisher, Patagonia, Walmart
- Are different and better both visible and moving fast enough?

### BRYAN WELCH

Beautiful and Abundant | *Author*

- Vision: the key to a beautiful future
- Runs *Mother Earth News*
- We need a positive vision:
  - healthier
  - smarter/more educated
- Sustainability is a primary driver of value
- 2 Recommendations:
  1. \$20M companies should hire a journalist to collect good and bad narratives from the supply chains you use (rewrite the narratives to what you want them to be)
  2. Share your own passion for sustainability in joyful and enthusiastic ways so other employees get excited and want to participate too

### UWE DREHER

BMW*i*

- A Future Without Tradeoffs: BMW*i*'s Path to a Sustainably Beautiful Future
- Launch in US Spring 2014
- Visionary mobility and inspiring design

### BILL SHIREMAN

President & CEO | *Future 500*

- Working with conservatives and progressives
- The Greenpeace Effect vs. The Walmart Effect: no global brand can afford to risk its brand integrity/profits/etc. vs. the power to drive change to supply chains

### JOHN HAVENS

H(app)athon Project | *Founder*

- shift how world views health and value

## VOLUNTEER SHIFT @ EXPO REG. TENT 11:30AM-5:00PM

### BOOTH CRAWL IN EXPO TENT 5-7PM

- I have all cards + reading materials that I collected.

### DINNER WITH DRAGON ROUGE

- Discussion about the year 2030: Which brands will make it and why? Which brands won't and why not?

**WEDNESDAY** 6.5.13

### BREAKFAST SESSION: Coca-Cola's Sustainability Journey

#### BEA PEREZ

Coca-Cola | *Chief Sustainability Officer*

- The elephant in the room for Coca-Cola is obesity- who is responsible, the brand or the consumer? They believe the responsibility is shared.

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- Using responsible marketing
- Really putting purpose into their brands
- Children really have power to affect change, importance of education
- Coke is working to give back the amount of water used in their products by 2020
- When you're a mile wide and an inch deep what impact are you really making?

## OPENING REMARKS: INNOVATION

- Likes and retweets do not validate success--what IMPACT do you actually have?
- Innovative spirit: [Lessons from Geese](#)

### PHIL HANSEN

"Embrace the Shake"

- Pointillism artist who suffered severe hand damage from making so many dots, doctors told him to "embrace the shake" (of his hand)
- his single approach became a bigger creative approach
- EMBRACING LIMITATION CAN DRIVE CREATIVITY
- We are often paralyzed by too many choices, so Phil invites us back into the box so that we may be creative by the confines of limitation
- LIMITATION > LIBERATION
- Instead of seize the day, seize the limitations
- [Phil's Website](#)

### TOM SZAKY

TerraCycle | CEO

- Garbage doesn't exist in nature
- Consumption + complex materials create garbage
- Current solution for the 5 billion tons/year is to burn or bury it
- Visit [terracycle.com](http://terracycle.com) to see what items we could be recycling.

### NIKHIL ARORA + ALEJANDRO VELEZ

Back to the Roots | Co-Founders

- [Back to the Roots](#)
- Grow your own mushroom kits (sold in Whole Foods, very cool)
- "Innovation is more about constant iteration than immediate perfection"
- Don't be afraid to share

### LANDFILL HARMONIC

- [Music from trash \(video\)](#)

## MEETING WITH NEXGEN PACKAGING (DEBBIE BOUGAS):

- Met Debbie while volunteering at the Expo Tent Registration desk, she saw my badge and has previously worked with Evy on hangtags and tickets
- Nexgen does 2 European trend trips/year searching for all the new trends in packaging and hangtags
- Extensive online [resource library](#) with product photos
- Really work with their clients to get product + price-point right
- Had a small conversation about the life-cycle of hangtags, how they can have continued use after purchase

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## OPENING REMARKS: COMMUNICATIONS

### TENSIE WHELAN

Rainforest Alliance | President

- Messaging should be simple and authentic
- 55% of all Americans belong to the Spend Shift movement (wanting and beginning to purchase green products)
- Consumers are finding brand attributes such as kind, empathetic, and friendly more important
- Messaging should talk about underlying values, not “sustainability” or “green”

### CHRISTINE CEA

Unilever | *Senior Director, Marketing Communications*

- Identify the opportunity and create a culture around it (can be small, test internal)
- Unilever is crafting brands for life
- Buzz around another “Giving Tuesday” this year- Tuesday after Thanksgiving (after Black Friday and Cyber Monday)
- Video: [Dove Real Beauty Sketches](#) (message that perspective is everything)

### ADAM WERBACK

Yerdle | *Co-Founder*

- [Yerdle Sharing Platform](#)
- Online “share and tell” platform, redefining “show and tell”
- building a “do good” community

### JONAH SACHS

Free Range Studios

- [Story of Stuff](#)
- 3 Untold Stories:
  1. The Positive (but possible) Future
  2. The Good Life
  3. A new relationship between corporations and citizens
- How does your company tell these 3 stories?

## NEXT STEPS