

CORPORATE BRAND MANAGEMENT AND REPUTATION

MASTER CASES



**Chr. Hansen:
“Bring Your Full Self to Work”**

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Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's Cases

The "Corporate Brand Management and Reputation: Master's Cases" is a case series for applying the case method of teaching and learning in higher education. The cases are relevant to brand strategists in private and public sector organizations, as well as academics and students at universities, business schools, and executive education.

The cases are written by groups of master's students as a course project. The specially developed case format is defined as: *"A management decision case describes a real business situation leading up to a question(s) that requires assessment, analysis, and a decision reached by discussion in class. The alternative approaches and recommendations from the class discussion are followed by a description of the choices made by the case company. This description is then discussed by the class."*

The student groups select the topics of their case providing updated and relevant insights into the corporate brand management. The cases can be used as "written cases" (handed out and read in advance, later to be discussed in class) and/or as "live case" (presented by the teacher following a discussion in class). Each case includes teaching notes, visuals with speaker's notes, learning objectives, board plans, and references.

The mission of the series is *"to develop cases for discussion providing insights into the theory and practice of corporate brand management and reputation, with the intent of bridging the gap between academic teaching and managerial practice."*

The series is a result of co-creation between students and teachers at the elective course Corporate Brand Management (BUSN35 – five-credit course/eight-week half-time studies), part of the master's program International Marketing and Brand Management at Lund School of Economics and Management, Sweden. The cases represent the result of the intellectual work of students under the supervision of the head of course.

Although based on real events and despite references to actual companies, the cases are solely intended to be a basis for class discussion, not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. The cases are free to be used and are to be cited following international conventions.

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WRITTEN CASE

The authors prepared this case solely as a basis for class discussion and not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. Although based on real events and despite occasional references to actual companies, this case is fictitious and any resemblance to actual persons or entities is coincidental.

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Chr. Hansen: “Bring Your Full Self to Work”

It's Summer 2023. Copenhagen Pride Month is celebrated all around town. Rainbow flags decorate the streets, and a cheerful mood full of excitement for the upcoming festivities prevails in the city. With its award-winning commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion, the global manufacturing company Chr. Hansen is getting prepared. The company spearheads the fight for LGBTQIA+¹ rights, and this year, they launched a campaign for the global Pride Month and are preparing for Copenhagen Pride Week by officially supporting the human rights festival. Across various social media platforms, Chr. Hansen proudly showcases its identity through rainbow-colored logos and shares personal stories from LGBTQIA+ employees. At the same time, Chr. Hansen is set to merge with another global biotech company, Novozymes, later this year, which echoes its dedication to LGBTQIA+ rights. However, just a week into the campaign, a surprising twist unfolds as the sales director for North America receives an unexpected call from a customer.

Background & History

Chr. Hansen, a pioneering Danish company in bioscience, has a rich history dating back to its establishment in 1874 by Christian D.A. Hansen. The company, headquartered in Hørsholm, Denmark, has played a pivotal role in developing natural solutions for the food, health, pharmaceutical, and agricultural industries. In response to the high demand for long-lasting cheese rennet, the company expanded its global footprint in the early days by opening its first factory in the United States in 1878-1879. This strategic move not only marked Chr. Hansen's commitment to meeting industry needs also laid the foundation for its enduring presence on the international stage.

The roots of Chr. Hansen traces back to its founder's commitment to innovation and scientific exploration. Christian D.A. Hansen was a pharmacist who recognized the potential of microorganisms in the fermentation process, leading to the creation of innovative products that would transform various industries. Since its inception, Chr.

¹ LGBTQIA+ is an abbreviation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, asexual, and more. These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Hansen has been at the forefront of biotechnology, consistently breaking new ground in developing microbial and enzyme solutions. The company's expertise lies in harnessing the power of nature's processes to create sustainable and efficient solutions for a wide range of applications. Pioneering the way in the food industry, pharmaceuticals, and health sectors, Chr. Hansen exemplifies its dedication to research and innovation, securing a position in the global bioscience industry.

With a global workforce of 3,800 and a diverse management board, Chr. Hansen stands out as a well-known and appealing workplace. In 2022, the company chose to honor this diversity by launching its Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI) movement.

The Incident

In 2022, Chr. Hansen kicked off its first-ever campaign supporting diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) to champion LGBTQ+ rights all under the passionate campaign slogan: “*Be who you are. Bring your full self to work.*” (see **Exhibit 1**). Exciting stories from LGBTQIA+ employees, complete with pictures, quotes, and videos, flooded Chr. Hansen's LinkedIn and Instagram channels as shown in **Exhibit 2**. In August 2022, Copenhagen Pride proudly declared Chr. Hansen as the official partner for the year's pride week, a badge that the company wore with pride, reposting the announcement with a hearty “*And we're proud to be a partner!*” (see **Exhibit 3**). The enthusiasm did not go unnoticed, as showcased through captivating recap posts, shown in **Exhibit 4**, ultimately culminating in Chr. Hansen being recognized as Denmark's Most Diverse Company in January 2023.

Feeling motivated to continue their fight for LGBTQIA+ rights, in February 2023, Chr. Hansen announced the founding of the internal Rainbow Alliance (see **Exhibit 5**) and continued their planning for Copenhagen Pride 2023.

Chr. Hansen states:

“The purpose [of the Rainbow Alliance] is to help facilitate an inclusive workplace where everyone can be themselves, be accepted, celebrated, and engaged. Similar employee resource groups exist or are in the making in other countries.”

Javier Gines Galera, Member of the Rainbow Alliance Group and Commercial Development Manager from the Food Cultures & Enzymes Division, further elaborates:

“I'm proud of being part of our Rainbow Alliance group. I believe it's a great way to contribute towards creating an even more diverse culture in Chr. Hansen, where we are not only applauded for bringing our full selves to work but also for reflecting a much broader

representation of partners and customers around the world. Together, we can make a difference.”

Amidst the vibrant pride month of 2023, Chr. Hansen launched a fresh campaign, unveiling rainbow-colored logos and once again weaving personal employee stories into the fabric of its social media presence. However, the excitement took an unexpected turn one week into the campaign when the sales director for North America received a call from a customer, expressing outrage at the company's public advocacy for LGBTQIA+ rights. The customer, the second-largest client in North America, declared an inability to be affiliated with a company that stood for values and politics conflicting with their own, threatening to terminate their contract. The customer insisted that the campaign had to be taken down, and Chr. Hansen refrains from further public support for the LGBTQIA+ community.

Facing a critical stage, the sales director tried to ease the customer's concerns and buy time and committed to discussing the customer's complaints with the management team and providing an official response within seven days.

Swiftly after concluding the tense call, the sales director reached out to the company's Chief Commercial Officer (CCO), explaining the situation. Understanding the severity of the problem, an emergency meeting of the management team was convened to deal with the issue's complexity and jointly formulate a strategic response to the customer's concerns.

You are a **management team member** being called in for the emergency meeting, expected to find a solution for the current dilemma. *Will you vote in favor of your current LGBTQIA+ campaign, or will you follow up on the customer's demand? How would you explain your decision to the different stakeholders involved?*

Exhibit 1 Chr. Hansen Campaign Poster



Exhibit 2 Chr. Hansen Social Media Employee Stories

A photograph of Sten Holmgaard Soerensen, a man with glasses wearing a blue polo shirt, smiling and holding a small rainbow flag on a stick. He is standing outdoors in front of green foliage.

chr.hansen • Folgen

chr.hansen It's the month for celebrating diversity and inclusion. Meet our colleague Sten Holmgaard Soerensen, who works as a Senior Technician in Fresh Dairy Tech Support, Global Application. He has just married his husband after almost 30 years together and we've asked him, what it means to him that Chr. Hansen is participating in Pride month and Copenhagen Pride later this summer.

"I think it's a fantastic idea that Chr. Hansen joins the Pride! Not only is it a really big thing that reinforces the family feeling in the company and further sustains the open and inclusive environment we're lucky enough to have in Denmark; it also strengthens our employer branding and helps to attract well-educated representatives from the LGBTQ+ community on a heated labor market. Now it's official: Chr. Hansen embraces employees to bring their full self to work every day, no need to lie or pretend, at the job interview or later. You are accepted as a whole person. That relieves a lot of stress which allows impacted colleagues to contribute even more."

Read Sten's full story in the link in bio 🌈🌈🌈🌈🌈

#Pride #PrideMonth #Diversity #Inclusion #Culture #Hansenites #Community #EmployeeStory #HappyPride #pridemonth #pride2022 #lgbtq

Bearbeitet · 85 Wo. · Übersetzung anzeigen

Gefällt 95 Mal
24. Juni 2022

Kommentieren ... Posten

A group photograph of approximately 15 employees of various ethnicities and ages. They are posed in two rows, with some kneeling in front and others standing behind. They are holding a large rainbow flag. In the background, a blue banner with the text "CHR HANSEN" is visible.

chr.hansen • Folgen

chr.hansen We love how our colleagues in different parts of the world are planning activities to show their support for diversity, inclusion and equality for everyone 🌈🌈🌈🌈🌈

In Brazil for instance, our employees marked Pride month through weekly newsletters with educational content on different LGBTQ+ topics such as how to be a good ally, and yesterday they wrapped up the month by hosting a special coffee break for all employees with the opportunity to have a dialogue about how to show your support by using stickers and plaques with words like #Respect #Ally #DiversityMatters #Inclusion

At Chr. Hansen, we strive to have a diverse workforce where each employee's unique differences are valued. It's something we feel strongly about, and we must continue to strengthen our efforts around diversity and inclusion. We should all feel comfortable bringing our full self to work every day.

#PrideMonth #Hansenites #ProudToImprove #Diversity #Inclusion #LGPTQ #Pride

85 Wo. · Übersetzung anzeigen

Gefällt 158 Mal
29. Juni 2022

Kommentieren ... Posten

Exhibit 3 Copenhagen Pride & Chr. Hansen Partnership Announcement

Chr. Hansen
@Chr_Hansen

And we're proud to be a partner! 🙌

[Post übersetzen](#)

Copenhagen Pride @CopenhagenPride · 11. Aug. 2022

Vi er stolte af at have @Chr_Hansen som partner 🌈 Chr. Hansen omfavner #diversitet, så du hver dag kan komme trygt på arbejde præcis som den, du er.


Vi omfavner diversitet, så du hver dag kan komme trygt på arbejde præcis som den, du er ❤️

CHR HANSEN
Improving food & health

10:49 vorm. · 11. Aug. 2022

AI Translation: "We embrace diversity, so you can come to work every day confident in who you are"

Exhibit 4 Chr. Hansen Pride Recap Post



chr.hansen • Folgen
Christian Davis • Stainless

chr.hansen What an event! 🇵🇷

Thanks to @copenhagenpride for an amazing Parade on Saturday, 20 August. More than 260 Hansenites including friends and family joined the fantastic parade in the sunny streets of Copenhagen.

It's definitely one for the books!
Here's a recap of some of the incredible moments from a cheerful and happy day.


#Pride #cphpride #employerbranding #diversity #DEI #copenhagen #inclusion #alliance #parade

Bearbeitet · 77 Wo. · Übersetzung anzeigen

Gefällt 154 Mal
23. August 2022

Kommentieren ... Posten

Exhibit 5 Chr. Hansen Announcement Rainbow Alliance



chr.hansen • Folgen

chr.hansen At Chr. Hansen, we've been working dedicatedly with diversity, equity and inclusion for years. We took a natural next step last summer by joining Copenhagen Pride week to support the LGBTQ+ community on a corporate level.

Our Rainbow Alliance group has now kicked off, a Danish employee resource group aiming at creating awareness and understanding of gender identity and sexuality. The purpose is to help facilitate an inclusive workplace where everyone can be themselves, be accepted, celebrated and engaged. Similar employee resource groups exist or are in the making in other countries.

Many good ideas were brought to the table at the kick-off, from quick wins such as a change of language in Standard Operating Procedures, gender-neutral bathroom signs, etc., to organizing events for colleagues' rainbow children, mixing film festivals with a broader representation, podcast series and much more.

"I'm proud of being part of our Rainbow Alliance group. I believe it's a great way to contribute towards creating an even more diverse culture in Chr. Hansen."

Javier Gines Galera
Commercial Development
Manager FC&E

Gefällt 80 Mal
20. Februar 2023

Kommentieren ... Posten

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