

## Does YOUR Favorite Corporation Exploit Tragedy for Sales?

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Tuesday, January 13, 2015

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It's not like capitalists deserve your pity when they accidentally offend people while they try to embrace their communities to build spirit. And profit.

It is partly because corporations are pretend human beings, with no emotions, no social conscience [beyond PR gains] and no capacity for human empathy, which is a fundamental part of human society.

Corporations must maximize shareholder wealth, while exploiting people and the environment. So no surprise that when they try to improve market share by corporatizing 9/11 and Boston Strong some people get offended.

And why not! Try this one on: "Remember 9/11; Soooo, Make Sure You Shop at Dick's Vinyl Siding."

It doesn't ring true. That's because we resent corporations who try to be human. But [we need to do a better job of that!](#)

Now, look at all the filth McDonald's endures while trying to become your bestie:

[McDonald's Ad Referencing 9/11, Boston Bombing Provokes Strong Reactions.](#)

The Washington Post's Wonkblog referred to [it](#) as "**tone deaf**" and a "**disarming minute of mushy corporate propaganda.**" Some noted the **irony** of an ad celebrating the company's role in the community, given **ongoing protests by workers and labour organizers calling for higher pay and a union.** For others, the reference to the Sept. 11 attacks and Boston Marathon bombing in a McDonald's ad were **jarring**, and some commenters on Facebook and Twitter called it **crass** and **exploitive.**

Other companies have faced sharp backlash for incorporating national tragedies into their marketing. In 2013, AT&T was **criticized** for a tweet that commemorated the Sept. 11 attacks while showing off its smartphone. Campbell Soup also **apologized** that year for a tweet by SpaghettiOs asking followers to "Take a moment and remember #PearlHarbor with us." The tweet featured an image of its smiling cartoon mascot jauntily holding an American flag.

The ad by McDonald's isn't entirely surprising. During an investor meeting last month, McDonald's USA President Mike Andres noted the company is working with franchisees to **strengthen their ties in communities**. The majority of the company's more than 14,000 U.S. restaurants are operated by franchisees.

**"More than ever, people want to feel good about the businesses and the brands they do businesses with,"** he said.

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