



(Flickr, 2012).



LUND UNIVERSITY
School of Economics and Management

Is gay advertising out of the closet?

A look into how explicit and implicit marketing
is perceived by consumers.

by
Terry Mathenge & Kevin Owusu
May 2017
Master's Programme in
International Marketing and Brand Management

Supervisor: Burak Tunca
Examiner: Johan Jansson

Abstract

Title: Is gay advertising out of the closet? A look into how explicit and implicit marketing is perceived by consumers.

Seminar Date: May 30th, 2017

Course: BUSN39 Degree project in Global Marketing

Authors: Terry Mathenge and Kevin Owusu

Supervisor: Burak Tunca

Keywords: LGBT, gay, lesbian, -marketing, explicit, implicit, content analysis, netnography

Research Purpose: This study aims to provide insight into the consumer perceptions of explicit marketing towards LGBT consumers. Furthermore, it examines the current status of implicit gay marketing

Methodology: Triangulation was adopted combining both content analysis and netnography to qualitatively analyse consumer perceptions from three different perspectives. Content analysis was conducted from two mediums. Firstly, consumers' reactions from Burger King's and Absolut's LGBT-related marketing campaigns. Secondly, additional information was collected from marketing news magazine Advertising Age. This data was triangulated with netnography from the online community Reddit to further understand why and how consumers perceive explicit marketing.

Theoretical perspective: The main theories that the study is based on are gay window advertising, target marketing and the self and social identity concept.

Empirical data: The empirical data consists of user comments taken from social media channels , online forums and marketing information taken from practitioner journals.

Conclusions: People's perceptions of explicit marketing towards LGBT consumers depends on various factors such as education and age but also on the advertising company's overall involvement with the LGBT community. This study presents a set of recommendations targeted at people interested in LGBT-related marketing from both academia and practice. Moreover, the study exposes implicit gay marketing as outdated.

Acknowledgements

I would like to appreciate my mum, Esther Kegah, for the sacrifices you have had to make for me to reach this far. My son, Sean, you are the anchor of my life and everything I do is to make you proud someday. Finally I would like to thank the rest of my family and friends for their encouragement, love and support – Terry Mathenge.

I would like to thank my mom, Ellen Owusu, for your love and continuous and unconditional support since day one – Kevin Owusu.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Literature Review	3
2.1 LGBT Community - A Brief History	3
2.2 Marketing towards the LGBT Community	3
2.2.1 <i>A Dream Market</i>	3
2.2.2 <i>Target Marketing</i>	5
2.2.3 <i>Self and Social Identity Concept</i>	6
2.2.4 <i>LGBT-Marketer's Dilemma</i>	7
2.3 Challenging Implicit Marketing towards LGBT Consumers	9
2.4 Research Question	9
3. Methodology	11
3.1 Philosophical Assumptions.....	11
3.2 Research Design	11
3.3 Method.....	12
3.3.1 <i>Content Analysis</i>	13
3.3.2 <i>Netnography</i>	16
3.4 Data Analysis.....	20
3.5 Reliability, Generalization & Validity.....	20
4. Results	22
5. Analysis & Discussion	38
6. Conclusion	47
6.1 Closing Statement.....	47
6.2 Practical & Theoretical Implications	48
6.3 Limitations & Future Research.....	50
References	51
Appendix A: Collected data Burger King	56
Appendix B: Collected data Absolut.....	74
Appendix C: Collected data Advertising Age.....	79
Appendix D: Collected data Reddit	82

1. Introduction

The United States is often described as a melting pot due to its ethnic and cultural diversity (Bisin & Verdier, 2000). With the country having different subcultures, the community of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender (LGBT) is of great interesting. Due to society's increasing acceptance of different sexual orientations, more people gradually embrace their sexual identities making this subcultural group ever growing (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005). The buying power of the United States' LGBT community today is estimated at almost 1 trillion USD, making this minority group the third financially largest in the entire country (Green, 2016). This offers great potential to corporations, which are constantly looking for new sources of revenue (Coon, 2012; Sender, 2007). Based on gay consumers being recognized as an important market segment, it has been found that advertising to them as a distinct group of people is more successful when the commercial's content is targeted and uses specific characteristics of this group (Aaker, Brumbaugh & Grier, 2000). Thus, marketers need to use the various identifying features of gay and lesbian culture, including particular signs and symbols, to gain their attention. Today, a variety of gay-related magazines and even TV channels exist, offering advertising space, however, only a few members of the LGBT community consume these media outlets. The majority, however, prefer reading magazines from mainstream media such as Time Magazine or Vanity Fair. This has forced marketers to place gay-targeted ads in mainstream media (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005) in order to reach the bigger share of the LGBT community. Many scholars and some practitioners have argued that this bears the risk of alienating potential customers who may not identify with the content, mainly heterosexuals who represent the core customer base of most companies (Johnson & Grier, 2015; Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005). To avoid negative reactions or rejection from straight consumers, marketing professionals have opted to use implicit ads (Campbell, 2005). These ads use gay cues in a way that only homosexual consumers understand in the hope that most heterosexuals will fail to decode its entire meaning (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2004). While most scholars laud these advertisements for their effectiveness, critique is slowly emerging. Not only is the creation of a commercial which can only be comprehended by certain people ethically questionable (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005; Tsai, 2011); American society's increasing acceptance towards LGBTs also poses the question whether implicit marketing towards gay and lesbian consumers is still appropriate to the current times and after all required (Ostrow, 2012; Witeck, 2014).

The present study examines consumer perceptions through their reactions towards explicit gay marketing campaigns and investigates through including the perspectives of marketing practitioners and the LGBT community on whether implicit gay marketing is and should still be the preferred mode of advertising in mainstream media. This study's results may be meaningful since marketers are still faced with the dilemma of which strategy to apply as scholars still propose the use of implicit advertising.

Terms such as "LGBT", "gays and lesbians", "gays" and "queers" to describe sexual minorities, will be used synonymously for the purpose of readability throughout this research paper.

2. Literature Review

2.1 LGBT Community - A Brief History

The history of marketing towards the LGBT community is relatively recent (Campbell, 2005). Characteristic of its development was that it was strongly influenced by the prevailing attitudes and perceptions as well as legislation linked to LGBTs. The 1970s Gay Liberation Movement sparked initial expressions of gay power and brought with it some significant societal changes. Homosexuals, both men, and women started coming out of the closet and in this way became an increasingly visible part of American society (Coon, 2012). Based on their sexual orientation and conscious lifestyles, they started to develop markers of their own culture, which were clearly distinguishable from the heteronormative lifestyles of the time (Campbell, 2005). Their distinct culture brought marketers to the table that started advertising to gays and lesbians using gay media outlets (Um, 2010).

The 1980s AIDS epidemic, however, changed society's attitudes dramatically. Sparking homophobia, many advertisers withdrew their gay-targeted ads, especially during 1984 and 1989. With the beginning of the 1990s, gays and lesbians' reputation rehabilitated in the public eye (Chinn, 2006). This was largely credited to the media and entertainment industry which started to portray gays and lesbians more in-depth and frequent, making their lives more relatable for society (Torres, n.d.).

Today, the LGBT community in the United States is considered the newest minority group to step away from a past of invisibility and negative, stereotypical portrayal and is becoming increasingly attractive to marketers who constantly look for new revenue sources. Some scholars argue that the development of the LGBT market resembles that of another historically suppressed group in the US, namely African-Americans (Sender, 2007). While this group of people remains the largest minority in terms of purchase power in the US and is followed by Hispanics, gays, and lesbians are believed to be the third-largest niche market in the United States (Ostrow, 2012).

2.2 Marketing towards the LGBT Community

2.2.1 A Dream Market

In recent years gays and lesbians as a target group have received a lot of recognition stemming from the market's size and buying power (Oakenfull, McCarthy & Greenlee, 2008). Although they were targeted before as described above, the 1990s are considered the starting point for the increased consideration of marketers regarding the LGBT community (Coon, 2012). The year of 1994 is particularly defining for LGBT marketing which was when a large brand, for the first time ever, targeted gays using mainstream TV. Swedish furniture retailer IKEA created a commercial depicting a gay male couple shopping for a dining table which was broadcasted on national US-television. Despite some supportive reactions lauding the positive representation of homosexuals, it created a lot of controversies. While IKEA and its responsible advertising agency were sent hate mail, one IKEA store in the US even received a bomb threat (Um, 2010). To avoid such negative backlash from mainstream consumers, marketers then largely decided to target gays using the increasing number of print

publications that were catered to gays. These included magazines such as *Out* or *Genre* which offered advertisers a chance to specifically address the LGBT community (Campbell, 2005).

These newly launched gay publications strategically created the image of the affluent gay consumer. By successfully conducting surveys among queers, they were able to demonstrate the economic power of gay and lesbian consumers. Hence, marketers perceived gays not only as relatively affluent but also well-educated, socially and politically informed as well as passionate about their careers (Angelini & Bradley, 2010). This is why LGBTs were often being referred to as the "Dream Market" (Oakenfull, 2007). In 1995, for example, an article in the *American Demographics* labeled the gay and lesbian market "an untapped gold mine" (Um, 2010, p.135), claiming that this niche's attractiveness stemmed from the high educational levels and large amounts of disposable income. These clever marketing tactics significantly drove advertising expenditures in gay magazines, rapidly outpacing average industry spending (Oakenfull, 2007) and by the end of the 1990s yearly gay ad expenditures were totaling up to more than 200 million USD (Oakenfull, 2007). Along with this development, the number of Fortune 500 companies which advertised to the LGBT community increased significantly. Starting from 19 companies in 1994, within slightly more than ten years, the number of brands rose to 180 in 2006 (Um, 2014). According to an analysis from Witeck Communications conducted in the US among lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender adults, their estimated purchase power was at 917 billion USD in 2015, with a rise of 3.7 percent in comparison to the previous year. The numbers were based on the assumption that 7% of the United States' adult population identifies as part of the LGBT community (Green, 2016).

In addition to the large buying power of queers, their disposable per capita income is often assumed to be higher, as the majority of these consumers are part of "the so-called double-income, no kids market" (Angelini & Bradley, 2010, p.487). In contrast to that, there are scholars from the field of advertising, who argue that the favorable economic portrayal of gays and lesbians has continued to be exaggerated due to survey bias (Tsai, 2011). These scholars argue, that the 1990s surveys were largely conducted among wealthy and politically active gay consumers creating a distorted and more flattering view of queers (Campbell, 2005). The United States' LGBT community, however, is as diverse as the entire country's population as homosexuality appears across all ethnicities and social stratum. Some studies even argue that gay men, for example, actually make less money than their heterosexual counterparts which may be rooted in various forms of discrimination at work (Witeck, 2014). The same principle applies to lesbian women who can naturally be found among all races, income levels and ages - which are three factors often used by marketers to create segments within the female population.

This shows that there is a need to distinguish between the prominent affluent gay who is predominantly depicted as white and well-educated man and all other members and layers of the LGBT community (Campbell, 2005), such as "gay men with little formal education, gay men of colour, and lesbian women who may be economically disadvantaged" (Um, 2010, p.137). The dissent within the literature, therefore, makes the LGBT community's "Dream Market status" questionable. Another question about the LGBT population refers to its size and its income levels. An exact estimate continues to be hard to make, as an obstacle lies in the collection of data. The United States Census, for example, enquires information about people's race and ethnic affiliation but not about people's sexual orientation. Even if these types of data were to be included, the collection would be quite problematic in terms of one's willingness to reveal his or her sexual preference as this may be a sensitive issue to some respondents (Um, 2014).

Regardless of the numbers and figures, it has been found by both scholars and marketers, that LGBT customers are extremely loyal to brands which are respectful towards them (Angelini & Bradley, 2010). Being included and represented within marketing campaigns and commercials is considered by some gays as being supportive of the gay social movement. Companies targeting homosexuals specifically, therefore, may be rewarded with more positive brand associations and greater levels of purchase intent among their targeted customers (Oakenfull, McCarthy & Greenlee, 2008, p.192). Brands like American Airlines or Subaru are known for their advertisements in gay and lesbian media outlets and the companies extend their employees' benefits even to their same-sex partners. These measures allowed the companies to benefit from the support of gay and lesbian consumers. On the other hand, companies not supportive of queers, such as Cracker Barrel, have felt the repercussions and financial sting from being boycotted by them (Angelini & Bradley, 2010). The cause for this boycott was the fact that the US-restaurant chain apparently does not offer any benefits or coverage to its LGBT employees' partners and did not install a non-discrimination policy protecting company members from being discriminated against in terms of their sexuality (Chattel, 2013).

Other scholars highlighting the lesbian and gay target market's importance argue that their power large and even more so when considering the people who are part of the lives of LGBTs. With approximately 16 million self-identified LGBT-adults living in the US, their number "is exponentially higher when 'the gay-friendly market, the parents-of-, the friends-of-, ' are included" (Ostrow, 2012, n.p.). When advertising to gays, their relatives and friends might feel addressed as well, enlarging the gay and lesbian target market making it ever more important (Ostrow, 2012). Despite the LGBT community's importance and controversial status as a target market, the group remains understudied (Um, 2010).

2.2.2 Target Marketing

The United States' population has become increasingly diverse with societal changes taking place on a socio-cultural, demographic and technological level. Due to this, marketers are increasingly considering target marketing as an essential tool to reach certain niche markets more effectively. Consumers can be segmented based on demographics (e.g. teenagers), gender (e.g. women) or by focusing on specific sub-groups within society such as the LGBT community (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999). Reaching out to these specific groups of people as a marketer is coined as target marketing. Hereby, consumers who share similar attributes and needs are identified and their characteristics are then used to communicate to them (Um, 2014).

Target marketing is seen as an effective response to the increasing diversity found within today's markets (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999). Its underlying premise is that targeted advertisements will create a stronger response among consumers. This is believed to result in greater affinity towards the brand message (Aaker, Brumbaugh & Grier, 2000), as it allows targeted consumers to create a mental connection between the commercial and the self. Advertisers tailor their ads specific to the characteristics of the targeted sub-group. They encode the intended message using culturally accepted symbols or keywords hoping that these will be correctly decoded by the corresponding consumer (Grier & Brumbaugh, 1999).

Gay consumers tend to be more interested in and likely to purchase ads which are directly targeted at them (Um, 2014). Hence, target marketing in regards to LGBTs uses the various cues available within the subculture of gays and lesbians. In this context, it is important to

note that subcultures are defined as "shared system[s] of values, norms, beliefs, and lifestyles of a substantial minority within a wider host culture" (Chandler & Monday, 2016). Following this definition, gay culture's markers of homosexual identity are not limited to exterior elements such as one's clothes or outer appearance but also apply to more underlying and subtle forms. These refer to the use of specific symbols and language. Characteristically features of homosexual iconography are, for example, the pink triangle, the rainbow, and references to keywords such as pride (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005).

2.2.3 Self and Social Identity Concept

Consumers show different reactions to targeted advertisements depending on their social group membership (Aaker, Brumbaugh, & Grier, 2000). As described above, LGBT-marketers use subcultural symbolism and cues to advertise to the LGBT community. Essential to the success of these marketing efforts is the target groups' self and social identity. In the case of homosexuals, the concept of self is quite complex. Consumer researchers used to view homosexuality as a simplified construct "either you are or you aren't" (Oakenfull, 2007, p.53). Following this logic, individuals either were gay and identified as such or they were not. It is now agreed, however, that homosexual activity and homosexual identity are not necessarily the same thing. While there certainly exists a connection, there are significant individual differences regarding the degree to which homosexuals actually identify as gay and feel part of the LGBT community. People labeling themselves as homosexual and relating strongly to the LGBT community, often view their sexual orientation as defining trait of how they construct their identity and shape their social interactions (Oakenfull, 2007). These individuals are usually well connected to fellow members of their community, identifying with and being aware of all aspects of the gay and lesbian subculture. This makes them most likely to understand gay iconography in advertising and comprehend the intended commercial message (Oakenfull, 2007).

While subcultural cues convey meaning to these self-identified members they are, however, meaningless to people who do not feel a sense of belonging to the LGBT community as they may not be aware of its cultural markers. If these consumers are exposed to gay advertising campaigns, it is likely that the characteristics and values of the ad do not match those of the consumer. This happens, for example, when the advertisement features members of a distinct group of which the viewer is or does not feel part of which can result in undesired nontarget market effects. This could lead to an avoidance of the brand or product because the viewer may think he or she is not the intended target (Aaker, Brumbaugh & Grier, 2000).

While some homosexuals don't relate to gay ads because they do not identify with the gay culture, there are several studies which investigated the responses of straight consumers when seeing gay ads. These studies have produced mixed findings regarding whether LGBT ads influence the brand perceptions or purchase intentions of straight consumers negatively (Um, 2014). What researchers largely agree on, however, is that heterosexuals' approval highly depends on their general attitude towards homosexuality. Consumers who have a high acceptance of homosexuality demonstrated higher rates of approval regarding companies using the gay-specific content. People less tolerant towards homosexuality, on the other hand, showed lower approval rates (Um, 2010). But what is this attitude towards homosexuality influenced by?

One explanation can be found within the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). It refers to how individuals' identities and their membership in a social group allow them to

enhance their group's social standing at the expense of another. The theory discusses ingroup and outgroups, whereby an ingroup member acquires a certain degree of self-esteem by differentiating themselves from members who are not part of the group, referred to as the outgroup. This favoritism that is demonstrated for the group of which someone considers themselves a member of, has been attributed to the majority of mainstream consumers' self-concept and self-identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). It is partially related to the consumer's membership within the overall societal group of heterosexuals, therefore, anything that goes against the group's social norms will be considered incongruent with mainstream consumers' self-concept and self-identity. For example, when heterosexuals come across advertising images that reflect an aspect of gay culture, it is possible that these consumers will exhibit a level of discomfort and disapproval in regards to the advertisements (Angelini & Bradley, 2010).

A second explanation would be gender (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2004). According to advertising scholars, prejudice against homosexuals is more common among heterosexual men while their female counterparts tend to be more open towards queers. This correlates with beliefs about gender roles. Men have been found to be more traditional about what they believe to be appropriate in terms of the male gender role. Some men consider homosexuals as deviants of these traditional roles which may explain why they reject them (Um, 2014). Those men are in particular adverse against homosexual men rather than homosexual women (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2004). Heterosexual women, on the other hand, are less attached to roles regarding gender and therefore less dismissive and ergo more tolerant towards sexual minorities (Um, 2014).

A third and final influencing factor of people's attitude towards homosexuality is their personal contact with gays and lesbians (Um, 2014). As studies have shown, straight men and women who personally know people openly identifying as LGBT, have been found to have more positive attitudes than straight people who don't. This is because it leads to heterosexuals thinking of gay people not in terms of a social minority or subculture but in terms of the individual relationships they have built with them. Consequently, the more gay people out themselves, the more likely heterosexuals are to establish personal relationships with them (Herek & Glunt, 1993).

Other than that, accepting and tolerating homosexuality is dependent on people's level of education, religious faith, and family ideologies (Um, 2014).

2.2.4 LGBT-Marketer's Dilemma

Some modern day advertisers who want to target the LGBT community, see themselves in a dilemma. Gay media is faced with relatively low readership among lesbian and gay consumers (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2004). Oakenfull and Greenlee (2005) constitute that "Out and The Advocate, the two most widely circulated gay magazines, will reach only 3% of the gay and lesbian population, at most" (p.429). There are estimates saying that only 50% of the United States' LGBT population actually consume any type of gay media. The majority of this sub-group, namely 90% of all gay men and more than 80% of all lesbian women, consumes mainstream media like Time or People magazine. In pursuit of the "Dream Market", advertisers, therefore, need to use mainstream media to place their gay-related advertisements. Many companies are, however, still reluctant to do so for fear of alienating the biggest share of their market which usually is heterosexual consumers. Exposing these ads which are

obviously gay- or lesbian-oriented could potentially result in a negative backlash (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005) based on the reasons described in the previous chapter.

The keyword for many companies when advertising to LGBTs within mainstream media, therefore, is implicit (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2004). Also known as gay window advertising, this marketing technique creates advertisements in a way which makes gay people feel as if they are targeted while the ad's gay cues might go unnoticed by heterosexuals. Gay window advertising makes use of "what is called 'gay vague', implying that the sexual preference or relations of the person or persons in the advertising image appear ambiguously inexplicit" (p.960). This can be achieved by, for example, featuring two individuals of the same sex in a commercial while avoiding to refer to their heterosexuality (Borgerson, Schroeder, Blomberg & Thorssén, 2006). Another tool is the use of gay implicit imagery or symbols. Particularly the rainbow flag is a symbol which has often been used by marketers both implicitly and explicitly depending on the context of the commercial. Such cues enable queer consumers to perceive the coded commercial messages differently from heterosexual consumers who are largely unable to make sense of them (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005).

When it comes to the practical application of such methods, it has been found that about one-third of gay advertisements in gay media uses indirect messages. The majority of advertisers, however, uses explicit imagery and messages (Um, 2016). Explicitly gay ads can increasingly also be found in general media channels. There are several companies, mainly based on the fashion and spirit drinks industries, which have been explicitly advertising to gay consumers in the mainstream media for years - and that without major evidence of negative effects. Levi's, GAP, Banana Republic and Absolut Vodka are a few of these brands (Oakenfull, McCarthy & Greenlee, 2008). They argue that while the majority of companies are reluctant to fully tap into the LGBT market, great opportunities to capitalize on it will arise for brands that are bold enough. Additionally, as more and more companies will follow suit, they even have the chance "to be agents of positive social change (Angelini & Bradley, 2010, p.499).

Most scholars still recommend gay window advertising as the way to go, although it is being less applied in practice. In addition, the use of this implicit marketing technique is slowly being criticized due to its characteristics: since the technique assumes that only the intended target group *gets it*, using mainstream media as a vehicle to implicitly target LGBTs turns into some kind of inside joke. It allows gay and lesbian consumers to create a bond with the advertiser while the less informed straight counterparts are not able to relate (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005). Psychology and marketing scholars raise the concern that this creates some moral issues from the perspective of the advertising company. Creating a commercial which is designed to be unavailable for comprehension by a specific group of people can be considered unethical advertising. Oakenfull and Greenlee (2005) state that when "applying various ethical theories, universalists, who focus on moral egalitarianism, may argue that coded advertising reflects a preference for one group, gays, and lesbians, over another, heterosexual, that is discriminatory and, therefore, unethical" (p.437).

Making use of gay symbolism and LGBT-specific iconography might also amplify prejudice because it assumes that homosexuals are different from straight people, which may fragment society and amplify homophobic attitudes. While minorities thrive to legitimize their subcultural characteristics, they also seek for social inclusion (Tsai, 2011) which implicit and gay vague cues do not promote.

2.3 Challenging Implicit Marketing towards LGBT Consumers

As Witeck (2014) argues: “We are in a new era in American history. Showing a remarkable shift in attitudes toward gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people, the United States appears to be embracing a new, more inclusive view of family life” (p.19). The quote highlights that the public opinion towards gays and lesbians has shifted and that there is an increasing acceptance of homosexual relationships. A few decades ago, a survey conducted in the USA from 1973-1991 by Time and CNN revealed that almost 80% of respondents thought homosexual relationships were morally wrong. In 2010 this number had dropped to 46% (Um, 2014). A more current 2014 survey proved that as much as 60% of American respondents now support marriage equality. Hence, the US seems to embrace a more diverse view of family life (Witeck, 2014) which speaks in favor of the overall improved perceptions of sexual minorities.

Support from the government has also been positive with former President Obama who dedicated a part of his presidency to fight discrimination against gays (Um, 2014). On top of that, the United States deemed bans regarding same-sex marriages unconstitutional in all states, legalizing gay marriage as of 2015 (Roberts & Siddiqui, 2015).

These societal changes have also been noticed or might even be driven by companies. They’ve come to realize that in reaching out to one LGBT client they are not scaring away two straight clients (Witeck, 2014). Marketers are moving past gay vague to explicitly gay ads even when targeting the larger gay-supportive consumer group. According to Ostrow (2012), “Gay vague is yesterday. [It] was the way to minimize risk, prevent panic in the streets. Now gay advertising is coming out of the closet in every possible way. There are many more gay-friendly consumers than there are actual gays and lesbians and, in the business of making impressions, more is better” (n.p.).

In short, it can be said that the use of implicit marketing ads in mainstream media towards gay and lesbian consumers is still discussed controversially. As highlighted, gay vague and its inside joke characteristics are criticized by some practitioners from a moral and ethical standpoint (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005; Tsai, 2011). At the same time society seems, more than ever before, acceptant of various ways of life and family structures (Ostrow, 2012; Roberts & Siddiqui, 2015; Um, 2014). Academia, namely marketing, and advertising scholars, however, seem like they have yet to catch up. To this day, most researchers still view gay window advertising as a great tool to reach a greater portion of the LGBT market while eliminating the risk of alienating straight consumers.

2.4 Research Question

The contradictions identified within the literature regarding the explicit or implicit use of LGBT marketing tools reveal a gap the researchers intend to contribute to. As described, most marketers are reluctant to use explicit LGBT advertising in mainstream media as they are afraid this might alienate heterosexual consumers. A solution proposed by many researchers is to target gay and lesbian consumers implicitly - meaning that the advertising method will be understood by this very demographic but not by most heterosexuals, thus eliminating the risk of alienating the bigger target population. Since there are some indicators that implicit marketing or gay window advertising is not state of the art any longer, the researchers intend to explore this field further. The findings shall be used to provide advertisers and managers

with a clearer understanding of explicit LGBT advertising. In investigating this, the researchers would like to contribute to the fields of marketing and advertising.

The question of research derived from this therefore is:

- How are companies that are explicitly targeting the LGBT community perceived by consumers and what determines whether marketers should adopt an explicit or implicit gay marketing strategy?

3. Methodology

3.1 Philosophical Assumptions

The aim of this chapter is to address the underlying philosophical assumptions of the present study to better understand the methods applied and decisions made by the researchers. Philosophical positions commonly refer to questions about ontology and epistemology (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

Ontology can be defined as someone's beliefs about reality and determines how this reality is inquired. There are four ontological positions which are realism, internal realism, nominalism, and relativism. Both realist positions assume that there is one reality that exists and researchers try to inquire this as accurately as possible. This is mostly suited for quantitative studies as realism is predominantly based on numbers. Contrasting the view of believing in one single truth, nominalism argues that there is no truth at all and that all facts are merely human creations (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

The nature of our study is qualitative and we, therefore, do not subscribe to the realist philosophical view. The study seeks to delve into the individual perceptions and opinions of various consumers by interpreting and understanding them, which is why one single truth would not emerge, nor can it simply be discovered. As the research strives to derive some implications from our findings, we do, however, believe in some sort of truth and therefore will not take on the nominalist view either. We believe in the existence of multiple versions and perspectives of reality. This is based on a relativist ontology which accepts that reality is created and can be experienced differently depending on one's social class, country of origin or a particular ethnicity. What is considered as truth can, therefore, vary among different people and even evolve or change over time depending on experiences? Consumers' perceptions about advertising, especially ads that target and depict sexual minority groups, are thus highly individual, dynamic and context bound. This is why the chosen relativist ontology is perfectly suited for conducting this study (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

Epistemology can be described as the theory of knowledge. Because we argue for relativist ontology and assume that reality is created in a social context, the epistemological stance of this study is based on social constructivism. Not only reality itself, but also its meaning is socially constructed according to this philosophical position. Social constructivism focuses on human interaction and how experiences are shared through language as a medium. It also tries to increase general understanding of a given situation and purposefully selects a small number of cases to achieve the latter. This is in line with our intended inquiry about consumers' opinions and perceptions, and why and how they are expressed socially. The perceptions of gay-related advertising will be explored in order to contribute to the continuous comprehension of LGBT marketing and theory generation. The fact that the LGBT community itself is a socially constructed group of people, further confirms the philosophical stance undertaken by this study (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015).

3.2 Research Design

To investigate consumers' perceptions of explicit LGBT advertising in mainstream media, we chose to combine three different sources of data that differed to offer an all-rounded

perspective. First, a content analysis of perceptions derived from newspaper articles, social media content and videos specific to the Burger King and Absolut cases will be carried out to provide the customers' perspective. In addition, intelligence from Advertising Age, a leading global marketing, and media community (Ad Age, 2017), will be analyzed to assess and represent practitioners' perspectives reflecting on their expert opinions. Finally, a netnography will be applied to the online community of Reddit, representing the perspectives and opinions of LGBT consumers. We selected America as an appropriate research context based on its diversity, multicultural and metropolitan nature providing a good foundation and insights into the perceptions to represent a wider research population.

Our study will make use of secondary data with the focus being on the collection and analysis of textual data. Textual data which in essence is text refers to a wide range of communication media that can be stored in many different formats (Drisko & Maschi, 2015). The textual data provides insight through comparing the levels of communication around given issues, in the description of opinions as revealed in communication content as well as identifying the intentions of the communicating individuals (Berelson, 1952). The essence of using text in research will be to identify significant statements which allow for the deduction of different interpretations amongst several meanings. In addition, the data to be collected will identify how sentiments, opinions, and emotions are expressed about the use of explicit gay advertising in relation to the communicator's experiences or the effect of the message conveyed. Therefore, this study being qualitative seeks to explore people's feelings, thoughts, prejudices and subliminal ideas in some depth in which the object of study will be recorded communication.

3.3 Method

The triangulation method was used to monitor and assess perceptions relating to the use of explicit gay advertising derived from customers, practitioners and the LGBT community. Triangulation refers to when two or more methods are combined to capture social phenomena in order for the findings to potentially generate a more accurate analysis and explanation (Wolfram & Hassard, 2005). Triangulation yields a more accurate and valid estimate of a result when each method of measurement actually converges on the same answer (Mark & Shotland, 1987). This technique of using different methods but bearing on the same issue was used to obtain data that is robust, rich, comprehensive, and well developed.

The triangulation scheme used data collected from two different qualitative research methods, content analysis, and netnography. Data was first gathered through content analysis to gain an in-depth and initial understanding of customer's reactions to the pride campaigns carried out by Burger King and Absolut vodka. In addition, a practical perspective was introduced. This data included published articles from industry professionals via Advertising Age. The second method used was netnography. This is a qualitative technique for research, using the principle idea of ethnography, however, it focuses on computer-based communications other than face-to-face conversations, which is suited to investigate cultural phenomena as well as communities.

3.3.1 Content Analysis

Communication researchers have heavily relied on both human- and computer-based content analyses to examine symbols of communication and to make valid inferences about communication patterns (Krippendorff, 2004; Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005). According to Bryman (2004), qualitative content analysis could be the most prevalent approach used when analyzing documents. He goes ahead to define it as:

"An approach to documents that emphasizes the role of the investigator in the construction of the meaning of and in texts. There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of data and on recognizing the significance for understanding the meaning of the context in which an item being analyzed (and the categories derived from it) appeared" (Bryman, 2004, p.542).

However, Drisko and Maschi (2015) have expanded on the aspect of content analysis by stating that the method not only applies to texts but also audio recordings, television shows, movies, images, telephone calls and other forms of electronic data such as social media.

The process of content analysis is done by assigning categories or codes to the data which is a strength of qualitative content analysis as the material is analyzed gradually (Krippendorff, 2004). In addition to being a systematic analysis process within the context of communication and the interpretation of texts, qualitative content analysis seeks to assign specific categories that are revised and refined in an interactive process to ensure credibility and usefulness (Mayring, 2000).

Accordingly, content analysis as a text interpretation method was selected as an appropriate tool to arrive at the meaning of data given the aim of this study. Schreier (2012) describes the process of qualitative content analysis in seven steps. It starts with deciding on a research question, selecting material, building a coding frame, revising and expanding the frame, segmentation, trial coding, evaluating and modifying the coding frame, main analysis and finally presenting and interpreting the findings which shall be employed in this study in various chapters.

The first step in selecting the material for data collection is the development of a sampling strategy that guides the selection of potential research participants and data collection methods (Easterby-Smith, 2015). Sampling is a feasible method used whenever it would be too time or cost consuming to consider all available documentation. A sample refers to a subset of people whose characteristics are representative of a larger group of the population (Law, 2016). The purpose of collecting data from a sample is to use evidence to draw conclusions about the population. The two cases selected for the study were based on the maximum variation sampling method that employs two extreme cases (Easterby-Smith, 2015). Absolut and Burger King were selected based on the brands' popularity and reactions received after launching their LGBT marketing campaign in the US during pride month which takes place in June. The impact of the two campaigns varied greatly which allowed us to explore different and comparative experiences relating to the aim of our study. The cases were analyzed through data collected from news reporters' and editors' opinions, from online news articles, customer comments posted on the two brands' Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts and published video recordings via YouTube. These data highlighted the research topic from a consumer point of view. Advertising Age, a news magazine dedicated to marketing and media (Ad Age, 2017) was included as another source of data to provide a different perspective generated by practitioners' views and opinions on how to target LGBT consumers.

The sampling method used to collect the data from the various sources was strategic sampling, whose aim was to explicitly select people or experiences that assist in exploring the research question and allows the derivation of theoretical ideas (Davies, 2007). In the case of Burger King, data collected was in relation to its pride month campaign that was launched in June 2014 whereas Absolut's campaign was launched in June 2015. Both cases, as well as Advertising Age as an appropriate and expert source of information for the purpose of this study, will be discussed in the following section.

Case 1: Burger King

Burger King, which was founded in 1954, is the second largest fast food hamburger chain in the world. It describes itself as "Home of Whopper" and has more than 11 million guests visiting its restaurants worldwide every day (Burger King, 2017). In what could have been a first for a global fast food chain, Burger King made a bold proclamation in support of the LGBT community with the launch of a specially packaged burger on the occasion of the LGBT-related Pride event. The restaurant chain introduced a burger wrapped in a rainbow-colored paper called "The Proud Whopper" burger. The burger was only available in Burger King's San Francisco-based restaurant not selling in any other of its locations. Customers walked into Burger King during Sunday's Pride parade wondering what made the "The Proud Whopper" different from any standard-issue burger. Customers only found out its meaning once they opened it. The Proud whopper's rainbow-colored wrapper was inscribed with the message, "We Are All the Same Inside." The whopper was just like any other burger even regarding its taste. The campaign was conceived as a way for Burger King to bring the company's new "Be Your Way" tagline to life. Burger King scrapped their 40-year-old food-centric slogan "Have It Your Way" in May, replacing it with the people-centric "Be Your Way." Fernando Machado, a senior vice president of global branding, led the effort which also included sponsoring Pride parades in New York and San Francisco and handed out about 70,000 rainbow-colored paper crowns. Machado stated that the promotion was all about making a connection with the customers: "We really want to be more than burgers, fries, and shakes," he said, "and occupy a space that's more meaningful to people." All proceeds from the sales of the burger went to Burger King's McLamore Foundation for scholarships benefiting LGBT college-bound, high school seniors (Wong, 2014). While this was the first such initiative from Burger King in the U.S., the chain said it has "sponsored LGBT events outside the U.S. and even decorated some stores during pride weeks" in the past (Oster, 2014). The project was publicized nationwide in press releases, in videos on Burger King's YouTube page, and in interviews in mainstream media featuring the company's marketing executives (Self, 2014).

Data collected for content analysis in regards to this case stemmed from customer comments on Burger King's social media sites. The comments sampled and collected were reactions to advertisements relating to "The Proud Whopper" campaign that had been posted by Burger King on their American Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. The included opinions were reactions to images of the rainbow wrapped Proud Whopper or captions and status updates relating to the burger and the slogan #beyourway that had been advertised by Burger King. The data search also included popular hashtags such as #burgerking #proudwhopper to identify all available information relating to the campaign on the social media sites. The online newspaper articles and blogs also made use of the campaign taglines to retrieve more data from the Internet relating to editors and bloggers opinions. In addition, a video recorded and published on YouTube by Burger King showing customers reactions to the campaign inside and outside the San Francisco restaurant was analyzed. For all the sources used, data

was collected until a point of saturation was reached where there were no new concepts found.

Case 2: Absolut

Absolut is a premium vodka brand founded in 1879 in Sweden. Today, the vodka is available in 126 different countries and was introduced to the US in 1979 which is its largest export market. More than 40% of all imported vodka in the US is Absolut vodka (Marketing the rainbow, 2016). Absolut's initial success in the US was based on the belief that some people simply "don't want to follow the crowd" which was said in reaction to critics who believed that no American would want to buy Swedish vodka. Based on this slogan, Absolut placed ads in two gay publications, *The Advocate* and *After Dark* magazine in the 1970s and 1980s. Since then, the brand has created many gay-oriented ads and sponsored events for the LGBT community (Marketing the rainbow, 2016). According to an interview with Absolut's global PR-manager, there have been some moderately negative effects due to the fact that Absolut is perceived as gay-friendly. These reactions apparently were solely a matter of a few negative emails (Marketing the rainbow, 2016, n.p.).

Absolut's vodka bottle and its shape are part of the company's brand identity. Over the years the bottle has been embellished by various artists such as Andy Warhol or Keith Haring and sold to consumers in a limited quantity (Marketing the rainbow, 2016). In 2008, the company launched yet another special edition bottle which was re-released in 2015. The "Colors" bottle is wrapped in a colorful skin and features the six colors of the rainbow flag, an iconic symbol within the LGBT community representing gay pride which was created by American artist Gilbert Baker. Written on the bottle is a special message embracing diversity: "Be proud of who you are and let your true colors shine" (Olshansky, 2015). The company's intention behind the campaign: "Absolut has long supported freedom for creative and self-expression and encouraged people to be who they are. We look back at our history within the LGBT community with pride and are excited to use the launch of Absolut Colours as an opportunity to re-establish ourselves as true pioneers in our continuous support for equality" (Chilled Magazine, 2015).

In finding relevant data, focus was placed on information found regarding the 2015 campaign and excluded all data from 2008. This was done to make a comparison to the case of Burger King more accurate. The collected data were firstly taken from Absolut's American social media presence, namely Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Only comments made in direct response to posts depicting the rainbow colored bottle were considered. The researchers browsed through the social media sites accordingly and additionally searched for popular hashtags such as #LoveisLove and #Lovewins in combination with the key phrase "Absolutvodka".

These key phrases and the term "Absolut Colors" were then used to find corresponding information via blogs and news sites. Information found here not only reflected the opinions of consumers but also gave account to managers' perspectives who were responsible for creating the ad campaign. Data collection continued as long as new insights and perspectives were found, eventually reaching saturation.

Advertising Age

Advertising Age also called Ad Age, is a New York-based magazine publishing news reports, analyses and data catering to the marketing and media community. Its online presence adage.com has close to 8 million unique monthly visitors (Mustat, 2017) and frequently

publishes articles from industry experts (Ad Age, 2017). Due to its dedication to current marketing topics and the fact that the news magazine is based in the US, it was chosen as a data source to include in this study. To collect data from the site, used the website's search function look for articles bearing the keyword "LGBT". A further specification was not necessary as the site purely discusses marketing-related topics, therefore, guaranteeing that the search results were as desired focussing on LGBT-related marketing issues. In selecting suitable information, we only considered articles and disregarded possible information given in the comments section. This was because of the fact that we wanted to capture practitioners and marketing professionals' point of view as opposed to any consumer perspectives. Articles collected for analysis were from 2013 or newer to preferably reflect a most up to date view and saturation was reached when the article's content showed signs of resemblance bringing the collection process to an end.

Content analysis becomes a more powerful tool when combined with other research methods such as interviews, observations, and use of archival records. While carrying out the content analysis, alternative areas of inquiry started to emerge that hadn't been considered from the onset of the study. Content analysis is a purely descriptive method. It describes "what" is there, but may not reveal the underlying motives for the observed pattern which is why netnography was used to triangulate the study and present more insights on the "why". Therefore netnography was introduced as an additional approach as the data collection process evolved to explore the insights of the pivotal target group of LGBT consumers.

3.3.2 Netnography

In today's era of the web 2.0, various topics including cars, food or movies are discussed online at length (Kozinets, 2002). Consumers share all kinds of information and feelings about products and brands with each other (Kozinets, 2005) and with the internet's increasing penetration rates, evidence indicates that consumers are more open on the world wide web than they are offline (Xun & Reynolds, 2010). This has strong implications for studying cultural phenomena since many people's lives span across an interrelated web of online and offline behavior. Netnography values computer-mediated communications (CMC) as cultural reflections (Kozinets, 2005) and are used to understand people's opinions, perceptions, and emotions (Langer & Beckman, 2005). It is primarily based on the analysis of textual data and tries to build an in-depth comprehension of a relatively small amount of research subjects' information (Xun & Reynolds, 2010). These consumer-to-consumer interactions usually occur naturally and unsolicited and can be gained by the researcher in an unnoticed way (Kozinets, 2005). Netnographic studies can reveal individual's underlying opinions, tastes, and values. Similar to ethnography, "netnography provides a window into the realities of consumer groups" (Kozinets, 2005, p.9).

Netnography is very well suited to explore general subjects (Kozinets, 1998) and unfolds its strength especially in comparison to other methods dominating the landscape of research of consumer insights (Kozinets, 2005). Focus groups, for example, take place in fabricated conversational settings and require the researcher's participation. This can influence the study's findings significantly as respondents may feel obliged to answer in order to please the researcher or are influenced by fellow respondents' opinions and potential peer pressure (Kozinets, 2002). From behind the screen, however, some scholars argue that respondents are more willing to share their opinions openly since their real identities largely remain concealed (Langer & Beckman, 2005).

The advantage of anonymity would also apply to the method of surveys. Here, participants are, however, required to choose from predetermined assumptions of the researcher potentially leading to skewed or even expected results (Kozinet, 2006). By comparison, netnographic studies are naturalistic as they observe users in a setting not artificially created by the researcher. This significantly reduces any potential biases and offers a multitude of novel, grassroots information of online groups (Kozinet, 2005). Another advantage lies in the ease of gaining access to the community of interest. All it requires is a web-enabled device and researchers can join a community from the comfort of their own desks (Kozinet, 1998).

This is why it serves the purpose of the present study very well. In this case, we seek to understand consumer's opinions and perceptions of homosexual advertising through their discussions and any discourses that may emerge within the online forums and chats. Our focus is put on the US market and therefore, one way of meeting these challenges can be found in the method of netnography which allows us to study technologically-mediated cultures from a distance (Kozinets, 2005), by adapting "the open-ended practice of ethnography to the contingencies of the online environment" (Kozinets, 2006, p.281).

Based on common ethnographic studies, Langer & Beckman (2005) consider the following steps essential to conducting netnographies;

- Entrée
- Data collection
- Analysis and interpretation
- Research ethics
- Member checks

This suggested procedure is only one of many as some researchers add or leave out a step (Kozinet, 2002; Kozinet, 2006). This is due to the fact that netnography, much like ethnography, is in itself flexible and can be adapted to the researcher's needs without forfeiting any of its methodological accuracy (Kozinet, 2002).

Entrée. In the initial phase of making cultural entrée, researchers need to identify an online forum appropriate to help answer the questions under research (Kozinet, 2002). When evaluating different communities, one useful criterion is to select communities with a high frequency of posts, a large number of not only members but active participants and a high level of interaction among members (Kozinet, 2002). In addition, the data under research should be "thick" (Langer & Beckman, 2005, p.192). This can be defined as descriptively detailed and is one of the main characteristics of ethnography which netnography is based upon. In this phase, researchers should also get familiar with the community's members, its characteristics and the type of interaction (Kozinet, 2002). According to this, we first needed to identify an online community, which discusses LGBT-related topics. With the specific research questions in mind, prerequisite for the community was, that members, regardless of their sexual orientation and identity, felt safe enough to share their opinions and thoughts openly, as sexuality is a sensitive issue to most people (Um, 2014). Discussions here also needed to be frequent and plenty in order to cover and give account to a number of different perspectives. Meeting these criteria, the data of study was collected from Reddit. It is a social news website and forum where content is socially shared by members through voting and its membership is freely accessible (Tech Target, 2016). As of April 2017, Reddit had 542 million monthly visitors (234 million unique users), ranking as the 4th most visited website in the US and 16th in the world (Alexa, 2017). The site is composed of hundreds of sub-communities, referred to as subreddits in which each subreddit bears a specific topic (Tech

Target, 2016). Its description as a community is what made the site be selected for the study as an appropriate forum for netnography:

“On one level, Reddit is a mishmash of literally thousands of different communities, all overlapping slightly. But there is continuity amongst those communities, and most Redditors agree that there is, to some extent, something that can be called the Reddit community” (Hern & Bengtsson, 2015, n.p).

In addition, most of its users have college degrees relative to the general internet population, which is an indicator that they are well educated (Alexa, 2017). The essence of Reddit is the voting system in which user’s upvote or downvote a post at their own discretion. Therefore, the more upvotes a post gets, the more prominently it will be displayed on the site. More so, the comments on the site are as important as the posts as they can be seen as extended discussion forums (CBR, 2017).

Data collection. After entering the community begins the data collection phase. In netnographic studies, this is done by directly copying textual data from the discussion occurring online. Which data is considered is determined by the research questions (Kozinet, 2002). To find corresponding data we have used Reddit's search bar looking for the following key phrases:

- “LGBT Marketing”
- “LGBT Campaign”
- “LGBT Advertising”
- “LGBT Promotion”
- “Gay Marketing”
- “Gay Campaign”
- “Gay Advertising”
- “Gay Promotion”

The search displayed a great number of online conversations, also called threads, which Reddit automatically sorts according to relevance, determined by Reddit users through the site’s voting system (CBR, 2017). The selection of relevant threads was guided by our research questions. To be considered, the discussions needed to have a decent number of comments (at least five) and a headline which seemed as if the corresponding discussion was going to provide relevant information. Posts considered, should also not be older than 2013. The year of posts was important to take into account as we seek to reflect the current attitudes and perceptions within American society. The collection of data was carried out within four weeks from March 26, 2017, until April 22, 2017. It continued until no more new insights were found reaching a level of saturation. The selected comments were then directly copied from Reddit and pasted into a separate Excel sheet for further examination.

Analysis and interpretation. Because the data collected through our netnography is triangulated with information found as part of our content analysis, this section will be presented in chapter 3 and discussed holistically thereafter.

Research ethics. Kozinet developed a guideline which ensures ethical research in netnographic studies. According to his proposed four steps, researchers should:

1. Reveal their presence and intention to online users under study
2. Ensure respondents’ anonymity
3. Get feedback from respondents
4. Evaluate the nature of the forum (private versus public) (Kozinet, 2002).

These guidelines have been debated controversially among marketing scholars. While some raise questions about whether the data available in forums can be used for research without the explicit consent of users (Kozinet, 2002) others claim that since the information is given voluntarily, fewer ethical concerns arise (Sudweeks & Rafaeli, 1995). In line with this are researchers who state that disclosing one's intention to use the available data for research purposes could potentially harm the discrete nature of online studies (Langer & Beckman, 2005).

Since there is no clear consensus as of now, ethical guidelines need to be decided individually based on the nature of the forum (log-in required or not) and the way in which information is gathered (observational or participatory) (Langer & Beckman, 2005). A forum which restricts access based on a password is intended to be used only by its members. Conversations here can, therefore, be seen as semi-private or private and the ethical guidelines should be considered more critically. In the case of access is not limited and posts can be read and written freely by everyone, occurring conversations can be viewed as public. Ethical guidelines can, in this case, be revised (Langer & Beckman, 2005).

In using Reddit, we specifically chose a forum, which is publicly accessible to all users of the internet. Since people posting on Reddit can be assumed to be familiar with the online community, they are aware or expected to be aware that their posts and comments are public. Hence, we do not view a qualitative analysis of some of their publicly posted comments as a violation of their privacy. Agreeing with Sudweeks and Rafaeli (1995), we view these type of discourses similar to graffiti or reader's letters: personal? Certainly. Private? No. Informed consent of Reddit users to use some of the comments for research was therefore not required.

In addition, we decided to use the method of netnography specifically due to the sensitive research topic at hand. Disclosing our identities and asking users for consent could distort the unobtrusiveness which is characteristic of netnography (Kozinet, 2002). It could also influence active user's future online behavior which might disadvantage other researchers intending to use Reddit for similar purposes.

Member checks. A member check means to present parts of or an entire study's findings to the people under research. These checks are done for two reasons. First, they can help to reduce some of the ethical concerns while still preserving the method's unobtrusiveness as these checks are usually done after collecting the data. Second, they can potentially establish an on going relationship to some of the participants which might be useful for future research (Kozinet, 2002).

We have highlighted why some of the ethical guidelines can be neglected when studying public forums. However, we still ensure research ethics by protecting participants' anonymity. Reddit members use pseudonyms, but in online communities, these names have a similar function as birth names and should, therefore, be treated equally cautious (Xun & Reynolds, 2010). We have therefore renamed and coded users' online names to provide them with absolute anonymity. As we do not seek to establish any further relationships with participants due to the nature of this study, we have, however, decided not to present this study to its participants.

3.4 Data Analysis

Miles and Huberman (1994) define qualitative data analysis as having three main features: “data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification” (p.10). The textual data was reviewed using inductive thematic text analysis, in which conceptual findings were identified through an iterative process of transcript review, interpretation and discussion amongst the researchers (Boyatzis, 1998; Patton, 2002).

Ryan and Bernard (2000) state that content analysis is one of the major coding traditions as the process of coding forces the researcher to make judgments about the meanings of data and it's the center of text analysis. Content analysis as a rule-guided technique is characterized by three main features; being systematic, being flexible and reducing data (Schreier, 2012) which are important considerations in this phase of the research.

Once the data was collected and following the steps of qualitative content analysis, the next step was building a coding frame, which is described as the heart of the content analysis method. The process of creating a coding frame involved coming up with a set of categories and subcategories. This is normally treated as the pilot phase and should cover all types of data and sources and also allow for the creation of the majority of categories in the frame (Schreier, 2012).

3.5 Reliability, Generalization & Validity

Carrying out a social research one needs to keep in mind that the stories told by the participants are very subjective since stories and meanings are socially constructed. Therefore, the study needs to fulfil certain quality criteria for measuring and collecting data, which include validity, reliability, and generalizability (Easterby-Smith, 2015).

The Internet is relatively new and many scholars from the fields of marketing and consumer research have discussed its suitability for collecting data of both qualitative and quantitative purposes. Its appeal as a tool that can be used to collect different types of online data stems from the speed of analysis as well as its ease and costs of use (Langer & Beckman, 2005). The reliability of our study lies in its ability to be repeated and generate similar results. This is possible because our collected data stems from secondary sources which are openly and publicly retrievable from the internet. However, given the ever changing social world, a new study can emerge based on a shift in opinions. Based on this, dependability of our study was enhanced by the availability of coding trails and inter-coder agreement, rich documentation and triangulation. In regards to validity, the researchers ensured to include three different perspectives which are the consumers, practitioners/experts, and the LGBT community. This consideration was made through adopting the triangulation method, which compares information to determine corroboration (Wiersma, 2000). Finally, generalizability of the whole study relates to its ability to be transferred to other fields, different participants, groups, and situations. In the case of our study, the selected population was the USA, which is multicultural and engulfed by different minority groups. Therefore based on the detailed descriptions provided, the study would easily reflect or represent other subcultural contexts.

Content analysis

The method assisted in the reduction of the research material by focussing on selected aspects of meaning that relate to the research question as a guide. The coding process involved the use

of overarching categories which unfortunately resulted in the loss of some descriptive information. However, it assisted in displaying how the data relates and compares to each other.

Seeking reliability is crucial to content analysis and involves the agreement among coders or within a single coder over time when classifying content (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005). This mainly relates to the trustworthiness of the coding. Due to such limitations, both researchers were involved in the coding of texts to ensure that both coders reliably applied the same codes to the categories in a consistent manner by comparing two rounds of coding.

Human coding was applied to maximize the validity of measurement, as the researchers identified characteristics within the data deduced from mediated messages to reveal the true underlying meaning of a text by uncovering nuances. The researchers were aware that achieving high reliability in human-coded content analysis would be challenging, especially when analyzing large volumes of data, as it increased the probability of coding mistakes (Riffe, Lacy & Fico, 2005). In addition, the subjective judgments of the researcher's codes decreased the reliability due to human bias as well as the limitation of reproduction of codes (Krippendorff, 2012).

Netnography

To ensure trustworthiness, netnographic studies need to discuss the limitations of the internet and the method. One of these is the fact that the present study only focuses on textual data versus actual behavior. In a face-to-face context, respondents have a limited opportunity to self-reflect before they respond. Consequently, these immediate reactions are lost online, since users can voice their opinions more carefully (Xun & Reynolds, 2010). Many characteristics of the in-person communicative exchange such as body language or voice changes cannot be translated into the digital world using text, losing information, which might be essential (Kozinet, 2006).

Furthermore, people's digital identities are separate from their physical selves, which often remain entirely anonymous. Due to this, users may feel less accountable for the information they share which could distort their reflected opinions (Kozinet, 1998).

While interviews can be steered into an intended direction by the researcher, netnographers need to rely on the natural flow of online discussions. Due to the vast amount of information found, researchers need to filter out the sequence of discussion which is appropriate in terms of answering the research question. To ensure a logical flow of this conversation, a certain degree of cleaning and restructuring of the data is required. This procedure depends on the researcher's comprehensive skill and subjective assessment and is, therefore, limiting any study's validity (Xun & Reynolds, 2010).

Lastly, the generalizability of this study is influenced by the fact that netnographic studies focus on examining rather fewer participants. This limits the derived conclusions' transferability to a larger set of people. Moreover, it is important to note that online forums are largely populated by certain types of people which may not be representative of the average person (Kozinet, 1998).

4. Results

The research was conducted successfully as the collected data reflect the perceptions of consumers regarding explicit LGBT marketing and are therefore able to answer our research question. In keeping with the analysis strategy previously mentioned, the results derived from our content analysis will be presented in three descriptive tables whereas the results of the netnographic research will be presented in one table.

We developed an initial coding index comprising two categories and 6 subcategories based on recurrent and interesting issues in the data collected, the research question and aims of the study. Coding is the process of organizing and sorting data whereby codes serve as a way for immersion in the data which allows for data to be labelled, compiled and organized (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The process of creating codes can be both pre-set and open (Scheier, 2012). We used a hybrid, using both initial codes derived from the conceptual framework derived from the research question and literature review as well as data codes which emerged from the study to reduce the data. This ensured that we focussed on selected aspects of meaning that relate to the overall research question. The meaning and interpretation of data were based on reflexive interpretation resulting in categories that apply to several extracts. As we went along, the coding frame was reviewed and refined allowing for some coding categories to either be added, collapsed or expanded. This ensured that we remained systematic. By analyzing every single part of the material relevant to the research aim, we avoided the bias of looking at material only based on assumption and expectation. The process also required a step by step approach, which in our case, required an interactive approach involving repeating some of the steps, and modifying the coding frame. This was essential to avoid creating too many codes in order to minimize the probability of mistakes in the coding process. Both analysts independently applied this coding frame to the data and thereafter, compared the coding categories which were fairly consistent thus serving as a quality measure for reliability. Deviances were thereafter resolved by discussion as our desire was to guarantee flexibility in ensuring the coding frame matched the material. This involved combining varying portions of concept and data-driven categories within the coding frame. This process was repeated until a point of saturation was reached where no new categories with varying concepts were found.

Content Analysis

The first three tables describe the coding frames created for Burger King, Absolut and Advertising Age. The tables reflect the perceptions found within each of these themes whereby the information is encoded for the purpose of clarity and to allow for an appropriate interpretation. Hence, we also refer to coding frame when discussing the tables. The frames offer an overview of all categories found, define these and give a few examples in the form of quotes from online users.

The first coding frame of this chapter highlights the data found in regards to Burger King's LGBT campaign "Proud Whopper". We have labelled our findings using two different main categories: "Perceptions" or "Other". The "Perceptions" category highlights users' opinions about explicit LGBT marketing and contains six sub-categories. Under "Other" we have included three subcategories. This part of the table contains all information found which did not represent a clear perception of explicit gay marketing.

Main category	Subcategory	Description	Indicators	Examples
Perceptions		What the participants feel and think the company is doing when they engage in LGBT advertising		
	Pink washing	When the participants think it's a marketing strategy aimed at promoting the product/brand to appeal to the LGBT community in order to gain economic value	The category applies whenever a participant expresses the view that the company is pandering/economic value/profit/clever marketing/commercialization/demonstrates a shallow commitment/not genuine/not authentic/exploitation/lack of trust	<p>“Why do business's pander to a specific religion or lifestyle...if we're all the same...then why pander...they lost my business just on the principle of pandering to gain customers...disgusting!!!!” (BK 89_FB).</p> <p>“But given Burger King’s general silence on LGBT issues thus far, many were left wondering whether this wasn’t just some elegant sleight of hand, an attempt to put fresh packaging on the same low-grade substance” (BK 3_BLG).</p>
	Acceptance	When the participants’ comments indicate that the campaign is good or acceptable	The category applies if a participant expresses consent/agreement/acceptance/support of the advertising	<p>“I'm a Christian, a wife, mother and grandmother (and no one in my family so far is gay), and I APPLAUD your move, Burger King! Good for you!!! The bigoted hateful remarks of pseudo-Christians here do not represent either Christianity or Jesus Christ; they represent evil” (BK 80_FB).</p> <p>“Love this - very simple, but very powerful. nicely done #Burgerking !#WeAreAllTheSameInside #ProudWhopper” (BK 108_FB).</p>

Brand loyalty	When participants express signs of increased brand loyalty after being exposed to the campaign	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant will return/coming back/ love for the brand/start purchasing the products/increased frequency of buying the brand/product	<p>“I love your food and this has made me love it even more. And yes...gay people do eat fast food” (BK 54_FB).</p> <p>“I rarely eat fast food, but after this commercial, I want Burger King” (BK 116_FB).</p>
Disapproval	When participants comments indicate that the campaign is not acceptable or express a feeling of dislike	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant is disappointed/annoyed/disgusted/don't agree with notion of being the same	<p>“VERY disappointed in you Burger King. Why can't you promote food instead of an agenda??” (BK 51_FB).</p> <p>“prides taken too far. Not everyone has to agree. People try too hard to make us agree. People have their own opinions. Be gay on your own time and quit wasting it trying to satisfy and make everyone support you” (BK 8_INST).</p>
Alienation	When participants state that they feel disconnected or stop visiting or buying the brands product after the campaign was launched	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participants felt discriminated/left out/not included/boycott due to religiously immoral reasons/homophobia	<p>“I will never ever eat at a Burger King again until they make an American Pride burger and a Straight Pride Burger” (BK 117_TWT).</p> <p>“As a Faith Driven Consumer my family will not patronize Burger King anymore” (BK 69_FB).</p>
Advocating social change	When participants comments express that the campaign aims to influence decisions within social systems through taking a stand on embracing diversity through the advertisement	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant felt included/ recognised/self-identity/social identity/not a minority/standing up for diversity/grateful/bold/brave	<p>“This is amazing! Burger King has stood up for what is right regardless the ridicule that they are receiving! I commend you and I thank you for supporting us!” (BK 72_FB).</p> <p>“this is not a political statement they're making. this is a statement of humanity, of viewing people as the same. the idea of the rainbow used in the wrapper is to imply</p>

				inclusiveness, that there is unity in diversity...regardless of color, beliefs, and who you love, we are all the same. Thank you Burger King for showing your humanity and kindness!! :)” (BK 81_FB).
Other	Product	When participants express what they feel/think about the product/brand	The category applies when the comments relate to product design/aesthetic/quality/availability	<p>“WHERE DO I GET ONE?!?!” (BK 15_INST).</p> <p>“Burger King. I'm a Christian, I'm transgender, and only complaint I have is I can't buy the proud burger in Florida” (BK 73_FB).</p>
	Internal inconsistency	When participants’ comments express that their actions and words do not match or they seem conflicted	The category applies when the participants comments are ambiguous, reflecting support and rejection at the same time	<p>“It is hardly surprising that we sometimes appreciate being targeted by big business” (BK 129_ART).</p> <p>“So as you can see, though I disagree with Burger King joining the cultural war that is attacking the family unit, I wholeheartedly agree with Burger Kings outlook on life about human nature, as far as everyone being the same on the inside... we are all broken, and Jesus, who is the "King of all kings" even King over the burger king (Revelation 19:16), is the only one who can fix us in this life, and more importantly in the life to come” (BK 5_BLG).</p>
	Unclear	When participants’ reactions are not clearly revealing their opinions/perceptions and categorization is therefore impossible to make without becoming overtly subjective	The category applies when the participants comments are unclear or seem unsure	<p>“Many customers reported that when they asked what the burger actually was, employees couldn't explain it” (BK 131_ART).</p> <p>“People saying burger king will suffer for this. There are tons of other supporters. So if you really want to boycott, get rid of you</p>

				apple products, Samsung, dove products, don't shop at Amazon, and I guess you've probably never been to Disney world or watched the Disney channel, right? Just saying” (BK 55_FB).
--	--	--	--	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Table 1: Coding frame Burger King

The second table gives an overview of the data taken from Absolut's advertising campaign "Colors Bottle". The "Perceptions" subcategories are congruent, however there is only one subcategory within "Other". The reason for this is that there were more comments found about the Burger King case, which consequently enabled us to create more categories.

Main category	Subcategory	Description	Indicators	Examples
Perceptions		What the participants feel and think the company is doing when they engage in LGBT advertising		
	Pink washing	When the participants think it's a marketing strategy aimed at promoting the product/brand to appeal to the LGBT community in order to gain economic value	The category applies whenever a participant expresses the view that the company is pandering/economic value/profit/clever marketing/demonstrates a shallow commitment/not genuine/not authentic/ exploited/lack of trust	<p>“I don't like the fact that alcohol and tobacco companies prey on the gay community” (AB 67_FB).</p> <p>“This is just advertising marking to lgbt people to drink there alcohol it's about money they want our money. There's already a big enough problem in our community with alcoholism this is not helpful it's damaging to target the lgbt with alcohol so please stop pretending to be doing something good by putting the rainbow on your bottles and saying your supportive of the lgbt community” (AB 64_FB).</p>
	Acceptance	When the participants' comments indicate that the campaign is good or acceptable	The category applies if a participant expresses consent/agreement/acceptance/support of the advertising/bold/brave	<p>“OMG YES YES” (AB 72_TWT).</p> <p>“LOVE this!” (AB 14_INST).</p>
	Brand loyalty	When participants express signs of increased brand loyalty after being exposed to the campaign	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant will return customer/coming back/ love for the brand/start purchasing the products/increased frequency of buying the brand/product	<p>“Straight woman in Bakersfield,California says LOVE! Love your brand, love what you stand for. Thank you” (AB 43_FB).</p> <p>“@absolutvodka All of us ... salute you – always have – always will!” (AB 84_TWT).</p>

	Disapproval	When participants comments indicate that campaign is not acceptable or express a feeling of dislike	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant is disappointed/annoyed/disgusted/don't agree with notion of being the same	<p>"I always hated absolut" (AB 51_FB).</p> <p>"Never liked this gay vodka and never will" (AB 2_BLG).</p>
	Alienation	When participants state that feel disconnected or stop visiting or buying the brands product after the campaign was launched	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participants felt discriminated/left out/not included/boycott due to religiously immoral reasons/homophobia	<p>"Why do you gays lesbians and bi's have to bring YOUR sexuality into everything? Seriously!? I don't care what you do behind your bedroom door! I don't so why are you horse feeding us this crap?" (AB 55_FB).</p> <p>"Love is love .. Between man and woman .. The norm .. Marriage is religious and sacred .. Funny how u guys jus wanna change it up .. Funny how a man and a man can't give birth to a baby or woman and woman can't give birth to a baby .. God have mercy" (AB 63_FB).</p>
	Advocating social change	When participants express that the campaign aims to influence decisions within social systems through taking a stand on embracing diversity through the advertisement	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant felt included/recognised/self-identity/social identity/not a minority/ standing up for diversity/grateful	<p>"Absolutvodka was the 1st and has ALWAYS supported the GLBT Community !! I say a Bigger round of applause to you for that !!" (AB 76_TWT).</p> <p>"I was so happy to see this, just picked up a bottle of Absolute! Going to invite my friends over; gay, straight, black, white, green – we can all get hammered EQUALLY!!" (AB 46_FB).</p>
Other	Product	When participants express what they feel/think about the product/brand	The category applies when the comments relate to product design/aesthetic/quality/availability	<p>"Beautiful bottle design !!! #ForeverAbsolut" (AB 85_TWT).</p> <p>"@absolutvodka_us were can I get it I'm in #chicago" (AB 25_INST).</p>

Table 2: Coding frame Absolut.

In both studies for Burger King and Absolut, there were a mix of both negative and positive results. However, in the case of Absolut there were more positive than negative. In the case of Burger King there was an almost equal amount of positive and negative comments.

Having established several patterns that were present in the two cases we took up the task to interpret why the patterns seemed to occur. To do this, we reviewed the coded data and the categories derived and identified four major themes upon closer examination. These are:

- Alienation
- Pink Washing
- Advocating Social Change
- Brand Loyalty

The above mentioned topics stand out not only due to the amount of comments made by both Burger King and Absolut consumers. Moreover, the themes are discussed by users from various different perspectives and are rather complex, which is useful for our research. As we seek to create implications for both theory and practice, we need to include differing perceptions. A simpler category like “Acceptance”, for example, does not allow for any in-depth interpretation. The same applies to all categories found under “Other” which do not contribute to answering our research question as they are not related to any perceptions. Thus, moving forward, we focussed on these four themes. In order to understand the four themes more comprehensively, we filtered out all data from Advertising Age and Reddit in accordance to these categories. By applying this thematic filter, we were able to reduce the amount of information taken into consideration significantly and select only the appropriate data.

The third and final table, which is part of the researchers’ content analysis, highlights the information found via Advertising Age. There are five different subcategories identified by us and put into the table. They focus on the practitioner's perspective which are more specialised. In particular, we interpreted the themes mentioned above in a narrower fashion ensuring that it was limited to only relevant themes and data relating to them. It also provided an opportunity to reflect on the differences that would emerge from the experts’ perceptions which grants a sense of confidence in the general conclusion to be derived from the analysis.

Main Category	Subcategory	Description	Indicators	Examples
Perspective	Authenticity	When statements express that companies should engage in LGBT campaigns when they have an inclusive marketing and employee policy as well as a longstanding commitment with the LGBT community	The category applies when the comments indicate that a company should be authentic/adopt equality policy/partner with the LGBT community/100% commitment/support history/connect/core values	<p>"More and more companies are beginning to realize that supporting equality doesn't stop at having inclusive workplace polices. Supporting equality also means being inclusive in your advertising and marketing and your outreach to your community and customers" (AD_3).</p> <p>"Above all, marketers must ask if their brands should be marketing to the LGBT community at all. Does your brand stand for equality? Is it in the DNA of your organization? Look at how you recruit. Do you provide same-sex benefits for employees? If not, consider taking your marketing dollars elsewhere" (AD_5).</p>
	Target group/targeting strategy	When participants comments express that the brand focuses on a particular market segment of customers	The category applies when the comments mention targeting strategy/target group/millennials/Gen Z	<p>"For many of the historically more traditional brands on the list, appealing to the LGBT community is not "just a gay strategy, but a millennial strategy" (AD_4).</p> <p>"...Nikon, Ikea, Chobani and Campbell's are using LGBTQ people in their general market advertising, particularly in campaigns that reach millennials and Gen Z... These ..consumers are looking for progressive brands that embrace diversity" (AD_6).</p>
	Brand loyalty	When the data states that a certain action would ensure customers love a particular brand even more or increased their frequency of buying the brand/product as well as the business benefit attached to catering to the LGBT segment	The category applies when the statements indicate that the action would yield loyalty/increased purchase/benefit/economic benefit/	<p>"71% are also more likely to purchase from a company that actively donates to LGBT charities and causes" (AD_4).</p> <p>"The market has staying power -- it's not here today, gone tomorrow. And despite the rush, there will always be a place for authentic marketing that connects with LGBTQ</p>

			consumers” (AD_6).
Advocating social change	When the data states that companies should focus on being inclusive, promote equality and impact change as they promote their LGBT campaigns	The category applies when the statements indicate inclusivity/equality	<p>“As gay goes mainstream, marketers need to do the same in planning and buying their media. If brands are not inclusive in their marketing, they could be unwittingly communicating that they are exclusive” (AD_5).</p> <p>“There's a difference between putting an LGBT-inclusive print ad in Family Circle versus putting the same ad in Out Magazine. inclusive marketing is a chance to support all types of families and give them a chance to be seen” (AD_2).</p>
Approval	When the data approves of companies’ focus on the LGBT community because it is a sound business strategy and/or because it is timely.	The category applies when the statements indicate approval.	<p>“The inclusion of LGBT themes in advertising is at an all-time high and will likely increase with the recent historic Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality” (AD_1).</p> <p>"26 Most LBGT-Friendly Brands, According to Logo's New Trailblazing Companies Ranking; Out of the top 25 companies on the list, four are from the financial sector. ""Banks have needed to transform their messaging to stay relevant,"" said Bob Witeck, president, Witeck Communications. Despite backlash from groups that threatened to boycott the company, Wells Fargo refused to pull the spot” (AD_4).</p>

Table 3: Coding frame Advertising Age.

Netnography

The netnography performed on Reddit is able to give even deeper insight into the perceptions and opinions of consumers. Data collected here were mostly taken from LGBT-related subreddits. As Reddit is an easily accessible online forum catering to all types of people, there are also comments from non-LGBT members but as the sub-forums are marked as “safe space” for LGBTs, it can be assumed that comments predominantly came from queers which means that this information represents gay and lesbians’ views.

Reactions can be grouped into four different main categories with participants being either positive, negative, sceptical or ambivalent towards explicit gay marketing.

Main category	Subcategory	Description	Indicators	Examples
Positive		When the participants perceive marketing towards the LGBT community as something useful and believe the company has a genuine interest in supporting the community		
	Advocating social change	When participants comments express that the campaign aims to influence decisions within social systems through taking a stand on embracing diversity through the advertisement	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participants felt accepted/recognized/included into larger society/campaign is raising awareness	<p>“If by seeing their advertising close-minded people start thinking: "well, I guess being gay is just normal" I feel well served” (RED 20).</p> <p>“It's not like they're supporting one presidential candidate or the other. Maybe they're just trying to stand up for their employees and equality and human rights. Sure, they get news stories and more advertising, but it's still a risk. Good on them for taking a stand” (RED 24).</p>
	Credibility	When the participants perceive the marketing efforts as credible because the company supports LGBT-related organisations and/or cares about their gay and lesbian employees	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participants think company is supportive/employees have benefits	“It's all part of the assimilation into a hetro-normative culture. It's a form of acceptance... Target also happens to have a good policy when it comes to benefits for non-married long term couples (same sex or otherwise) and their children, so I don't think it's all about the dollas in this case” (RED 2).
Negative		When the participants disapprove of marketing towards the LGBT community and perceive it as insincere		

	Exploitive	When participants state that company is only interested in monetary gains	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participants felt used/angry/taken advantage of/pandered	<p>“I can't stand that Pride/Pride-related things were turned into a big circus to pander for votes and consumer dollars” (RED 12).</p> <p>“It's highly targeted and exploitative; even if it were for LGBTQ rights, I personally don't like being allotted into an "LGBTQ" group of people to an advertiser, I'd prefer to be advertised to in a non-exploitative and informative way like everyone else” (RED 16).</p>
	Narrow focus	When participants comments express that the campaign solely cares about one or few, but not all people within the LGBT community/does not acknowledge the entire spectrum of sexual minorities	The category applies when the comments indicate that the participant felt excluded/abandoned	<p>“They throw out LGBT but what they're mostly focused on is the white wealthy cis-gender gay and lesbian people who will buy their crap” (RED 6).</p> <p>“Fuck the corporations with their disgusting pandering crap, slapping a rainbow on an advertisement does not mean shit. They throw out LGBT but what they're mostly focused on is the white wealthy cis-gender gay and lesbian people who will buy their crap” (RED 27).</p>
	Deceptive	When participants' comments express that the company only intends to be perceived as if it cared but actually does not or even works against queers	The category applies when the participants indicate that companies just appear to care and assume a lack of genuine commitment	<p>“I think Pinkwashing is trying to appear progressive in all aspects (not just gay rights) by shifting the focus to your pro-gay stance, although your group may be oppressive or destructive in other areas (human rights, pay equity, environmental issues etc)” (RED 9).</p> <p>“a lot of advertising doesn't give a crap about including gay people, they just want to look like they care” (RED 21).</p>
Ambivalence		When the participants have a clear opinion but voice two different	The category applies when the participants comments are ambiguous	<p>“It never ceases to amaze me how susceptible the LGBTQ community seems to</p>

		viewpoints; meaning they appreciate LGBT marketing for its social inclusion while they critique the financial profits companies make out of it	reflecting support and rejection at the same time. Support refers to comments which indicate acceptance/inclusion whereas rejection is reflected in phrases like money/marketing ploy/economic & reputational effects	be to targeted advertising supporting the community. I mean there's nothing wrong with announcing your support for a cause, namely LGBTQ rights and marriage/gender equality, but when you turn that support into an advertising campaign, it changes that support into exploitation" (RED 7). "to answer your question if this is "exploitation for the cause," to some extent, yes. But think of the companies that started this trend, such as Google, Starbucks, etc, and realize that it's not purely exploitative. I think the Google employee "It gets better" video is not primarily to advertise the Google brand, but actually help people. ... Companies face a real risk of losing revenue. In short, there are many motives for companies to embrace the LGBTQ community. I believe the long term effects though are mostly positive" (RED 17).
Sceptical		When participants are uncertain about what to think of LGBT marketing; they are uncertain whether it is genuinely supportive or just a clever marketing strategy applied by companies to make profit	The category applies when the comments are rather asking/interrogative contain phrases such as why or for what reason	"Do they "support" the LGBT community by plastering two same-sex people embracing each other on their signage, or do they actually go out of their way to contribute money to relevant advocacy groups? I think the concept is great if these companies are actually interested in LGBT rights, but I'm just a skeptic, you know?" (RED 4).

Table 4: Coding frame Reddit.

The frames as illustrated in Tables 1,2,3 and 4 enabled us to test the categories through trial coding and gave us an opportunity to look across the data. This aided us in identifying patterns or connections and interpreting the entire dataset. Both analysts compared and contrasted possible patterns in the data and identified emerging themes. Consensus was reached on final themes by discussion and by returning to the original objectives of the research. All four coding frames from Burger King, Absolut, Advertising Age and Reddit are the foundation of the following analysis chapter.

5. Analysis & Discussion

The results demonstrate how companies that are explicitly targeting the LGBT community are perceived by consumers and what determines whether marketers should apply explicit or implicit marketing. In this section, we move deeper into understanding what was examined through perceptions consumers have regarding explicit LGBT advertising marketing efforts from the selected cases; Burger King and Absolut. In addition, results from Reddit and Advertising Age are also discussed to enrich and provide more depth considering the roles that the different perspectives offered from the online community and reflections from managers and practitioners. The first part of this chapter will highlight the consumers' perceptions, the impact of the perceptions from the three perspectives and the importance of moving beyond implicit marketing to explore explicit marketing.

After reviewing the data from Burger King and Absolut, there are four major themes that emerge which appear due to the frequency of themes being mentioned by both Burger King and Absolut consumers regarding each of these categories as well as some interesting perspectives with little to no research done on them. These are:

- Alienation
- Pink Washing
- Advocating Social Change
- Brand Loyalty

Alienation

The most obvious impact of using explicit advertising targeting LGBTs and consistent with prior research (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005; Borgerson et al 2006) is that consumers felt alienated. This was reflected in numerous instances where the study reveals that there are some customers who have felt alienated and were forthright in sharing their comments of their disgust and disapproval after being exposed to the gay-targeted advertisements by Burger King and Absolut that led them to abandoning consumption of the brand. One especially common reaction shared was discriminatory and homophobic as illustrated by a post on Absolut's Twitter account:

“GAY VODKA...won't drink anything GAY!!” (AB 78_TWT).

This tendency to discriminate against the LGBT community can be explained by Aaker, Brumbaugh and Grier (2000) when they speak of unwanted non-target market effects. Seen in this light, it's not surprising that such effects can occur if people do not identify with the LGBT community or don't feel part of the desired target group resulting in the boycott of the corresponding brand. This is often accompanied by an active persuasion of others to do the same bearing in mind the dominance of the non-target group in this case heterosexuals, which is demonstrated by this consumer's comment:

“Hope you go broke with this stupid promotion, I will be boycotting you and will spread the word online for everyone to do the same” (BK 85_FB).

Angelini & Bradley (2010) note that heterosexuals who come across advertising images that reflect an aspect of gay culture tend to be uncomfortable and exhibit disapproval thus the possibility of the alienation of heterosexual consumers which may be reflected here as it can be assumed that the poster of the above comment is heterosexual.

Although high rates of alienation have been documented, we are unaware of any investigations relating to loyalty of a brand being affected based on customers feeling alienated. There were some customers who had been loyal to the brand for quite some time illustrating deep attachment to the brand but stopped supporting it due to the campaign as demonstrated by a customer's negative statement on Burger King's social media site:

"Bye, bye, Burger King! Lost a 40 year customer, to make a political statement" (BK 43_FB).

As these people stopped purchasing the product based on a marketing campaign, it may imply that their loyalty towards and involvement with the brand was questionable which may be explained by Aaker, Brumbaugh and Grier (2000) whereby the customer feels they are not the intended target for the brand.

Something which stood out within this category is that there were some customers who were not part of the intended target group or did not identify as LGBT but still showed signs of acceptance towards the campaign:

"Straight woman in Bakersfield, California says LOVE! Love your brand, love what you stand for. Thank you" (AB 43_FB).

The woman clearly defines herself as straight. Thus, it may be implied that she does not self-identify with the LGBT community. The woman's acceptance of the explicit campaign is therefore not based on the gay imagery used or her personally strong relations to the LGBT community (Um, 2014) but on her agreement with the communicated values of the campaign which promotes equality and inclusivity. She may also believe in these values regardless of her sexual orientation and sexual identity which to some extent confirms an assumption put across as a shift in attitudes relating to acceptance of various ways of life and family structures (Ostrow, 2012; Roberts & Siddiqui, 2015; Um, 2014; Witeck, 2014).

Therefore the level of tolerance of explicit LGBT advertising can be extended to include the society being more accommodating due to changing times. Further, results from Advertising Age confirm that with the changing times and inclusive laws, alienation should not be a hindrance as more people are accommodating and thus marketers should get on board at this timely moment. As demonstrated from the Advertising Age discussion revealing;

"Corporate mentality went from, We're not ready for gay marketing to We don't want to be left behind" (AD_6).

On the other hand, past research stated that most companies feel that the potential rewards of tapping into the gay and lesbian market fail to outweigh the potential backlash by mainstream audiences in response to the company's actions (Oakenfull & Greenlee, 2005). From the discussions on Reddit, the community also agrees that there is an inherent cost or risk associated with targeting the LGBT community in mainstream media as they are minorities which is related to heterosexuals not wanting to be associated with them. This is illustrated from the comment:

"...Companies face a real risk of losing revenue" (RED 17).

However, from the same medium there appears to be a discourse based on the idea that although the risk/cost may be a hindrance of progress, the potential gains related to social change and economic value derived from targeting gays and lesbians outweigh the costs of losing some customers who have refused to accept diversity. As displayed in the discussion, one comment indicates that being more inclusive is more profitable than not:

“The amount of companies openly marketing to LGBT people, supporting LGBT-friendly politics, and featuring LGBT-friendly internal policies tells me that it is more profitable to be inclusive vs homophobic” (RED 23).

Therefore taken together, these discussions point to a broader implication whereby the study contradicts previous theories that suggest that alienation causes more negative effects on companies than positive.

To pursue this theme further, an interesting comparison was done based on the levels of alienation observed from the two cases in relation to the explicit LGBT campaigns. The qualitative content analysis carried out on the selected cases showed that negative comments in the Burger King case predominated over the Absolut case. Why is that? This may be attributed to Absolut’s target audience who has been stated to be millennials as described by Robertson (2013); “Today’s target consumers for Absolut were just babies when the vodka brand first collaborated with Andy Warhol. It was 1986, and the pop art pioneer was the first artist to create an original piece for Absolut, based on the iconic bottle” (n.p.). This target group may also be associated to their positive attitude towards gays as shown in literature by Um (2010). A person’s education, social and economic situation or values can determine this acceptance. In contrast to Burger King’s target audience that seems to be a mass product cutting across all age groups to an even older demographic “the changing marketing strategy has been successful and Burger King’s mix of both women and customers age 50 or older increased further in Q3 after initial improvements in Q2” (Morrisson, 2012, n.p.). Hence, it may be implied that the average Absolut customer is more tolerant and open towards sexual minorities than Burger King’s customer base.

In addition, Absolut has had a long-standing commitment with the LGBT community as mentioned by the brand’s marketing controller, “We look back at our history within the LGBT community with pride and are excited to use the launch of Absolut Colours as an opportunity to re-establish ourselves as true pioneers in our continuous support for equality” (Apparatus, 2015, n.p.). In contrast, Burger King just recently started targeting gays explicitly.

Pink Washing

According to Jaffe (1991), advertisers who purpose to reach gay and lesbian consumers, must provide advertising content that the target group identifies with. However, this study demonstrates that although the use of LGBT advertising can effectively target gay and lesbian consumers, it may also breed outrage, doubt and distrust. This was mentioned and discussed at length while comparing the three perspectives whereby, such a negative perception is brought about when consumers question or criticize a company's agenda. Situations whereby LGBT concerns are hidden behind the exploitation of institutions in order to cast their agendas in the pretence of positive pink-PR are known as "pinkwashing". This term is borrowed from Breast Cancer Action, which criticises companies using the pink ribbon for PR purposes (Rowe, 2012).

While analysing the data, the results show that the consumers did not trust the campaign as they expressed a lot of doubt related to the company's intention and agenda behind carrying out the pride month campaign. One article reflecting on Burger King's campaign illustrated this passage:

"But given Burger King's general silence on LGBT issues thus far, many were left wondering whether this wasn't just some elegant sleight of hand, an attempt to put fresh packaging on the same low-grade substance" (BK 3_BLG).

The results in this category demonstrated a lack of genuineness from the marketer which was often considered as exploitation. In addition, many customers perceived that the driving force for the company engaging in LGBT advertising was for financial gain which implies a lack of trust in the company's value system as illustrated by the phrase:

"I highly doubt Burger King even cares about "gay pride" they are just doing it to get money from all the gays and gay supporters" (BK 27_INST).

The same was evident in the Absolut case where it's implied that a company's genuineness is demonstrated by its commitment to community outreach through supporting LGBT related charities and initiatives:

"So this is a cash grab? If they're not donating anything to charity, this is pretty shameful" (AB 3_BLG).

The results from the Advertising Age's managerial perspective also echoed the same sentiments by establishing that this unfavourable response from consumers should guide marketers to avoid the temptation of joining the bandwagon of shallow commitment or what some consumers described as clever marketing if they do not actually intend to be authentic through promoting equality:

"Get your own house in order. Brands do not have a right to profit from LGBTQ consumers without supporting full equality for LGBTQ people" (AD_7).

To a greater degree, being authentic or fully committed was related to being a part of the company's DNA which upon interpretation refers to a company's core values. Whereby if corporates do not consider equality from angles such as embracing diversity through recruitment of employees, inclusive advertising, policy support and social media then any form of pride initiative is considered deceptive as demonstrated by the following phrase:

"marketers must ask if their brands should be marketing to the LGBT community at all. Does your brand stand for equality? Is it in the DNA of your organization? Look at how you recruit. Do you provide same-sex benefits for employees? If not, consider taking your marketing dollars elsewhere" (AD_5).

While marketers mostly agreed as previously discussed, the LGBT community would most probably be offended by pink washing, sharing mixed reactions. Some results from Reddit indicated that some members were disappointed when companies took advantage of the pride-related events to fulfil their own selfish needs such as attract customers in order to generate profit as shown in the comment below:

"I can't stand that Pride/Pride-related things were turned into a big circus to pander for votes and consumer dollars" (RED 12).

On the contrary, others were also aware of the exploitation behind the pride campaigns carried out by companies but expressed a sense of ambivalence. The results indicate awareness of the deception behind a campaign however, the consumers still applaud progression implied through the inclusion and acknowledgement gays and lesbians receive on the social equality level. This implies that the consumers are willing to bear the cost of being pandered for the reason that there is a possibility of a positive benefit to being obtained. This can be verified by one of the comments analysed:

"exploitation for the cause, to some extent, yes. more corporations see the economic and PR effect and also come out in support of gay marriage. The more this happens, the more acceptable gay marriage becomes. Corporations can exploit gay marriage all they want as long as it has a positive impact on our end goal" (RED 17).

This study therefore contradicts Oakenfull and Greenlee's (2004) research on the use of implicit advertising also referred to as gay window advertising. It is a marketing technique creating advertisements in a way which makes gay people feel as if they are targeted while the ad's gay cues go unnoticed by heterosexuals. However from the study, it may be implied that using implicit advertising to avoid backlash from mainstream consumers has a negative impact on the targeted gay and lesbian community. This is based on the perception that the use of implicit ads is not authentic or bold enough whereby companies do not want to fully expose themselves. According to the results, the use of explicit imagery contributes to a company's authenticity while the lack of it demonstrates the rise of pink washing.

In addition, it's interesting to note that supporting LGBT charities, although this may demonstrate support for the gay community and elicit gay favour, is not sufficient to be considered authentic or fully committed to the LGBT community. Therefore, equality and embracing diversity should be integrated into a company's core values to legitimize their association or support for the gay community.

Advocating Social Change

The findings of this study agree with literature in the sense that companies can indeed "be agents for positive social change" (Angelini & Bradley, 2010, p.499). Many consumers perceived the inclusion of members of the LGBT community in advertisements as pushing social boundaries forward. This implies that the visibility of gays and lesbians in ads connotes normality and equality to other members of society. This could have a positive effect on their attitudes towards sexual minorities and create a more open-minded and tolerant society as demonstrated by this comment:

"Whether we like it or not, many minority groups throughout history have tended to make progress by first being recognized as a target group for advertising ... Here's the thing about advertising: Even though it may be designed to target a small target group, it generally ends up being visible to a much larger audience. As a side-effect, it promotes visibility of that minority group" (RED 5).

The results from Advertising Age also confirm the same however, they go a step further and expound on what supporting equality means as more companies take on the initiative. It is not only limited to being inclusive in work policies but in all other facets from stakeholders, customers and the community as phrased below:

"More and more companies are beginning to realize that supporting equality doesn't stop at having inclusive workplace policies. Supporting equality also means being inclusive in your advertising and marketing and your outreach to your community and customers" (AD_3)

This inclusion is not only applauded by gay and lesbian people, but also by straight and even religious consumers as these people appreciate the campaigns' promotion of a more diverse society which is demonstrated by the comments below from both Burger King and Absolut cases:

"I was so happy to see this, just picked up a bottle of Absolute! Going to invite my friends over; gay, straight, black, white, green - we can all get hammered EQUALLY!!" (AB 46_FB).

"I am God loving, not God fearing and if you call yourself a Christian then you need to STOP the hate and judgement. Read the new testament and listen to Jesus who said to all not to judge, and to love everyone - no exceptions. Thank You Burger King for being on the right side of history. <3" (BK 40_FB).

Oakenfull and Greenlee (2014) further state that some consumers see gay marketing equal to taking a stance. The present study confirms this aspect as well as some gays considered being included and represented within marketing campaigns as being supportive of the gay social movement. Unlike others, the results from Reddit also demonstrate that some consumers are simply satisfied with being represented in commercials despite the lack of any other commitment from the company such as supporting a LGBT-related organisation. In short, these users view inclusion in commercials equal to driving social change as one company's success will drive others to benchmark causing a ripple effect and thus a larger impact will be generated as highlighted:

"Both the LGBT community and these corporations benefit of the exposure. I don't care if they make a lot of money by using a rainbow, I care that people get to know that others care and that we matter. I hope they make tons and tons of money so other companies will follow and give us their support as well" (RED 19).

The Reddit community further perceives explicit marketing as a demonstration of a company's boldness as they acknowledge that targeting them is a risk most brands would shy away from. This confirms the perspective of Oakenfull, McCarthy and Greenlee (2008), that most companies are still reluctant to do so in fear of alienating a majority of their mainstream consumers. Explicit gay advertising is, in this context, perceived as something brave and bold as it is accompanied by a certain risk of not being able to please every customer but still worth taking a stand in support of the LGBT community:

"It's not like they're supporting one presidential candidate or the other. Maybe they're just trying to stand up for their employees and equality and human rights. Sure, they get news stories and more advertising, but it's still a risk. Good on them for taking a stand" (RED 24).

Even though companies might not openly support any presidential candidate, the fact that explicit gay marketing is perceived as taking a stand by some, still adds a political dimension. This is demonstrated by the below comment which compares the role of the company's CEO to semi-political opinion leaders whose conduct can have significant impact in terms of influencing people's perspective or view:

"And CEOs became activists, with leaders such as Tim Cook of Apple, Howard Schultz of Starbucks and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook speaking out forcefully on full equality for

LGBTQ people. Their influence can't be understated and it speaks to their strong corporate values. Be bold” (AD_6).

While the aforementioned comments applaud explicit LGBT advertising because they promote social change, it is interesting to note that some practitioners recommend explicit marketing for a different reason - to not send out the wrong message. The results from Advertising Age show that companies which do not include gay and lesbian consumers in any promotions might unconsciously say that they are uninterested in this target group. This could lead to LGBT consumers rejecting these types of brands as illustrated by Aaker, Brumbaugh and Grier (2000), whereby consumers tend to avoid brands if they feel they are not the intended target. This risk may also apply to companies which implicitly target LGBTs as they communicate a lack of inclusion as illustrated by this comment:

“...If brands are not inclusive in their marketing, they could be unwittingly communicating that they are exclusive” (AD_5).

The Reddit community further confirms where it highlights that gay consumers see corporations as allies in fighting for social acceptance. This implies that the corporation becomes an equal partner or friend which can be a source of guarantee for consumers' support as long as the support is reciprocated as highlighted below:

“corporations play an important role in influencing American society, in this case the acceptance of the gay community. What is important to realize here is that these corporations can be used as a resource for our cause because there is a common ground. Corporations want money? Fine. We want recognition? Fine” (RED 15).

To sum it up, the results of this study confirm that being explicit in targeting the LGBT community demonstrates that companies can be agents for positive social change. Based on a reflexive interpretation, whether the company intentionally supports other LGBT organisations through social work or just adopts a pride campaign in the mainstream media, there is a positive change to be attributed to it. Therefore companies are urged to be advocates of social change through the adoption of explicit campaigns which transcend financial benefit by driving transformative change.

Brand Loyalty

Several scholars have argued that the LGBT community can be especially loyal towards brands. As Oakenfull, McCarthy and Greenlee (2008) state, “Companies targeting homosexuals specifically, may be rewarded with more positive brand associations and greater levels of purchase intent among their targeted customers” (p.192). The results of this study match these sentiments to a great extent by implying that advocating for social change is a catalyst for brand loyalty. Thus, a company that is perceived as a social change driver has a better chance of enjoying higher levels of brand loyalty from targeting gay and lesbian consumers. In reference to the Burger King and Absolut cases, the brands were not only able to attract new customers and increase their return customers but also to win back lost customers. This brand loyalty was found to be independent of the customer's sexual orientation evidenced by these comments:

“Straight woman in Bakersfield, California says LOVE! Love your brand, love what you stand for. Thank you” (AB 43_FB).

“I LOVE THIS! I haven't eaten at Burger King in ages, but I think I'll do just that. WAY TO GO BK!” (BK 47_FB).

Furthermore, in the case of Absolut most customers know that the company has been advertising to the gay community for a couple of decades. Because of this, Absolut may enjoy increased levels of customer loyalty due to their long standing demonstration of commitment:

“Do people know nothing about this company? Listen up haters, Absolut has been an outspoken supporter of the LGBT community for over 30 years...best read up on companies before you look stupid by saying you won't shop/eat/drink” (AB 48_FB).

The Reddit community further confirms what Oakenfull (2007) has described as the “Dream Market”, whereby LGBT customers are extremely loyal to brands which are respectful towards them. One of the comments described below, highlights that gay consumers see corporations as allies in fighting for social acceptance. This implies that the corporation becomes an equal partner or friend which can be a source of guarantee for consumers’ support as long as the support is reciprocated:

“corporations play an important role in influencing American society, in this case the acceptance of the gay community. What is important to realize here is that these corporations can be used as a resource for our cause because there is a common ground. Corporations want money? Fine. We want recognition? Fine” (RED 15).

Results from Advertising Age further confirm what Oakenfull (2007) has described as the “Dream Market”, whereby LGBT customers are extremely loyal to brands which are respectful towards them. This explanation is supported by the analysis from which it illustrates that targeted consumers will be more inclined to purchase from brands promoting equality and caring about the community other than solely making profit as described:

“LGBT consumers have a buying power of about \$884 billion, according to Witeck, and Logo research found that 71% are more likely to support a brand after seeing an equality-themed ad. And 71% are also more likely to purchase from a company that actively donates to LGBT charities and causes” (AD_4).

Furthermore our study extends the concept relating to the target group. We have found that brand loyalty and acceptance towards companies which advertise to gays and lesbians is related to age demographics. Results from Reddit show that millennials are more accepting and open minded than older consumers. Comments related to exhibiting that the younger generation is more accepting of the gay community and their importance to the success of a brand based on their disposable income and loyalty are demonstrated by the two comments below:

“18-24 crowd is the biggest customer base for most companies, and that demographic is strongly proLGBT” (RED 25).

“It's worth noting that not only do the 18-24 crowd tend to have more disposable income, but as this demographic is starting to make their own buying decisions, building up a brand loyalty early is a pretty sound advertising strategy” (RED 26).

Consequently, results from Advertising Age are congruent to targeting millennials. These results suggest that the millennial generation acknowledges social diversity as targeting gays is equated to targeting millennials.

“For many of the historically more traditional brands on the list, appealing to the LGBT community is not “just a gay strategy, but a millennial strategy,” Mr. Witeck said”(AD_4).

Thus, by using explicit gay and lesbian imagery in advertising placed in mainstream media, marketers can appeal to both LGBT and straight consumers and more so building brand loyalty which contradict the risk of creating negative sentiments among heterosexual consumers. However, for a favourable response to be achieved, marketers to a great extent need to have a well-defined demographic of their target group to avoid varying attitudinal differences.

6. Conclusion

6.1 Closing Statement

Is implicit marketing towards LGBT consumers still relevant?

The results are consistent with theoretical perspectives offered and advance prior research in an important direction. Most scholars, as evidenced in the literature review, still believe in the suitability of implicit gay marketing however, practitioners rarely use this technique. We therefore raised the question whether there are still situations in which implicit gay marketing should be preferred over explicit marketing and what determines when either can be used. Upon interpreting the results, the conclusion derived was that implicit marketing towards gay and lesbian consumers is antiquated and impractical and hence not suited.

This study presented how a triangulation scheme analysed the perceptions of heterosexual customers, homosexual consumers' standpoint and an applied and practical viewpoint from practitioners in the marketing community which increases trust in the validity of the study's conclusions. The results were acquired using unobtrusive data collection methods, which enabled us to gain raw and unadorned information. Therefore ensuring the data reflects their true opinions giving results that were consistent with the findings obtained from the three different perspectives employed. This was important as almost all prior researches carried out in regards to LGBT marketing were quantitative therefore lacking the extraction of meaning from rich, complex sources of linguistic.

The LGBT community and its acceptance within American society have come a long way. From the initial police raids of gay and lesbian bars in the 1960s, to their protests for social acceptance throughout the 70s, fast-forward to June 2015, when same sex couples were granted equal rights in terms of marriage. Therefore, marketers who intend to target the LGBT community should always consider its eventful past; and given the corporations' power to influence societal opinion they should use this power responsibly. Just like any other target group, gay and lesbian consumers deserve to be treated with respect and dignity, acknowledging and supporting their continuous fight for social inclusion. Given the prevalence of gay and lesbian equality rights and more so in the United States' society where it is considered a melting pot of people, it should come as no surprise that this cultural diversity is reflected in commercials. Thus, although, the gay community and LGBT marketing is coming out of the closet, it is the duty of marketers, advertisers and the rest of society to ensure that the progress is not transient but influences further progress. This study has enabled us to answer the research question raised in the beginning and has demonstrated that the way in which we challenged the status quo of LGBT marketing is sound.

The one advantage implicit marketing has over explicit is that the advertisement has a reduced risk of alienating heterosexuals as some of them are unable to decode the gay cues used in the campaign. It has been stated that gays and lesbians are an increasingly visible part of American society with LGBTs being the third largest minority in the United States. Along with this, gay culture has become more widespread and even gone mainstream. This means that straight people, even those uneducated, will eventually be able to decode gay cues. As rainbow flags and words such as pride are used more often by marketers and through human rights propagation of laws, straight people will eventually understand that these refer to homosexuals. Hence, implicit gay advertising is likely to lose its advantage making the technique rather inefficient and outdated.

Another indicator that implicit marketing is outdated is that it is hardly ever used by companies. To the contrary, corporations have long understood, that explicit gay marketing makes good business sense and evidence has shown that the corporate mentality has shifted to companies not wanting to be left behind. Moreover, most corporations are aware of their responsibility for their ecological footprint. This awareness is now increasingly extended to its social influence. Realizing this power to shape public opinion can be a great opportunity to build brand loyalty. To tap into this, companies need to be inclusive in their commercials which cannot be achieved through implicit marketing that tries to hide from the comprehension of straight people. In addition, society also seems to be more liberal than ever demonstrated by their willingness to accept behaviour or opinions different from their own. This was further proven by the support received from straight allies found on Burger King's and Absolut's social media pages. To assume these people would not understand gay cues or agree to a campaign featuring LGBTs could almost be considered as an insult.

Furthermore, implicit marketing is more likely to be penalised for pink washing by the LGBT community than explicit marketing. The reason for companies being called out for pink washing is that they are only concerned with making profits off of the gay and lesbian community without support going any further. A company which advertises to gays implicitly is likely not to support any social gay-related institutions as they try to keep their relations with gay customers away from straight consumers as much as possible.

To conclude, implicit gay marketing might have been a great tool when gay and lesbian consumers were an unseen part or considered outcasts of American society. As the LGBT community has a large buying power, it is here to stay and due to society's social acceptance gay window advertising should be considered obsolete.

6.2 Practical & Theoretical Implications

Our findings have several implications for both practitioners and scholars from the fields of marketing and advertising. In this context it should be mentioned that although the paper focuses on the group of sexual minorities, its findings can be used in other contexts as well. The discussed concepts which built the foundation of the study, such as target marketing, self-identity or implicit versus explicit marketing, are applicable to any distinct group of people and would therefore allow for the transferability of the study.

Practical implications

1. Acceptance of sexual minorities is higher among younger people. Therefore managers should clearly define and be aware of who their target audience is and include gays and lesbians (explicit advertising) in their commercials if they cater to a younger demographic of millennials. In the case of an older demographic, managers may want to refrain from using explicit advertising such as those depicting sexual minorities in order to minimize negative backlash.
2. The use of implicit advertising amongst LGBT consumers has a negative impact as it is considered to be exploitation, referred to as pinkwashing as well as an unethical concept where marketers try to use icons that straight consumers will not understand. Given the prevalence of pinkwashing, it is important for managers not to be associated with it as it is not considered a cause for pink pride. Despite LGBT customers purchasing the brands based on their desire for social acknowledgment, they will be more loyal to those brands that exhibit authenticity and genuineness reflecting their

worth of being included. In regards to being unethical, it's just a matter of time before everyone understands the vague icons used to represent the LGBT community. As more and more people are exposed and the movements propagation of progression intensifies there will be no one to deceive thus marketers should embrace explicit advertising sooner than later.

3. Companies targeting the LGBT community are considered by some as advocates of social change which can result in higher levels of brand loyalty. In order to maximise on this, companies should not only promote their own brand but also be at the forefront when it comes to fighting for social rights outside their own business practices. Supporting an LGBT-related organisation can demonstrate such commitment. This can, however, only be sustainable if the company adopts core values related to equality and embracing diversity. Commitment that is part of a company's DNA will guarantee a bold backing by the company's leader, who may be seen as an influencer advocating for social change on behalf of the community.
4. The acronym LGBT stands for a variety of sexual orientations and identities. Companies should be aware that including a same sex male couple, even though considered inclusive by some, may not represent the view of transgender or even bisexual people. As highlighted in the Dream Market description, many marketers are often simply concerned with gay Caucasian men leaving out other members of this community. Companies should therefore acknowledge all members of the LGBT community, their culture and differences. This has the power to demonstrate attentiveness and genuine commitment.
5. As demonstrated in our analysis, companies which are not inclusive might unwillingly demonstrate that they are exclusive. Not targeting LGBTs at all is, however, still better than targeting them implicitly as implicit gay marketing is often equated to pink washing. In short, implicit is the new pink washing. Thus, companies should target LGBTs explicitly, including them in their commercials or stay away from targeting them entirely.

Theoretical implications

1. We have demonstrated why implicit gay marketing is antiquated. Academia, however, still recommends gay window advertising as a useful tool to target gay and lesbian consumers without alienating anyone else. This view needs to be adjusted and discarded respectively.

Derived from the findings of this research being based on an exploratory study, we have created some propositions (P) which could be considered as a foundation for future research. These could be tested by future researchers by carrying out confirmatory studies.

P1: Consumers' perceptions of pink washing are prevalent if the company targets LGBT consumers implicitly as opposed to explicitly.

P2: Gay cues used in implicit gay marketing campaigns are decoded by an increasing number of heterosexual consumers.

P3: The success of an explicit LGBT campaign is influenced by the demographic of a company's target group:

P3.1: Acceptance is higher among millennials than among people aged 50 and older.

P3.2: Acceptance is higher among educated consumers than among those who lack education.

P4: The success of an explicit LGBT campaign is influenced by a company's marketing strategy; if the brand appeals to a mass market or a niche market.

6.3 Limitations & Future Research

Just like any study, the present research has some limitations which should be addressed. The limitations mentioned here simultaneously represent some opportunities for future research. One limitation is the number of selected cases. In examining consumers' reactions towards the LGBT-related campaigns, we only focussed on two cases which were Burger King and Absolut. These certainly do not reflect all existent consumer perceptions. Future researchers should therefore select and compare a larger sample of cases to give account to more views and perspectives.

Furthermore, the netnography was conducted on Reddit. While this is one of the largest online forums in the US, it may not be representative of the United States' population. This is due to the fact that internet penetration ranges slightly below 90% of the entire population (Internet Live Stats, 2016) disregarding some people's opinions - predominantly elderly. Since we have collected most information on Reddit in LGBT-related sub-groups, it can also be assumed that the reflected views are more gay-friendly than offline. Thus, future research should inquire the opinions of a more representative set of people. This might, however, be difficult given the US' fragmented society and vast differences between rural and urban areas. Due to this, future research could also be conducted in certain geographical areas, or among people with certain demographics or psychographics to derive more specific recommendations.

As mentioned in the methods chapter, this study only focuses on secondary data. Information such as gestures, facial expressions or tone of voice is consequently not considered as it does not translate into online forums. Based on this, we suggest the use of multiple methods of data collection in order to develop a full picture. The development of more integrated assessment strategies can create a system of checks and balances to ensure the validity of results.

Related to this limitation is the fact that in focusing on textual data, we also rely on data from the past. Something as fluid as people's perceptions might change over time. The implications of this study are therefore time-bound and in order to reflect most up-to-date opinions, future researchers should conduct this study using cases as novel as of 2017. Since we however, only considered data from 2014 or newer, the derived implications are relatively timely and are able to reflect the current zeitgeist quite accurately.

In addition to the propositions suggested, future research can investigate whether brand loyalty or level of brand involvement can cause alienation or customers to abandon a brand based on exposure to explicit LGBT advertising. In conclusion, the review of current literature given in this study and our approach of challenging implicit gay marketing provides a sound base for conducting future research.

References

- Aaker, J. L., Brumbaugh, A. M. & Grier, S. A. (2000). Nontarget Markets and Viewer Distinctiveness: The Impact of Target Marketing on Advertising Attitudes, *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp.127–140.
- Ad Age (2017). About us, Available online: <http://adage.com/help/about-us> [Accessed 7 May 2017].
- Alexa, (2017). Traffic Statistics, Available online: <http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/reddit.com> [Accessed 5 April 2017].
- Angelini, J. R. & Bradley, S. D. (2010). Homosexual Imagery in Print Advertisements: Attended, Remembered, but Disliked, *Journal of Homosexuality*, vol. 57, no. November, pp.485–502, Available Online: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20391007>.
- Appartus (2015). Absolut shows its support of the lgbt community with limited edition limited edition “colours” bottle, Available online: <https://apparatusmag.com/2015/07/06/absolut-shows-its-support-for-the-lgbt-community-with-limited-edition-colours-bottle/> [Accessed 7 May 2017].
- Berelson, B. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bisin, A. & Verdier, T. (2000). Beyond the Melting Pot: Cultural Transmission, Marriage, and the Evolution of Ethnic and Religious Traits. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, vol. 115, no. 3, pp.955–988.
- Borgerson, J. L., Schroeder, J. E., Blomberg, B. & Thorssén, E. (2006). The Gay Family in the Ad: Consumer Responses to Non-Traditional Families in Marketing Communications, *Journal of Marketing Management*, vol. 22, no. 9–10, pp.955–978, Available Online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1362/026725706778935646>.
- Boyatzis, R.E., 1998. *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. sage.
- Bryman, Alan (2004). *Social research methods* (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Burger King, (2017). About us, Available online: <https://www.bk.com/about-bk> [Accessed May 01 2017].
- Campbell, J. E. (2005). Outing PlanetOut: Surveillance, Gay Marketing and Internet Affinity Portals, *New Media and Society*, vol. 7, no. 5, pp.663–683.
- CBR (Computer Business Review), 2017. What is Reddit, Available Online: <http://www.cbronline.com/what-is/what-is-reddit-4908959/> [Accessed 4 April 2017].
- Chandler & Munday (2016). *Subculture*, Oxford: A Dictionary of Media and Communication, Available Online: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/ludwig.lub.lu.se/view/10.1093/acref/9780191800986.001.0001/acref-9780191800986-e-2648> [Accessed 4 April 2017].
- Chatel, A. (2013). 7 companies that don't support gay rights, *Huffington Post*, [web blog post], Available Online: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/16/anti-gay-companies_n_4110344.html [Accessed 4 April 2017].
- Chilled Magazine (2015). Absolut celebrates #loveislove with launch of limited edition colours bottle, Available Online: <http://chilledmagazine.com/absolut-celebrates-loveislove-with-launch-of-limited-edition-colours-bottle> [Accessed 2 April 2017].
- Chinn, S. E. (2006). Here, Queer, and Going Shopping, *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, vol. 12, no. 1, pp.150–152, Available Online: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23446404>.

- Coon, D. R. (2012). Sun, Sand, and Citizenship: The Marketing of Gay Tourism., *Journal of homosexuality*, [e-journal] vol. 59, no. January, pp.511–34, Available Online: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22500991>.
- Davies, M. B. (2007). *Doing a successful research project – Using qualitative or quantitative methods*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Drisko, J.W. & Maschi, T. (2015). Introduction. In: *Content Analysis*. Oxford University Press. <http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/ludwig.lub.lu.se/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190215491.001.0001/acprof-9780190215491-chapter-1>. Accessed April 24, 2017.
- Easterby-Smith, M, Thorpe, R. & Jackson, P. (2015). *Management and Business Research*. 5th ed. Sage: London.
- Flickr (2012). rainbow flag : banner, harvey milk plaza, castro, san francisco (2012), Available Online: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/gazeroonly/8071055615/in/photolist-didgDi-o7JmyL-9Xvpja-7dm9gf-nSCCrL-dhJFyT-oh7u-f8UJse-4RSiWJ-fndZdH-cXrEdU-iFJZCX-hDaEn-otAL9x-divnyA-fcy1pP-dCHwhH-ax2fRz-8hpeBH-p99Qbe-cp49Hw-r25WA-66Tmw5-fnt6JU-RJ6yMy-3QbxJ-7nuAXx-r25Uo-oCxmWR-iKJtYy-bYJnHQ-oCwfsu-huDgDu-f99ZRj-3QbC3-dKRL5E-Kyzsb-dideay-nSkiyk-dq2aV3-RKsGT7-fCFsHe-9UKvXe-RP577n-howNV-Sfa1Cz-Tf9tW5-RP4ytT-wpNM-7JwRRW> [Accessed 4 May 2017].
- Green, J. (2016). LGBT Purchasing Power Near \$1 Trillion Rivals Other Minorities, *Bloomberg*, Available Online: <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-07-20/lgbt-purchasing-power-near-1-trillion-rivals-other-minorities> [Accessed 3 April 2017].
- Grier, S. A. & Brumbaugh, A. M. (1999). Noticing Cultural Differences: Ad Meanings Created by Target and Non-Target Markets, *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 28, no. 1, pp.79–93, Available Online: <http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.lib.le.ac.uk/login.aspx?direct=true&db=buh&AN=2064982&site=ehost-live>.
- Herek, G. M. & Glunt, E. K. (1993). Interpersonal Contact and Heterosexuals' Attitudes toward Gay Men: Results from a National Survey, *The Journal of Sex Research*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp.239–244, Available Online: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00224499309551707>.
- Hern, A. & Bengtsson, H. (2015). Reddit: can anyone clean up the mess behind 'the front page of the internet'?, *The Guardian*, 21 March, Available Online: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/mar/12/reddit-can-ceo-ellen-pao-clean-up-the-mess> [Accessed 5 April 2017].
- Internet Live Stats (2016). *Internet Users by Country (2016)*, Available Online: <http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users-by-country/> [Accessed 30 April 2017].
- Jaffe, L. (1991). Impact of positioning and sex-role identity on women's responses to advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31, 57–64.
- Johnson, G.D. & Grier, S. A. (2015). Targeting without alienating, *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 233-258.
- Kozinets, R. V. (1998). On Netnography: Initial Reflections on Consumer Research Investigations of Cyberculture, *NA - Advances in Consumer Research*, vol. 25, pp.366-371.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2002). The Field Behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities, *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp.61–72.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2005). Netnography : The Marketer's Secret Weapon, *Journal of Applied Physics*, vol. 97, no. 3, pp.1–12.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2006). Click to Connect: Netnography and Tribal Advertising, *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 46, no. 3, pp.279–288.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). Reliability in content analysis – Some common misconceptions and recommendations. *Human Communication Research*, vol. 30, no. 3, pp.411–433.
- Krippendorff, K. (2012). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Langer, R. & Beckman, S. (2005). Sensitive research topics: netnography revisited, *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp.189 - 203.
- Law, J. (2016). In *A Dictionary of Accounting*: Oxford University Press. Available Online: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780198743514.001.0001/acref-9780198743514-e-2956> [Accessed 05 April 2017].
- Mark, M.M. & Shotland, R.L. (1987). New directions for program evaluation. In *Multiple methods in program evaluation*, vol.35, chapters 2-6. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Marketing the rainbow (2016). Case Study: Absolut, Available Online: <http://marketingtherainbow.info/case%20studies/absolut.html> [Accessed 3 April 2017].
- Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative content analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, vol.1, no. 2.
- Miles, M.B. & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: an Expanded Sourcebook*, edited by. Thousand oaks, Calif.: Sage. https://books.google.se/books?id=U4IU_wJ5QEC&printsec=frontcover#v=snippet&q=content%20analysis&f=false [Accessed 4 April 2017].
- Morrison, M. (2012). Burger King's Broadened Audience Target Pays Off in Sales Growth, Available Online: <http://adage.com/article/news/burger-king-s-broadened-audience-target-pays-sales-growth/238033/> [Accessed 17 May 2017].
- Mustat (2017). Adage.com, Available Online: <http://www.mustat.com/adage.com> [Accessed 7 May 2017].
- Oakenfull, G. & Greenlee, T. (2004). The Three Rules of Crossing over from Gay Media to Mainstream Media Advertising: Lesbians, Lesbians, Lesbians, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 57, no. 11, pp.1276–1285.
- Oakenfull, G. K. & Greenlee, T. B. (2005). Queer Eye for a Gay Guy: Using Market-Specific Symbols in Advertising to Attract Gay Consumers without Alienating the Mainstream, *Psychology and Marketing*, vol. 22, no. 5, pp.421–439.
- Oakenfull, G. (2007). Effects of Gay Identity, Gender and Explicitness of Advertising Imagery on Gay Responses to Advertising., *Journal of Homosexuality*, vol. 53, no. 4, pp.49–69, Available Online: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00918360802101278>.
- Oakenfull, G. K., McCarthy, M. S. & Greenlee, T. B. (2008). Targeting a Minority without Alienating the Majority: Advertising to Gays and Lesbians in Mainstream Media, *Journal of Advertising Research*, vol. 48, no. 2, pp.1–9.
- Olshansky, C. (2015). Absolut wants you drinking to equality with rainbow vodka shots, *Food and Wine*, Available Online: <http://www.foodandwine.com/fwx/drink/absolut-wants-you-drinking-equality-rainbow-vodka-shots> [Accessed 3 April 2017].
- Oster, E. (2014). Ad of the Day: Burger King Makes the Most Fabulous Whopper Ever for LGBT Pride, *Adweek*, 2 July, Available Online: <http://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/ad-day-burger-king-makes-most-fabulous-whopper-ever-lgbt-pride-158724/> [Accessed 11 April 2017].
- Ostrow, J. (2012). Ads aim marketing at gay audience: Moving past "gay vague", *Denver Post*, Available Online: <http://www.denverpost.com/2012/06/14/ads-aim-marketing-at-gay-audience-moving-past-gay-vague/> [Accessed 5 March 2017]
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3d Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Roberts, D. & Siddiqui, S. (2015). Gay marriage declared legal across the US in historic supreme court ruling, *The Guardian*, Available Online: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/jun/26/gay-marriage-legal-supreme-court> [Accessed 3 April 2017].
- Robertson, K, S. (2013). Absolut vodka strives for authenticity in ads aimed at millennials, *The Globe and Mail*, 9 September, Available Online: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/marketing/absolut-vodka-strives-for-authenticity-in-ads-aimed-at-millennials/article14205567/> [Accessed 17 May 2017].

- Rowe, A. (2012). Pinkwashing is no cause for Pride, *NewStatesman*, 7 July, Available Online: <http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/lifestyle/2012/07/pinkwashing-no-cause-pride> [Accessed 20 April 2017].
- Riffe, D., Lacy, S. & Fico, F. G. (2005). *Analyzing media messages: Using quantitative analysis in research*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ryan, G.W. & Bernard, H.R. (2000). Data management and analysis methods. In Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, pp.769-802. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Self, J. (2014). How Proud Is the Proud Whopper?, *Advocate*, 1 September, Available Online: <http://www.advocate.com/print-issue/current-issue/2014/09/01/how-proud-proud-whopper> [Accessed 11 April 2017].
- Sender, K. (2007). Business, not politics: The making of the gay market, *Journal of Communication*, vol. 57, no. 1, pp.803–814.
- Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative content analysis in practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-content-analysis-in-practice/book234633#preview>.
- Sudweeks, F. & Rafaeli S. (1995). How Do You Get a Hundred Strangers to Agree? Computer-Mediated Communication and Collaboration, in *Computer Networking and Scholarship in the 21st Century University*, Teresa M. Harrison and Timothy Stephen, eds, pp.115-136.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, pp.33–48. Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (Eds.). *Psychology of intergroup relations*, pp.7–24.
- TechTarget, 2016. *Reddit*, Available Online: <http://searchcio.techtarget.com/definition/Reddit> [Accessed 7 April 2017].
- Torres, V. (n.d.) *Gay-Events Timeline, 1970-1999*, SOIN - Sexual orientation issues in the news, Available Online: <https://www.usc.edu/schools/annenberg/asc/projects/soin/enhancingCurricula/timeline.html> [Accessed 9 April 2017].
- Tsai, W. S. (2011). How Minority Consumers Use Targeted Advertising as Pathways to Self-Empowerment, *Journal of Advertising*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp.85–97, Available Online: <https://content.ebscohost.com/ContentServer.asp?T=P&P=AN&K=65089262&S=R&D=bth&EbscoContent=dGJyMNLr40Sep7Q4wtvhOLCmr0yepzZSsq64SbeWxWXS&ContentCustom er=dGJyMPGprkxprVMuePfgex43zx>.
- Um, N.-H. (2010). Seeking the Holy Grail through Gay and Lesbian Consumers: An Exploratory Content Analysis of Ads with Gay/lesbian-Specific Content, *Journal of Marketing Communications*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp.133–149.
- Um, N. H. (2014). Does Gay-Themed Advertising Haunt Your Brand? The Impact of Gay-Themed Advertising, *International Journal of Advertising*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp.811–832.
- Um, N.-H. (2016). Consumers' Responses to Implicit and Explicit Gay-Themed Advertising in Gay vs. Mainstream Media, [Http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1080/10496491.2016.1154923](http://Dx.Doi.Org/10.1080/10496491.2016.1154923), [e-journal] vol. 22, no. 3, pp.461–477, Available Online: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10496491.2016.1154923>.
- Wiersma, W. (2000). *Research methods in education: An introduction*. 7th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Witeck, B. (2014). Cultural Change in Acceptance of LGBT People: Lessons from Social Marketing., *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, vol. 84, no. 1, pp.19–22.
- Wolfram, C., Julie, & Hassard, John (2005). Triangulation in organizational research: A representation. *Organization*, vol. 12, no.1, pp.109-133.

- Wong, C. M. (2014). Burger King Supports LGBT Rights With 'Proud Whopper' And 'Be Your Way' Campaign, Huffington Post, 7 February, Available Online: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/?icid=hjx004> [Accessed 11 April 2017].
- Xun, J. & Reynolds, J. (2010). Applying Netnography to Market Research: The Case of the Online Forum, *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, [e-journal] vol. 18, no. 1, pp.17–31, Available Online: <http://www.palgrave-journals.com/doi/10.1057/jt.2009.29>.

Appendix A: Collected data Burger King

Main Category	Subcategory	Medium	Date posted	Date collected	Comment	Username	
Perceptions							
		Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	I suppose there could be some positives to this.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
		Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	Immediately, the social networks gushed with praise for Burger King's support of the LGBT community.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
		Living for Eternity	05.07.14	20.04.17	Though I stopped eating at Burger King long ago, due to the fact that in my opinion they are far from being "king" of the burger world, I definitely agree with their slogan on the inside of the wrapper, "We are all the same inside"	BK 5_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/TmZfpb
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	You rock BK!	BK 10_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	YASSSS	BK 11_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	This is great	BK 13_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	love it.	BK 14_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	Btw I love the hats and damn why we don't have BK in our town!!	BK 17_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	I want one of those crowns (:	BK 18_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	This is very great, I want a crown	BK 19_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	KEEP IT AND PUT THE PROUD WHOPPER IN ALL BK's.	BK 20_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	I will buy one of those crowns somehow	BK 20_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	WHEN WILL THIS AWESOMENESS BE AVAILABLE EVERYWHERE	BK 24_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	@burgerking this is awesome!	BK 25_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	<u>@burgerking please bring the pride burger to Los Angeles!!! Please</u>	BK 26_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	<u>Be your way! I love it @burgerking thank you!</u>	BK 28_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	Is this at every burger King?	BK 30_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Acceptance	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	I wish I could get a proud whopper in Georgia :(BK 33_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj

Facebook	05.07.14	20.04.17	I'm a Christian, a wife, mother and grandmother (and no one in my family so far is gay), and I APPLAUD your move, Burger King! Good for you!!! The bigoted hateful remarks of pseudo-Christians here do not represent either Christianity or Jesus Christ; they represent evil.	BK 80_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	We stand tall n United.#Proud Whopper.#rainbow	BK 90_FB	http://urlshort.pw/UxOtFi
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	Good stuff...	BK 92_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	Way to go..	BK 93_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	<u>I support the #ProudWhopper 100%, that is purely amazing. Thank you :D.</u>	BK 99_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	I would of had the same reaction as the beautiful girl in the white tank top upon discovering the intended message within this campaign. That burger would of brought me to tears as well. #weareallthesameontheinside Well done #burgerking though I care for my #proudwhopper medium rare. ;-)	BK 104_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	Love this - very simple, but very powerful. nicely done #Burgerking !#WeAreAllTheSameInside #ProudWhopper	BK 108_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	This little #ProudWhopper has a lot of fans already! #BurgerKing wins Round 1. It's your turn next, McD's!	BK 110_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	05.07.14	16.04.17	That Proud Whopper commercial from Burger King is pretty awesome. Never felt so offended and so emotional at the same time. It's about time a very big company like BK makes an honest and open statement. #proudwhopper #BurgerKing #AllTheSame	BK 113_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Twitter	02.07.14	11.04.17	Please make this national wide for at least a week I would love to get my hands on one of the wrapping	BK 123_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	11.04.17	Great message!	BK 127_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
YouTube	15.07.14	18.04.17	I think it's cool, I think it's cool idea, i think it's great 00:12:00	BK 140_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
YouTube	15.07.14	19.04.17	*as she reads the inside of the wrapper, "awwwwww we are all the same inside 01:16:00	BK 149_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
YouTube	15.07.14	18.04.17	I like that *smiling 01:20:00	BK 150_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
YouTube	15.07.14	19.04.17	I cried in there because I was overwhelmed, a burger has never made me cry before 01:24:00	BK 156_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
Edge Media	15.07.14	18.04.17	<u>"Proud Whopper" wrappers have become a collectors item and are being auctioned on eBay for \$500 opening bids.</u>	BK 160_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/wx9VKz

				..Now Burger King....I would LOVE for you to do this nation wide. Unfortunately you will get negative comments from people who have nothing better to do then whine and complain about things that do not affect them at all. This is a great marketing technique and I absolutely loved this. So please people...worry about your own life and stop worrying about other people. Thanks again burger king.	BK 54_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I love the wrapper!	BK 57_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Love this. WTG Burger King! I am a proud, Christian, ally for the LGBT community and I think this is great.	BK 66_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Advocating Social Change	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	It's already pissing off religious conservatives and that's always fun, right? And if some LGBTQ people find this affirming and encouraging, I definitely won't hold it against them.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	HRC	03.07.14	20.04.17	Consumers are lighting up social media with mixed reactions. Many LGBT people feel inspired and honored by the ad	BK 4_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/gUDBUQ
	Living for Eternity	05.07.14	20.04.17	In fact, in a recent article I wrote answering a person who wrote in to Got Questions Ministry, asking the following question, "Will Gay People go to Heaven?" I unknowingly answered the person with the Burger King slogan, "We are all the same inside!"	BK 5_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/TmZfpb
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	We are all the same inside !!! Love it good job Burger King !!!! Making a change one burger at a time !!!	BK 6_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	THANK YOU BURGER KING!!! You are so amazing to come up with this expressive way to show freedom and rights! Bravo! ☐	BK 9_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	Goddammit, homophobes. Stop being so judgmental. If you're so concerned with the "liberal views" on equality and love being shoved down your throats, either stop looking at the picture or stop forcing your conservative views on us. Minds are like parachutes. They only function when open.	BK 16_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	YYYYEESS! Thank you for sticking up for equality. I need one of these ASAP!	BK 22_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj

			Everyone who says that they do not support gays because it is against their religion: John 15:12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." Now I will say, I am an atheist; I have no religion. I do not believe in a God. But I do believe that everyone has their beliefs. It is okay to have your opinions; it is okay if you do not support gay marriage. But, it is NOT okay to make fun of someone for who they love. "Fag," "queer," "homo." How do you think the LGBT community feels about this? Everyone has feelings, everyone is human. Thank you for reading. -A pansexual lady.	BK 32_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17		BK 34_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	This is amazing forward progress.	BK 34_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
Facebook	06.07.14	20.04.17	Saying you support the LGBT community isn't a political stance. They're people, not lobbyists. Burger King is supporting people.	BK 36_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	How funny that "Christians" believe that conservative companies should be able to act on their values, but when Burger King acts on theirs, they have a hissy fit! I say kudos to BK for supporting diversity.	BK 37_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	04.07.14	20.04.17	For all you claiming you're going to "boycott BK" because they support equality, here's a more comprehensive list of companies for you to "boycott" (though we ALL know you won't actually do it) Wouldn't want you to be a hypocrite...	BK 38_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I am God loving, not God fearing and if you call yourself a Christian then you need to STOP the hate and judgement. Read the new testament and listen to Jesus who said to all not to judge, and to love everyone - no exceptions.Thank You Burger King for being on the right side of history. <3	BK 40_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	03.07.14	20.04.17	Happy to be a straight mom/wife/Christian, and very proud friend/relative to MANY gay/lesbian/trans/etc people! I support this company's policy of giving equal rights :-D But I DO miss the Texas Whopper!	BK 42_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Thank you, Burger King, for embracing love and equality in such a fun and innovative way. Your Pride Whoppers are a stunning method for communicating that all people are welcome in your restaurants. You have gained another fan. Cheers!	BK 48_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Glad to see your support of the LGBT community. :) Ps: To the person who said heterosexuals breed more customers, heterosexuals also breed gay people	BK 52_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp

Facebook	05.07.14	20.04.17	"Pride was not born of a need to celebrate being gay, but our right to exist without persecution. So instead of wondering why there isn't a Straight Pride movement, be thankful you don't need one."	BK 56_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I love that Burger King is openly supporting equality.	BK 58_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	This is amazing! Burger King has stood up for what is right regardless the ridicule that they are receiving! I commend you and I thank you for supporting us!	BK 72_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	08.07.14	20.04.17	Way to go Burger King! Love it when companies show their support :)	BK 74_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	07.07.14	20.04.17	I can hardly wait to go to Burger King and get one of those Whopper's with cheese. Thanks for supporting human rights! Oh, and make that a combo. :)	BK 75_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	04.07.14	20.04.17	this is not a political statement they're making. this is a statement of humanity, of viewing people as the same. the idea of the rainbow used in the wrapper is to imply inclusiveness, that there is unity in diversity...regardless of color, beliefs, and who you love, we are all the same. Thank you Burger King for showing your humanity and kindness!! :)	BK 81_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	03.04.14	20.04.17	For all of the "people" who want to boycott a company for supporting equality, here's a list of other companies (such as Motorola, BP, Chipolte, Sears, ComEd, Hyatt, Groupon, etc...) that you better add to your list! WTG BK!	BK 75_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	04.07.14	20.04.17	I completely support you Burger King!!(: Thank you so much for showing your support! - <3 a STRAIGHT CHRISTIAN	BK 88_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	16.04.17	A bold and colorful move by Burger King (The Proud Whopper)	BK 91_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	02.07.14	16.04.17	Such a wonderful message!Way to go #burgerking #proudwhopper	BK 95_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	People need to chill the fuck out. You can goddamn bet that I will roll up to #burgerking to get my #proudwhopper, take a photo with it, and post it anywhere I can. Homophobic bigots... Let's grow up and understand that times are changing...	BK 114_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip

Facebook	07.07.14	16.04.17	Thank you #burgerking for the #proudwhopper #weareallthesameinside I do understand that people do not believe that homosexuality is right BC of there religion. But why be so hateful? Growing up.. I always understood Christians were supposed to be good people not hateful and not judgemental to others. Love eachother... we are all brothers and sisters.. children of God. Leave the judging to the Lord. That is why they call it #judgementday	BK 115_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Twitter	02.07.14	17.04.17	Thank you, @BurgerKing, for inspiring so many of us and reminding all of us that we are all the same inside! #BeYourWay #LGBT #LoveIsLove	BK 118_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Washington Post	03.07.14	18.04.17	“They made a decision to connect to the gay community in a way that no other company in their category or industry has done. Being the first to do something in a category or industry is always the best because everyone else will follow suit,”	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/yF2yZY
Washington Post	03.07.14	18.04.17	“While the program was unique to San Francisco and it was a very limited program, the social media aspect of it will go viral and it will go nationwide as a cause célèbre in the LGBT community	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/yF2yZY
Washington Post	03.07.14	18.04.17	What we’ve really learned over the last couple of years is the best way to reach the LGBT community and impress the LGBT community is through mainstream media outreach,	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/yF2yZY
Washington Post	03.07.14	18.04.17	What the LGBT people have been saying is don’t segregate us so much. We expect to see us in your mainstream advertising, not all the time, but once in a while.	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/yF2yZY
USA Today	01.07.14	18.04.17	The move also demonstrates BK’s desire to stay connected to its base of Millennial customers. Gay rights is an issue that reverberates strongly with many Millennials both inside and outside the U.S. Burger King also was a sponsor of San Francisco’s gay pride parade. Machado says that’s the first time Burger King has sponsored a gay pride parade in the U.S., though it may have sponsored some outside the country.	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/8f6REh
USA Today	01.07.14	18.04.17	One gay rights activist says BK is doing the right thing. “Whenever a company comes out in support of gay people, it makes a difference	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/8f6REh
The Drum	29.06.15	29.04.17	Ramos praised the bravery of Burger King for taking such a big, bold stance, “that is not something every brand its size would have done.”	BK 132_ART	http://urlshort.pw/pMxkDs

	Pink News	23.06.15	29.04.17	The concept behind the packaging was to emphasise that, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, we are all just people.	BK 137_ART	http://urlshort.pw/0OhDy6
	Huffington Post	07.02.14	29.04.17	In what could be a first for a global fast food outlet, Burger King is making a bold proclamation in support of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community with the launch of a specially packaged burger.	BK 138_ART	http://urlshort.pw/w2VyUS
	Huffington Post	07.02.14	29.04.17	<u>proceeds from the sales of the sandwich will be donated to the Burger King McLamore Foundation for scholarships benefiting LGBT college-bound high school students who graduate next year.</u>	BK 138_ART	http://urlshort.pw/w2VyUS
	YouTube	15.02.14	18.04.17	finally, yeah it's about time 00:14:00	BK 142_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	19.04.17	it makes me feel supported, it makes me feel proud and it's just a burger but I mean it's baby steps the whole way 01:35:00	BK 157_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	18.04.17	we are all the same inside, I think this wrapper means that we all have the same rights 01:41:00	BK 158_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	19.04.17	I love... mummies 01:48:00	BK 159_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I have always enjoyed going to Burger King, but I won't be going there any more	BK 62_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Now the end begins	02.07.14	20.04.17	With all this focus on the LGBT Pride Movement, did you know that the bible mentions people who are part of that as well? The bible says that it is the Devil who reigns over the "children of pride". It is no coincidence that thousands of years after that was written, the sodomites of our day choose to call themselves the Pride Movement.	BK 2_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/avr6YQ
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	<u>@chriscroston I really don't like how chick-fil-a can't say they stand with The Bible without there being a borderline riot, and then Burger King goes against the principles our nation was founded on, and no less on the week of our Independence Day, and then the nation views it as the greatest thing to ever happen.</u>	BK 23_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	Call me a Jesus freak, but I don't support gay rights.	BK 31_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Facebook	03.07.14	20.04.17	BK, you big trickster, you! Absolutely genius marketing ploy to get all the ignorant trailer trash to stay out of your restaurants! The girlfriend and I are on our way.	BK 35_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Alienation	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Bye, bye, Burger King! Lost a 40 year customer, to make a political statement.	BK 43_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp

Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I'm done! As a Straight Christian American I would never ask for or expect a Christian Whopper, Straight Whopper, or an American Whopper. Because you felt it was necessary to get involved in this issue I will get involved and no longer dine or take out from a Burger King again. Good JOB!!!	BK 45_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	No longer a customer. Sell your products not your ideology.	BK 46_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I will NEVER eat at another Burger King again. There was no reason at all for you to literally shove your political views in your customers faces. I'm a Christian and was just re-born that way :) Bad move BK.	BK 53_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	When will businesses learn to stay out of the culture wars? No more of my money will be spent at any of your establishments.	BK 59_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Burger King has always been one of my favorite fast food places to eat but no longer.	BK 60_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	That 'proud' whopper only makes me vomit a little. I'll be happy to associate Bad unhealthy foods to gay rights if that's how you want me to interpret it. Could I get a proud to be straight burger, or are you just discriminating against me and my culture?	BK 61_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	03.07.14	20.04.17	So Burger King you say your slogan is now BE YOUR WAY and the way you show this is by catering to approximately 7% of the population who are LGBT? I understand that. So what I want to see before I place another penny on your counter is the following: I want to see a Christian burger with bright white paper wrapper and picture of Jesus on the Cross! I also want to see the Constitutional Burger where the wrapper has the entire Constitution of the United States of America printed on it. If you were to do that it would mean you place the values of 70 percent of your customers on the same level of importance that you do for your LGBT customers What do say Burger King?	BK 63_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	No more Burger King for me. Need to stick to food service, not lifestyle promotion	BK 64_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Good bye Burger King. I guess you have figured out a way to alienate loyal customers.	BK 65_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Me and my entire family will never be eating at any of your restaurants in the future. I would suggest you stay out of the political arena	BK 67_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp

Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	As a Faith Driven Consumer my family will not patronize Burger King anymore.	BK 69_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	03.07.14	20.04.17	I loved Burger King but now I will go to Wendy's	BK 70_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	05.07.14	20.04.17	No more business with Burger Queen!!	BK 76_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	04.07.14	20.04.17	You just lost an entire family who used to eat there a lot	BK 77_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	03.07.14	20.04.17	So, where is the I support troops burger?	BK 79_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Why do you have to bring sexuality into food? Must everything be sexualized?I don't care if you are pushing a Gay Pride agenda or a Straight Pride agenda, sexualizing fast food is disgusting! Not everyone wants this sex crazed political crap forced on them at all times!My family and I will no longer be customers	BK 82_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I wonder if the closed-minded idiots threatening to never eat Burger King again realize Burger King wouldn't want them as customers in the first place? Lol.	BK 83_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Pandering to 4% of the US population, STUPID idea. Let the boycotting begin!	BK 84_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Hope you go broke with this stupid promotion, I will be boycotting you and will spread the word online for everyone to do the same.	BK 85_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	04.07.14	20.04.17	Chick-fil-a sounds good to me	BK 87_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	02.07.14	16.04.17	@BurgerKing #BurgerKing #ProudWhopper? How about a #2ndAmendmentWhopper? --Steve Sanchez	BK 96_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	where's the heterosexual proud burger?	BK 101_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	Bye bye Burger King. We are not the same inside. Jesus lives within me and we are to be separate from the world so I will no longer go to Burger King.	BK 102_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	Shame they stole the Rainbow from the Bible and that a rainbow wrapping has nothing to do with a children's book. No more BK for me.	BK 103_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	Burger King the best outcome of your #proudwhopper campaign is that now #fundies will stop going to your restaurants, which will make it ever better since we won't need to eat surrounded by douche bags!	BK 105_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	This gonna kill their profits...	BK 106_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	02.06.15	16.04.17	Goodbye #burgerking. You've lost me with your gross #proudwhopper SMH.	BK 111_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip

Facebook	04.07.14	16.04.17	Yup. #burgerking has officially lost business from the other side. 3-7% of the population associates themselves as homosexuals. It's sad to see a company lack good business sense. #proudwhopper	BK 112_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	I will never ever eat at a Burger King again until they make an American Pride burger and a Straight Pride Burger.	BK 117_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	Means I'll be taking my business elsewhere...most likelyChik-Fil-A	BK 119_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	boycott bk	BK 120_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	It means it's your business, do as you choose. And I'm still a food snob, ergo not eating there.	BK 121_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	BeYourWay means that my family of 6 will not be patronizing your business while you so overtly promote an immoral lifestyle.	BK 124_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	<u>It means I eat at @InandOutBurger</u>	BK 125_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	03.07.14	16.04.17	Not eating your crappy food.	BK 126_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Twitter	02.07.14	16.04.17	<u>#FREEFOODFORFAGS</u>	BK 128_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
Washington Post	03.07.14	19.04.17	"In the past, most brands have been outreaching to the LGBT community through the LGBT media and it was almost a safe way of doing it because the only people seeing it were LGBT people,"	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/yF2yZY
Daily grind	02.07.14	19.04.17	As word of Burger King's "Proud Whopper" spread online, many twitter and facebook users couldn't contain their homophobia, tweeting calls for boycotts against the fast food chain.	BK 133_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DAmSIH
Business Insider	02.07.14	19.04.17	The marketing campaign.....has set off a firestorm of backlash among customers, with hundreds of people vowing to boycott the fast food chain.	BK 134_ART	http://urlshort.pw/CIxo2
Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	19.04.17	"When people sit down to eat a hamburger," Fischer said, "the last thing they want to be thinking about is two guys having sex":	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q
Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	19.04.17	<u>the AFA issued that action alert, asking activists to email Burger King and warn that "promoting and encouraging abhorrent behavior will drive families away</u>	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q
Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	19.04.17	In addition, a copy of your email will be sent to the Burger King Franchise Association, reinforcing your message that promoting and encouraging abhorrent behavior will drive families away.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q

	Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	19.04.17	Your celebrated promotion of cross-dressers and homosexuality is an insult to families and I find your celebration of abhorrent behavior as a reason to dine elsewhere.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzy2q
	Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	19.04.17	I hope you will learn from this publicity blunder and realize that while most stores did not participate in the corporate-approved program, the damage has been done and affects the image of all Burger King outlets.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzy2q
	Ontop magazine	16.07.14	16.04.17	Tony Perkins, president of the Christian conservative Family Research Council (FRC), wants to know whether it's "Burger King or Burger Queen?"	BK 139_ART	http://urlshort.pw/ePHqkw
	Ontop magazine	16.07.14	16.04.07	Perkins has joined other conservatives in condemning the fast-food chain's Proud Whooper	BK 139_ART	http://urlshort.pw/ePHqkw
	YouTube	15.07.14	19.04.17	I just don't really believe in homosexual lifestyle 00:09:00	BK 141_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOlqbg
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Bye bye burger king, you have fallen to the pressures of the biggest propaganda of satans agenda, good job....Leviticus 18:22 KJV. Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination.	BK 50_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Brand Loyalty	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	I love you guys so much for the proud whopper	BK 12_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	The next time I eat fast food (which admittedly is rare), I will go out of my way to find a Burger King. You guys ROCK!!!!!!Love,A straight ally	BK 39_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Thank you Burger King. I will make a point to eat at your restaurant more often now because of your support. THANK YOU.	BK 41_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I LOVE THIS! I haven't eaten at Burger King in ages, but I think I'll do just that. WAY TO GO BK!	BK 47_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Well I'm still a customer! Now more than ever. Thank you for having courage. :)	BK 49_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Well done Burger King! I will make it a point to buy from you MORE often :)	BK 52_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	I love your food and this has made me love it even more. And yes...gay people do eat fast food.	BK 54_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	My family and I will be switching from Mickey Dees to BK. Good job!	BK 58_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp

	Facebook	05.07.14	20.04.17	I stopped eating Burger King years ago, but I'll come back for this! Bravo, Burger King	BK 86_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	16.04.17	I knew I loved Burger King for a reason xD #proudwhopper Gives me hope for this race. :)	BK 97_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
	Facebook	05.07.14	16.04.17	Buying a #proudwhopper. #BurgerKing i always knew i like you better man	BK 109_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
	Facebook	06.07.14	16.04.17	I rarely eat fast food, but after this commercial, I want Burger King. #ProudWhopper #BurgerKing #LGBT #NoH8 #Equality#WeAreAllTheSameInside #MustWatch	BK 116_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
	HRC	03.07.14	20.04.17	while the company is also getting a fair share of negative attention from anti-LGBT consumers on its Facebook page.	BK 4_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/gUDBUQ
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	VERY disappointed in you Burger King. Why can't you promote food instead of an agenda??	BK 51_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	This has to be the most ridiculous marketing stunt I've ever seen!!! You have just offended a HUGE sector of your patrons. It's a big mistake to throw gay pride in the faces of everyone when not everyone agrees with gay marriage/gay relationships. Personally, people can do whatever they want, but don't throw it in my face! You're obviously taking sides which does not make good business sense.	BK 62_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	04.07.14	20.04.17	Remember BK. When this is all over you will need more than the gay community to keep you in business.	BK 78_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Facebook	02.07.14	16.04.17	I'm sorry. I avoid crappy fast food anyway but why the need for a #burgerking #proudwhopper ?? Was it an intolerant burger before?	BK 94_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
	Twitter	02.07.14	11.04.17	It means, what the hell are you thinking because this has nothing to do with eating hamburgers?!???	BK 122_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/dR27hG
	Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	11.04.17	"if this kind of nonsense" isn't stopped, it'll spread across the nation.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q
	Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	11.04.17	Unless there is some pushback from consumers, there is a real possibility that they could expand this promotion.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q
	Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	11.04.17	Unless Burger Kings sees a backlash for promoting cross-dressing and homosexual conduct as normal behavior, it will expand the promotion to other cities and additional stores next year.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q
	Right Wing Watch	15.07.14	11.04.17	TAKE ACTION...We have prepared an email that you can send directly to Burger King executives.	BK 136_ART	http://urlshort.pw/mRzv2q
Disapproval	YouTube	15.02.14	11.04.17	nah *shakes head* 00:26:00	BK 145_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg

	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Just couldn't stay out of politics, what a shame. Should have concentrated on your food and not an agenda. Bye	BK 44_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	I'm a newly "out" bisexual, queer person. I'm new at this whole "pride" thing. But honestly? I'm not too excited about the Proud Whopper, perhaps because of my experiences working for Burger King and other fast food corporations.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	Because, we're not "all the same inside," are we, Burger King?	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	"We're all the same inside" minimizes the oppression LGBTQ people have faced and continue to face because of cisheterosexist society insisting that everyone ought to be "the same."	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	I want my differences as a queer person to be liberated and affirmed, not erased. Not dismissed with "We are all the same inside."	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	RIDICULOUS.	BK 7_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	prides taken too far. Not everyone has to agree. People try too hard to make us agree. People have their own opinions. Be gay on your own time and quit wasting it trying to satisfy and make everyone support you.	BK 8_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	Fuck this. What the fuck would be going through a little kids mind when you give them food wrapped In the gay flag.	BK 21_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
Pink Washing	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	The main thing I want to talk about in this post, though, is my experience as former employee of Burger King, and how it shapes my reactions to hearing about the Proud Whopper. Burger King may be using the Proud Whopper to exploit the LGBTQ movement in order to make a buck or two, but this is nothing new for them. In fact, Burger King has been exploiting LGBTQ bodies for years.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	If Burger King really cared about LGBTQ communities, if they really wanted to make a difference in the lives of LGBTQ people, they would pay their employees a livable wage.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	Until those employees are making a livable wage, I don't think I can see The Proud Whopper as anything more than an attempt for Burger King to exploit LGBTQ people even more than they already do.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	Keep your rainbows, Burger King. I don't trust you with my liberation.	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ

Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	But given Burger King's general silence on LGBT issues thus far, many were left wondering whether this wasn't just some elegant sleight of hand, an attempt to put fresh packaging on the same low-grade substance	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	<u>On the HRC Corporate Equality Index (CEI), Burger King scored a middling 55 out of 100. To be fair, Burger King's major shortcomings were not on the "mainstream" gay-rights issues, such as domestic-partner benefits and employment protections based on sexual orientation.</u>	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	Burger King's score "reflects, among other things, a lack of employment protections on the basis of gender identity as well as a lack of base level health care coverage for transgender employees." Those "other things," by the way, also include the lack of an officially recognized LGBT-employee association, and a lack of adoption assistance for same-sex couples.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	For this promotion to have been meaningful, Burger King should have gotten its own practices in order before preaching equality to others.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	Furthermore, the promotion was limited to one restaurant (located along the San Francisco Pride parade route) on one day, and the company says that it has no plans to expand the promotion, though it may plan something bigger in the future. It all smacks a bit too much of test marketing rather than authentic understanding of and concern about an issue.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	Burger King stepped meekly out of the closet on an issue that already has popular support and doesn't risk alienating too much of its customer base. It is great that Burger King has finally gotten on the bandwagon, but merely playing catch-up is hardly cause for pride and celebration.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	The lesson here is two-fold: For the LGBT community, it is that having pride means more than accepting crumbs from the table. Progress is more than hollow slogans and pretty packaging of the same-old substance; the ingredients and the process matter. This means that the lesson for Burger King and other companies that want to distinguish themselves by engaging communities on important issues is that social responsibility is no longer a matter of if but of how and especially why they do it.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs

HRC	03.07.14	20.04.17	As a transgender person who also works directly with employers to improve their policies and practices of workplace inclusion, I experienced mixed emotions with the Burger King ad. Burger King has a score of 55 on the HRC Foundation's Corporate Equality Index (CEI) – a score that reflects, among other things, a lack of employment protections on the basis of gender identity as well as a lack of base level health care coverage for transgender employees. For comparison, other chains such as Yum! brands (parent of KFC, Taco Bell and others) and McDonald's have both implemented gender identity protections.	BK 4_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/gUDBUQ
HRC	03.07.14	20.04.17	While Burger King's gesture is nice and the scholarship fund is incredibly welcome, workplace equality in the form of policies, practices and benefits should be a fundamental focus of fair-minded businesses and particularly those companies that want to participate in Pride events and our combined LGBT market power.	BK 4_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/gUDBUQ
Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	I highly doubt Burger King even cares about "gay pride" they are just doing it to get money from all the gays and gay supporters	BK 27_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
Facebook	05.07.14	20.04.17	Why do business's pander to a specific religion or lifestyle..if we're all the same..then why pander...they lost my business just on the principle of pandering to gain customers...disgusting!!!!	BK 89_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
Facebook	14.07.14	16.04.17	<u>Burger King is getting social justice pats on the back for #ProudWhopper - but the revolution won't come in the form of easily consumable advertising.</u>	BK 98_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	03.07.14	16.04.17	<u>#ProudWhopper: A moving stand? Or a marketing scheme?</u>	BK 100_FB	http://urlshort.pw/MKQvip
Facebook	06.07.14	16.04.17	I agree with the message, no doubt that we are all the same inside. But dont forget that EVERYTHING is a marketing strategy. Props to #burgerking genius business move. #theproudwhopper #\$\$\$ #money#sales	BK 107_FB	http://urlshort.pw/BKvns9
The Guardian	07.07.14	20.04.17	As lesbians and gay men all over the world fight to end oppression, corporations have been piggy backing on our struggles to sell us whatever they can dress up as "gay-friendly". The latest to offer us commercialism masquerading as campaigning is Burger King.	BK 129_ART	http://urlshort.pw/VbireZ
The Guardian	07.07.14	20.04.17	The fast food chain is not known for its commitment to equal rights more broadly.	BK 129_ART	http://urlshort.pw/VbireZ

The Guardian	07.07.14	20.04.17	The gay community used to be defined by politics, but lesbians and gay men no longer share a political base – only, in some quarters, a social one. Rather than meeting on the picket line, we meet on a commercialised social scene, in clubs often owned by straight entrepreneurs,	BK 129_ART	http://urlshort.pw/VbireZ
The Guardian	07.07.14	20.04.17	Many gays have kidded themselves that bigger and richer sponsors for our Pride events and charities means acceptance rather than acquiescence; that it is a sign we are reaching full equality.	BK 129_ART	http://urlshort.pw/VbireZ
The Guardian	07.07.14	20.04.17	Almost every aspect of gay life has been commercialised – we can buy sperm, gay-themed wedding services, and holidays – and whenever there is a gay festival or event, the banks, airlines, restaurant chains and other large companies are usually there to profit, all in the name of supporting our quest for equality.	BK 129_ART	http://urlshort.pw/VbireZ
Washington Post	03.07.14	20.04.17	Burger King’s week-long stunt in a city known for its large LGBT population and progressive politics may not be viewed as particularly risky or groundbreaking.	BK 130_ART	http://urlshort.pw/yF2yZY
Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	while the company has supported LGBT events in some cities before, it appears to lack any substantial commitment to LGBT equality.	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	Proceeds of that burger’s sales were donated to an LGBT college scholarship fund. Pretty cool, right? Alas, the burger was available only at one location in San Francisco, the promotion ran only until July 3 (the press release The Advocate received was dated July 2)	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	Support should always be welcome, unless it’s mere marketing luring LGBTs to spend money on a company that does not live up to its claims.	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	it’s difficult to tell whether Burger King stands by its fairness message and just hasn’t made the leap to get there in corporate terms, whether it’s a crass bid for gay dollars, or whether it’s an attempt at keeping criticism at bay	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	If Burger King wants to prove its stance on LGBT rights....could also have included making the Proud Whopper available at every one of Burger King’s locations across the United States—not just in a city with one of the largest Pride celebrations in the world.	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe

		Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	The fast food chain is also being accused by some of pandering to the LGBT community."Local blog SFist.com gave this title to a post on the campaign: "Burger King Panders To Gay Fast Food Fans With 'Proud Whopper' Stunt."	BK 134_ART	http://urlshort.pw/Clixo2
		Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	It still maintains a low HRC Corporate Equality Index rating of 55 (out of 100), does not offer trans-inclusive health care benefits to its employees, and has no upper-level LGBT corporate programming.	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
		Advocate	01.09.14	11.04.17	Is one burger, available at one location, a valid showcase?	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
Other							
		Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	Those left unimpressed by the "Proud Whopper" promotion were quickly shamed by others for being ungrateful for Burger King's "gift" to the LGBT community, and the HRC was accused of overemphasizing an issue seen as marginal even by many gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
		Living For Eternity	05.07.14	20.04.17	So as you can see, though I disagree with Burger King joining the cultural war that is attacking the family unit, I wholeheartedly agree with Burger Kings outlook on life about human nature, as far as everyone being the same on the inside... we are all broken, and Jesus, who is the "King of all kings" even King over the burger king (Revelation 19:16), is the only one who can fix us in this life, and more importantly in the life to come.	BK 5_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/TmZfbp
		The Guardian	07.07.14	21.04.17	It is hardly surprising that we sometimes appreciate being targeted by big business	BK 129_ART	http://urlshort.pw/VbireZ
	Internal Inconsistency	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	As far as I'm concerned people are free to do whatever they please and are accountable to God for what they do. However why show support for gays ? If you were to show support for Christians...which you never would you would be boycotted by the gay and lesbian movement. Shame on you !	BK 60_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
		Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	WHERE DO I GET ONE?!?!	BK 15_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
		Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	Dear Burger King, I love your whoppers. They are my favorite fast food burgers. You need to open one in downtown DC (I'll send you my address so it can be close to me).	BK 68_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Product	Facebook	07.07.14	20.04.17	Burger King. I'm a Christian, I'm transgender, and only complaint I have is I can't buy the proud burger in Florida	BK 73_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp

	The Blaze	02.07.14	18.04.17	the beef-burger is being sold at only one Burger King location in downtown San Francisco, California, though it has gained national attention.	BK 135_ART	http://urlshort.pw/xFzLGm
	YouTube	15.02.14	20.04.17	meat is my preference (00:34)	BK 147_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	20.04.17	it really does taste different, you don't taste it? (00:45)	BK 149_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	20.04.17	I still taste a whopper *smiling* (00:47)	BK 150_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	20.04.17	I think it's the meat, the meat tastes more like sweeter, or I don't know (00:49)	BK 151_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	20.04.17	*at a table, picks the wrapper, raises it and says "it's the same burger (01:04)	BK 144_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	15.02.14	20.04.17	it's the same shit*turns back to another customer and says again "it's the same shit (01:05)	BK 153_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	Patheos	04.07.14	20.04.17	I mean, this phrase is ridiculous for so many reasons:	BK 1_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/odubOJ
	Huffington Post	07.09.14	20.04.17	And it highlights how tricky corporate social-responsibility initiatives can be, particularly those anchored in the PR-friendly level of cause marketing	BK 3_BLG	http://urlshort.pw/CySWJs
	Instagram	04.07.14	20.04.17	Whats with the rainbow hats is that new?	BK 29_INST	http://urlshort.pw/fgSULj
	Facebook	02.07.14	20.04.17	People saying burger king will suffer for this. There are tons of other supporters. So if you really want to boycott, get rid of you apple products, Samsung, dove products, don't shop at Amazon, and I guess you've probably never been to Disney world or watched the Disney channel, right? Just saying.	BK 55_FB	http://urlshort.pw/KMH2Rp
	Advocate	01.09.14	21.04.17	Many customers reported that when they asked what the burger actually was, employees couldn't explain it.	BK 131_ART	http://urlshort.pw/DjFsDe
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	what?! so like it's a gay burger or what is it *smiling*	BK 140_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	do gay people even eat fast food, really 00:16:00	BK 143_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	umm what is the proud whopper?*perplexed* 00:21:00	BK 144_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	I don't know 00:24:00	BK 143_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	Huh? *shocked and gives an awkward smile* 00:29:00	BK 146_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	are they different? * 00:37:00	BK 144_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	what is the difference? 00:39:00	BK 148_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	I don't know *shaking her head* 00:40:00	BK 143_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
Unclear	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	*opens the wrapper and reads "we are all the same inside, is that it?*laughs* 00:59:00	BK 152_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg

	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	everything's the same on the inside but its just the outside *3 ladies eating together 01:09:00	BK 154_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg
	YouTube	20.04.15	20.04.17	oh my god emilie dude, she got it 01:11:00	BK 155_VID	http://urlshort.pw/FOIqbg

Appendix B: Collected data Absolut

Main Category	Subcategory	Medium	Date posted	Date collected	Comment	Username	URL
Perceptions							
		Instagram	26.06.15	21.04.17	I think it would be disrespectful if I didn't get this for our next hangout.	AB 7_INST	http://url9.de/Ymc
		Instagram	11.10.16	21.04.17	@melissa_p_ want so bad	AB 8_INST	http://url9.de/Ymd
		Instagram	22.12.15	21.04.17	Give me two!	AB 13_INST	http://url9.de/Yme
		Instagram	11.10.15	21.04.17	LOVE this!	AB 14_INST	http://url9.de/Ymf
		Instagram	11.10.15	21.04.17	@narimansam AMAZING	AB 15_INST	http://url9.de/Ymf
		Instagram	14.02.15	21.04.17	#Amen	AB 17_INST	http://url9.de/Ymh
		Instagram	23.08.14	21.04.17	let's get it for our much needed DC reunion	AB 19_INST	http://url9.de/Ymi
		Instagram	22.06.14	21.04.17	!!!! Great #gay	AB 21_INST	http://url9.de/Ymj
		Instagram	22.06.14	21.04.17	@anagarrafa absolut gay pride	AB 22_INST	http://url9.de/Ymj
		Instagram	14.06.14	21.04.17	Love	AB 26_INST	http://urlshort.pw/b8fZ6D
		Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	total love <3 thank you !	AB 74_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
		Instagram	11.10.16	21.04.17	Way to go with this bottle!!...Thanks for your support!!	AB 11_INST	http://url9.de/Ymd
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	So far this is the only company that doesn't have any negative comments . . Good job consumers of absolute!	AB 47_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Acceptance	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	OMG YES YES	AB 72_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka

Advocating social change	Instagram	23.08.14	21.04.17	It's soooo gay, love it too. Pride!!!	AB 20_INST	http://url9.de/Ymi
	Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	yes!! #LoveIsLove	AB 30_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	Absolut, i am with you	AB 31_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	Proud of you, Absolut!	AB 32_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	Love it!!! And thanks for supporting us Absolut!!! Love you guys and your vodka!	AB 33_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	This is why we love Absolut!	AB 34_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	I just shared it in my timeline! I strongly believe in equality	AB 35_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	More of a whiskey drinker but thanks for the support!	AB 42_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Awesome. #I'm gay and proud	AB 45_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I was so happy to see this, just picked up a bottle of Absolute! Going to invite my friends over; gay, straight, black, white, green- we can all get hammered EQUALLY!!	AB 46_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I love how people that live in sin are so quick to judge the next man/woman " let he without sin cast the first stone"	AB 49_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	I am not gay but love this bottle #LoveIsLove #LoveWins	AB 70_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	Absolutvodka was the 1st and has ALWAYS supported the GLBT Community !! I say a Bigger round of applause to you for that !!	AB 73_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
Alienation	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I don't like this post. Now everything have to have this fucking rainbow shit affixed to it.	AB 52_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	No gay Vodka	AB 54_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Why do you gays lesbians and bi's have to bring YOUR sexuality into everything? Seriously!?! I don't care what you do behind your bedroom door! I don't so why are you horse feeding us this crap?	AB 55_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	That's not love that's lust.	AB 56_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9

	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Bye absolut	AB 57_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Laughable. Perversion is not love	AB 58_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	All this gay shit. Smh	AB 59_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Fuck you absolute stay with your gay ass costumers	AB 60_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Its not going to be no gay parades in heaven. God is all powerful all mighty.	AB 61_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Love is man and women that's the way God made it	AB 62_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Love is love .. Between man and woman .. The norm .. Marriage is religious and sacred .. Funny how u guys jus wanna change it up .. Funny how a man and a man can't give birth to a baby or woman and woman can't give birth to a baby .. God have mercy	AB 63_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	You deleted my comment because I was telling u lose clients? Remember there are many vodka brands, people will buy the others	AB 76_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	with your supporting the SCOTUS Absolute is OFF my list of purchases	AB 77_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	GAY VODKA...won't drink anything GAY!!	AB 78_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	@absolutvodka oh fuck no!	AB 79_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
	Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	What marketing genius recommends offending 50% of your customers? #rainbowoverload	AB 80_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
Brand Loyalty	Instagram	26.06.15	21.04.17	My favorite drink! I drink this all the time	AB 6_INST	http://url9.de/Ymc
	Instagram	11.10.16	21.04.17	Is it still possible to buy one of these bottles somewhere? Desperately need one for my Absolut collection.	AB 12_INST	http://url9.de/Ymd
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Straight woman in Bakersfield,California says LOVE! Love your brand, love what you stand for. Thank you.	AB 43_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I <3 absolute and I <3 this message ? Such a great company !	AB 44_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9

	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Do people know nothing about this company? Listen up haters, Absolut has been an outspoken supporter of the LGBT community for over 30 years...best read up on companies before you look stupid by saying you won't shop/eat/drink	AB 48_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Twitter	24.06.15	17.04.17	@absolutvodka All of us @VuittonTravel salute you - always have - always will!	AB 84_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/RDLjLt
Disapproval	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I always hated absolut	AB 51_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I'm so fucking tired of seen these colors	AB 53_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17	Never liked this gay vodka and never will.	AB 2_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
Pink Washing	Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17 but if Absolut is just now starting to "support" the culture then they obviously don't support the culture. At least not yet.. Corporate loves to support when it makes them money.	AB 1_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
	Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17	So this is a cash grab? If they're not donating anything to charity, this is pretty shameful.	AB 3_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
	Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17	Absolut hops on the bandwagon to capitalize on the legalization of gay marriage to line their pockets by selling these bottles.	AB 4_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
	Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17 pandering with kitchy/desperate marketing	AB 5_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Now they love the gays	AB 50_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	This is just advertising marking to lgbt people to drink there alcohol it's about money they want our money. There's already a big enough problem in our community with alcoholism this is not helpful it's damaging to target the lgbt with alcohol so please stop pretending to be doing something good by putting the rainbow on your bottles and saying your supportive of the lgbt community. Support would be opening up a lgbt homeless shelter or funding surgeries for Transfolks that's actually doing something to support the lgbt Community show me that not a advertisement.	AB 64_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9

		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Marketing ploy	AB 65_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Yay exploit people's emotions for profit yay!	AB 66_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I don't like the fact that alcohol and tobacco companies prey on the gay community.	AB 67_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	let a new marketing machine begin!	AB 81_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
Other							
		Instagram	26.06.15	21.04.17	One of the best vodka for the money	AB 16_INST	http://url9.de/Ymg
		Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17	It's always been a crappy vodka	AB 5_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
		Hypebeast	04.07.15	19.04.17	Bottle is cool	AB 1_BLG	http://url9.de/Ymb
		Instagram	11.10.16	21.04.17	Really nice	AB 9_INST	http://url9.de/Ymd
		Instagram	11.10.16	21.04.17	I collect these bottles #awesome	AB 10_INST	http://url9.de/Ymd
		Instagram	11.10.16	21.04.17	Where can i buy one?	AB 11_INST	http://url9.de/Ymd
		Instagram	14.02.15	21.04.17	I really want this bottle @absolutvodka_us	AB 18_INST	http://url9.de/Ymh
		Instagram	22.06.14	21.04.17	Where can i buy in orlando - fl ???	AB 23_INST	http://url9.de/Ymj
		Instagram	22.06.14	21.04.17	@absolutvodka_us will it be on sale at Mexico???	AB 24_INST	http://url9.de/Ymj
		Instagram	22.06.14	21.04.17	@absolutvodka_us were can I get it I'm in #chicago	AB 25_INST	http://url9.de/Ymj
		Instagram	07.06.14	22.04.17	@amberfranklin4 will definitely be buying a bottle I'm sure!!	AB 27_INST	http://urlshort.pw/oKCJQw
		Instagram	07.06.14	22.04.17	@justcallmetoy I want this bottle!!	AB 28_INST	http://urlshort.pw/oKCJQw
		Instagram	07.06.14	22.04.17	@absolutvodka_us WHERE CAN I BUY THIS IN TEXAS?!?	AB 29_INST	http://urlshort.pw/oKCJQw
		Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	and....r u selling this bottle again??!	AB 36_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	one love! way to go absolut! are u gonna sell this in mexico?	AB 37_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	24.06.15	10.04.17	Where can I buy this bottle?	AB 38_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I love this i want to buy it but nit drink it i just want the bottle am happy to be bisexual	AB 39_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
	Product	Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	Pretty!!!	AB 40_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9

		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I saw that bottle at the club we went to. I don't drink vodka but I'm defiantly buying it for keepsake.lol	AB 41_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	...BTW... Where can I get this bottle???	AB 49_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	I wanna know if u guys will sell the bottles with this design?	AB 68_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Facebook	26.06.15	10.04.17	For real, where is this in Minnesota? No liquor store I've found has the pride edition.	AB 69_FB	http://urlshort.pw/RXeQo9
		Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	omg we need to buy this and I wanna keep the bottle	AB 71_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
		Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	I NEED THIS ONE! as limited edition bottle on xmas maybe. think about it	AB 75_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
		Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	will these be for sale in regular stores? I need that bottle! #LoveWins	AB 82_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
		Twitter	26.06.15	17.04.17	Will bottle be available???	AB 83_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/BFc9Ka
		Twitter	24.06.15	17.04.17	Beautiful bottle design !!! #ForeverAbsolut	AB 85_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/RDLjLt
		Twitter	24.06.15	17.04.17	well, it seems it's not going to be available in Mexico. How can I get one??	AB 86_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/RDLjLt
		Twitter	24.06.15	17.04.17	is this a legitimate bottle that consumers can purchase? It's beautiful and I must have one... Or two or a few	AB 87_TWT	http://urlshort.pw/RDLjLt

Appendix C: Collected data Advertising Age

Main Category	Sub-category	Date posted	Date collected	Comment	Username	URL
Perspective						
	Advocating social change	30.06.15	26.03.17	As brands see the value in promoting diversity and acceptance in their messaging	AD_1	http://urlshort.pw/3Fxyzul
		30.09.15	02.04.17	There's a difference between putting an LGBT-inclusive print ad in Family Circle versus putting the same ad in Out Magazine. inclusive marketing is a chance to support all types of families and give them a chance to be seen	AD_2	http://urlshort.pw/Y8cB8A

	30.09.15	02.04.17	This year, LGBT-inclusive advertising has seen a bunch of hits, and brands seem to be especially vocal in support of LGBT-inclusivity. They took to social media when the Supreme Court made the decision to guarantee the right to same-sex marriage.	AD_2	http://urlshort.pw/Y8cB8A
	15.06.15	03.04.17	"More and more companies are beginning to realize that supporting equality doesn't stop at having inclusive workplace policies. Supporting equality also means being inclusive in your advertising and marketing and your outreach to your community and customers,"	AD_3	http://urlshort.pw/0hiNef
	11.12.15	14.04.17	Despite backlash from groups that threatened to boycott the company, Wells Fargo refused to pull the spot.	AD_4	http://urlshort.pw/UNFqWI
	21.08.13	14.04.17	As gay goes mainstream, marketers need to do the same in planning and buying their media. If brands are not inclusive in their marketing, they could be unwittingly communicating that they are exclusive. Above all, marketers must ask if their brands should be marketing to the LGBT community at all. Does your brand stand for equality? Is it in the DNA of your organization? Look at how you recruit. Do you provide same-sex benefits for employees? If not, consider taking your marketing dollars elsewhere.	AD_5	http://urlshort.pw/8YshhS
	25.05.16	14.04.17	And CEOs became activists, with leaders such as Tim Cook of Apple, Howard Schultz of Starbucks and Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook speaking out forcefully on full equality for LGBTQ people. Their influence can't be understated and it speaks to their strong corporate values. Be bold.	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
Approval	30.06.15	26.03.17	The inclusion of LGBT themes in advertising is at an all-time high and will likely increase with the recent historic Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality,	AD_1	http://urlshort.pw/3Fxyzul
	11.12.15	14.04.17	"26 Most LGBT-Friendly Brands, According to Logo's New Trailblazing Companies Ranking; Out of the top 25 companies on the list, four are from the financial sector. ""Banks have needed to transform their messaging to stay relevant,"" said Bob Witeck, president, Witeck Communications. Despite backlash from groups that threatened to boycott the company, Wells Fargo refused to pull the spot. "	AD_4	http://urlshort.pw/UNFqWI
	25.05.16	14.04.17	Corporate mentality went from, "We're not ready for gay marketing" to "We don't want to be left behind."	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
	25.05.16	14.04.17	It's been one year since the U.S. Supreme Court's historic ruling on marriage equality and the outpouring of popular support around it	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
Authenticity	30.06.15	26.03.17	The lesson here is that the best ads do more than effectively describe a product or position a brand. They strike a chord which, once struck, resonates far beyond typical advertising metrics like product recall or brand awareness.	AD_1	http://urlshort.pw/3Fxyzul

	15.06.15	03.04.17	"The commercial highlights a social issue that aligns with the yogurt company's core foundations of equality and acceptance. ""We've been an inclusive brand from the beginning and equal rights has been fundamental and foundational for this brand. Mr. McGuinness said. ""We don't want to do taste-offs and comparison ads, we don't want to take the typical approach.Mr. Adam said. ""I think that's what you're seeing here is Chobani taking that next step and saying 'We support acceptance and equality and this is what that looks like.'"	AD_3	http://urlshort.pw/0hiNef
	11.12.15	14.04.17	LGBT consumers have a buying power of about \$884 billion, according to Witeck, and Logo research found that 71% are more likely to support a brand after seeing an equality-themed ad. And 71% are also more likely to purchase from a company that actively donates to LGBT charities and causes.	AD_4	http://urlshort.pw/UNFqWI
	21.08.13	14.04.17	Above all, marketers must ask if their brands should be marketing to the LGBT community at all. Does your brand stand for equality? Is it in the DNA of your organization? Look at how you recruit. Do you provide same-sex benefits for employees? If not, consider taking your marketing dollars elsewhere.	AD_5	http://urlshort.pw/8YshhS
	21.08.13	14.04.17	Google had (and still has) a longstanding commitment to gay rights and is a well known leader in LGBT inclusion efforts. The company supports Pride celebrations around the world and operates an initiative called Legalise Love, which seeks to ensure that all LGBT employees are not only supported at work, but also outside of the office. The LGBT platform is in Google's DNA, and it comes across in its advertising to this community	AD_5	http://urlshort.pw/8YshhS
	21.08.13	14.04.17	In a global world connected by media, transparency is at an all-time high. Consumers can detect inauthentic advertising immediately, so do not force something that simply is not a good fit. LGBT consumers deserve better, and so does your brand.	AD_5	http://urlshort.pw/8YshhS
	25.05.16	14.04.17	The market has staying power -- it's not here today, gone tomorrow. And despite the rush, there will always be a place for authentic marketing that connects with LGBTQ consumers.	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
	25.05.16	14.04.17	"Don't generalize...LGBTQ consumers are not ""just like everybody else."" You need to connect on things like culture, interests and passions, "	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
	25.05.16	14.04.17	Get your own house in order. Brands do not have a right to profit from LGBTQ consumers without supporting full equality for LGBTQ people	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
	25.05.16	14.04.17	Creating successful campaigns aimed at the LGBTQ community lies in both the understanding of the consumer groups and the execution of the advertising itself.	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW
	11.12.15	14.04.17	For many of the historically more traditional brands on the list, appealing to the LGBT community is not "just a gay strategy, but a millennial strategy," Mr. Witeck said.	AD_4	http://urlshort.pw/UNFqWI
Target group	25.05.16	14.04.17	...Nikon, Ikea, Chobani and Campbell's are using LGBTQ people in their general market advertising, particularly in campaigns that reach millennials and Gen Z. people in their general market advertising, particularly in campaigns that reach millennials and Gen Z. These ..consumers are looking for progressive brands that embrace diversity	AD_6	http://urlshort.pw/KXVSrW

Appendix D: Collected data Reddit

Main Category	Sub-category	Year posted	Date collected	Comment	Username	URL
Positive						
		2013	26.03.17	straight people seeing ads with queer people in it will help them to not be so freaked out by seeing queer people.	RED 3	http://urlshort.pw/FaCHCZ
		2013	12.04.17	It's called pinkwashing. And I hear you. But. It's also coming out swinging in support, and there's something to be said for that.	RED 8	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	I think everyone understands that it's marketing. It's all marketing - everything a company does. Even charitable, philanthropic work is marketing. But it's positive marketing - [they] aren't making a caricature or a mockery of our community, they're making a public statement that they support our community. Whether it's genuine or not is another question; they aren't exploiting us, they are realizing that we are a viable demographic that should be marketed towards. That's business, and it's smart. If we don't want to be marketed towards because it's "exploitation," then we want heterosexism. Is there another option? Am I creating a false dilemma? Because if we don't want companies to mention/portray/support our community in their marketing campaigns, then we want to be what, invisible?	RED 10	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
			26.03.17	Whether we like it or not, many minority groups throughout history have tended to make progress by first being recognized as a target group for advertising... Here's the thing about advertising: Even though it may be designed to target a small target group, it generally ends up being visible to a much larger audience. As a side-effect, it promotes visibility of that minority group	RED 5	http://urlshort.pw/k48Xzk
		2013	12.04.17	If by seeing their advertising close-minded people start thinking: "well, I guess being gay is just normal" I feel well served.	RED 20	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	22.04.17	It's not like they're supporting one presidential candidate or the other. Maybe they're just trying to stand up for their employees and equality and human rights. Sure, they get news stories and more advertising, but it's still a risk. Good on them for taking a stand.	RED 24	http://urlshort.pw/ePsqnM
	Advocating social change	2017	10.04.17	18-24 crowd is the biggest customer base for most companies, and that demographic is strongly proLGBT.	RED 25	http://urlshort.pw/2LINag
	Credibility	2013	26.03.17	It's all part of the assimilation into a hetro-normative culture. It's a form of	RED 2	http://urlshort.pw/FaCHCZ

				acceptance... Target also happens to have a good policy when it comes to benefits for non-married long term couples (same sex or otherwise) and their children, so I don't think it's all about the dollas in this case		
		2015	22.04.17	The amount of companies openly marketing to LGBT people, supporting LGBT-friendly politics, and featuring LGBT friendly internal policies tells me that it is more profitable to be inclusive vs homophobic.	RED 23	http://urlshort.pw/ftXNyE
		2017	10.04.17	It's worth noting that not only do the 18-24 crowd tend to have more disposable income, but as this demographic is starting to make their own buying decisions, building up a brand loyalty early is a pretty sound advertising strategy.	RED 26	http://urlshort.pw/2LINag
Negative						
	Deceptive	2013	12.04.17	I think Pinkwashing is trying to appear progressive in all aspects (not just gay rights) by shifting the focus to your pro-gay stance, although your group may be oppressive or destructive in other areas (human rights, pay equity, environmental issues etc)	RED 9	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2016	22.04.17	a lot of advertising doesn't give a crap about including gay people, they just want to look like they care.	RED 21	http://urlshort.pw/JGy0sR
	Exploitive	2013	26.03.17	Why are mainstream LGBTs glad that Target is now advertising to get our money?	RED 1	http://urlshort.pw/FaCHCZ
		2013	26.03.17	Fuck the corporations with their disgusting pandering crap, slapping a rainbow on an advertisement does not mean shit.	RED 6	http://urlshort.pw/k48Xzk
		2013	12.04.17	I can't stand that Pride/Pride-related things were turned into a big circus to pander for votes and consumer dollas.	RED 12	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	"Support" of the LGBT community has become the sexy, trendy thing to do these days, and it's being taken advantage of by master manipulators in marketing departments. I would wager that there were people involved in making this Oreo campaign come to fruition that are actually apathetic or hostile towards the LGBT community but worked on it anyway. Don't be fooled people!	RED 13	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	It's highly targeted and exploitive; even if it were for LGBTQ rights, I personally don't like being allotted into an "LGBTQ" group of people to an advertiser, I'd prefer to be advertised to in a non-exploitive and informative way like everyone else.	RED 16	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2016	22.04.17	I've always been kind of annoyed by ads that are clearly the result of some marketing executive telling his department to whip up something for the gay demographic. The ads I really like are the ones that just portray gay people as people. The very best LGBT advertisements, IMO, could have the gay characters replaced by straight ones and still make sense.	RED 22	http://urlshort.pw/JGy0sR

		2013	26.03.17	They throw out LGBT but what they're mostly focused on is the white wealthy cis-gender gay and lesbian people who will buy their crap.	RED 6	http://urlshort.pw/k48Xzk
	Narrow focus	2013	26.03.17	Fuck the corporations with their disgusting pandering crap, slapping a rainbow on an advertisement does not mean shit. They throw out LGBT but what they're mostly focused on is the white wealthy cis-gender gay and lesbian people who will buy their crap.	RED 27	http://urlshort.pw/k48Xzk
Ambivalence						
		2013	12.04.17	It never ceases to amaze me how susceptible the LGBTQ community seems to be to targeted advertising supporting the community. I mean there's nothing wrong with announcing your support for a cause, namely LGBTQ rights and marriage/gender equality, but when you turn that support into an advertising campaign, it changes that support into exploitation.	RED 7	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
			12.04.17	for a business to come out in support of LGBT means that they are willing to take the risk and lose a portion of their customer base while gaining enough to avoid overall losses. So really, on one hand, you can cynically look at these business as entities who are trying to make an easy buck. On the other hand though, you can view these moves as a measure of societal opinion in that those customers who would leave boycott a business are now a smaller and more insignificant portion than before. And that's great to see.	RED 11	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	even if it is just a marketing ploy (which I agree with you that it obviously is), I'm still okay with that. In addition to making the statement that the company supports the community, it's also a testament to the fact that we as a community are a significant part of the larger economy because we are consumers, too.	RED 14	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	corporations play an important role in influencing American society, in this case the acceptance of the gay community. What is important to realize here is that these corporations can be used as a resource for our cause because there is a common ground. Corporations want money? Fine. We want recognition? Fine. What you will see happen is more corporations realizing the benefits outweigh the costs of addressing this market, and more corporations "come out" in support/advertise to the gay community. This may be to make money, but in effect it is spreading a message of acceptance that is gaining traction. Edit: Though it would be cool to see some of the sales money go to LGBTQ causes. But, it's still progress	RED 15	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA

			12.04.17	<p>to answer your question if this is "exploitation for the cause," to some extent, yes. But think of the companies that started this trend, such as Google, Starbucks, etc, and realize that it's not purely exploitative. I think the Google employee "It gets better" video is not primarily to advertise the Google brand, but actually help people. ... Companies face a real risk of losing revenue.</p> <p>In short, there are many motives for companies to embrace the LGBTQ community. I believe the long term effects though are mostly positive.</p>	RED 17	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	<p>more corporations see the economic and PR effect and also come out in support of gay marriage. The more this happens, the more acceptable gay marriage becomes. Corporations can exploit gay marriage all they want as long as it has a positive impact on our end goal.</p>	RED 18	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
		2013	12.04.17	<p>Both the LGBT community and these corporations benefit of the exposure. I don't care if they make a lot of money by using a rainbow, I care that people get to know that others care and that we matter. I hope they make tons and tons of money so other companies will follow and give us their support as well.</p> <p>I hope that the world realizes what a big monetary loss it is for everybody to consider the LGBT people as second class citizens.</p>	RED 19	http://urlshort.pw/ZOF7cA
Sceptical						
		2013	26.03.17	<p>I spent the whole weekend at SF Pride and was a little bit skeptical at all the corporatism I saw. I'm not sure if it's just become like this in recent years or if this is an even newer phenomenon, but lots of big companies were out with LGBT-targeted ads. I have to ask myself, though, are they pandering? Lots of these giants want nothing more than your money, and I'd bet a good number of those advertising may have histories of anti-gay statements or activities...</p> <p>Do they "support" the LGBT community by plastering two same-sex people embracing each other on their signage, or do they actually go out of their way to contribute money to relevant advocacy groups? I think the concept is great if these companies are actually interested in LGBT rights, but I'm just a skeptic, you know?</p>	RED 4	http://urlshort.pw/k48Xzk