

CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS

Understanding the roles and impacts patrons can have to make ethically minded purchases that affect society.

MALLORY SALLSTROM
MASTERS OF FINE ARTS THESIS

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION & THE ARTS
FALL 2023

FINAL SIGNATURES

Conscious Consumers is a Masters of Fine Arts thesis prepared by Mallory Sallstrom for Liberty University's Department of Graphic Design.

Chelsea Bass, MFA, Chair

Andrea Lawyer-Lucas, MBA, PHD, First Reader

Joshua Wilson, MFA, MFA, Second Reader, Thesis Advisor

Pamela Miller, MFA, Department Chair

The personal, religious, philosophical, or political positions found this project are solely that of the student, and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the committee or Liberty University.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

ABSTRACT & MOTIVATIONS

02

CHAPTER 1

05

CHAPTER 2

34

CHAPTER 3

57

CHAPTER 4

73

CHAPTER 5

77

WORKS CITED

82

APPENDIX

ABSTRACT

This thesis will examine the issue that **patrons of large corporations are often unaware of how their patronage funds divisive corporate philanthropy resulting in an ethical dilemma for the patron.** To better understand this issue, research was conducted through a series of research questions. After completing this research, a literature review was conducted in addition to case studies and visual analyses. Based upon the research, a visual solution was created to serve as a resource and tool to educate consumers about the philanthropic efforts of large corporations as it relates to their values and missions. The thesis visual deliverables include an interactive prototype, logo for the app, full branding guide, various consumer and marketplace-based icons, as well as posters to be used within the community to raise awareness and advertise for the final app solution. Through these outlets, consumers will have a greater understanding of how their patronage pays support to economic, social, and political issues.

PERSONAL MOTIVATIONS

I chose this topic because it is something that I interact with daily and have been recently discovering truths about the issue, recognizing that where I shop matters. I had several questions of my own that fueled my research. I am passionate about educating people on what they are supporting and how it can make a difference. I think that society is too naïve, and it should be brought to their attention so that they can make informed and ethical decisions.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Patrons of large corporations are often unaware of how their patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy resulting in an ethical dilemma for the patron.

OBJECTIVES

This thesis will explore corporate philanthropy of ten of the largest brands in the United States and draw a summative conclusion of how large brands, in general, contribute to corporate giving as it relates to social, economic, and political issues. In addition, the research will examine consumer behavior and how individuals make decisions as it relates to their personal ethics. The goal of this project is to raise awareness for consumers to learn more about the brands they regularly support and decide for themselves if it aligns with their values. To accomplish this study, I will investigate methods of raising awareness to consumers to help create care in patronage and what specific issues they are most interested in. The research will seek to confirm how a strong brand identity influences consumers and user engagement and inform the target audience so that they can decide for themselves whether or not to support a brand.

In an effort to report results from research and to create a solution, I plan to develop an app interface where the user can search their name-brand corporation to learn more and decide for themselves if the corporation they are supporting aligns with their personal beliefs and ethics. My user interactive design solution will demonstrate its own strong brand identity to help the user to navigate various points of data, and it would be my goal for the brand to be one that individuals can learn to trust. To create a larger database for users, I plan to make this app one that corporations and local business can apply for verification.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How does corporate philanthropy impact consumer behavior?

- Are customers loyal to brands when they know about their divisive corporate philanthropy or is their patronage out of convenience?
- What is preventing consumers from investigating brand's missions and values?
- What are the motivations of large corporations in donating to charities?
- How do top brands in the United States budget and allocate their revenue dollars towards social, economic, or political issues?

KNOWLEDGE GAP

Existing research has mainly focused on consumer behavior as it relates to psychological aspects, product judgment, and view of self. While studies have shown that consumers are starting to consider their place in the market, conclusions have not related individual's self-awareness and personal convictions to the funding of divisive corporate philanthropy. Additionally, existing research has concluded that corporations participate in philanthropy and that consumers make choices in response to social initiatives, however, the way in which companies allocate resources from consumers as well as direct financial data is still unclear. Further research avenues include why consumers are more concerned about business ethics as it relates to brand attitudes and how the businesses allocate their revenue dollars and in what budget item/financial stream one can see the changes made.

SIGNIFICANCE

This topic is one that consumers unknowingly interact with daily. When individuals click the "place your order" button at all hours of day while shopping online and scan items in the self-check-out line from their last-minute shopping trip to the grocery store, they are supporting large companies and their economic, social, and political statements through their purchases. Within this action, their patronage may be creating issues within society and their personal ethics. Therefore, there is a significant need to create awareness to establish conscious consumer care.



Adapted from Freepik (See Appendix)

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH

RESEARCH RATIONALE

In a consumer marketplace, consumer-oriented companies have taken advantage of their consumers and strategized philanthropic efforts in attempts to gain revenue. Corporate philanthropy is a voluntary contribution to charitable causes by organizations. A majority of companies participate in this initiative, however, studies demonstrate that consumer-oriented companies are the ones who make the largest donations (Gautier 353). Unfortunately, this action is not out of pure motives, but to manipulate the consumer into loyalty and purchases. Here lies the issue of corporate philanthropy. It is not wrong for individuals to purchase products from well-known retailers; nonetheless, it has resulted in mass consumption without knowledge of the source it is coming from and how it is affecting them in return. Individuals are blindly consuming products that are contributing to an economy with ethics that they would otherwise agree with. This is leading to growth of issues such as mistreated employees, false product claims, financial misappropriation, a rise in untraditional family life, and other personal dilemmas for the consumer (Carrington 140). The research I plan to conduct will highlight large, well-known corporations, including Apple, Amazon, Target, Google, and others and detail their corporate identity, mission statements, philanthropic efforts, budget, etc. The project's in-depth research and targeted solutions seek to inspire change in consumer behavior and cause additional care and thought behind personal support within large corporations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

Individuals are constantly paying support to large companies and their economic, social, and political statements through their purchases. At the same time, their patronage is creating issues within society and their personal ethics. Patrons of large corporations are often unaware of how their patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy resulting in an ethical dilemma for the patron. This review will present research that addresses both the consumer and the corporation, the issues that exist between them, ethical concerns within the buyer/seller relationship, and consumer behavior. Reviewing a variety of relevant research from case studies to questionnaires to card sorting, the literature review establishes the current state of research and identifies where the gaps lie. Research presented in this literature review leans toward economic situations within the U.S., however, some studies present cross-cultural discoveries and data. Relevant theories identify issues within the psychological aspects of personal ethical judgments, mixed motivations of corporations, and the multidimensional characteristics of consumer behaviors. While similar topics have been widely studied, there exists a lack of resources and material specifically addressing consumers to ensure that they are personally aware of how they are being manipulated, how they can develop care in spending, and how to ensure that they are in ethical agreement.

KEY TERMS DEFINED

Throughout the literature review, **individual**, **patron**, and **consumer** will be used interchangeably. Researchers in this field identify patronage as loyalty and attention with financial support toward another entity.

Corporate philanthropy is a voluntary contribution to charitable causes by organizations. A majority of companies participate in this initiative, however, as it will be identified later in this paper, studies demon-

strate that consumer-oriented companies are the ones who make the largest donations (Gautier 353). Unfortunately, this action is not out of pure motives, rather out of obligation or to manipulate the consumer into loyalty and purchase (Gautier 350). Here lies the issue of corporate philanthropy.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Consumer marketplaces exist all around the globe, however, they have evolved over time and vary within cultures and locations. When considering indigenous tribes or the first settlers in the United States, one can identify that consumption needs were first met through self-sufficiency, however, colonization and exchange of products impacted, and improved, this system. Consumer marketplaces were established to exchange goods and services and individuals became more dependent on the marketplace as their immediate environment no longer carried all of the resources necessary (Saunders 1695). In an article published in the Journal of Consumer Affairs, Stephen G. Saunders explains:

Many eminent social scientists, including Popper (1994), point out that individual people, on average, exhibit an incomplete or partially wrong understanding of their immediate situation or what social scientist refer to as the logic of the situation. For these reasons, many consumer scholars advocate for a broader approach to gain a more complete understanding of the consumers' situation in the marketplace (Saunders 1692).

This study contributes to consumer affairs literature and seeks to bring awareness to how consumption needs are met and how they can be improved. Even though consumers interact with the marketplace almost every day, they are often unaware of how it operates and how they relate to it. Research shows that patrons are often unaware of how purchases fund divisive corporate philanthropy, and therefore unaware of ethical concerns they may be contributing to.

ETHICAL CONCERNS

ETHICAL CONCERNS IN CORPORATIONS

Considering how to act and be perceived as ethical is a desired quality by many corporations in the marketplace and is a growing concern. Unfortunately, this aspiration is not always out of pure motives. Lamberto Zollo, economics and business professor, identified two angles that have contributed to the growing interest of ethical consumption:

The managerial perspective embraces ethical consumption as a marketing strategy for enhancing brand images and firm profits and thus focuses on targeting ethical consumers. In contrast, the consumer perspective regards ethical consumption as an individual, conscious choice generated by consumer perceptions of right or wrong" (Zollo 693).

Large corporations targeting ethically-minded consumers as a market for profitable gain, and the individuals feel good about it because they believe they are contributing to something worthwhile—yet most of the time, it is unknown. Up until recently, companies have not published reporting on their environmental, social, and governance advancements. Stuart L. Gillan discloses in the Journal of Corporate Finance reviews that in 2018, 60% more firms released a sustainability report than firms did in 2011 (Gillan 1). The published data appeals to consumers as corporations take interest in their own corporate social responsibility.

O.C. Ferrell, Director of Center for Ethical Organization Cultures, identifies an ethical brand as "doing something good for society or the consumer such as, [sic] organic ingredients, fair trade, or in some way addressing the needs and desires of stakeholders" (Ferrell 493). In studies with individual consumers, Ferrell focuses on issues related to decision-making and behavior of organizations. Ferrell identifies that patrons and stakeholders look for labels of organic or fair trade, therefore large corporations market with them. Brands can be distinguished as ethical as well. An ethical brand is defined as "promoting the public good with attributes such as honesty, integrity, quality, respect, and accountability" (Ferrell 493). Ferrell concludes that consumers demonstrate loyalty and

trust to the company in which their ethical conduct is highlighted or perceived within their brand attitude (Ferrell 499). Additional research must be conducted as to why consumers are more concerned about business ethics as it relates to brand attitudes. On the other hand, it seems as though negative ethical behavior influences consumers even more. If a corporation is known to behave with negative ethics, consumers may then see all the company's activities in a negative way and abandon allegiance (Ferrell 498). If patrons were aware of negative corporate philanthropy, they may become more attentive in how their patronage funds corporations' activities in order to avoid divisive actions.

EACH INDIVIDUAL BRINGS THEIR PERSONAL ETHICS INTO THE MARKETPLACE, HOWEVER, IT IS NOT ALWAYS RECOGNIZED OR CARRIED THROUGH.

ETHICAL CONCERNS IN CONSUMERS

Ethical judgments are made regularly by consumers. Scott J. Vitell, a professor at the University of Mississippi, has dedicated his career to studying social psychology, business ethics, and consumer ethics. After receiving his PhD in marketing from Texas Tech University and his exploration of various cultures and people, Vitell conducted studies on individual consumers which lead him to determine consumer ethical judgments to be based upon three key issues: "(1) whether or not the consumer actively sought an advantage or was basically passive in the process, (2) whether or not the activity might have been perceived as illegal and (3) whether or not there is any perceived harm to the seller" (Vitell 36). With this in mind, each individual brings their personal ethics into the marketplace, however, it is not always recognized or carried through. Business professor Helene Cherrier confidently summarizes her research:

ethical considerations regularly demand references to the moral climate, which, as a form of grand narrative or regime of truth, provides direction for choices between right and wrong, good and bad, ethical and unethical. Yet from a post-modern perspective, the moral climate has scat-

tered into countless narratives, such that what is good or ethical may no longer be certain everywhere and in every situation” (Cherrier 321).

The moral climate may vary in different countries, cultures, and religious beliefs. Cherrier took her time conducting an in-depth study of a particular case in real-world context over the course of four years, however, she did not consult real-world participants, leaving a gap in the research. In a more compact approach to present research, Vitell has developed a consumer ethics scale through examining tested consumers’ views on various questionable behaviors and reviewing several studies that focus on consumer ethics within the buyer/seller relationship (Vitell 33). He determined that regular consumers can easily rationalize unethical behavior. Vitell calls this concept neutralization and believes that it “has the potential to explain much as to why otherwise ethical consumers sometimes behave unethically” (Vitell 45). Paula Dootson, an associate professor at Queensland University, picks up this theory and identifies that there is a mental line that consumers draw for themselves to justify behaviors. This concept of a line, the deviance threshold, identifies when questionable and acceptable behaviors are no longer justified, and there the line is crossed. Results from research using consumer-based interviews determine that individuals have different perceptions of what is right and wrong (Dootson 751) and consumers are not consistent when facing ethical dilemmas. There is a gap in the research for understanding neutralization techniques in identifying specific definitions of right and wrong. Yet, when neutralization techniques are applied (Dootson), consumers can easily rationalize unethical behavior (Vitell). This theory of neutralization techniques used by consumers reveals the issue that patrons lack care for how their behavior affects large corporations.

CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY

Corporate philanthropy is not charitable in all departments. Arthur Gautier, in his article “Research on Corporate Philanthropy: A Review and Assessment,” reports his conclusions after reviewing academic research of corporate philanthropy over the last

40 years. He summarizes corporate philanthropy as “voluntary donations of corporate resources to charitable causes...financial contributions, either in the form of direct grants or through vehicles like corporate foundations” (Gautier 344). After assessing academic literature on corporate philanthropy, Gautier identifies various drivers for corporate philanthropy, strategies, and outcomes. He recognizes that typically it is consumer-oriented or retail-oriented companies, those in the business-to-consumer industries, that have higher contributions for corporate philanthropy as it appeals to individual consumers and leads to greater impacts (Gautier 353). This source is strong as it takes a rather neutral view and includes information from a vast time span, speaking to the traditional vs. modern corporate philanthropy. For example, Gautier speaks to the separation of ownership and manager control among modern corporations. Whether appealing to current or potential customers, Douglas S. Beets, PhD, accounting professor at Wake Forest University, would agree that corporate philanthropy can lead to lasting impacts. Beets outlines four motivations for corporate giving: “Strategic (to enhance profits), Altruistic (giving expecting nothing in return), Political (to benefit a particular political perspective), and Managerial utility (personally supported by corporate managers)” (Beets 1102). Beets’ study comes to support the conclusion that charitable contributions do in fact lead to revenue growth for U.S. companies. After evaluating charitable contributions made by public companies from 1989 to 2000, Barauch Lev, a Professor of Accounting and Finance at the Stern School of Business, New York, proves that there is a positive relationship between large corporations’ charitable giving and consumer satisfaction, resulting in revenue growth (Lev). He states,

Corporate giving is associated with subsequent sales growth after controlling for the major drivers of sales growth. Charitable contributions appear most effective in enhancing revenues in the consumer sectors, such as retailers and financial services. Doing good is

CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS DO IN FACT LEAD TO REVENUE GROWTH FOR U.S. COMPANIES.

apparently good for you under certain circumstances” (Lev 198).

In the United States, it is estimated that charitable contributions are above \$20 billion annually (Beets 1101), however, specific amounts are not always disclosed by firm accountants. Many public corporations are generous in the charitable and political giving, but the amount and to which foundation may result in scrutiny. Therefore, corporations decide to create and give via private foundations in order to facilitate giving in a way stockholders or others do not know where to look (Beets). At the same time, consumers often support firms on their level of generosity (Lev 185). It is clear that there are positive impacts for the organization if consumers take notice of their efforts within corporate philanthropy.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Patrons are often unaware of how their patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy that doesn’t align with their ethical evaluations; however, current research concludes that often consumers don’t behave ethically themselves. Michal Carrington, in the Journal of Business Ethics, reviews “the majority of ethical consumer behavior models are built on a core cognitive progression: (1) beliefs determine attitudes, (2) attitudes lead to intentions and (3) intentions inform behavior” (Carrington 142). This model identifies a weak foundation in that consumer’s individual beliefs to conclude what behavior is right and wrong. There are several factors that effect consumer’s purchases even if they are convinced of which products to purchase and where to shop. It is common for current research to lean towards the viewpoint that

“THERE EXISTS A GAP BETWEEN WHAT CONSUMERS SAY THEY ARE GOING TO DO AND WHAT THEY ACTUALLY DO AT THE POINT OF PURCHASE”

right and wrong are subjective. Even if consumers desire to behave according to how they would view an ethical manner, Carrington identifies that “there exists a gap between what consumers say they are going to do and what they actually do at the point of purchase” (Carrington 141). Carrington seeks to create a solution to close this gap. Ethically minded consumers may need assistance from family,

store employees, marketers, or additional help to make it from the aisle to the cash register with their ethically sourced product (Carrington). Maferima Toure-Tillery, a professor of marketing at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University who holds an MBA and PhD in Marketing, researched the gap between a consumer’s intent to shop ethically and what they actually consume. Her proposed theory focused on how individuals’ memories affect their behaviors and experiences relating to brand purchases, donations, and personal perceptions. Marketers certainly feast on the belief that consumer’s memories of products and experiences attract them to products and that it adds values to the consumption experience (Touré-Tillery 751). It may be that ethically minded consumers are not being mindful at all as the unconscious consumer tends to be less charitable.

There is surely a psychological aspect of consumer behavior as it relates to motivations, morals, values, and philanthropy (Touré-Tillery). After conducting five studies using U.S.-based adults and undergraduate students within online experiments, conclusions demonstrate that “low-memory efficacy,” or weak abilities to use memory effectively, “decreased virtuous behaviors for consumers (studies 1 and 2), due to lower perceptions of self-diagnostics (study 3)” (Touré-Tillery 749). Virtuous behavior means decisions made by consumers that produce benefits to society or others as it relates to ideals, values, and social expectations (Touré-Tillery 739). Dickinson would consider this view of self, that consumers often don’t think outside of themselves and that their own self-interest is enough, to lead to manifested greed and unethical behaviors (Dickinson). Dickinson’s reflection on this research is innovative as it addresses the problem of the consumer’s self-interest, making a point that individuals should be responsible for their actions that sometimes bring unintended consequences (Dickinson 9). His research conclusions also include proposals for improvements and possible changes for teaching.

Individuals have an “inherent drive to maintain a positive self-concept,” therefore, studies show that it may

be worth it for them to perform an ethically deviant behavior in order to avoid conflict within (Dootson 752). Paula Dootson, along with several other professors from Queensland University in Australia, examined underlying factors that cause individuals to temporarily neutralize behaviors that would typically go against their values and act in an illegitimate way. This would be identified as an example of a neutralization approach (Dootson 751). Dootson conducted 29 consumer-based interviews with college-aged students using the card-sort method. This method was effective as it used a technique that identifies actions that may be otherwise difficult to categorize and helps reflect mental models of the participants. Reviewing real-world behaviors such as testing fruit in the store without purchasing it or not being honest to the cashier when given an incorrect amount of change were considered and identified as right and wrong by participants. The results showed that neutralization techniques are used by consumers to resolve conflict within without having to negatively update their perception of themselves. Often times, deviant consumer behavior is viewed with a benefit that trumps the unethical action (Dootson 752).

Consumer behavior is often influenced by large corporations which, in turn, results in a conflict for the consumer's ethics. One point being that "consumers are influenced by information about firms' ethical behaviors and product attribute information when forming attitudes toward the firm" (Folkes 243). Throughout a series of questionnaires given to university students, marketing professor Valerie S. Folkes, demonstrates conclusions that consumers' attitudes towards a certain firm and their products varies depending on the firm's ethical or unethical behaviors, and may even change depending upon which type of ethical behavior was displayed (Folkes 243).

The firm's moral standards, as evidenced by the means by which a product is produced, influence consumers' attitudes. That effect is observed even when the action lacks a direct impact on the consumer (involves hiring practices), when the unethical action is legal in the country in which it is performed, when there is

no overt social pressure (as in boycotts), and when the firm's ethical or unethical behavior does not influence product quality judgments (Folkes 257).

This research starts to address the issue of patrons being unaware of how their patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy within large corporations, yet it stops at focusing on standards of product performance for brand evaluation (Folkes 257). In a specific study identifying a controversy regarding Reuther Manufacturing Company where the union asked customers to boycott all Acme consumer products, a small sector of a larger brand, Miller and Sturdivant conducted group interviews to analyze the relationship between corporate social conduct and consumer behavior, concluding that socially questionable behavior of one part of a multi-unit firm may have negative impact on sales of other parts of the firm (Miller 6). The current research alludes that when self-interest is minimized and corporate behaviors are considered over product judgment, consumers may act differently. Furthermore, the question of this issue identifies the need for additional research on consumers' awareness of corporate practices and philanthropy participation.

Making decisions is much more complex than the individual may realize. According to Zollo's research, there are five steps that regular, ethical consumers consider when making decisions: "they recognize a need, search for information, evaluate alternatives, make the purchase, and evaluate their purchase" (Zollo 693). As consumers search and evaluate before ever making the purchase, consumers make product judgements for how the product is produced. Folkes adds an additional layer to this decision-making process: considering corporations' moral standards influence consumers' attitudes as there may be unethical practices in the production process. Folkes highlights, "that effect is observed even when the action lacks a direct impact on the consumer

THERE ARE VARIOUS FACTORS THAT CONSUMERS FACE WHEN MAKING DECISIONS...A COMPLEXITY OF PERSONAL, ETHICAL, AND SOCIAL FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED

(involves hiring practices), when the unethical action is legal in the country in which it is performed, when there is no overt social pressure (as in boycotts), and when the firm's ethical or unethical behavior does not influence product quality judgments" (Folkes 257). Helene Cherrier, PhD, a professor at SKEMA Business School, would agree that there are various factors that consumers face when making decisions. There is not a default action to be made, but rather a complexity of personal, ethical, and social factors to be considered (Cherrier). For example, Zollo argues that while there is social responsibility and a desire by consumers to make ethically conscious choices, intuition and other irrational factors drive consumer's choices. In an effort to explore the "understudied antecedents of moral reasoning and cognitive processes that ultimately shape the ethical consumption," Zollo concluded that intuition is a "non-rational" element that influences consumers' ethical attitudes and affects their decision making (Zollo 707). So, for one person, a company's way of doing something may seem ethical, but to another, it may go against their personal judgments of an issue (Cherrier 331). The general conclusion on this topic is that there is a lack of awareness of complexities and situational circumstances, including physical surroundings, social surroundings, temporal surroundings, and cognitive processes, that effect consumer behavior resulting in a gap (Carrington), which attributes to the problem that patrons are often unaware of the impacts their patronage will fund corporate missions (Cherrier).

ECONOMIC ISSUES

For the consumer, there are many economic issues. One of the problems that exists is that "our current laws are so lax that half of the time we can't even figure out which brands belong to which companies (they don't have to tell us), much less have any idea of what their business practices look like" (Jones 5). It is difficult for patrons to know who and what they are supporting when they shop at large corporations, which is why Ellis Jones has dedicated over a decade of research to compiling a database of reliable sources of information on corporate behavior (Jones 9). His book, *The Better World Shopping Guide:*

Every Dollar Makes a Difference, addresses issues of human rights, the environment, animal protection, community protection, and social justice and how various corporations interact with or stand on these issues. Literature like this is a great leap for consumers as they have resources in a pocketbook style for easy use as they take trips to the grocery store and survey the various brands set before them. On the other hand, this resource has a gap in knowledge regarding how the businesses allocate their revenue dollars and in what budget item/financial stream one can see the changes made. Ellis encourages consumers to make the better choice when possible, pointing out that they may not have access to "A+" (Jones) products or may not be able to afford them as they'd like, yet they can still aim for a "C" level product which would be better than an "F" rated product. Deirdre Shaw would describe this choice between products as "consumption as voting" (Shaw). Consumers vote each day in each purchase with the power of money. According to Jones, "the average American family spends around \$22,000 every year on goods and services. Think of it as casting 22,000 votes every year for the kind of world you want to live in" (Jones 5). This is a key concept and one that consumers need to be aware of so that they can view their purchases with more purpose and tackle some of the economic issues set before them, one dollar at a time.

Consumers cast votes when they choose to purchase a good or service, and as they show patronage, they are demonstrating the power they have to shape society and influence their quality of life (Dickinson 17). Roger Dickinson, in his article published in the *Journal of Business Research*, calls consumers to bring about change in the way they can – through consumption. There are other perspectives, however, as it relates to different styles of consumer marketplaces. Stephen G. Saunders presents three various consumer marketplaces: consumer-led marketplace, enabler-led marketplace, and self-sufficiency marketplace. He advocates for a hybrid of these options. He reasons that:

Essentially people attempt to meet consumption needs in two basic ways. They may participate in consumer marketplaces and engage

in value exchange activities. Or, they may be self-sufficient, and meet consumption needs through 'absorbing' resources from their immediate environments. While these two ways may seem to be distinct and clearly delineated, Layton (2019) points out that people do not have perfect information and choice sets; and so attempt to meet their consumption needs from what may be possible in their immediate situation (Saunders 1692).

It is difficult for the consumer to know how and where to consume as, even with a hypothetically 'perfect' marketplace, there continues to be economic issues within the buyer/seller relationship. Consumers can rally together to consume, or not consume, goods in the market. One popular area where individuals tend to react this way is with boycotts, or on the opposing side, buycotts: purchasing products from a company in support and/or to counter boycotts. Shaw makes a strong argument in his article, "An Exploration of Consumer Empowerment," that considers research revealing "even where consumers are uncertain of the likelihood of a successful boycott, they will continue to support it because of a personal belief that it is the correct individual action to take" (Shaw 1053). Saunders would agree that boycotting or avoiding all the large corporations is not viable and does not create an ideal marketplace (Saunders). Regardless, Dickinson would add his academic perspective of consumer

WHILE CORPORATIONS AIM AT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, THEY REALLY ARE NOT ACTING OUT OF THE BEST INTEREST FOR SOCIETY. INSTEAD, THEY ARE ACTING OUT OF THE BEST INTEREST FOR THEMSELVES.

responsibility in that "there are achievable benefits that include a greater sense of community with consumer voting, helping individuals to integrate their public and private worlds, consumer behavior as a part of other aspects of life, increased public discussion of key issues, etc." (Dickinson 13). While consumers may be starting to have economic considerations within

their activities, there is still research to be presented to patrons of large corporations in order to help consumers change and see a greater importance of how they 'vote' with their dollars in order to avoid funding divisive corporate philanthropy

SOCIAL ISSUES

For the consumer, there are many social issues. Several sources within current research identify that Corporate Social Responsibility, or CSR, a business model by which firms operate with priorities set on improving society, plays a major role when it comes to patronage to large firms. One common way in which firms seek to accomplish successful CSR to influence consumers is with social initiatives. Karen Becker-Olsen, in her article published in the Journal of Business Research, conducted two experiments with 28 respondents by giving them sample firms and social issues to confirm hypothesis. Results determined that "80% of respondents believed firms should engage in social initiatives and 76% felt those initiatives would benefit firms" (Becker-Olsen 52). Becker-Olsen identifies that consumer interest and expectations of CSR has increased over the last 5-10 years (Becker-Olsen 52). It is assumed by corporations that consumers will reward firms for their involvement in social causes, therefore, CSR can be used by large corporations to manipulate the target market. While corporations aim at social responsibility, they really are not acting out of the best interest for society. Instead, they are acting out of the best interest for themselves. CSR may sound like a good thing to consumers, yet individuals are often unaware of how their support will fund divisive missions. Furthermore, in an academic article published in the Journal of Consumer Behavior, Helene Cherrier conducts a case study on voluntary simplicity, a practice of simplifying life that has been widely adopted by Western society. Cherrier identifies voluntary simplicity as an "emergent social trend" that leads to a cultural movement of "group consciousness about the negative aspects of consumerism" (Cherrier 326). Cherrier describes this new social movement to include perspective shift to an "identity-centered paradigm (Touraine, 1981), which makes the construction of identity central rather than peripheral to the formation of the movement" (Cherrier 324).

This research, compiled with that of the consumer behavior studies mention earlier, continues the conversation demonstrating that individuals in the post-modern world are caught between conflicting, nonlinear ethical opinions, individual ethics, and a social movement of voluntary simplicity, thus affecting consumption practices. Cherrier uses "the new social movement theory to explore the complexity of voluntary simplicity's ethical stance and direction" (Cherrier 327). Together as a society, it can be difficult to determine what is moral as individuals hold their own for what is right and wrong. This is an example of where consumers put their ethics under societal formations, complied to live in a world of "plural and nonlinear ethical standards," and together became more consciously aware of the negative aspects of consumerism (Cherrier 326). On this topic, there remains a gap in research as it relates to firm specific factors and reporting for how social initiatives are perceived by consumers. Further research could be key in validating these conclusions.

For the company, there are also social issues to consider. In Karen L. Becker-Olsen's study on past research of sponsorship and social marketing, she quotes Levy's belief that, "corporate philanthropy and social initiatives are the heart and soul of business...social endeavors must be consistent with firms' operating objectives (heart) and must be an expression of their values (soul)" (Becker-Olsen 52). As a result of Becker-Olsen's evaluations of how firm conditions may influence consumer response, it was concluded that when social initiatives are not aligned with the corporate objectives, CSR can negatively affect perceptions of the company and even lead to liabilities (Becker-Olsen 52). This is something that the corporations must keep in mind if they want to appeal to consumers and operate appropriately. Kenneth E. Miller, PhD, a clinical and community psychologist, analyzed Reuther Manufacturing Company, a large, multi-faceted corporation (parent company, subsidiary organization, and brand) and how unacceptable behavior would be viewed by consumers. Results from the group interviews used to analyze the relationship between corporate social conduct and consumer behavior determines that consumers indeed do

value social responsibility within companies, and it affects both purchase behavior and attitude toward the firm (Miller 7). Similar studies conclude:

"We found no changes in perceived corporate ability across fit or motivation, suggesting that companies cannot use social initiatives in place of strong brand management and high-quality products. In categories where there is intense competition among similar goods and services, social initiatives may be used to differentiate offerings but are unlikely to influence consumers' assessments of desired functionality" (Becker-Olsen 50).

In Becker-Olsen's study, she adds a unique perspective to this conversation as it addresses corporate social responsibility versus perception of the brand. Other studies examine the relationship between firm's management and attitudes towards corporate social responsibility. Stuart L. Gillan's article, "Firms and Social Responsibility: A Review of ESG and CSR Research in Corporate Finance," adds a new voice to some of the most debated and important issues in corporate finance as he assesses the relationship between firm leadership and ESG/CSR scores. A common trend shows that characteristics of ownership structure such as corporations leaders' age, gender, marital status, pay, and even confidence level effect the rating of corporate social responsibility. While this is an interesting concept, this study by Stuart L. Gillan notes that research leads to further questions (Gillan 1).

POLITICAL ISSUES

Finally, for the consumer, there are also many political issues. In an article published in the European Journal of Marketing, university professor Deirdre Shaw uses responses from consumer interviews to support conclusions that consumers place consumption in both an ethical and political context (Shaw 1061). Boris Holzer, PhD, a professor of General Sociology and Macrosociology at the University of Konstanz, understands the political consumer to be a combination of both politics and the economy in modern society. Many individuals are not aware of the political effects their purchases can have, yet they have choices to make in the marketplace. While it may not

feel as though they have a lot of power individually, consumers can reroute their role into a conductor for change (Holzer 411). Their political consumerism, as a collective social movement based upon individual consumption choices, can signal the market (Holzer 406). Sometimes, consumers use boycott as a response to a political statement:

Consumers can ‘punish’ a company that does not live up to their expectations through a boycott of its products. But then they will not get what they originally aimed for: the product and the correct behavior...they will get neither of them. In such a simple scenario of a consumer boycott, the sanction is not actually used as a threat to induce a certain course of action; it is merely used as a form of punishment” (Holzer 407).

This is another area where consumers are weak in their desires and think of themselves over political issues and are unaware of how they affect large corporations.

For the company, there are also political issues to consider. Some entities may strive to be a business for political change yet become distracted with traditional business structures and what to do with profits. After spending much time studying political and social activism of the 1960s and '70s, Joshua Clark Davis gives examples of this as he concludes, “activist businesses have suffered in large part due to broad declines in Americans’ political participation, community engagement, and social connectedness in the past fifty years” (Davis 240). These activist entrepreneurs have looked like black nationalist bookstores, head shops, feminist businesses, and natural foods stores. One example is Whole Foods, specifically addressed for “abandoning both its initial enthusiasm for political change and skepticism of unfettered capitalism” as it has now risen to classification of a supermarket which it originally opposed (Davis). Some corporations have developed a Political Action Committee, or a PAC, to serve this goal while others just make political donations with hopes they will benefit as a result of their financial support (Beets 1102). This is a niche and controversial topic; therefore, most research fails to address the activist business’ perspectives in modern society and how

they would reflect on growth and consumer participation with the business over time.

CONCLUSION

There is much to consider when it comes to patronage of large corporations and how patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy. The research presented articulates the growing ethical concerns in the marketplace for patrons and corporations, the strategy and motivations of corporate philanthropy, what influences consumer behavior, along with the economic, social, and political issues involved. The review of literature seeks to bring awareness to the issue at hand and help consumers become more aware of what they are doing to support divisive philanthropy. Moving forward, it would be helpful for consumers to practically understand what happens between the self-check-out at Target, clicking “Place your order” on Amazon.com, or large purchases at the Apple store as it relates to economic, social, and political issues. Existing research has mainly focused on consumer behavior as it relates to psychological aspects, product judgment, and view of self. While studies have shown that consumers are starting to consider their place in the market, it has not specifically demonstrated their awareness and attention to how it will fund divisive corporate philanthropy. Additionally, existing research has concluded that corporations participate in philanthropy and that consumers respond to social initiatives. However, the way in which companies allocate resources from consumers through avenues of corporate philanthropy and the financial data is still unclear.



ADDITIONAL RESEARCH METHODS CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY 1: BEN & JERRY'S DEMOCRACY IS IN YOUR HANDS

For my first case study, I analyzed an awareness campaign. Ben & Jerry's "Democracy Is In Your Hands" campaign was motivated by the 2016 General Election in which cofounders of the ice cream company, Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield, noticed issues of voting restrictions in place and corporate dollars dominating politics. The campaign's slogan states, "democracy only works when it works for everyone" ("Democracy Is In Your Hands"). The company believes that voters are being suppressed, making it hard for minority groups like black, brown, and low-income to vote and that the system is becoming corrupt due to wealthy donors and politicians. When asked in an interview by MSNBC, Cohen stated that it appears many states are seeking to decrease access to the polls, targeting "poor people and people of color, and students" which is "discriminatory and anti-American" (Roth). In seeking to create awareness to this issue and encourage patrons to take action by registering to vote and exercising their voting right, "Democracy Is In Your Hands" was born. The goal of this campaign was to "activate citizens to take action for a more equitable and just society by building a democracy that works for all regardless of race or income" ("Democracy Is In Your Hands"). Ben & Jerry's developed a new flavor, Empower Mint, peppermint ice cream with fudge brownie and fudge swirls, and produced a video of the launch all to showcase the issue that democracy belongs to the public. They first introduced the flavor by using a local scoop truck in NC and then added it to shops across the country to help register voters and get them involved in the Voting Rights Act. A portion of the proceeds from Empower Mint was given as a donation to the North Carolina NAACP to support the political, educational,

social, and economic equality of all persons ("The 7 Most Inspiring Things We Heard at the Empower Mint Launch"). It is clear how much the company valued the campaign as they devoted 20% of their marketing budget to "Democracy Is In Your Hands" which was double their past efforts towards political change in 2012 with "Get the Dough out of Politics" (Wohl). "We take on the issues that we think are most important to our values and where we can have an impact," said Ben & Jerry's Senior Global Marketing Manager Jay Curley, "I don't think this is a big departure from where we've been, but I do think it's another step forward in really trying to bring more justice into this world" (Wohl). The company is not afraid to speak up and be known for involving themselves in political and social issues. One opinion says that "it is the only big brand in the Democracy Awakening coalition, which is largely comprised of environmental, political, religious and social organizations" (Wohl). In fact, the company's namesakes, "Ben & Jerry," were among the 300 protestors arrested in April 2016 at the Democracy Awakening Event in Washington D.C. Their involvement was not necessarily a part of the campaign but does demonstrate their commitment to the cause.

Ben & Jerry's main asset for the campaign was their website. Ben & Jerry's has a large amount of content and information on their website that informs the audience of the problem and suggests solutions to fix it. An article page defined the goal:

We think that registering 50 million more voters all across this country qualifies as both huge and positive. Think about that number. As of the November 2014 election, there were 142,166,000 registered voters in this country. Now imagine adding 50 million more—basi-

cally a 35% increase. Yeah, that's a huge deal. And the good news is that we know exactly how to make it happen: automatic voter registration (AVR) ("How We Could Register 50 Million People to Vote – Today").

About two months after the campaign was launched, the campaign had more than 1 million video views and 12,000 petition signatures (Wohl). They did well to combine their branding with an americana style for the campaign, and strong imagery including illustrations of the national mall buildings in D.C. coming out of waffle cone, powerful videos of people rallying together for change, and product photos of a man holding the Empower Mint pint, pointing out towards the audience like Uncle Sam. The company has done well to have studied and involved themselves in making a difference for a cause and compiled a large resource for Americans to learn and participate in the democracy that is set up for them. I believe this campaign to be successful as it is approachable to Americans who are consuming ice cream and presented to them in a way that creates interest and a place to look further. The FAQs on the website help keep the information organized and inform the audience in this awareness campaign. According to the United States Census Bureau, "In 2016, 61.4 percent of the citizen voting-age population reported voting, a number not statistically different from the 61.8 percent who reported voting in 2012" (File). Similarly, data shows that not many other voting trends changed within age and race from the 2012 to the 2016 general election. While reports may not show a large increase in voters and participation from minority groups, it can be seen that voter participation did not wane and voters continued to exercise their right. Ben & Jerry's saw increase in business during this period, though, growing at a "double-digit pace" (Wohl).

One thing that struck me from researching this campaign is Ben's comment:

You can talk about very serious and very important issues but in a way that incorporates ice cream. And that's a way to connect with people on an emotional level and also on a gustatory level. You know, I think that businesses, corporations, well-known and respected brands have a certain degree of credibility or recognition in the culture. And I

think that it's powerful to use those corporations and those brands to speak out for issues of social and economic justice" (Roth).

It was also found that customers want to see companies being authentic and taking a stand on issues, going beyond a narrow self-interest (Roth). I hope to be able to create a source of genuine information and truth for consumers that they can connect with and trust. Ben & Jerry's "Democracy Is In Your Hands" campaign has gone ahead in this venture, creating a powerful awareness campaign and setting an example of what it looks like to build a movement.

CASE STUDY 2: CHARITY TRANSPARENCY OF NATIONAL BRANDS

For my second case study, I analyzed ten of the nation's largest brands: Target, Walmart, Amazon, Procter & Gamble, Nestle, Pepsi Co, Unilever, Netflix, Google, and Apple.

I asked the following questions for each company:

1. **How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
2. **How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
3. **What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?**
4. **Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
5. **Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
6. **How may corporate giving influence consumers?**

After reviewing ten of the largest brands in America, many similarities can be found. Almost all the companies researched have a page on their website that is dedicated to their philanthropic efforts with highlights and stories. Most of the corporations' statements aim to do good in the world, directing attention to issues of communities in need, minorities, clean water initiatives, environmental concerns, etc. Corporate philanthropy tends to be communicated in a general manner with goals over financial amounts. It was interesting to see how the brand of a company communicates their values which also

determines their philanthropic efforts and how they seek to help those around them. For example, Google is a technology company that works towards providing digital literacy in under-privileged communities and Unilever produces many home and personal care products and they, in turn, direct their efforts to sustainability, climate change, and plastic pollution. Within the ten corporations that I researched, their corporate giving was related to social issues over political and economic issues.

Below are the specifics from the studies I conducted on the top ten brands.

TARGET

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
There is a Corporate Giving page on their website, A Bullseye View, that highlights their programs, partners, approach, etc. They summarize their philanthropic efforts and include links to details and several of their partners and related information.
- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
It was easy to find the corporate giving of this company. They have a whole page dedicated to it with lots of information.
- 3. What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?**
- Diversity, equity and inclusion which is also one of their corporate goals – “We embrace diversity and strive to create more equitable and inclusive communities, giving everyone the same access to opportunities. We do this by reducing disparities and championing societal impacts for communities to thrive with a focus on Asian, Black, Hispanic/Latino, LGBTQIA, military and veterans, people with disabilities and women team members, guests and communities” (“Corporate Giving”).
- Community empowerment – “Through strategic partnerships, sponsorships, programs and volunteerism, we leverage our resources to help reduce disparities, to provide equitable

and inclusive opportunity and to strengthen the diverse needs of the communities we serve” (“Corporate Giving”).

- Sometimes their giving is event based i.e. disaster and crisis response and holiday giving

- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
Yes, their branding and advertisements demonstrate inclusion with their models, images, and messaging.
- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
Mainly social as the giving is related to communities, humanitarian need, and includes partners like Feeding America.
- 6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?**
Their website states that: “Making an impact is at the heart of Target Circle. That’s why, as a member of Target Circle, guests not only save with offers and receive personalized deals, but they can vote to impact the communities we’re all a part of” (“Corporate Giving”). This may influence consumers to shop there more to earn more rewards which in turn makes them feel good as they are saving money and contributing to charitable giving. Target patrons have a chance to vote where their funds go in support to nonprofits across the country and “as each voting period wraps, Target awards grants to the nonprofits based on the percentage of votes they receive” (“Target Circle Community Giving”). This puts the giving in the hands of the people.

WALMART

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
They have several webpages that tell the story of what they do that links to other media such as articles and videos.
- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
Yes, it was clear and easy to find as Walmart has a page on their Walmart Digital Museum website that is dedicated to their corporate giving:

The Walmart Foundation.

- 3. What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?**
Walmart categorizes their philanthropic efforts within Creating Opportunity, Advancing Sustainability, Strengthening Community, and a Center for Racial Equality (“Working together to spark change”). They state that “We focus our philanthropic support across these areas keeping diversity, equity and inclusion at the heart of our philanthropy” (“Working together to spark change”).
- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
Yes, Walmart’s brand and even the products they sell align with their values to give people access to a better life. “Walmart founded the Walmart Foundation as an internal corporate philanthropic organization in 1979 with a mission to create opportunities so people can live better” (“Corporate Giving: The Walmart Foundation”) which fits with the company slogan.
- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
Their corporate giving is related to social issues. They seek to involve themselves in issues such as racial equality, empowering small farm owning women, fallen soldier’s families, etc.
- 6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?**
Corporate giving may influence consumers as the company has strong corporate philanthropic efforts that are made known to the consumers throughout several avenues such as social media, advertisements, the news, etc. The Walmart Foundation also encourages U.S. volunteers to participate in the movement.

AMAZON

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
Amazon recognizes their corporate giving as “Community Investments.” On their corporate website they have several pages detailing who they are, what they do, their impact, etc. Their

impact page is setup like a blog where they have stories and articles about their programs and efforts.

- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
It was easy to search and find this impact page on their website. Amazon used to have a charitable program called “AmazonSmile,” however, as of January 2023 this initiative was shut down. “AmazonSmile” allowed patrons to give back to their favorite charity when shopping on Amazon. This program contributed to a great deal of collective good yet the company felt “with so many eligible organizations — more than 1 million globally — our ability to have an impact was often spread too thin” (Kassirer). This was a program many patrons were aware of and contributed to and time will tell where Amazon will direct those philanthropic efforts will be redistributed.
- 3. What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?**
Underprivileged communities, disaster relief efforts, and Amazon also has a large program called “Amazon Future Engineer” which aims to increase computer science education for children in underserved communities (“Community Investments”).
- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
Yes, the style of the brand is clear and simple, including the arrow pointing from a to z communicating that sell everything from a to z and puts a smile on customers faces. It seems as though Amazon seeks to serve others and bring comfort and joy to their communities.
- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
Their corporate giving is related to social issues.
- 6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?**
Amazon is a large company that people all over the world use for its wide range of products and convenience. I believe the patrons will continue to support Amazon for those reasons, however, many want to stray away from the large

business that makes money off smaller sellers. Corporate giving may influence consumers to continue supporting Amazon.

PROCTER & GAMBLE

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
Procter & Gamble has a website page that is dedicated to their community impact. They outline their various programs and include highlights and stories in article format with links to learn more. Their statement says: “We’re all about doing the right thing. We are committed to being “A Force for Growth and A Force for Good”. That’s why our people and our brands do good every day” (“Community Impact”).
- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
P&G is such a large company with a vast number of products. Their giving is also vast, and they can reach a large amount of people with their internal and external efforts.
- 3. What themes are found within this company’s corporate giving?**
Their impact focuses on communities in need, equality and inclusion (gender, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+, Race and Ethnicity), and sustainability. “Whether it’s supporting hygiene education, providing a simple necessity like water or delivering essentials for families impacted by disaster, our goal is to improve the health and well-being of the communities we touch” (“Community Impact”). They categorize their efforts within Global Programs, Regional Programs, Brand Programs, and COVID 19 Support. They also have a page devoted to their Ethics and Corporate Responsibility statements.
- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
P&G uses their brand and their products as a solution for good. For example, Pampers partnered with Canadian Premature Babies Foundation (CPBF) as one in twelve babies in Canada are born prematurely. They donated \$200,000 in technology grants to hospitals across Cana-

da to help premature babies and help families stay connected.

- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
Their corporate giving is related to social efforts.
- 6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?**
Corporate giving may influence consumers to stay within P&G’s products, knowing that they have a mission to do good.

NESTLE

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
On Nestle’s website, they have several subpages regarding their involvement with charitable causes. As it specifically relates to financial giving, on their “Community” page, it was highlighted that Nestle employees donated over \$1.2 million to charitable causes and donated 154 million pounds of food and gave \$700,000 to Feeding America (“Community”).
- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
It seems as though Nestle highlights their programs more so in the packaging of their products and volunteerism over their financial giving as that is how they tend to direct their efforts. They did have some statistics of financial giving listed.
- 3. What themes are found within this company’s corporate giving?**
It is clear they are passionate about sustainability and improving communities.
- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
Their brand as well as the style and make of their packaging is consistent. Their logo and package design appears to be organic and natural which aligns with their mission of sustainability, seeking to build a more sustainable future.
- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
Mainly social and economic, especially as it relates to the environment.

- 6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?**

Corporate giving may influence consumers as those who are more middle class or can afford ‘name brand’ can see how they are supporting a company that seeks to contribute sustainable products and donate food back to those who may be less fortunate. Finding alternate resources without compromising quality may help patrons to reach for Nestle over other brands.

PEPSI CO

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
Pepsi Co has a “Philanthropy” page where I was able to find a lot of information as well as their Global Impact Report. They categorize their philanthropic efforts into categories and highlight key stories and recent community work. Many of the corporate giving financial details are listed in the Global Impact Report.
- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
Their “Philanthropy” page was found with a quick search and there they had their 2022 Global Impact Report PDF from the Pepsi Co Foundation for viewing which had highlights from the previous year.
- 3. What themes are found within this company’s corporate giving?**
Food security, Safe water, Economic Opportunity, Employee engagement & disaster relief.
- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
Yes, their brand has undergone recent changes but their logo and other design assets are currently more geared towards a global/universal style and even on their homepage, the messaging, images, and content is focused on their community involvement.
- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
According to their “Philanthropy” page, “Pepsi-Co Foundation’s work focuses on the creation of sustainable and innovative solutions to these

three critical socioeconomic issues” (“Philanthropy”).

- 6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?**

Corporate giving may influence consumers to consider the large scale impact one can have and to consider investing and supporting the mission.

UNILEVER

- 1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?**
I found a PDF on Unilever’s website of their Annual Report and Accounts from 2022. This report had Financial Statements and performances of the company. Since Unilever is British, their amounts were in pounds (“Unilever Annual Report and Accounts 2022.”)
- 2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?**
Most of Unilever’s financial giving is published, however, it is not clearly presented on the website as it is for other companies. Individuals have to read through the Annual Report to find this information.
- 3. What themes are found within this company’s corporate giving?**
Sustainability, Climate change, plastic pollution, and inequality (“Planet & Society”).
- 4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?**
Unilever’s brands are focused on sustainability. According to their website, “We’re determined to prove that our purpose-led, future-fit business model delivers superior performance: the Unilever Compass is our strategy to deliver growth that is consistent, competitive, profitable and responsible” (“Planet & Society”) and their branding (logo, colors, typography, and other creative assets) are in line with that.
- 5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?**
Economic, especially environmental/climate issues.

6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?

Unilever is such a large company that includes a collection of brands, and it seems as though they would have large donations. This information is not apparent and so consumers may not be aware of Unilever's philanthropic efforts. If one did become aware of this information, I believe that consumers would see their priority given to environmental causes.

NETFLIX

1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?

Netflix has a page on their website that outlines the impact they seek to have through their company. They have headings communicating their values/focus on inclusion, programs, and sustainability with links to separate pages regarding each of those with more details and stories.

2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?

It is unclear the specifics of how Netflix gives/donates financially and how consumers can take part in that. Rather, the initiatives and programs that Netflix has started or participated in are highlighted on the company website. They have created a Netflix fund for Creative Equity in which they have invested \$100 million to "create opportunities for underrepresented artists" ("Building a Legacy of Inclusion").

3. What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?

Inclusion, accessibility, and sustainability.

4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?

Netflix is a media and entertainment company that allows individuals to stream content while they also produce original content. Their branding is creative, modern, and simplistic and when navigating through the platform, relevant content is highlighted for users. Similarly, on their corporate website, their missions are highlighted based upon their values.

5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?

Based upon the Netflix fund for Creative Equity, it would appear their giving is mainly social.

6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?

Corporate giving may intrigue users to their content or be an example for artists and creators of what it looks like to create quality content with a mission in mind. At the same time, for someone who may not be described like this, it may not make a difference to them.

GOOGLE

1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?

On Google.org, they state their mission, share stories, communicate how they are taking action, and share their approach ("Our mission").

2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?

Google's corporate website was easy to find and gave several clear examples of corporate giving.

3. What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?

Google is such a large company that relates a large world. They have involved themselves with many different issues. Some of their main efforts are directed to economic empowerment, technology and innovation, and learning (computer science education, and digital responsibility resources).

4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?

Yes, Google is a technology company and search engine and they involve themselves with various issues and value digital literacy.

5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?

Economic issues.

6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?

Consumers who learn about Google's corporate giving may become aware of issues around the world that they did not know of and chose to donate, research, or involve themselves in.



Adapted from Freepik (See Appendix)

APPLE

1. How does this company communicate what they do as it relates to corporate giving?

Within my Google search, I found an article that was published in December 2022 that was featured on Apple's website highlighting their giving and philanthropy programs across the globe. This article was on their Apple "Newsroom" like a blog that included mainly text accompanied by some images. The article can be summarized by this statement: "Since its inception 11 years ago, Apple's Employee Giving program has raised over \$880 million dollars for almost 44,000 organizations globally. That includes the work of more than 76,000 employees who have logged more than 2.1 million volunteer hours" ("Across the globe, Apple and its teams find new ways to give").

2. How clear/easy is it to find the corporate giving of this company? Is it obvious?

I was able to find this article easily, however, I was surprised there was not a page on their website dedicated to Apple's philanthropic efforts. Even other sources that I found in my research pointed me to the same information and there was not a lot else to be found.

3. What themes are found within this company's corporate giving?

Apple has had a 16-year partnership with the Global Fund, which they call the (PRODUCT)RED campaign, with a mission to end AIDS specifically in Africa. Apple also partners with nonprofits through corporate grants supporting food banks, environmental causes, and racial equity and justice.

4. Does the style of the brand line up with their values/mission statements?

Yes, in Apple's branding, advertisements, and products, their missions and partnerships are clear and their values can be seen. They even have red products (iPhone and Apple Watch) in which the proceeds go towards the fight of AIDS.

5. Is their corporate giving related to social, political, or economic issues?

Mainly social issues and humanitarian crises.

6. How may corporate giving influence consumers?

Corporate giving may influence consumers to buy certain products (i.e. the (PRODUCT)RED products) or purchase Apple products over another company.

CASE STUDY 3: DOVE'S REAL BEAUTY CAMPAIGN

For my third case study, I researched another awareness campaign. Dove brand initiated the Real Beauty Campaign in 2004 to address the societal problem they noticed: people are increasingly dissatisfied with how they look and feel in their bodies. Dove states, "The problem is, we're so bombarded by unattainable standards of beauty – in magazines, TV, advertisements, on social media – that we undervalue the true beauty in ourselves" ("Dove Real Beauty Sketches"). According to an article by Global Brands, "Dove saw a growing gap between what people wanted from beauty products and what the market was delivering" ("The Success of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign"). The theme of this project is "beauty is not the absence of imperfections, but the power to embrace them and still feel beautiful" ("The Success of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign"). The motivation of the project is to create awareness for how the perception of beauty is distorted by advertising and marketing and how many times what consumers see is not the reality. The Real Beauty campaign was a large project the company produced as a marketing campaign that included videos, social media posts, experiments, and articles to spread the message of the issue and influence emotions of consumers. Dove was able to understand and communicate their message by working with real women. Dove features photographs on their website from consumers who use their products and the hashtag #mydovemesages on social media. Powerful imagery and stories were presented within this campaign. One of them was a film where a woman walked in completely natural and then had her hair and makeup done by professionals, while photographers set fans to blow her hair, and then the image was manipulated

in Photoshop. At the end of the video, it stated "No wonder our perception of beauty is distorted" ("No. 1 Dove: Campaign for Real Beauty"). In another experiment that Dove conducted, women were asked to describe their physical features and while doing so, a forensic artist drew them based upon the description. Then, a stranger was asked to look at the same women and describe them to see how the description would differ. The two portraits resulted in two very different results, showing the second portrait described by the stranger to appear more beautiful. This experiment proved Dove's hypothesis that people are more beautiful than they think. ("Dove Real Beauty Sketches"). The impact of this video can be described like this:

More than 50 million people viewed the Dove video within 12 days of its release. To date, Real Beauty Sketches has been viewed almost 180 million times. We want the film to continue to inspire every single one of the 80% of women who feel anxious about how they look to reconsider their view of their own beauty and remember: you're more beautiful than you think. It could be as easy as seeing ourselves through a stranger's eyes ("Dove Real Beauty Sketches").

As a result of this campaign, Dove has made positive contributions towards society with individual self-esteem and body image. Out of the campaign came a pledge to always feature real women instead of models, portray women as they are in real life without cosmetic or digital manipulation, and help girls build body confidence and self-esteem ("The 'Dove Real Beauty Pledge'"). They also seek to "educate ¼ billion young people around the world on body confidence and self-esteem by 2030" ("The 'Dove Real Beauty Pledge'"). Their efforts and accomplishments in these matters have influenced consumers in not only the way they see advertisements, but how they see themselves ("The Success of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign"). Dove's Real Beauty Campaign encouraged the audience to take part in the Dove Real Beauty Workshops for Girls which helps young women to develop a positive relationship with beauty and body esteem ("Self-esteem resource my beauty story: redefined"). Individuals can sign up for these classes locally and it is encouraged for children to do with a

parent or another adult. The Real Beauty Campaign also led to growth for the company. "In 2010, Dove's revenues increased by around 10% compared to the previous year. In addition, its products are available in almost all countries throughout the world and have achieved significant success in international markets as well" ("The Success of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign").

Dove challenged several cultural norms and sought to break negative stereotypes that have been established within the beauty industry. This was no easy task and required a lot of research on the problem and coordination with real women for execution. It is often said that we are our own critics. Dove's research would agree when it says that "More than half of women globally agree that when it comes to how they look, they're their own worst critic. Our perception of ourselves is far less positive than it should be" ("Dove Real Beauty Sketches"). Dove impacted the way that their consumers think and feel about themselves, used emotional elements to tell a story, and intentionally created a positive brand presence in the process. This campaign was successful to create awareness to a problem that is in front of consumers regularly as I hope to do with my final solution. Dove's Real Beauty Campaign is a great example of a brand that created a successful awareness campaign to a problem that is happening all the time, yet the audience may not be conscious about. The influence their campaign had prompted the audience to get involved and ended in success for the company as well as growth in sales.

VISUAL ANALYSES

VISUAL ANALYSIS 1: BEN & JERRY'S DEMOCRACY IS IN YOUR HANDS

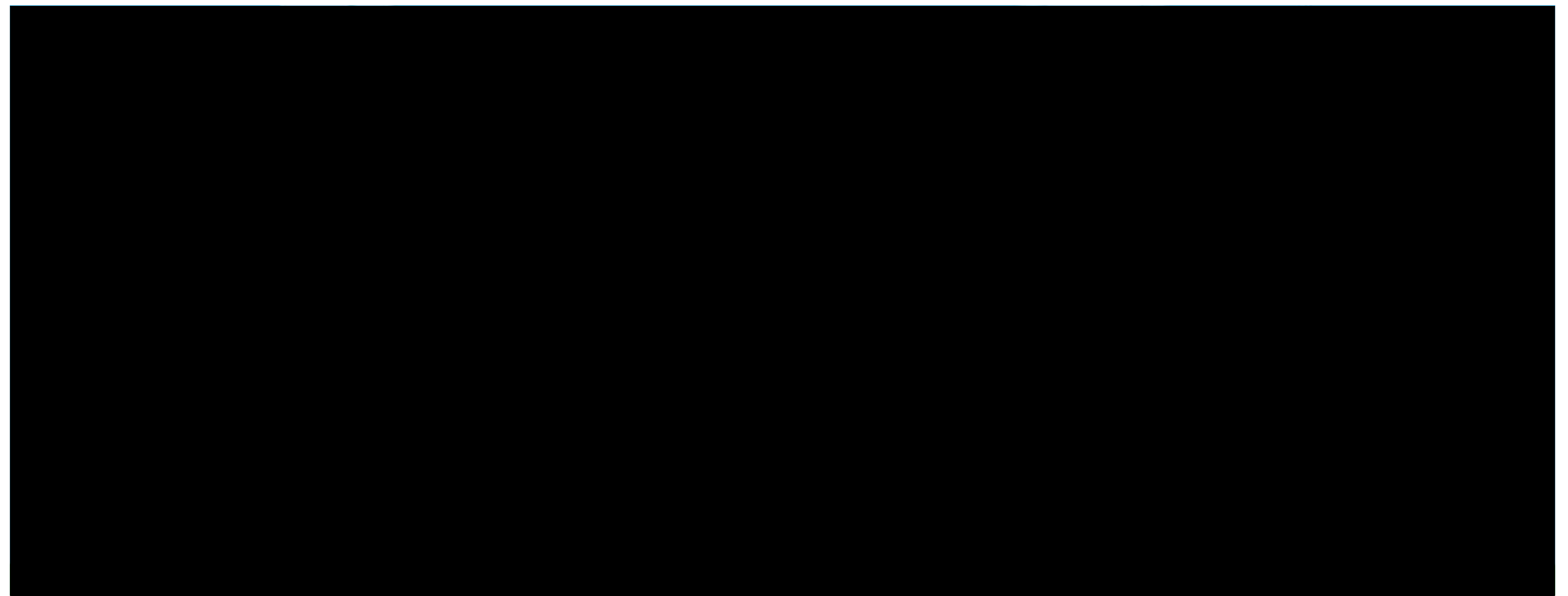
For my first visual analysis, I analyzed the campaign elements of Ben & Jerry's "Democracy Is In Your Hands" awareness campaign. The website banner image includes an illustration of the national mall with the capitol building inside of a waffle cone, held within a large hand. The capitol building is a symbol in America's democratic government as it is the place where congress meets to write laws, where presidents are inaugurated, and State of the Union addresses are shared, yet, it is the people that make the decisions in the United States. Ben & Jerry's is bringing awareness to the challenges facing the country's current democracy. Individuals consume this visual solution mainly through the internet. However, other promotional materials such as the Empower Mint ice cream flavor and advertisements will prompt the consumer to visit the website. This is well done by Ben & Jerry's brand as they have a strong presence within grocery stores, convenience stores, and other brick-and-mortar places. Their audience may not typically visit the website on their own, yet their products show the importance of the cause and point them to a visual solution. The audience is U.S. citizens, specifically those who are not registered to vote. The point of action is to register to vote, expand access to voting, and to exercise the right of voting so that the democratic government works for the people. This project does not just speak to middle-class Americans or those who are actively involved in their communities and government. Rather, it encourages citizens to build a democracy that involves all people regardless of race or income and work together toward a common goal of expanding voter access and avoiding wealthy donors from dominating politics. This is an issue that lies in the hands of the public, and one that individuals most likely unknowingly interact with on a regular basis.

The campaign's aesthetics are subtle, familiar, and easy to understand. This helps to convey the solution in a way that is also easy to understand and does not

complicate the matter, but rather brings attention to it. I admire these qualities as they are ones that are done well within an awareness campaign and connect back to my theoretical solution as I hope to bring attention to the issue that patrons of large corporations are often unaware of how their patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy resulting in an ethical dilemma for the patron. I want to develop a brand that is applied within an app for users to navigate through to find information on specific corporations that they regularly purchase from and see for themselves if they are worth supporting. The imagery used makes clear what the campaign is all about. The illustration uses fundamental shapes and colors in a sketch-like style. The grass is displayed rudimentary as it is in the lower portion of the frame with other small patches for depth. The buildings represent those of the national mall: the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, the White House, and the Capitol building. The capitol building is brought to the foreground at the same time being brought to attention as it is scaled larger and in a brown ice cream cone. The capital building is cleverly placed inside of the waffle cone like a scoop of ice cream. The

hand grasped around the cone looks strong and as though it is raising it up in salute. This icon is off to the right side but clearly of most importance and offsets the title on the left side in black branded font. The background is blue with a few light clouds decorating the sky. The image is a flat illustration and while it clearly and accurately displays buildings in real life, it is illustrated in a cartoon style. The graphic elements are clearly drawn in a cartoon style and are not a photograph but are realistically portrayed. They do not look modified, rather, a recreation of the real thing. The edges are irregular and appear to be somewhat of a rough sketch. The objects are blocky and simple. The cone and capitol building are the focus and also includes the most detail. There appears to be a light source coming from the right side out of the frame, lighting up the hand and capitol building. It is almost as though the other buildings are in the shadows. According to Ben & Jerry's website, "We love making ice cream - but using our business to make the world a better place gives our work its meaning" ("Our Values, Activism and Mission"). Their values include honoring the rights of all people in human rights and

dignity, and this campaign is one of many efforts to affirm those values. This specific campaign follows the branding throughout their products and website with the same font, colors and illustration style. The image on the website relates to the accompanying text as it pictures the capitol building in an ice cream cone in a hand. The "Democracy Is In Your Hands" title and images are clever with the nature of the brand imagery and the concept that the people can hold the power of democracy. The website has three sections: Take Action, which is a link to click to register to vote; Friends of the Movement, or partners and others who are taking similar action; and FAQs. Their FAQs take up the majority of the information and use dropdown menus which are helpful to conserve space and give the audience a chance to read through the information they are looking for. The visuals are sparse and the website could use more icons and imagery to display concepts. The typography could be improved as well as there is a lot of black text on a white webpage with no visual interest. Overall, I have a lot to learn from Ben & Jerry's "Democracy Is In Your Hands" awareness campaign.



"Democracy Is In Your Hands" - Image removed for copyright compliance

VISUAL ANALYSIS 2: PUBLICSQ APP

For my second visual analysis, I interacted with the digital application, PublicSq. PublicSq is a tool in a movement to encourage consumers to shop quality products and business that have high moral standards. Their brand states that “It acts as your go-to resource for trusted, values-aligned brands, empowering you to begin your journey of switching with confidence” (PublicSq). The app acts like a guide for individuals who seek to shop quality brands and products. The audience and users of this app are those who no longer want to support corporations that have political or social agendas that they would otherwise agree with. PublicSq analyzes and selects companies that their audience can justifiably support without compromising quality (PublicSq). Consumers can download the PublicSq app on their personal device. There is a home feed with “featured” companies and products that have been curated as some of the best businesses on the app, which updates daily. There is also a search bar for the user to find businesses or search for businesses that have specific products the user is looking for. Users can also find businesses based on their location. The app connects the user to the merchant’s website with a link if they would like to shop and sometimes offers a discount code. Frequent users of this app can save favorite businesses or share them with their friends.

There are a few different sections to the app: Featured, Online, Near me, and Account. The Featured section is where the curated content lies. Squares with rounded corners fill the screen for users to scroll through, filled with vibrant and crisp images to attract attention and interaction. The Online section is where products and businesses are categorized or promoted. For example, if a user is shopping for clothing and accessories, they can click on the corresponding gray tab, narrow in their search, find brands which are listed alphabetically and paired with their company logo, and learn more about them specifically. The Near me section displays a detailed map based upon the device’s location alongside promoted local businesses. There are map indicators placed around that pinpoint where businesses are in relation to the user

with an option to click on them and learn more. In all sections, the long, outlined search bar is located at the top of the screen with a magnifying glass and cue to “Search America’s Marketplace” (PublicSq). Trending searches and popular categories appear below the search bar when clicked for inspiration. When navigating through the app, the user can see certain products in an online storefront, view or change tabs to learn more about the company’s story, and find information like phone numbers, email addresses, and directions.

The overall style of the app is simple and clean with a white background and sections to scroll between with rounded corners. Each section bubble has a shadow beneath which provides depth to the design. The typography of the interface is black which provides strong contrast, and each letter has a circular shape. Some headings have more fluidity with thick and thin strokes and serifs. A majority of the elements of design are rudimentary which creates an overall uncomplicated interface, allowing the viewer to focus on the images and products and not be visually distracting. The app is also filled with professional photos and images of brands which makes the app feel as though you are looking through an online magazine with high-quality products. The images within the app represent the brands and products, sharing a preview of what that company offers. The images are paired with and relate to the accompanying text, helping the user to see the product in use or visualize what they are selling, and the text lists the brand and describes the story behind the brand. The PublicSq logo is a square with blue and purple gradient which communicates both strength and movement. In history, a public square in a city was a commonplace for people to meet, sell, trade, and interact. and I believe PublicSq is pursuing this similar concept in bringing small businesses to the public. In a culture where many companies involve themselves in political, social, or economic matters, PublicSq seeks to be a source of aligning values that consumers can trust. It has become increasingly important for consumers to vote with their dollars and their support in patronage as brands turn to unethical or skeptical values. Some individuals chose to boycott

these businesses, but PublicSq presents alternative solutions to find quality products.

While this app has clean aesthetics, the design is not very creative or visually interesting. The design makes the app interface easy to use. However, it is plain and rather boring. There is not a single element that stands out as unique or creative; it is more conventional. Even the icons for different pages are basic: star for featured, computer screen for online, map for near me, and profile icon for account. These elements are cliché, appearing almost exactly like I have seen in dozens of other apps. The PublicSq app concept is very similar to what I plan for my theoretical solution. It creates awareness for non-woke brands and seeks to be a platform of information that users can trust. I wanted to study this example to see how something similar has already been created. The concept is strong, especially as it allows businesses to apply to be added to the app—PublicSq lets the businesses find the app and apply to be verified—yet the design is poor. I can learn from this example and improve upon the design. The PublicSq brand does tend towards conservative viewpoints, and I want my final project to be a solution of awareness that lets the consumer decide what aligns with their values over presenting only traditional views, allowing consumers to decide for themselves. The most successful element of the app is the layout, including the section breaks between information. For example, when viewing a company, there is an image at the top, the logo and company name listed directly below, a dark blue button with a link to view their website, and additional sections below with a short description of their story and information about the business. The elements follow the company’s values as they are committed to truth, believe in small businesses, and the greatness of America. Their app communicates truth and an emphasis on small businesses.

PublicSq
Image removed for copyright compliance

VISUAL ANALYSIS 3: GLOBAL IMPACT WEBSITE



For my third visual analysis, I interacted with Global Impact's website. The Global Impact website depicts a mission-focused company that is intentional and creative to assist philanthropic efforts. Most of the content is organized in a drop-down menu with information about the company, including leadership, financials, news, and events, Global Impact's expertise, advice, infrastructure, case study examples, the groups they serve, their blog, and places to donate. There is a lot of information on this site, yet it is presented in a creative and playful way, helping the corporate, strategic, and financial aspects to appear visually exciting and interesting. The images on the website help communicate the information it corresponds to, the brand colors are strong and direct individuals to action, and graphics work together to convey ideas. The images and elements correspond to each other accordingly to communicate the message of that section and the brand as a whole.

For example, within the Advisory Services page, the text states, "Global Impact comes alongside partners to identify goals, evaluate the current landscape, and navigate a path forward for maximum impact" ("Advisory Services") and the accompanying image displays a man holding a paper report and pointing to another individual. The man is outlined, and the paper has strokes like rays coming out of it displaying its significance. The image described tells the same story as the text to the left.

The audience of this website is nonprofits, corporations, family philanthropies, and donors who seek advice and collaboration for how to strategize and support philanthropy. It is a regular practice for corporations to donate to charities and involve themselves in philanthropic efforts, and Global Impact seeks to help in this work. The audience consumes this visual solution online.

The target audience includes individuals and corporations who are seeking financial advice and may be new to the process or operating at a loss. The brand may evoke emotions of inspiration and encouragement. When users visit Global Impact's website, they will be uplifted and inspired to keep working to help those in need and have a creative team to help them continue the mission. The users can click through the information which links to different pages, articles, and more. The website flows in a Z pattern, with attention starting at the logo, moving across the banner menu, down a section to the title of the page, "Inspire greater giving," and over from left to right through the rest of the information (Global Impact).

Overall, the style is minimalistic with some flare of sketched elements that bring a humanistic and personal voice to the brand. Bold and vibrant hues with bright colors of blue green, purple, and yellow are used throughout. The website is professional and clear as they seek to provide advice and support to both individuals and groups who want to fundraise and sponsor those in need. The brand is positive and uplifting in all of its elements of design, using vibrant hues of yellow and green, featuring people smiling in the photographs, and utilizing rounded corners. It is clear they are seeking to do good. Global Impact's logo is an uppercase G with three half rings around it, communicating the effect they seek to have on their audience and in the world. The font in their logo is strong and geometric with large bowls and counters within the letters. Headings within the pages use an organic, brushstroke style that is carried through with other elements on the website, including arrows, doodles, and outlines. This use of a decorative font paired with a more traditional font creates visually interesting text that follows proper design principles. Global Impact's brand uses an analogous color scheme, mainly consisting of blues and greens. These col-

ors are relatable and communicate new beginnings, abundance, growth, responsibility, and strength—all qualities that Global Impact seeks to help their partners with and relay throughout their brand. Sections are divided by colors and some text is placed into boxes with rounded corners to create organization. Other elements include doodles, squiggles, arrows, and brush strokes that direct the user's eye to information and highlight what is important. Some of the elements in this style are icons: a magnifying glass for a website search, moneybags for fundraising, a hand holding out a heart for family giving strategy, arrows to communicate a link to follow or where to look next, and drawings of people or hands. The layers of the page create depth. For example, on the home page, there is a dotted pattern in the background, other lighter blue circles of different textures, and accents of various colors. Photographs used throughout the website are high quality, clear, and professional looking. The images are of people in professional environments interacting with one another. The photos appropriately correspond to the text and are positioned to the side of the content. Some images are edited, have an overlay over them, or have doodles around them.

The aesthetic choices within Global Impact's website communicates personality and excitement as they involve many handwritten elements and colors. They are visually interesting and help direct the eye through information and highlight key content. The site is lively and compelling which aids in the success of their mission to collaborate with others and transform philanthropy. Many times, philanthropic giving, as it deals with finances, may seem dull or distinguished and this presents the information in a relatable, fascinating way. On the other hand, CEOs and accountants who may be looking at this website may not appreciate the exciting or hand-drawn aesthetics and could find it less professional. The

aesthetic choices relate to my theoretical solution as I hope to create an app that presents corporate philanthropy to consumers. I want to follow many of the style choices from Global Impact as they have followed design principles well and used their brand to communicate philanthropy in a visually interesting way. One key element I hope to follow includes the edits on photographs with the overlay and hand-drawn outline around important elements. I admire Global Impact's use of the natural brush strokes throughout the app. Another element I will apply within my app from Global Impact is the hand-drawn doodles that help to direct the eye or tell the user where to click. I think this is successful as it helps the user navigate while also giving some unique character to the brand.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the research conducted so far, there exists an issue within corporate philanthropic efforts being misaligned with consumers' personal ethics. As it was discussed in the literature review, consumers can be influenced with powerful messages and have developed an increased interest in current ethics in the marketplace. This is an ideal situation to present a researched solution to them. By case studies and visual analyses, it is clear that individuals actively respond to advertisements and use technological tools, such as apps, to learn information.

CHAPTER 3

VISUAL PROCESS

OVERVIEW

Through my research, I determined an appropriate solution for the problem needed to be comprehensible and easily accessible to consumers. In my research I identified that individuals bring personal ethics and values to the marketplace, yet it is not always recognized or carried through. In the past, there has been a consistent lack of consumer care. I had to think of a convenient way to raise awareness to this issue, help consumers apply their values within their personal patronage, and then act on them. As a result, the visual solution materialized into a strong brand, an interactive app prototype, and a poster series. The features of the app are powerful yet approachable and designed with a clean, uncluttered layout, an at-a-glance perspective, and several stimulating elements. Vibrant colors grab attention, rounded corners send messages of community and commitment, and modified images tell a story, all working together to present the information and cause response from the audience. Each deliverable plays a specific role to attract attention to the issue and serve the solution. The project is called Conscious Consumers, directly addressing the audience and the goal of the initiative.

DESIGN PROCESS



VISUAL RESEARCH

To begin my creative process, I conducted some initial visual research. I created a Pinterest board filled with images, typography, pattern designs, and examples of logos and branding I admired to provide inspiration and a better feel for what I wanted my brand to look like and communicate. My board is filled with 80+ pins, not all in the exact same style, but bringing various elements together to create an aesthetic for me to fashion from.

View the full mood board [here](#).

Images removed for copyright compliance

FIGURE 1: PINTEREST MOOD BOARD

BRAINSTORM

After viewing various brands and imagery on Pinterest, I filtered through to find my favorite elements and brought in screenshots within a mind map of InVision to determine a clearer direction for style, color palette, typeface choices, and I also brainstormed name options for my logo. I decided to create a brand that was vibrant, communicated movement and clarity, integrated photos with lines and shapes, included lots of curves, arcs, and loops. These elements will be appealing, familiar, and help direct attention as I seek to create an awareness to the problem within corporate philanthropy for consumers. Some of the app names that were on my list included Mindful Market, Conscious Consumers, EcoQuest, and EconoMe as they included words and concepts that communicated the subject of my final solution.

View the full Mindmap [here](#)

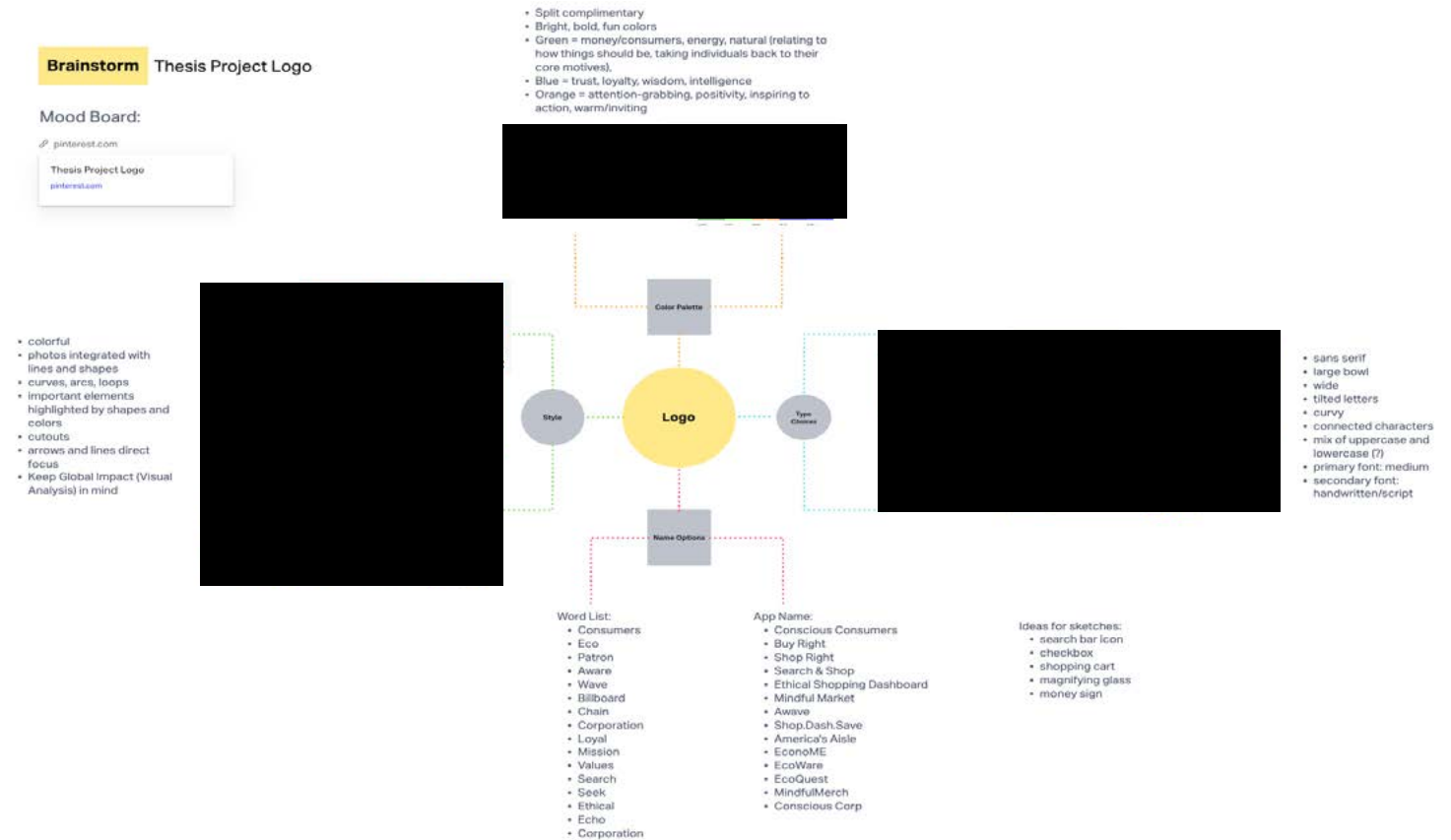


FIGURE 2: INVISION MIND MAP
Images removed for copyright compliance

After reviewing inspiration images and pulling together my favorite elements, I decided that I wanted to create a brand that was vibrant, communicated movement and clarity, integrated photos with lines and shapes, included lots of curves, arcs, loops, etc.

SKETCHES

Based upon the characteristics determined from my mind map, I started sketching. I drew 25 rough thumbnail sketches of logo options based upon the name options and key imagery such as a search bar, checkbox, shopping cart, magnifying glass, and money sign icons (figure 3). After sketching out some ideas, I drew up more detailed sketches of my top favorite options (figure 4). It was difficult to commit to a name for my final solution. This is something I considered last semester when naming my project, but I had to make a decision on what I would call my app as I began branding and creating additional elements for it. I was stuck at a decision point before I could move forward with my deliverables. I wanted the name to be clear so users understand what the app is about but was struggling to think of a name that was also clever and amusing. Professor Bass, my thesis committee chair, helped me evaluate my options and point me towards what is most important, making sure the name is clear and does not need to be explained. I decided to continue to move forward

with “Conscious Consumers,” what I had been calling my project already, as I believe that clearly represents the goal of the solution and who it is for while still involving some agreeable alliteration. The logo I drew up included two Cs that could be used interchangeably with conscious consumers, consumer co., or consumer corp. As I was brainstorming names, I found that Mindful Market already exists as a website that connects consumers with conscious brands, and I felt that my app concept may be too similar. After further research, I found that “consciousconsumers” as a domain name is available and more unique which helped lead me to a final decision. The next step was to create a detailed draft sketch of my Conscious Consumer logo in color. The logo is two Cs, one facing forward and one facing backward. The two Cs are interlaced, creating a double image representing a C and O (figure 5). This logo establishes principles that things are not always what they seem at first glance, that consumers can have major effects on companies, and the power of working together.

FIGURE 3: LOGO ROUGH SKETCHES

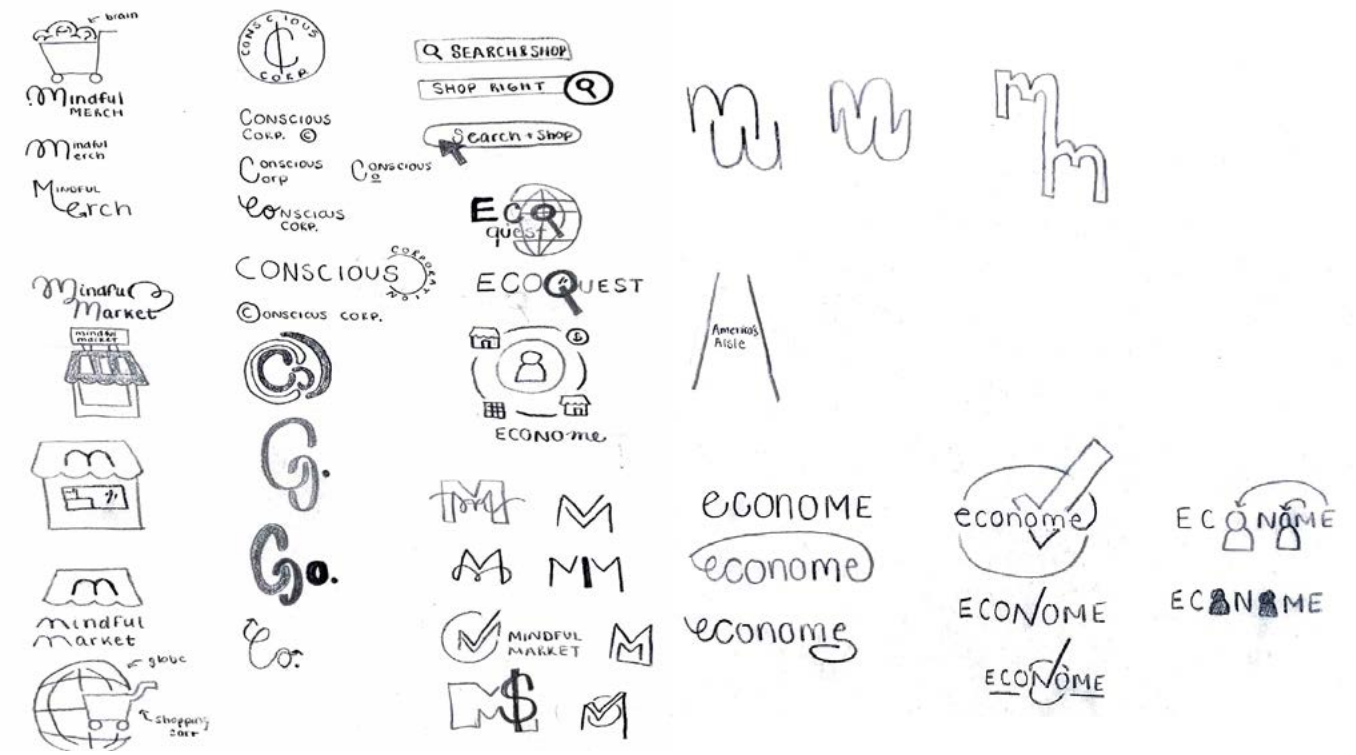


FIGURE 4: LOGO DETAILED SKETCHES

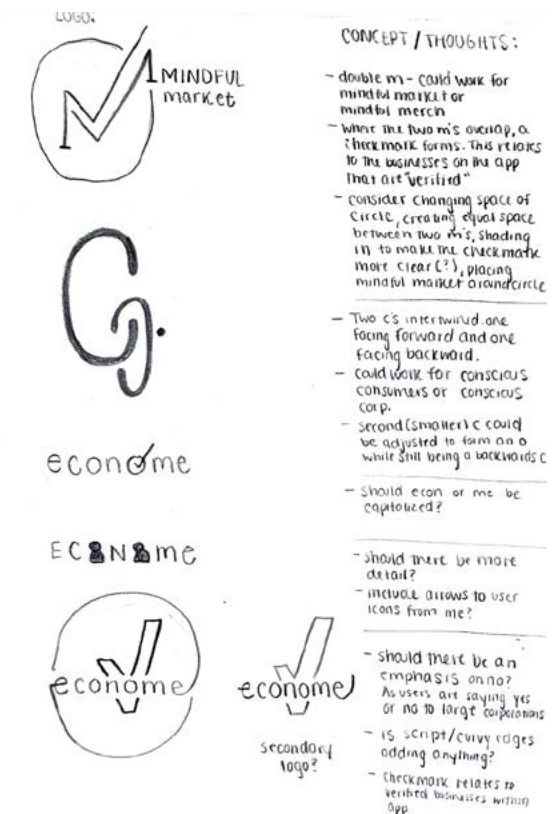
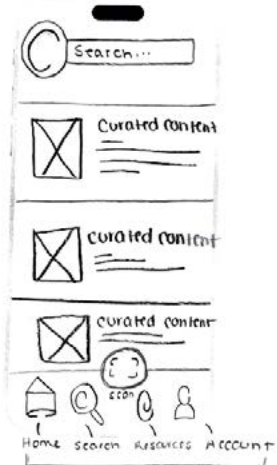


FIGURE 5: LOGO DETAILED SKETCH

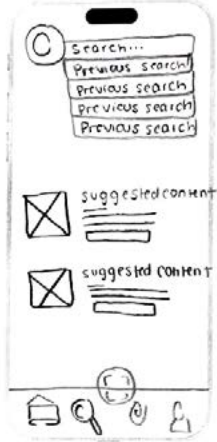
FIGURE 6: SCREEN LAYOUT SKETCHES

HOME SCREEN

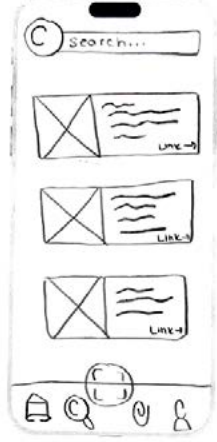


Do I list these section/page names or just keep icons? Are they obvious enough?

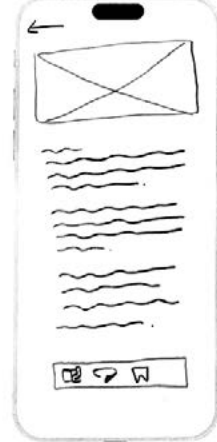
SEARCH SCREEN



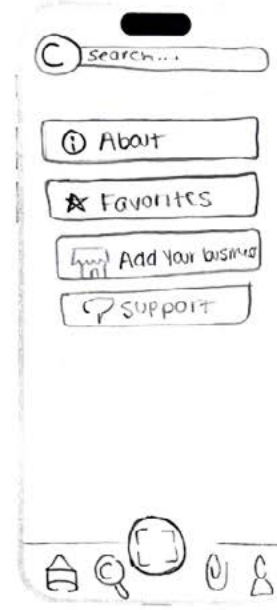
RESOURCES SCREEN



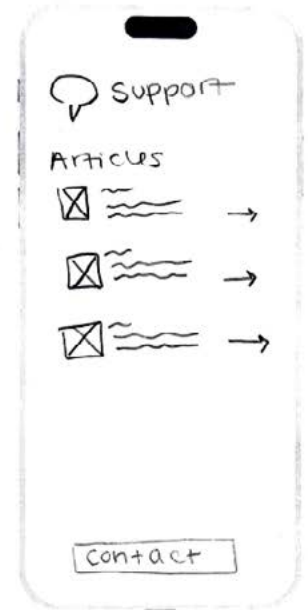
RESOURCES RESULT SCREEN



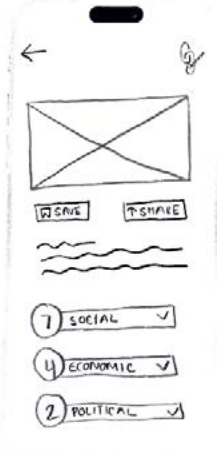
ACCOUNT SCREEN



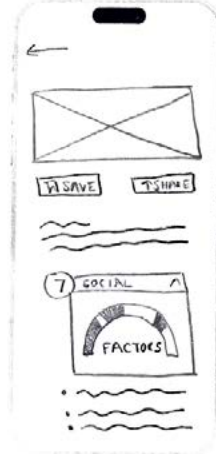
ABOUT



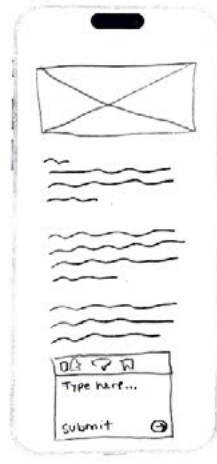
SEARCH RESULT SCREEN



SEARCH RESULT DROP



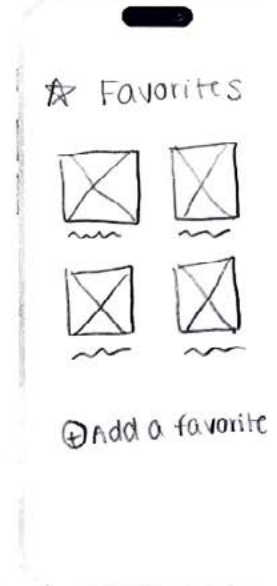
COMMENT



SAVE



FAVORITES



ADD YOUR BUSINESS



phone camera

BRANDING

I moved on to digitalizing my logo in Adobe Illustrator using the pen tool to trace over my sketch. I created a brand guide that includes Conscious Consumer's primary logo, a few other logo variations, hex codes for the brand's color palette, as well as a primary typeface for the brand logo and a secondary typeface to complement and mainly be used for body copy. The color palette for the conscious consumers brand is split complementary consisting of two shades of violet, a lighter and darker, two shades of green, one like a neon lime and the other like a light forest green, and an orange for accent. I received feedback that the color palette is appropriate, and many times these hues of blue or green relate with recycle or health which are two good things and meaningful to my final solution. The typography within the brand is sans serif. The primary typeface, Ostrich Sans, has a medium weight to it and is thin with vertically tall characters. The typeface has relatively small tracking between letters and has light, medium, black, and bold within its font family. The bold type style is more of a decorative or heading style as it has double strokes for each character. The secondary typeface is

Mr Eaves XL Mod OT and includes thin, book, bold, and ultra within its font family. I primarily used the book style for body copy within the paper and the app, however, the ultra (very thick strokes) is used within the one of the logo variations to create weight to the word conscious and balance the decorative style of the bold Ostrich Sans that spells out consumers (figure 7). The colors and fonts are playful and exciting which will appeal to my younger target demographic. The logo, as explained earlier, consists of two Cs one facing forward and one flipped backward and a little lower to appear as an O. The brand name, Conscious Consumers, is spelled out and equal to the height of the O. A small circle is placed at the end of the word consumers and this, in one of the logo variations, is pulled closer to the O with the text removed to appear as Co. The other logo variation is Conscious Co. with nsumers on the following line, bringing attention to the company, Conscious Consumers, while also developing a double meaning.

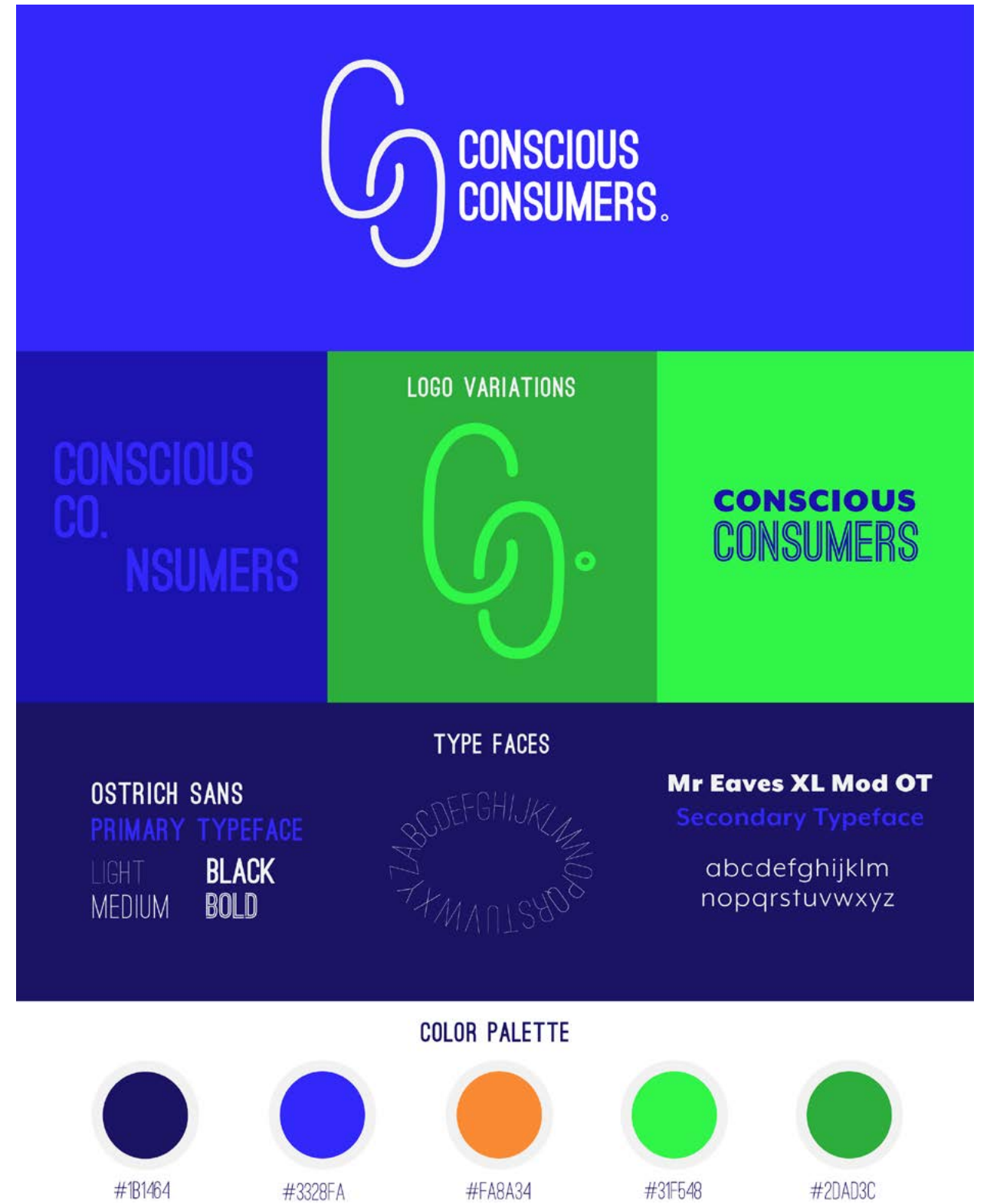


FIGURE 7: BRAND GUIDE

ICONS

Based upon the branding guidelines, I sketched out some icons that I plan to use within the app for home, user account, menu, search, money, and other headings. I created five versions for each icon for brainstorming. In figure 9, it is demonstrated that the final version of each icon has a similar C characteristic that can be seen within. I thought this cleverly incorporated elements of the brand and logo. I did end up changing this after receiving feedback that I should make them more generic while still feeling more on brand as the C head or doorway of the house may not be understood right away. After this process, I moved onto Adobe Illustrator to digitalize these icons.

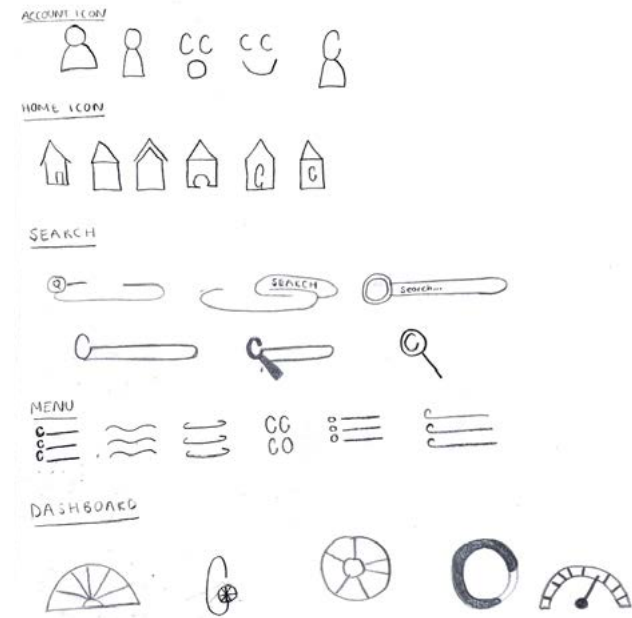


FIGURE 8: ICON ROUGH SKETCHES

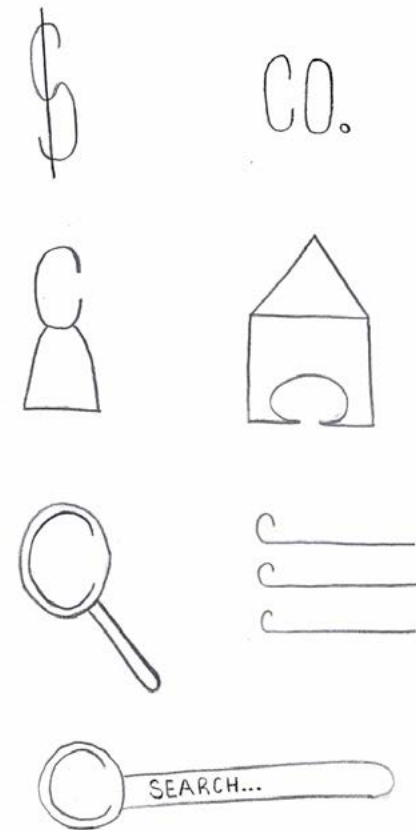


FIGURE 9: ICON DETAILED SKETCHES

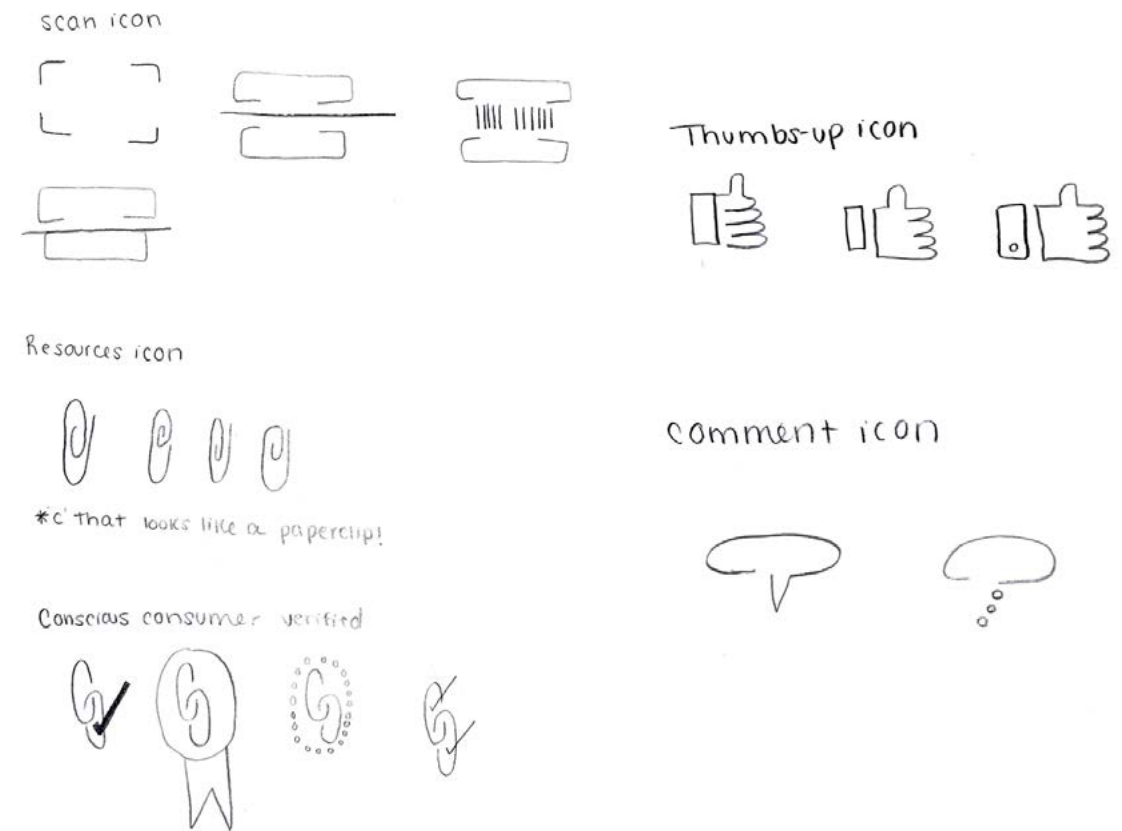
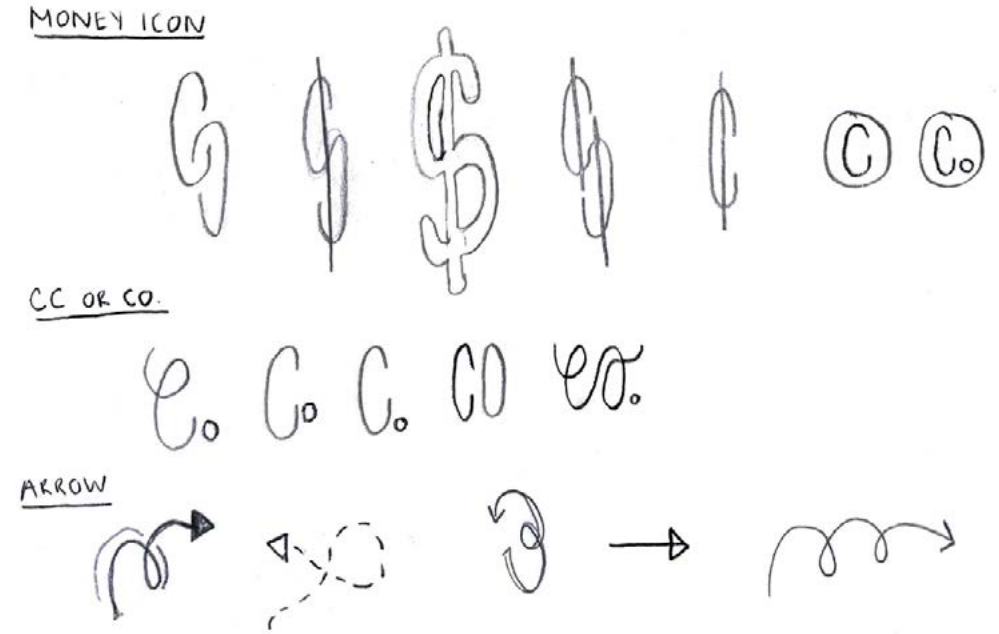


FIGURE 10: ADDITIONAL ICON SKETCHES

USER RESEARCH

The next step in the creative process was to conduct user research to direct my final solution. I reviewed my target audience, identified potential users of the app, and contacted some friends and family who fit within the target audience to incorporate their personal feedback into the design process. I presented the issues, the goal of the final solution, and some ideas I had for features within the app. I also asked if they had any other ideas or desired features to incorporate once hearing about the final solution.

The three features I suggested were:

1. A gamified ethical shopping dashboard where users can track their shopping habits over time
2. An in-app camera feature where users can scan a barcode to make it easy to find results about brands/products
3. Present curated content on the home page once the user opens the app that searches and suggests products/brands the user may be interested in after answering a few questions.

All the feedback I received seemed positive and my friends approved of this endeavor as a helpful tool to encourage conscious consumerism. I had two friends suggest a place within the app to compare companies that have similar products to help find the better ethical option. One friend suggested a place for resources to be available on specific retailers that score high for the user to read through. Another friend suggested making a place to donate to a charitable cause or organization. The major consensus was that the information should be readily available and easy to understand, as it can often be hard to find. In this stage, I also created personas of potential users for the app to give me a better idea of who I am designing the app for, and this helped me to narrow its features. My personas are Maria Mones (pronounced like monies) and

Phil Anthony (philanthropy). I created occupation, responsibilities, demographics, motivations, and a problem statement for these personas to help identify why they needed my final solution. I also found a stock image for each persona to give them a face. Both characters are based upon people, or a combination of people, that I know in real life.

MY GOAL IN USER RESEARCH IS TO UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS, BEHAVIORS, AND ATTITUDES OF USERS TO HELP MAKE DECISIONS WITHIN THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE APP.

The target audience for this project is adults, specifically in the age range of 20-50, who live in the U.S. and are in the middle class. These individuals are the ones who are evaluating brands and making purchase decisions based upon many different factors (price, convenience, brand name, and routine). These specific consumers may have favorite places to shop and personal preferences in brands, yet willing to learn and change behaviors if there are major benefits. Adults in this age range are ones that may look for information on a device and will be able to access the app. It is my aim that this project leaves a lasting impact on individuals as they take the time to care about how their purchases support corporate missions of those such as Amazon, Target, and Walmart, and identify whether or not it aligns with their personal values and ethics.

Persona 1

Maria Mones

Occupation and major responsibilities: Stay at home mom, homeschool teacher, wife, takes care of the responsibilities within the home, regularly involved in her local community.

Demographics: 33-year-old female, caucasian, married to her husband, Steve, who is a construction worker, has three children (8, 6, and 3), lives in northern Tennessee.

Motivations: Maria is a highly motivated and a hard worker. She has dedicated many years to learning new skills and caring for her young family. Maria loves being a stay-at-home mom, but it can be hard to keep up with news, trends, and changes. She doesn't have much time to research or read on her own, but she enjoys learning and finding new ways for improvement. As a consumer, she loves a good deal, shopping sales, and finding ways to save money. She enjoys using her hands, making things from scratch, and being self-sustainable and living a homesteading lifestyle when possible. She leans towards the conservative side and respects businesses that source within the U.S.

Problem/Goals: Maria is a busy mom who needs condensed research and ease of use in an app because her conviction of shopping more ethically has grown over the years and she will only keep neglecting it due to lack of time and mental space.

Phil Anthony

Occupation and major responsibilities: Phil is a young professional who works at JMJ Phillip Group in Detroit, MI as a Financial Planning and Analysis Manager. He leads a small team and, within his firm, specializes in the Manufacturing, Supply Chain and Technology sectors.

Demographics: 24-year-old male, Indian, single, recent graduate from the University of Florida with an MBA. Lives in the metropolitan Detroit area.

Motivations: Phil is knowledgeable of the ins and outs of business practices and is up to date with his understanding as a recent college graduate. He values knowledge and research, is interested in reading in his free time, and loves technology. As he transitions from student to adult, he desires to be more conscious of the decisions he is making and establish himself as an honest, ethical, and upright citizen.

Problem/Goals: Phil is a young professional who needs to consider his personal place as a consumer because he knows the ins and outs of the corporate world and that he can make a difference with his dollars.

Persona 2

POTENTIAL USERS

Potential users of this final project may include college students, young professionals, young mothers, and families. I sought to make observations and ask questions. I spoke with a few friends about the goal of the app and explained to them my vision for this final solution. I listed the three ideas of features and asked them which features they thought would be most helpful and if they had any other ideas. They all responded that this app seems like a great idea and a helpful tool to encourage conscious consumerism. I had two friends suggest a place within the app to compare companies that have similar products to help find the best, most ethical option. One friend suggested a place for resources to be available on specific retailers that score high for the user to read through. Another friend suggested making a place to donate to a charitable cause or organization. The major consensus was that the information should be readily available and easy to understand as it can often be hard to find.



WIREFRAMING

After I had gathered all this information, it was time to create a wireframe to ensure I was not missing any usability functions and help determine layout. I created the wireframe in InVision, outlining what each section and screen of the app would look like within a smartphone border, filled with shapes, placeholder text, and a rough menu. I also mapped out how the screens would link together with arrows directing connections of what content would appear when the user clicks certain elements. The wireframe saved time when I went to design the app screens as I just recreated the layout more in depth and within branding guides. The wireframe can be viewed [here](#).

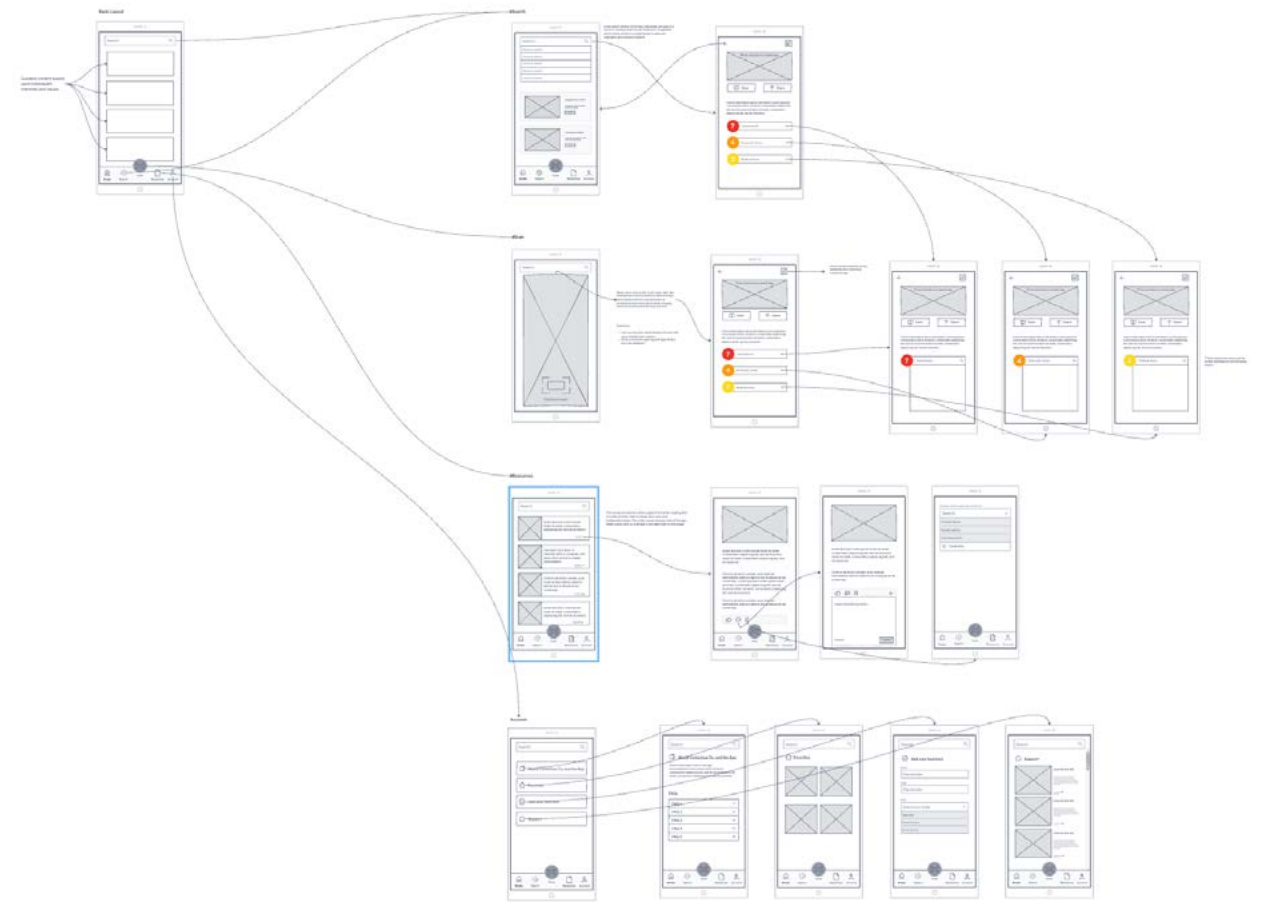


FIGURE 11: INVISION WIREFRAME PREVIEW

APP DRAFT

I decided to design each individual screen in Adobe Illustrator which would then be imported into Adobe XD for prototyping. I based the layout of each screen upon the wireframe I built and applied my brand as I designed.

It was essential that the user interface had the menu bar at the bottom of each screen for navigation, and many of the screens have the Conscious Consumer logo for users to click to take them back to the home page. In the first draft, the menu consisted of icons within the brand guidelines, all having the letter C incorporated within the imagery (see figure 12). The icons were filled in green with white strokes of detail. In the first draft, the menu was sectioned off at the bottom of the screen by a thick green line that ran through the scan button. To indicate the present page, specific menu icons were surrounded by a light gray box, like a button pushed in. I decided to change this by filling each icon with the neon green hue to create a simpler transition from tab to tab for the user. The first version of the home screen had a vivid blue bubble in the background (figure 12), but I removed this element as it distracted from the main content, and I felt as though the vivid blue behind the bright green was too busy. The six green squares that fill the home page represent categories of curated content, like food, apparel, or tech for users to follow. The home page also has the magnifying glass search icon at the top; the word search is placed within to cue the user of its function by typing in the bar.

The search screen was developed to drop down once a user started typing in the bar or clicked on the search icon in the bottom menu. Again, suggested content is presented to guide the user in their thinking and interacting with the app. Articles of trending headlines appear in

the latter half of the screen with a button to read more. Previous search placeholder text is displayed directly below the search bar as one would see in any major search engine, allowing the user to easily go back to their research or cue further study. Once a user searches for a specific brand or scans a barcode, results display compact information for users to interact with. The logo displays at the top of the page with two buttons to either save the content to refer back to or share with a friend. A short summary of the company's philanthropic donations from my research is presented for the user to read, and further descriptions based upon key factors are available in drop down menus. Initially, I had conceptualized that each factor would have its own score and designed the screen likewise, but I decided to create a comprehensive score for the company as a whole and then listed drop down menus detailing how the social, economic, and political scores contributed to it (figure 13).

The scan tab is one of the main features of the visual solution: an in-app camera that allows consumers to use their personal device to scan barcodes of products to pull up data. This function is convenient to consumers as they do not even need to type in a brand or take the time to get to the bottom of what company they are actually supporting. In my research, I learned that many times brands are owned by other larger brands, so to be a patron of one brand may mean that one is also paying patronage to a much larger brand. For example, if someone was wanting to know more about the Dove body wash they use regularly, the user could scan the barcode on the outside of the bottle and learn that Dove is produced by a much larger brand, Unilever, and learn what they stand for. While this visual solution is still in a prototype stage, it would be my goal that this function displays a large database of information for local to large

FIGURE 12: FIRST DRAFT HOME SCREEN

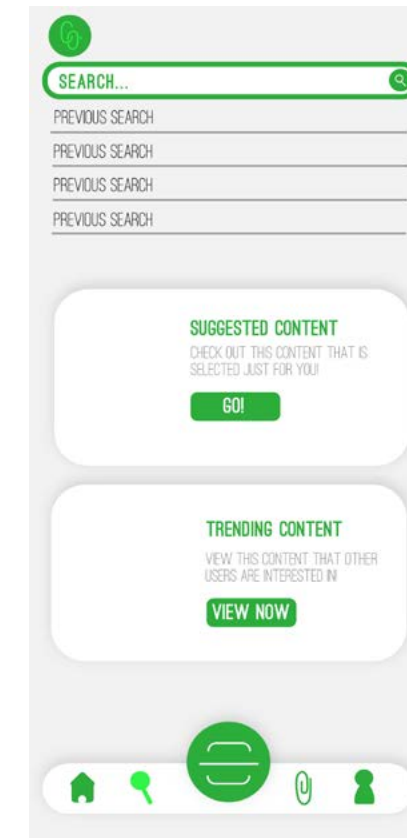
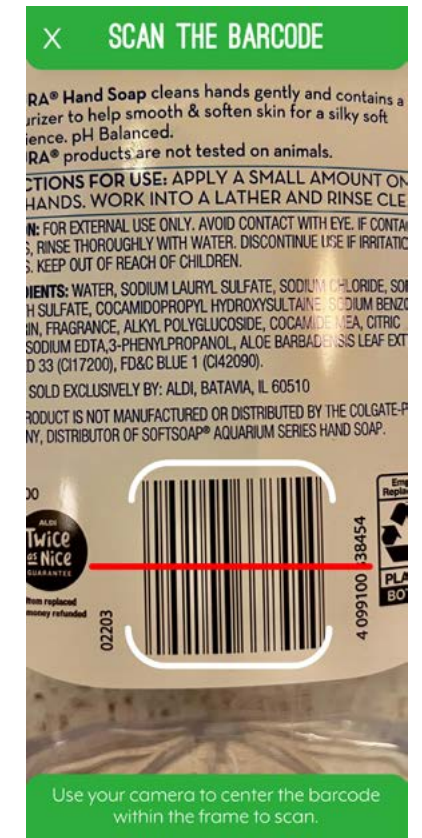


FIGURE 13: FIRST DRAFT SEARCH SCREEN

FIGURE 14: FIRST DRAFT SCAN SCREEN

Photo by author



I based the layout of each screen upon the wireframe I built and applied my brand as I went along designing. It was essential that the user interface had the menu bar at the bottom of each screen for navigation and many of the screens have the Conscious Consumer logo for users to click to bring them back to the home page.

businesses with a wide range of products and brands.

The resources tab was designed to be a place for further reading that includes links to articles and consumer feedback/reviews. This is the social network side of the app. When users click on a thread, it will take them to a page that will allow them to like, comment, or save the resource for later. Users have the option to save the article to a group and organize however they would like, similar to Pinterest boards.

The final tab, labeled as account in my first draft, is a place for the information about the app and an opportunity for the user to connect with Conscious Consumers (figure 15). The about button brings the user to a place of common FAQs. The favorites button is a place where user can customize their own resources for future reference. The add your business button has a few question fields for users to complete to apply to be verified on the app. The contact us button brings up a contact form. This tab is an area that had many design changes throughout the project. In the first draft, all the fields throughout the various pages had a gray border around them which I believe made the app look rather antiquated and primary. Each of the pages had a circle in the background which corresponded to the color of the button on the account page and was filled with a different hue from the brand's color palette. This element was eventually adapted to be more visually interesting.

Another major change I made from the draft phase was using the secondary typeface, Mr Eaves XL Mod OT, from the brand guide, instead of the Ostrich Sans for all the text. Ostrich Sans is very similar to my logo and has more character. However, each character is a capital letter and should not be used for paragraphs of text as it

may be communicated as yelling. This change made the app feel more friendly and personal, and I believe it aided in the communication of the information overall.

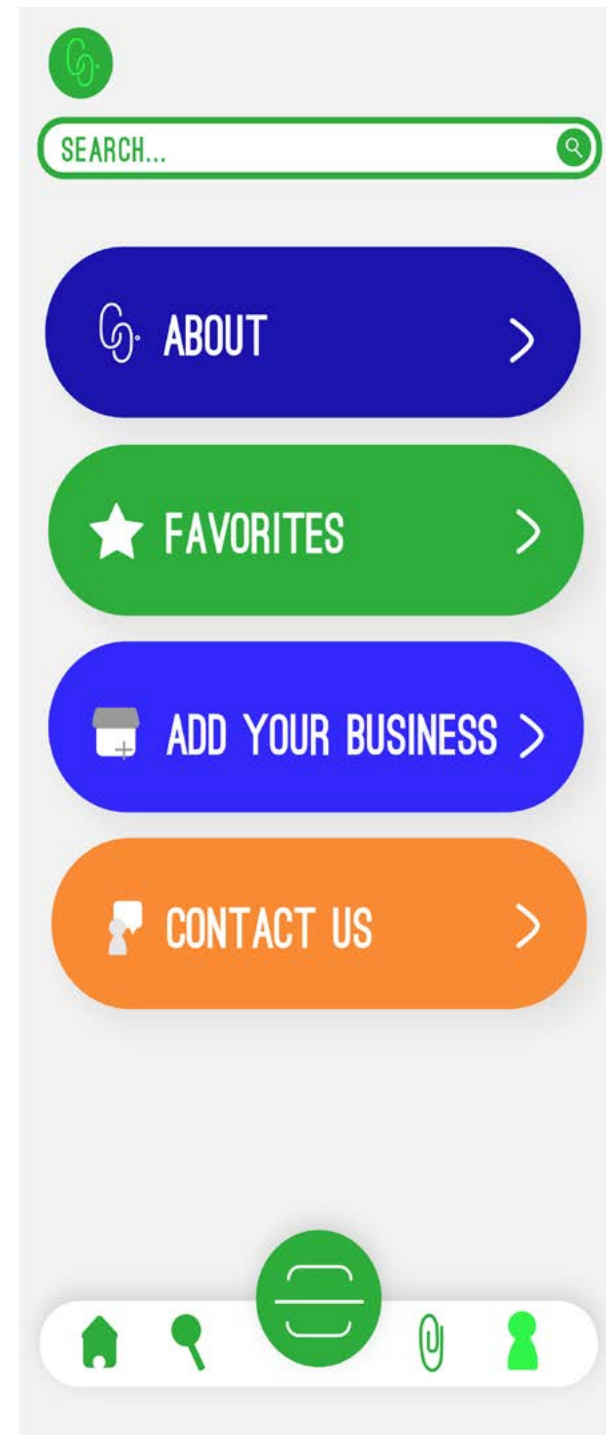
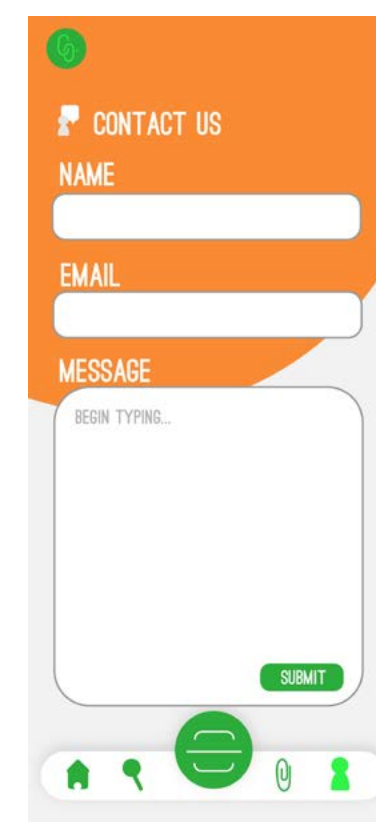
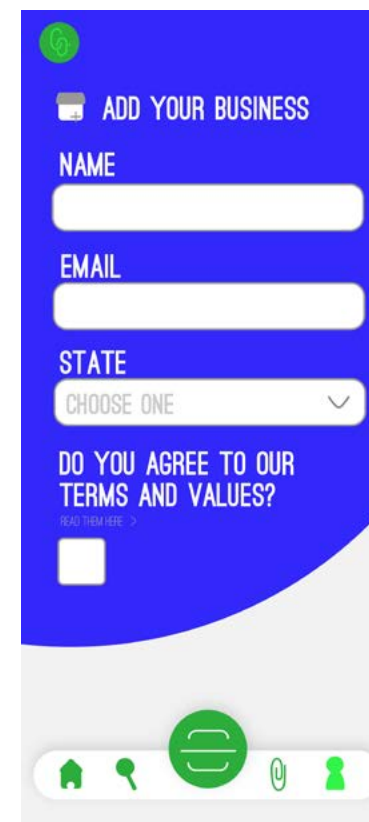


FIGURE 15: FIRST DRAFT ACCOUNT SCREENS



USER TESTING

I conducted user testing with three individuals: two friends and my thesis committee chair. User one was an individual within my target audience: age 26, lives in the U.S., business professional in the middle class. This user was familiar and comfortable with a variety of smartphone apps yet had never interacted with a barcode scan in-app feature to pull up data on a personal device. While scanning barcodes in self-check-out or using a price scanner to make a registry at a department store is something he had done before, he had some questions about how the backend technology and database would work in a developed app. Of the same mind, at first glance he did not know what the scan icon in the bottom menu represented until he clicked on it and the image showed the barcode centered within the box and the line through it. He suggested making the icon a camera instead of a scan icon. Another point of feedback on the icons from this user was that the paperclip in the menu made him think of attachment, as one would see in email, and was unsure of how it related to the article page in that tab without explanation. Feedback like this is helpful to know what the user is thinking and expecting when navigating the app on their own as I will not always be there to explain why I made certain design choices. This user brought to my attention that some things were difficult to read on his mobile device, like the label for result for philanthropic concern, next to the letter grade, when it was the same color text as the circle (i.e. green, orange, or red). I took this into consideration and made the text black so it would be easier to read for users. Within the results pages, this user also recognized that when clicking on the drop-down menus for social, economic, and political factors, it was confusing that some of the sections went away. He said it was odd that when clicking on the Social Factors drop down, the other

two boxes went away, but when clicking on the Economic Factors drop down, the Social Factors box remained above. When designing this, I thought of it as the boxes were covering what was below; however, I realized from this user's feedback that this was not typical for drop down menus. This is a fix I did not have capacity to change in the prototype at this stage in my project, as it would require me to redesign 40+ screens, but something I will keep in mind for the future if I went on to publish this app. After asking this user a few specific questions about concept and navigation, the user said that the grading scale makes sense as it is explained in the FAQs. However, it could be more in-depth and include more of what I explained further to him in person.

The second user that I had test my app was someone just outside my target audience age, at 54 years old, but is someone who lives in the U.S. and has done some of their own personal research on large brands and has interacted with the PublicSq app that I researched for my second visual analysis. This user had several questions about potential features of the app, such as the search bar and in-app camera scan to make sure she understood how they would work in a full version of the app past this prototype. She understood the concept and had positive feedback that the app was user-friendly and will be a helpful tool to consumers. This user found the FAQs on research methods, purpose, etc. to be interesting and informative and did not have any other follow-up questions. This user also helped me find some typos; it is always helpful to have another set of eyes on the matter. I was glad to have someone who was a little bit older—but who still uses their smartphone regularly and for everyday tasks—test the navigation and concept of my app.

My third user is an individual who is in the graphic design field and has an eye for design and user experience as well as someone who fits within my target audience. This user suggested that I use a color-coding system for the grades, creating a quick distinguisher for users who are viewing results of various companies. Instead of having all grades displayed in a green circle, the user suggested I have lower letter grades in red representing that they are worse. This was something I had already considered, and this feedback confirmed it was something I needed to change. This user also brought to my attention that the back arrow in the results section of app did not function well. I had prototyped the thin stroke of the line to link back to the search tab, and this was not a large enough space for the user to tap and made it feel inactive. This was helpful feedback as I had not interacted with the app much on the mobile device myself and knew exactly where to click as the designer. Finally, this user had some helpful comments on formatting of text within the app such as some odd hyphenations and spacing with justified text.

The process of user research and testing generated valuable feedback and was helpful to keep me in line with the users I had in mind for the final solution and not overlook qualities of the app I had become accustomed to when working on the app for several weeks. The Conscious Consumers app is for the individual, so I want it to be a human-centric, user-friendly, and helpful tool for people.

CHAPTER 4

FINAL SOLUTION

After researching the problem at hand and following a creative process to provide a solution, the final deliverables work together to present conclusions of in-depth research that users can access at any time on their mobile device, search for brands that they personally interact with, and come to their own conclusions and convictions.

APP PROTOTYPE

The final solution is prototyped for an interactive experience at [this link](#).

I decided to make the app, Conscious Consumers, with five main tabs: home, search, scan, resources, and menu. The home screen, represented by a house, displays six large, green boxes representing categories of curated content based upon a few initial questions individuals will theoretically answer when they first download the app. This feature is based upon my visual analysis of the PublicSq app as it successfully brought featured companies to users' attention. This content is readily available for users to scroll through if they do not know where to begin while also bringing awareness to brands that are worthy of supporting without compromising quality or taking much of their own time to research. This feature helps to strengthen consumer's foundation to determine what is right and wrong when choosing where to shop, providing direction to determine ethical judgment, an issue I recognized to solve in my literature review (Cherrier 321).

Any time a user clicks on the Conscious Consumer logo, from anywhere in the app, it will return the user to this page. The home tab also has a search bar at the top of the screen, as does the first screen in every section, so the user can easily search for information no matter what tab they are on. The bar has placeholder text, "Search," within it to cue the user how to make

a quick search by typing in the bar as well as a magnifying glass icon button. After interacting with various apps such as PublicSq and others in my research, I realized this is a common cue in user interface and helps the user know what to do there which is why I added it into my design.



FIGURE 18: HOME TAB

The search tab can be selected by clicking on the magnifying glass. The search tab gives the user a search bar to type in a brand or product they are interested in learning more about as well as offers suggestions based upon previous searches and trending searches with a blurb. All the companies I researched in my case study, including ten of the top brands in the United States, are listed here in the prototype to interact with.

The scan tab, placed slightly higher than the rest of the tabs at the bottom menu, is launched by a green button with a scan icon. When users click on the green scan button, a new screen scrolls up from the bottom, bringing up a simulation of an in-app camera function. A white square is centered around the barcode with a red line running through the middle. The user is instructed on what to do with a simple phrase, “Scan the barcode,” at the top and further directions of how to use the camera to center the barcode within the frame to scan at the bottom. Once the barcode is captured, results will be displayed for the user based upon the brand they scanned. The scan tab provides a really easy feature of the app for consumers. My research fueled this easy-to-use tool as there was a gap recognized between what consumers say they are going to do and what they actually purchase (Carrington 141). The app acts a guide through all parts of the purchasing process, constantly available to them.

Each result screen has an image in the top box displaying the brand which helps the user to visualize their personal patronage as they have interacted with the logo before, either by walking into the store or seeing it when shopping online. Two buttons are immediately below the box: save and share. The save icon is the same as the paperclip in the bottom menu as it is connected to the app’s resources section. The share icon is an arrow pointing up, which is a generic icon for

share, and is a repeated element with the back button. This is a custom designed arrow that has a thin stroke similar weight to the primary typeface and a rounded curve forming the point.

Each result is scored with a letter grade (i.e. A through F) and is placed within a circle with a thick weight and filled inside based upon the score. A receives green, B and C are orange, and D or lower are color coated in red. This is based upon research from my literature review by O.C. Ferrell, Director of the Center for Ethical Organizational Cultures, that negative ethical behavior influences consumers in a greater way, and if consumers see a glaring red-letter grade about their favorite brand, they may be influenced to stop supporting them (Ferrell). The grades are also labeled with high, moderate, or low concern for philanthropic contributions corresponding to the result. The score is important as it is not just about the amount that a company donates, rather, what they are donating to and for what reason. Scores are not meant to be an opinion by Conscious Consumers, rather a neutral presentation of information, based upon brand transparency and what companies publicly disclose regarding donations. I want users to recognize these qualities in the brands they pay patronage to. There is a brief description of each result directly below a score, and then three drop down menus labeled by social, economic, and political factors. These menus are boxes with rounded corners and have arrows directing the user to click for the information to drop down. While each screen contains a lot of information, I wanted the user to interact with it as they searched, not overwhelming them, and present in a creative and playful way, similar to Global Impact’s website from visual analysis 3.

Both the search and the scan option will display results of brands scored upon three factors: social, economic, and political. If users are curi-

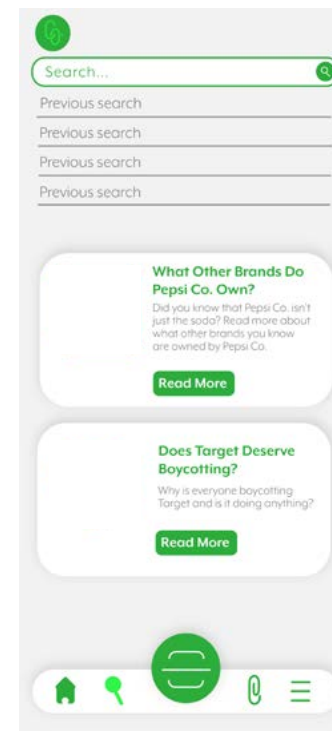


FIGURE 19: SEARCH TAB



FIGURE 20: SCAN TAB



FIGURE 21: RESULT EXAMPLE



FIGURE 22: SOCIAL FACTORS

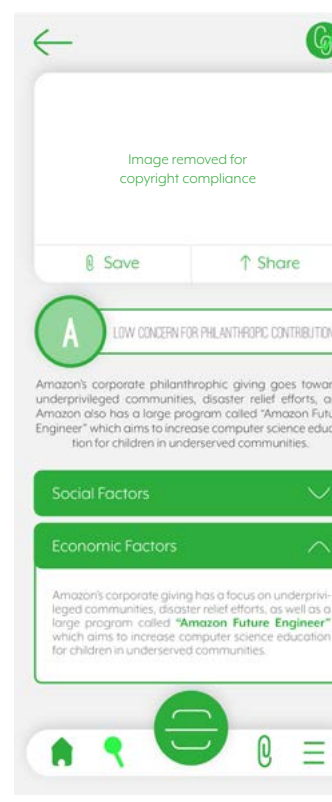


FIGURE 23: ECONOMIC FACTORS

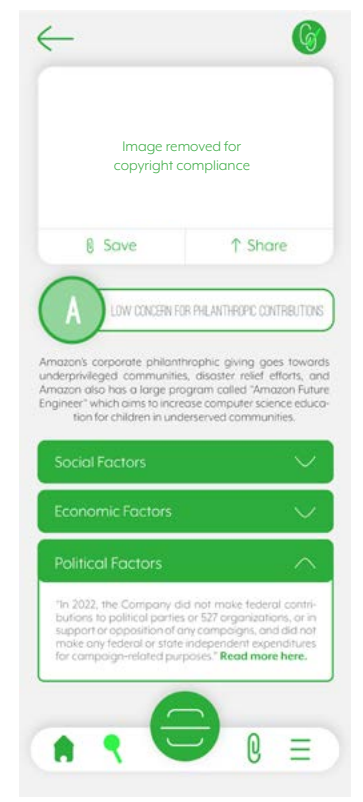


FIGURE 24: POLITICAL FACTORS

ous as to why a brand received a score, they can click on any of the scores to display a drop-down box that details the research behind it. For example, if a user is sitting at their desk with a can of Bubly sparkling water, they can find the barcode to scan in the Conscious Consumers app, and results will appear, displaying that it is a product owned by PepsiCo. PepsiCo is a brand that receives a stamp of approval from Conscious Consumers as it meets quality standards within its values, devoting their efforts towards issues such as safe water access and economic opportunity, as well as their transparent display in philanthropic contributions included in their annual report (“Philanthropy”). This feature is based upon the EWG Healthy Living App that I analyzed in my competitor analysis, as they successfully used technology so that individuals can scan barcodes of products around their home or search for specific products to see what ingredients are used within them and how they rank on toxicity and health concerns.

The resources tab (Figure 25) includes photos relating to the articles and a green box coming out of the side, like a drag switch. I made sure to include professional photos in this section, and throughout the app, to feel high quality and as though the user is looking through an online magazine. In my visual analysis, this is something that I mentioned PublicSq did well with, and I sought to replicate their style of professionalism to display Conscious Consumers as a trustworthy source of information. Each article has a title, a short description, and a link to learn more which, when clicked, takes the user to the article. When viewers are reading the article, the previewed image appears larger and centered at the top of the article with a green bar below that has three icons: thumbs up, speech bubble, and bookmark. This represents the social media side of the app. The thumbs up represents liking

the article, and users can see how many other users have liked the content; the speech bubble brings up a space for the user to type and post a comment; and the bookmark brings up different lists for the user to save for future reference.

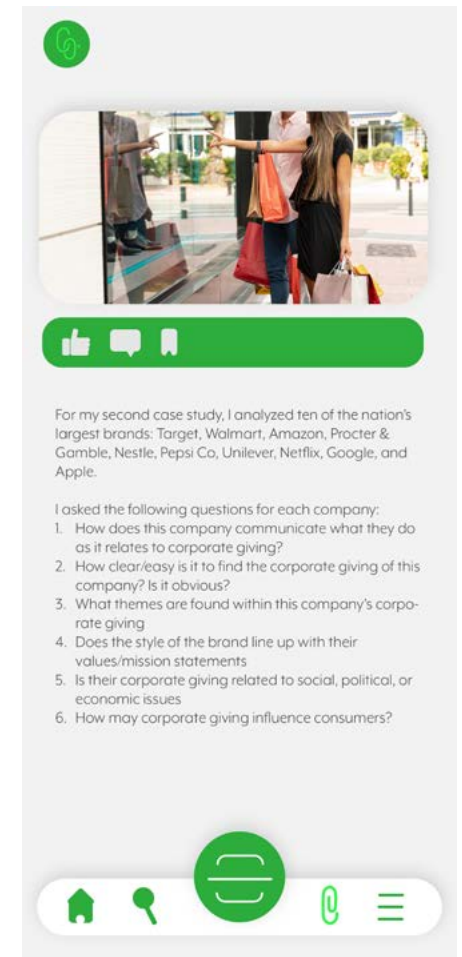


FIGURE 26: ARTICLE EXAMPLE

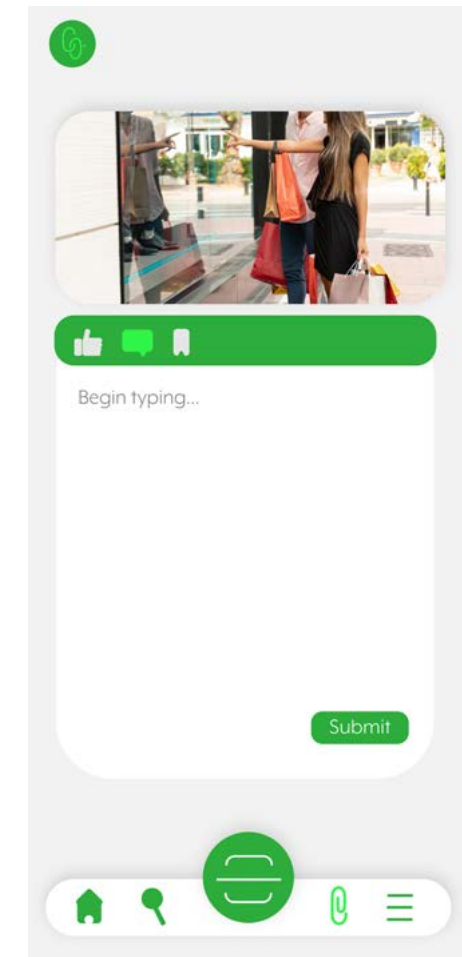


FIGURE 27: ARTICLE COMMENT

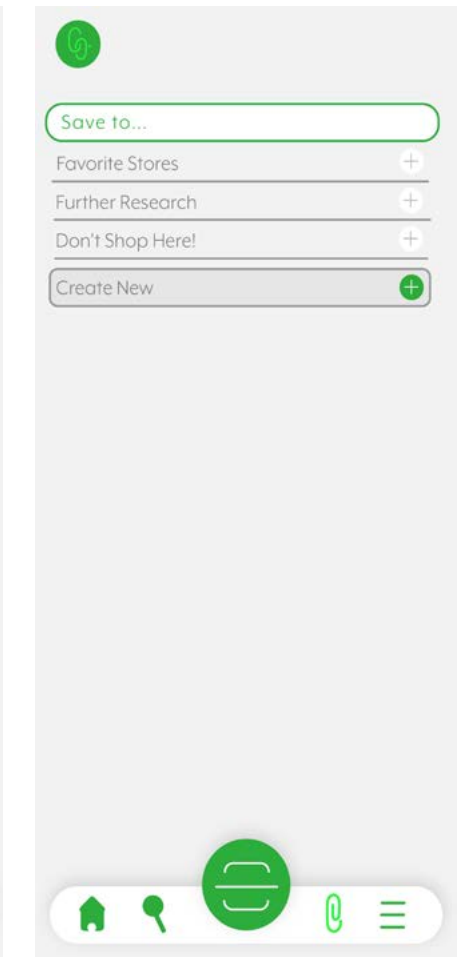


FIGURE 28: SAVE ARTICLE

The menu tab (Figure 29) has various sections like a typical account menu would. The “About” section is a place for FAQs and information about this research project such as where the research comes from, the goal of the project, and how the businesses are scored. This is a place for users to explore once they are interested in the content, which I decided to add in my app as it was successful on Ben & Jerry’s website. The “Favorites” section is a place for users to save their favorite brands or articles they read to refer back to. The “Add Your Business” section is a place for businesses to apply to be featured and/or verified on the app. It just asks for a few pieces of information (i.e. Name, Email, State, and if you agree to Conscious Consumer’s terms and values). PublicSq had a strong concept allowing businesses to apply to be added to the app, creating a larger database, which is what motivated this decision. The “Contact Us” section has a button to leave feedback, a button to directly email Conscious Consumers, and an in-app feature to send a message. The ‘Report’ section is a place for users to report any issues they may see such as the spread of false information, spam, unauthorized sales, or other problems created by third party influencers or sponsors within advertising that is not directly from the company. This section was a later addition to my final solution in response to a question asked in my thesis defense regarding how I would mitigate misinformation consumers may see. Conscious Consumers recognizes that there is plenty of false information shared online and aims to reduce this spread, helping consumers to interact with factual information and find trustworthy sources.

As the menu tab of the app is most similar to an “about” section of a website, I took the creative freedom to bring in some additional design elements. These pages have more visually appealing backgrounds and images to support

the information and create excitement for what Conscious Consumers is doing. For example, the “Add Your Business” page has Ostrich Sans’ bold decorative font in white, highly contrasted by the vibrant blue. The two circles in the background overlay one another by the dark blue stroke, appearing connected and related to the Conscious Consumer logo. There is a blue transparent overlay affecting the image, giving it personality and the hands of the individuals coming together are outlined in the neon green, showing emphasis. This style is recreated from Global Impact’s website as they successfully demonstrate strong humanistic, familiar, and positive characteristics, seeking to do good, while still appearing professional and on-brand.

Throughout the app screens, the basic elements (background, menu bar, shapes, etc.) have a simple and clean appearance, leaving an overall uncomplicated interface. All the background of the screens are a very light gray, just a little bit darker than the white menu. This is to create contrast and make the menu and other elements in white pop off the background, creating depth, similar to what I admired about PublicSq’s app from my visual analysis. Stroke weights on elements throughout are 2 point which is rather thin and matches the lean, elongated font. The brand is applied throughout to represent Conscious Consumer’s identity and to bring in creative and visually appealing elements, something I intended to do after analyzing a more basic brand in PublicSq’s app. Brand colors are used consistently throughout, with the primary color of green. This relates to consumerism and money and keeps a fresh and natural aesthetic throughout. I created icons for each item in the menu to help quickly signal what the item is about. All boxes, buttons, bars, etc. have rounded corners to follow the curves of the Cs in the logo and the circular properties of the O.

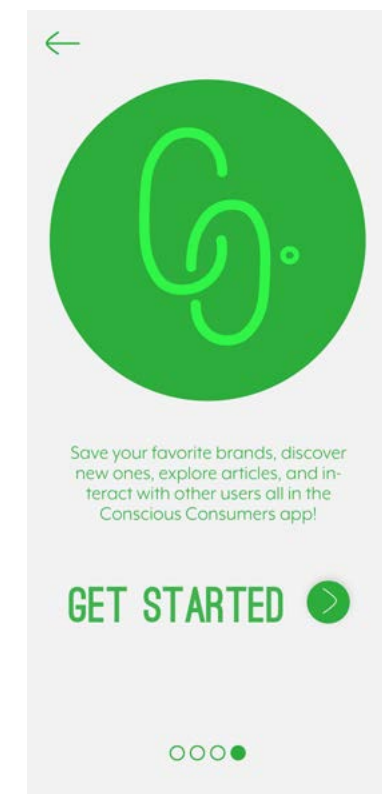
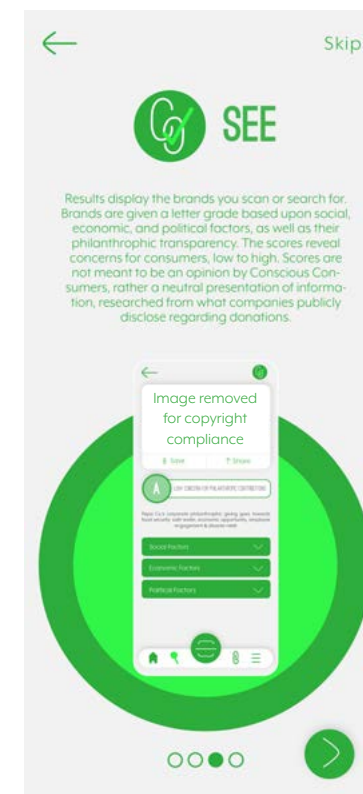
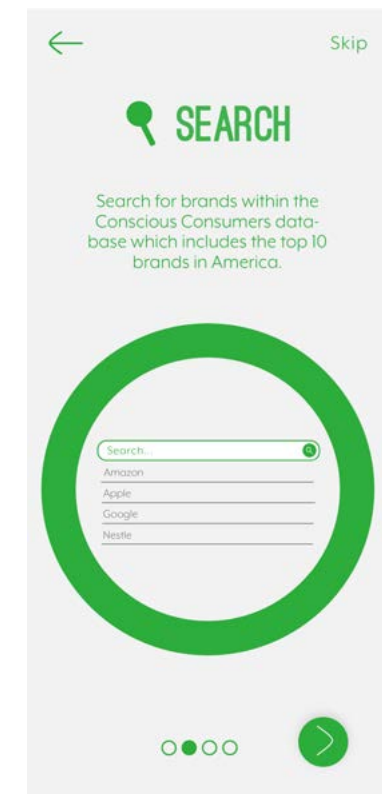
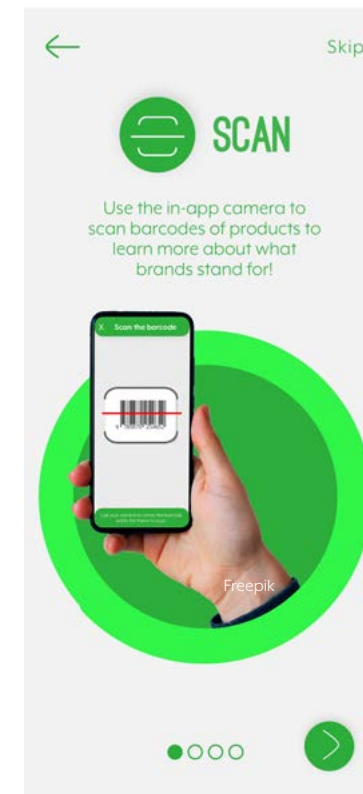
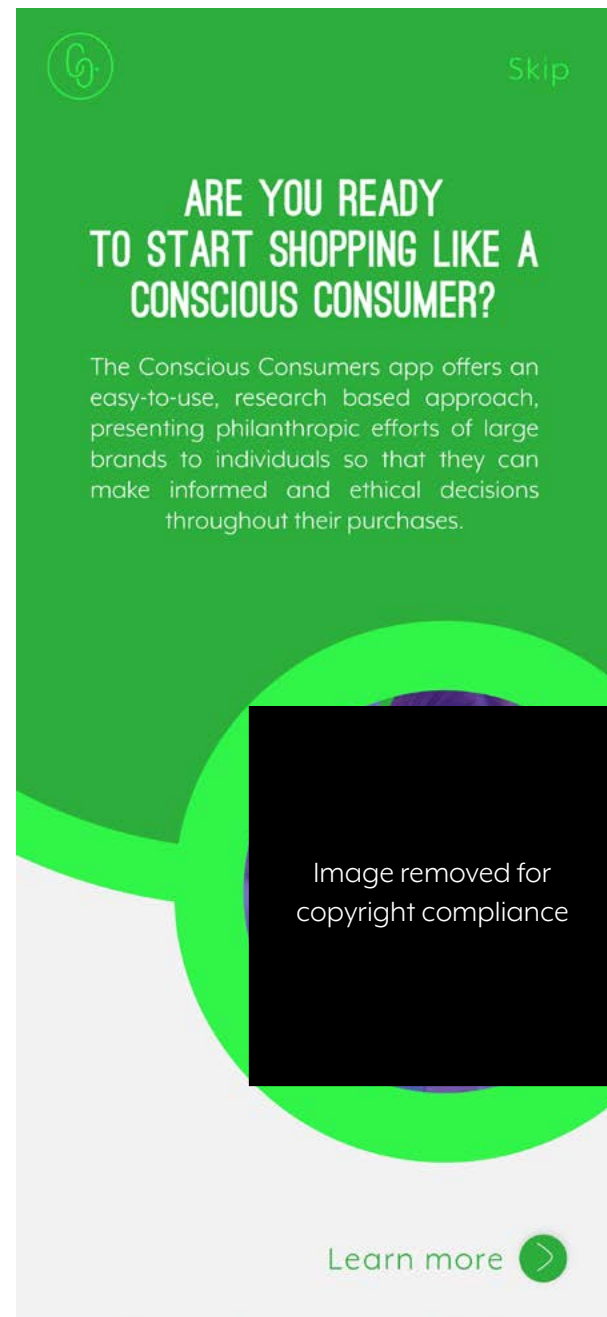
FIGURE 29: MENU TAB



Images removed for copyright compliance

At the end of the project, and based upon feedback from my thesis committee, I created a series of splash screens to onboard users to the application, its key features, and to fully communicate how the grading process is conducted and implemented. These screens (Figure 30) will display for users upon the first download the app to aid in the understanding of how the app can be used and where the information comes from so that it is clear from the start. I used the same aesthetics from the rest of the prototype to introduce the user to the style of the app so that they will be familiar when they navigate the app on their own. The first slide asks the user, “Are you ready to start shopping like a conscious consumer?,” hooking the user in with a question, the catch phrase of “conscious consumer,” and a description of what that means. The blurb briefly describes the goal of this visual solution. The following screens are outlined as: Scan, Search, and See. These screens provide visuals of what the scan and search features look like and briefly summarize their function. The “See” page displays an example of a result screen, describing how each brand receives a customized score and how it is based upon social, economic, and political factors as well as the company’s brand transparency. I made it a point to mention that these scores are not an opinion or personal judgment by Conscious Consumers, rather a neutral presentation of the research conducted. I want it to be clear how each company is graded so that the users understand the information they are receiving. The grades are meant to be applied by the user to help them to feel as though they have a role to determine how these factors relate to their personal ethics and values and understand the power they have to demonstrate consumer care with their dollars. The final onboarding screen mentions additional features of the app and a button to get started, taking them to the search screen to begin exploring brands or viewing the recommended/trending content.

FIGURE 30: ONBOARDING SCREENS

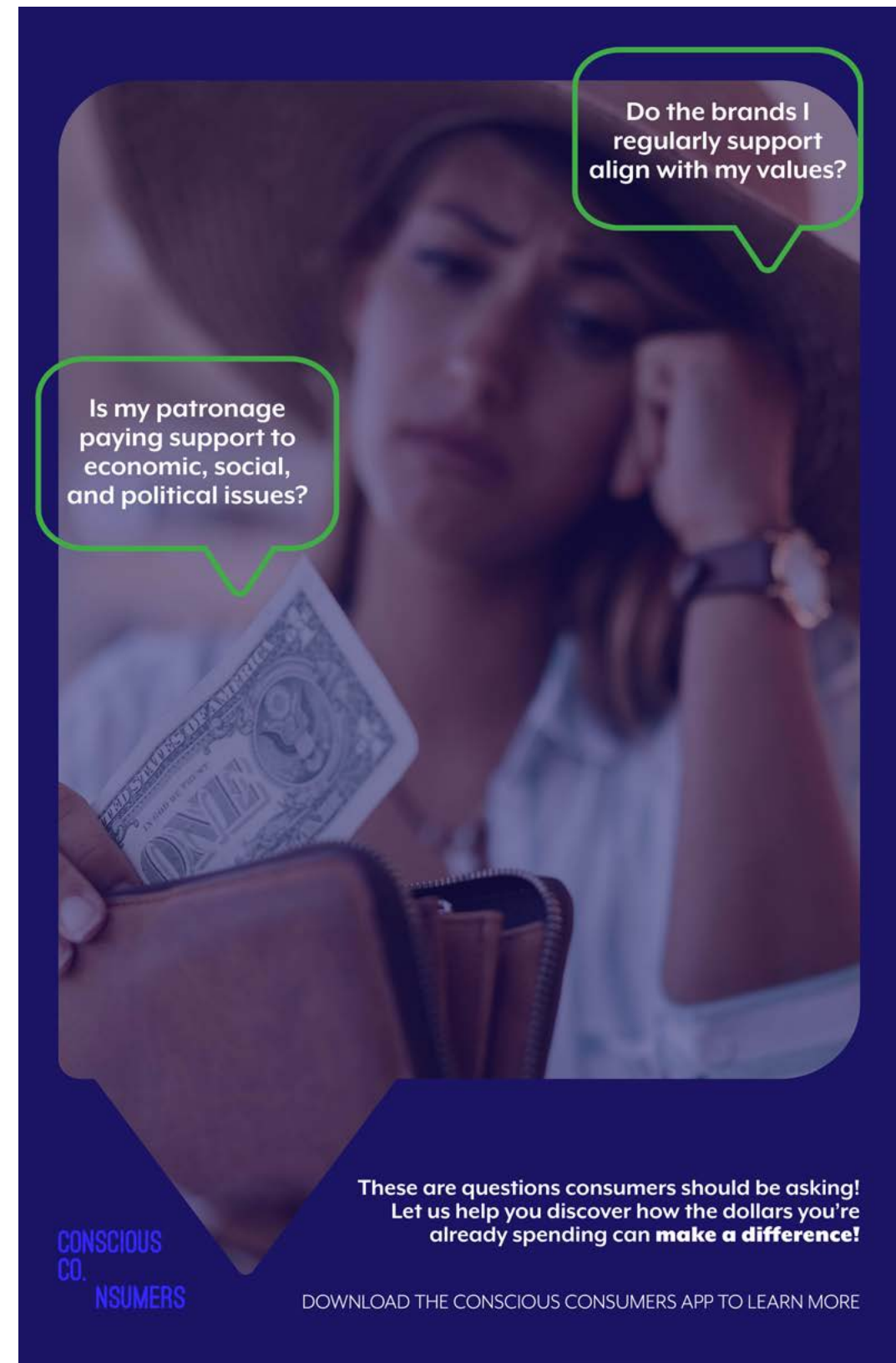


POSTERS

I designed a series of posters to create awareness for the issue that patrons of large corporations are often unaware of how their patronage will fund divisive corporate philanthropy resulting in an ethical dilemma for the patron. One of the key problems I found within research is that consumers are ignorant or too preoccupied to realize they are contributing to divisive corporate philanthropy and have simply not taken the time to address the issue. They need to become aware of this issue and have accessible options to change their habits.

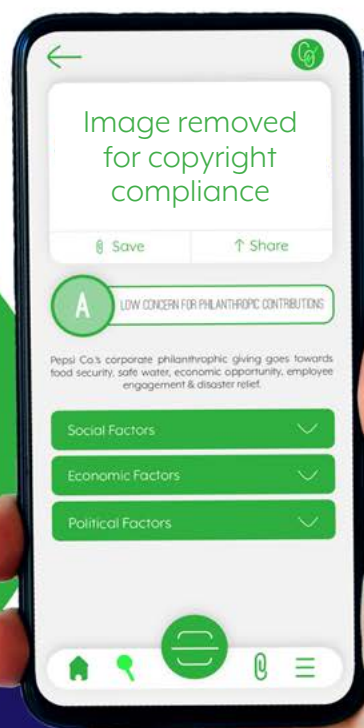
The first poster has an image of a consumer with a concerned look on her face as she focuses on the dollar bill in her hand. This is a powerful image that causes the user to consider or relate to the woman. This is based upon Dove's efforts and accomplishments within their campaigns as they have successfully influenced consumers in not only the way they see advertisements, but how they see themselves ("The Success of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign"). The style of the poster fits within the brand guide and the image has a violet overlay over it for dramatic effect. Green text bubbles, to attract attention, are filled with two pointed questions to consider: "Is my patronage paying support to economic, social, and political issues?" and "Do the brands I regularly support align with my values?" I used these poignant questions to conduct research. The design appears subtle, yet the questions are direct, bringing attention to the issue immediately. This messaging is informed by Ben & Jerry's "Democracy Is In Your Hands" awareness campaign from my case study as their imagery does not dodge the issue, but is presented in an easy to understand, familiar manner, allowing viewers to wade into the information as they feel comfortable. The image of the woman is placed within a clipping mask of a text bubble and below,

on a dark violet-colored background, it is stated: "These are the questions consumers should be asking! Let us help you discover how the dollars you're already spending can make a difference." This statement will be appealing to consumers as it does not require any extra spending or action, but creates a solution for change. "Make a difference" is bolded for emphasis and to spark inspiration. There is a call to action for the viewer to download the Conscious Consumer app to learn more. The Conscious Consumers logo is placed on the bottom left of the poster on the other side of the text bubble as if it is the one speaking.





- Powerful search tool
- Accessible information based upon America's top businesses
- Research at a glance
- Curated content
- Interactive resources
- Created with the consumer in mind



Conscious Consumers

An in-depth research project that seeks to create conscious consumer care—
All at your fingertips.

Download the app on your personal device to start shopping smarter and supporting brands you trust!



The second poster demonstrates the final solution to the problem. The poster has a heading that spells out Conscious Consumers and the tagline created for this poster about the app is: "An in-depth research project that seeks to create conscious consumer care—all at your fingertips." There is a close-up of the app on a smartphone screen mocked up in the hand of a user breaking out of the bubble element and directing the viewer's eye to the screen. The app screen displays the results section. Beside the mockup, features of the app are listed for the user to learn

more about what the app includes, uses for it, and who it was created for: consumers! The call to action on this poster is encouraging users to download the app on their personal device to start shopping smarter and supporting brands they trust. There is a functioning QR code to scan right on the poster. The style of this poster clearly follows brand guidelines as it includes the distinguished blue and green hues, the same font that is used all throughout the app, the primary logo, and many circular elements.

Freepik

The third poster in the series also clearly follows brand guidelines. The Conscious Consumer logo is placed in the top right corner within a blue circle, the blue hues are repeated throughout, and there is a blue dotted pattern at the bottom. Conscious Consumers is the heading at the top of the page, the word Conscious highlighted in the light blue color to create emphasis and awareness that the solution requires a conscious effort and has been given thought to. The tagline for this poster encourages viewers to check out the visually appealing, data driven, research at a glance made for consumers like you! The main portion of the poster highlights various screens of the app as a pre-view. Arrows are drawn from the screens to brief descriptions of how the app functions and key elements. The call to action for this poster encourages users to download Conscious Consumers in the app store.

The three posters are mocked up in settings that users could choose for a realistic view. Poster one is mocked up in an a-frame sign on the sidewalk outside of a store, a place where viewers may have just spent money or are about to and this poster causes them to think and ask themselves questions. Poster two is mocked up on a large sign within the grocery store, another place that consumers shop, and this poster has a QR code on it that viewers can download right then and there and begin using the app while they are shopping. Poster three is mocked up on a sign outside in a city setting, potentially by a bus stop or on a viewer's commute to work. This poster has descriptions of different features and may cause the viewer to stop and examine the content for a minute.

CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS

Check out our visually appealing, data driven, research at a glance, mobile app made for consumers like you!

(Freepik)

curated content based upon your personal values

quickly view information about America's largest brands and what factors affect their philanthropic contributions

search for brands or scan barcodes of your favorite products to learn more

interact with articles and other consumers for further research

save brands to groups to refer back to

DOWNLOAD IN THE APP STORE

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Conscious Consumers offers an appealing, research-based approach, presenting philanthropic efforts of large corporations to consumers to help them see and have concern for their role and avoid supporting divisive endeavors and personal ethical dilemmas. It started with an effort to understand how patronage impacts corporate philanthropy. Examining the relationship between individuals and corporations, consumer behavior, and a range of current concerns. Research revealed that consumers regularly make ethical judgments and, when they have a clear understanding of what they are supporting, they tend to have a higher moral rather than neutralizing behaviors which results in actions that more closely align with their values. Awareness also leads to less ethical dilemmas for the patron as they make conscious decisions to avoid or support brands and what they stand for. The literature review revealed that corporate philanthropy may not always be a positive contribution to society and just because a brand makes a charitable donation does not mean that it is worthy of supporting. These contributions need to be discerned by patrons as, many times, the corporation involves themselves in philanthropic efforts that align with their company values but does not align with the patron's.

As identified in the research, there has previously been a gap between the desire and the execution of ethical actions by patrons, which the visual solution of Conscious Consumers seeks to fill. Being a mobile app, this solution is available in the aisles at the store, when viewing advertisements for products, and on individual's personal device, a comfortable place for consumers to read and interact with information. An app on an individual's smartphone is the same place where consumers typically keep their grocery lists electronically, shop online, and browse for new products making it readily available to make conscious

decisions. Purchase decisions within consumer behavior is a multi-faceted and complex issue, and so the distinct options to search or scan are presented in the app and social, economic, and political factored results are presented for consumers. These options allow consumers to learn more about large brands and make the best choice that they can with the information they have and situation they are in. This tool is designed to inform individuals to see a greater importance in how they use their dollars and avoid funding divisive corporate philanthropy.

The case studies provided information that some brands disclose their giving much more transparently than others. Studies showed that some brands make donations through private foundations while others disclose detailed budgets and annual reports. The difference may be because corporations want their patrons to see the detail of their efforts for positive impacts while others may not simply because they do not have to. On the consumer side, reporting this information may help individuals decide between competing brands even over marketing and quality of products (Becker-Olsen 50). This research demonstrates the importance of relaying the information to consumers. This is why, in the Conscious Consumers app, brands receive a higher score for having detailed reporting on philanthropic efforts. Case study research also observed companies, like Ben & Jerry's and Dove, are advocating for active citizens, seeking to connect them and relate to them on an emotional level through approachable digital content. Similarly, aware-

CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS OFFERS AN APPEALING, RESEARCH-BASED APPROACH, PRESENTING PHILANTHROPIC EFFORTS OF LARGE CORPORATIONS TO CONSUMERS TO HELP THEM SEE AND HAVE CONCERN FOR THEIR ROLE AND AVOID SUPPORTING DIVISIVE ENDEAVORS AND PERSONAL ETHICAL DILEMMAS.

ness of this research problem was presented in the final solution after working with real individuals, understanding their current knowledge, and presenting information for a personal response throughout design elements, targeted information, and awareness posters.

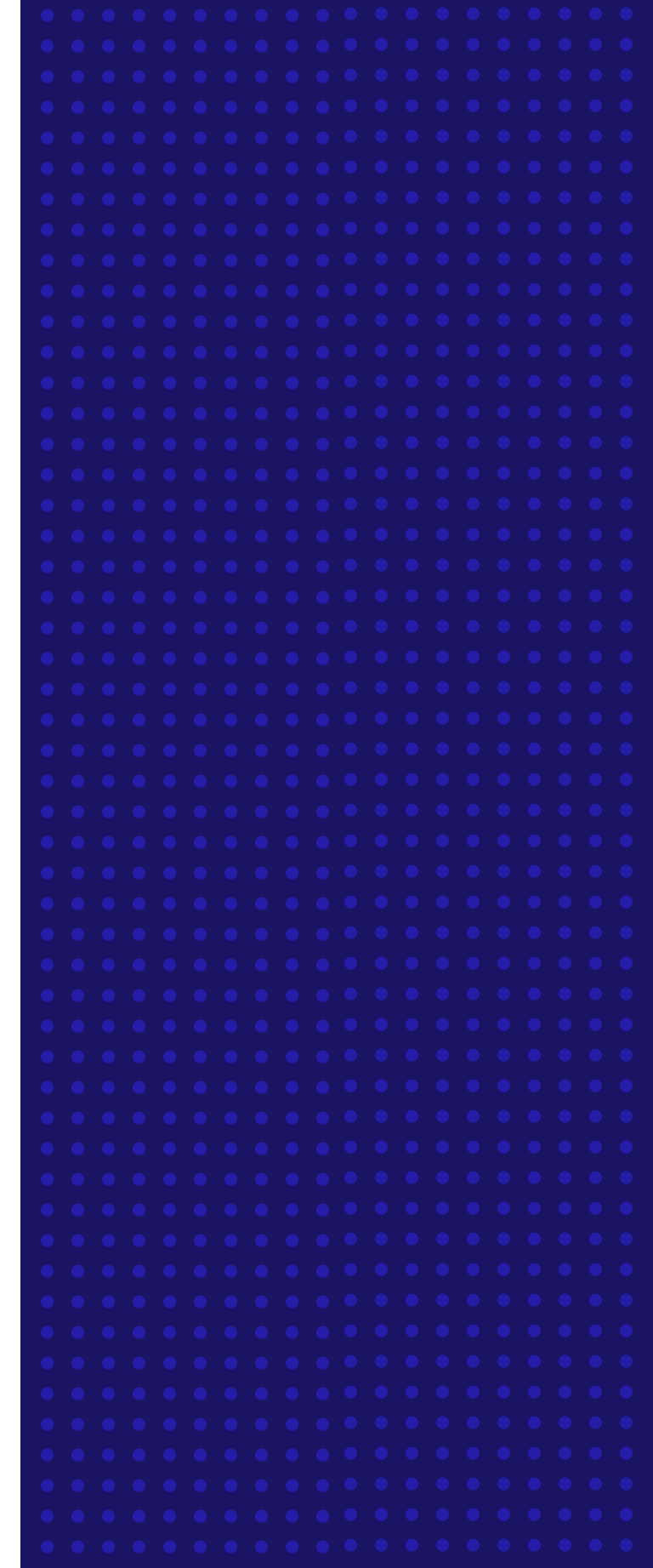
The visual analysis provided examples of awareness campaigns and app solutions that conveyed deep issues to approachable understanding with the use of clear, familiar, and personal elements. Likewise, I desired that the project worked to communicate effectively, emphasize truth, demonstrate quality solutions, and present the information in an organized manner. I sought to create my visual solution to be more than just a well-designed app but also a tool in a movement. Skillful examples helped me to create Conscious Consumers as a solution that convicts and inspires change.

I learned a lot through my research about the issue and developed as a designer throughout the creative process. I grew in my understanding and appreciation for research-based design and the impacts it can have to strengthen the solution. I think that specifically using research methods of case studies and visual analysis helped to improve my work and cause me to develop a better final solution. I can see myself continuing to use research methods of case studies and visual analysis for future projects as well as additional user-based research methods such as interviews and focus groups. Many of my academic sources from the literature review used these research methods that I was able to learn from regarding how consumers behave and respond to similar information. Conducting interviews myself and engaging with targeted participants who have common characteristics that relate to the objective of the study would be helpful to continue to develop the app and assist in making the final solution a tool for the user, one that is unique to their needs and easy to use.

The goal of this project is to raise awareness for consumers to learn more about the brands they regularly support and decide for themselves if it aligns with their values, creating a positive contribution towards society while transforming individuals. If this project were to continue, I would love to see it used from the local to national level, including small businesses, franchises, restaurants, online shops, and more generating a larger database of brands. It would be my hope that users can search any product in their home and view a trusted Conscious Consumer score on it. With further user interaction, I envision people sharing and connecting through the resources tab. Also, it is currently in a prototype state, so I would need to continue working to develop the app fully to publish it in the app store.

I envision sharing this final solution with many of the brands I researched that received a verified score (i.e. Amazon, Nestle, and PepsiCo) as users will be encouraged to shop those brands above the others. It would be beneficial to both parties if Conscious Consumers promoted the highest scored brands as well as if those brands advertised to their audience that they are verified by Conscious Consumers, creating awareness for the solution. If I had more time, I would like to further develop the app to include additional features. One idea that I was unable to execute in the prototype was a gamified digital dashboard for the users. This would be located on the home page for users to easily track their status. As users shop highly scored brands, they would receive points as a reward. Earning points would fill up the user's ethical dashboard, incentivizing them to keep shopping ethically and I considered allowing users to choose which charity Conscious Consumers would donate profits to once they reached a certain number of points. Likewise, another a feature I wish to include would be a place in the app for consumers to donate to specific causes, facilitating additional philanthropy to those in need. I would love to

reach out to philanthropy advisors at Global Impact as they come alongside organizations to identify goals and help navigate how to make the maximum impact ("Advisory Services"). Becoming involved in philanthropic efforts is an area that I see Conscious Consumers leading and participating in while encouraging its users to do the same. Conscious Consumers still have a lot of good to do in the world.



- Kassirer, Samatha, Jillian Jordan, and Maryam Kouchaki. "Why Shuttering AmazonSmile Was a Mistake." Harvard Business Review, www.hbr.org/2023/04/why-shuttering-amazon-smile-was-a-mistake . Accessed 3 Aug. 2023.
- Lev, Baruch, Christine Petrovits, and Suresh Radhakrishnan. "Is Doing Good Good for You? How Corporate Charitable Contributions Enhance Revenue Growth." Strategic Management Journal, vol. 31, no. 2, 2010, pp. 182-200, onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/joca.12403. Accessed 10 June 2023.
- Miller, Kenneth E., and Frederick D. Sturdivant. "Consumer Responses to Socially Questionable Corporate Behavior: An Empirical Test." Journal of Consumer Research, vol. 4, no. 1, 1977, pp. 1-7. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2488630. Accessed 16 June 2023.
- "No. 1 Dove: Campaign for Real Beauty." YouTube, uploaded by AdAge, 12 Jan. 2015, www.youtube.com/watch?v=wpM499XhMJQ.
- "Our mission." Google, www.google.org/. Accessed 5 Aug. 2023.
- "Our Values, Activism and Mission." Ben & Jerry's, <https://www.benjerry.com/values>. Accessed 29 July 2023.
- "Philanthropy." PepsiCo, www.pepsico.com/our-impact/philanthropy/pepsico-foundation. Accessed 4 Aug. 2023.
- "Planet & Society." Unilever, www.unilever.com/planet-and-society/. Accessed 4 Aug. 2023.
- PublicSq, publicsq.com/.
- Roth, Zachary. "Ben & Jerry On Their New Campaign to Promote Democracy." MSNBC, www.msnbc.com/msnbc/ben-jerry-empower-mint-new-campaign-promote-democracy-msna850711. Accessed 28 July 2023.
- Saunders, Stephen G., et al. "Consumer Marketplaces and Self-sufficiency: Meeting Consumption Needs in Community." The Journal of Consumer Affairs, vol. 55, Wiley, 2021, doi:10.1111/joca.12403. Accessed 10 June 2023.
- "Self-Esteem Resource My Beauty Story: Redefined." Dove, www.dove.com/ca/en/dove-self-esteem-project/help-for-parents/self-esteem-resource-my-beauty-story-redefined.html. Accessed 10 Aug. 2023.
- Shaw, Deirdre, et al. "Consumption as Voting: An Exploration of Consumer Empowerment." European Journal of Marketing, vol. 40, no. 9-10, 2006, pp. 1049-67. EBSCOhost, doi.org/10.1108/03090560610681005. Accessed 17 June 2023.
- "Target Circle Community Giving." Target: A Bullseye View, corporate.target.com/sustainability-ESG/community-engagement/Corporate-Giving/target-circle. Accessed 3 Aug. 2023.
- "The 'Dove Real Beauty Pledge.'" Dove, www.dove.com/us/en/stories/about-dove/dove-real-beauty-pledge.html. Accessed 9 Aug. 2023.
- "The Success of Dove's Real Beauty Campaign." Global Brands, www.globalbrandsmagazine.com/the-success-of-doves-real-beauty-campaign/. Accessed 10 Aug. 2023.
- "The 7 Most Inspiring Things We Heard at the Empower Mint Launch." Ben & Jerry's, 17 May 2016, www.benjerry.com/whats-new/2016/7-empowering-things-launch. Accessed 29 July 2023.
- Touré-Tillery, Maferima, and Maryam Kouchaki. "You Will Not Remember This: How Memory Efficacy Influences Virtuous Behavior." Journal of Consumer Research, vol. 47, no. 5, Feb. 2021, pp. 737-54. EBSCOhost, doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucaa023. Accessed 14 June 2023.
- "Unilever Annual Report and Accounts 2022." Unilever. 2022, www.unilever.com/files/92ui5egz/production/257f12db9c95ffa2ed12d6f2e2b3ff67db49fd60.pdf.
- Vitell, Scott J. "Consumer Ethics Research: Review, Synthesis and Suggestions for the Future." Journal of Business Ethics, vol. 43, no. 1/2, 2003, pp. 33-47. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/25074974. Accessed 19 June 2023.
- Wohl, Jessica. "How Ben & Jerry's Keeps Purpose Alive." Advertising Age, vol. 87, no. 14, July 2016. EBSCOhost, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=b9h&AN=116945018&site=eds-live. Accessed 27 July 2023.
- "Working together to spark change." Walmart, foundation.walmart.com/. Accessed 3 Aug. 2023.
- Zollo, Lamberto, et al. "Ethical Consumption and Consumers' Decision Making." Management Decision, vol. 56, no. 3, 2018, pp. 692-710, www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/MD-10-2016-0745/full/html, Accessed 9 June 2023.

IMAGES CITED

"Democracy Is In Your Hands." Ben & Jerry's, www.benjerry.com/values/issues-we-care-about/democracy#-jump-a3ab816a-57e8-4f04-b6e0-f957852991ed. Accessed 27 July 2023.

Freepik. "businesswoman sitting with colleagues using laptop." [downloadscdn6.freepik.com/107420/85/84748.jpg?filename=businesswoman-sitting-with-colleagues-using-laptop.jpg&token=exp=1695318388~hmac=d9f6152d8c3da7c9ac56d8399b74dc6a](https://www.freepik.com/downloadscdn6.freepik.com/107420/85/84748.jpg?filename=businesswoman-sitting-with-colleagues-using-laptop.jpg&token=exp=1695318388~hmac=d9f6152d8c3da7c9ac56d8399b74dc6a).

Freepik. "Closeup worried woman having one dollar bill her wallet." [downloadscdn6.freepik.com/637285/3/2159.jpg?filename=closeup-worried-woman-having-one-dollar-bill-her-wallet.jpg&token=exp=1695309700~hmac=7ad8523420fe18f586baf2f9alb78088](https://www.freepik.com/downloadscdn6.freepik.com/637285/3/2159.jpg?filename=closeup-worried-woman-having-one-dollar-bill-her-wallet.jpg&token=exp=1695309700~hmac=7ad8523420fe18f586baf2f9alb78088).

Freepik. "Female friends out shopping together." https://www.freepik.com/free-photo/female-friends-out-shopping-together_2894602.htm.

Freepik. "Free photo abstract blur in supermarket." www.freepik.com/free-photo/abstract-blur-supermarket_1246288.htm#page=2&query=shopping%20cart%20in%20grocery%20store&position=0&from_view=search&track=ais.

Freepik. "Free PSD isolated right hand with smartphone." https://www.freepik.com/free-psd/isolated-right-hand-with-smartphone_18219037.htm#query=hand%20holding%20phone&position=0&from_view=keyword&track=ais&uuid=e0e167d4-2120-4c3b-b7e2-6b92ab7cd0a3.

Freepik. "Portrait of young pretty positive girl smiling." [freepik.com/free-photo/portrait-young-pretty-positive-girl-smiling_8467766.htm](https://www.freepik.com/free-photo/portrait-young-pretty-positive-girl-smiling_8467766.htm). Accessed 13 Sept. 2023.

Freepik. "Young couple shopping together." www.freepik.com/free-photo/young-couple-shopping-together_5588663.htm#query=window%20shopper&position=43&from_view=search&track=ais.

Global Impact, <https://charity.org/>. Accessed 7 Aug. 2023.

PublicSq, <https://publicsq.com/>.

APPENDIX

IMAGE PERMISSION

From: Freepik Support [REDACTED]
Subject: Case 00712729: New Case Comment
Date: December 8, 2023 at 2:55 PM
To: [REDACTED]

FS

Support Ticket

Hello,

Thank you for your message.

We are happy to confirm you can use our resources in both digital and physical designs or items **for personal purposes**.

In this case, you can use our resources as main element of the design or item, or as a secondary element, if you wish to include self-made designs or from third parties.

Please remember that all these products are aimed for personal use and not for commercial purposes, that is, not for sale.

If you're a free user you must include the attribution line 'Designed by Freepik' on the products themselves. If you're a subscribed user, you don't have to include this attribution line.

If this answer doesn't solve your questions, please reply to this email and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

We wish you a wonderful day!

The Freepik Team

Copyright © 2010-2023 Freepik Company S.L.