Molson Coors Brewing Company
2014 Customer Stakeholder Engagement

Introduction

Molson Coors is a leading global brewer with a strong heritage, a passion for its portfolio of more than 100 beer brands, a dedication to innovation, and a commitment to sustainability and responsible business practices.

The company is recognised for world class corporate responsibility (CR) – in 2013, Molson Coors was named sector leader and listed on the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index and the Dow Jones Sustainability North American Index for the second year. Further, Molson Coors has captured the imagination of stakeholders with innovative approaches to CR via initiatives such as ‘Our Beer Print.’

Molson Coors now wishes to explore synergies across its areas of strength, by creating commercial engagement around CR. The company wants to identify opportunities for engaging with customers around CR and for incorporating CR within its brands.

Therefore, Molson Coors commissioned GlobeScan to conduct a formal engagement program amongst external commercial stakeholders – that is, key on-trade and off-trade customers – across the international business, and internal commercial functions.

Approach

GlobeScan, in collaboration with Molson Coors, developed a detailed discussion guide exploring key issues for customers and the industry, existing CR partnerships and programs, perceptions of Molson Coors’ CR programme and potential synergies and opportunities for partnership going forward.

GlobeScan conducted depth interviews with 17 individuals in commercial and CR functions in 12 companies across Europe and North America. Strategic customers were selected by Molson Coors and invited by Molson Coors and GlobeScan to participate in interviews. The interviews took place in March and April 2014.

A further discussion guide was developed to explore similar issues from an internal perspective and allow the opportunity for Molson Coors executives to react to some of the insights gained from the customer interviews.

Key Findings

- The most important issues, and possibly opportunities, for Molson Coors in the CR space are water stewardship, education and mitigation of alcohol risks, and addressing numerous aspects of the supply chain in order to help customers achieve their objectives.
- Not surprisingly, commercial customers are far more focused on economic and operational issues than on CR issues.
- Molson Coors’ executives are more aligned with their commercial customers than with customers’ CR staff. Molson Coors executives are most aligned on business issues (e.g., declining consumption), responsible marketing and water.
Molson Coors’ strategic customers are engaged in collaborative, multi-stakeholder initiatives to address major issues, including water, responsible alcohol use, waste, and supply chain sustainability.

Customers are largely unaware of Molson Coors in the CR space, but the company’s size and global reach would make it a welcome partner in collaborative programs.

**Implications and Recommendations**

1. **Supply Chain**: In order to engage more effectively with customers, Molson Coors could consider working with stages in the supply chain to ensure best practice and provide transparent information on sourcing and ingredients. Within this broad area there are collaboration opportunities around information sharing, co-procurement, waste reduction, recycling initiatives and emissions reduction.

2. **Water**: Water stewardship emerges as an area of focus for the industry and one that would benefit from partnership with customers as part of a holistic sustainable supply chain policy. This is an area Molson Coors could pursue further.

3. **Health and Awareness**: Molson Coors should be cognisant of increased engagement among consumers around health issues in its marketing, CR activities and product development. Consumers are looking for ways to live healthier lifestyles.

4. **Communications**: While there is some basic recognition that Molson Coors is a leading company on CR, without more detailed engagement on its efforts, the full benefit to brand profile will not be enjoyed. When appropriate, Molson Coors should consider enhancing communications to raise awareness of its CR activities. A platform to communicate around CR initiatives would provide space for dialogue on collaboration and partnership.

5. **Engagement and Partnerships**: Partnerships would provide opportunities for Molson Coors in terms of addressing its major issues, spurring supply change innovation, and improving information sharing and relations with customers.

**About GlobeScan**

GlobeScan is a research consultancy providing global organizations with evidence-based insights to help them set strategy and shape their communications. Companies, multilateral institutions, governments and NGOs trust GlobeScan for our unique expertise across reputation management, sustainability and stakeholder relations. GlobeScan help clients to build recognized leadership strategies based upon a foundational assessment of the business context and through internal and external stakeholder intelligence and engagement.

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**GlobeScan**

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