

A-B-C: AI, Boycotts, & Culture Smart Protest: Learn from Bud Light

Why has the boycott over Bud Light Beer reached such a fever pitch?
Ask **Kevin O'Leary**, known as "Mr. Wonderful" on Shark Tank.

"When Bud happened, I can't believe that boards didn't wake up to that decimation market cap. Budweiser was the American beer. It took decades to build that brand and they blew it up in 30 hours."

Budweiser and Target have lost a combined \$28 BILLION in market value as of last Friday.

Regardless of where you stand on the political spectrum, this is a classic case of a marketing miscalculation. The marketers (OK, the "on-leave" marketers) who developed the Dylan Mulvaney promotion clearly missed the mark on this one.

Bud Light is a mainline beer in the same category as Coors Light and Miller Light. Some call it a "Bubba Beer" (not to be confused with the [actual](#) Bubba Beer brand) because it's a core beer rather than an artisan or craft brew.

Great numbers of its core drinkers play golf and shoot pool, attend football, baseball, basketball, and hockey games, and hunt and fish.

Then, amid March Madness, Bud Light intruded on their space with a message that does not resonate with sports and those that play those sports.

I'm not saying it's right. I'm not saying it's wrong. I'm just saying that... it IS.

So, where do we go from here? My observations are:

- **Conservatives discovered their voice.** This is unlike many protests that are loud and require massive gatherings. By simply changing their purchases at the ball game, grocery store, or at a restaurant, these customers caused a six-week, 25% decline in Bud Light sales.
- **This situation is contagious.** At the height of the Bud Light protest, Target launched trans swimsuits for those transitioning from men to women to tuck their... well, you know. Massive numbers of customers have registered their vote by not shopping at Target.
- **Deny, deny, deny.** Have you noticed that every top executive at Anheuser-Busch/InBev has denied ever knowing about the campaign in advance? That's not a possibility for a massive worldwide brand. They're defending their jobs and their reputations with "plausible deniability."
- **Bud Light cannot win, no matter which route it takes.** If it officially apologizes, the trans and affiliated communities will bash the brand and refuse to drink it (they very likely did not drink it in large numbers anyway). If the brand does **not** apologize, it alienates its core drinkers.

By the way, at last count, the brand is rebating \$15 off the 15-can case of Bud Light in many markets. With the promotional price at \$14.99 in many of those markets, Anheuser-Busch is **PAYING** its customers 1¢ to drink the beer!

In one market, a case was on sale at \$3.49. With the rebate, Bud paid the customer \$11.50 to take the beer off its hands.

My father was a wise man. He gave me many pieces of brilliant advice and one of his best was: The best way OUT of a jam = Never get INTO that jam!



Smart Concern: How AI Impacts Us

Have you ever had a major disagreement with a friend or family member and asked yourself **why they could not understand simple logic?** After all, you were basing your arguments on a constant source of truth: the internet. **Well, they were asking the same question about you!**

Check THIS out: You were both **RIGHT**.
At the same time, you were both **WRONG!**

Technology leaders are warning us about **AI – Artificial Intelligence**, and they have good reason to fear.

If you want to learn what AI can do, consider the TV series, **Person of Interest**, which aired 2011–2016. In the show, a billionaire developed “The Machine” for the federal government, and it could collate all sorts of information to predict terrorist acts and identify people planning them.

Well, here we are – sort of.

Google and **Microsoft** are confusing me.

For years, they have promised their AI-driven search filters (don't let them fool you – AI has been around for years!) were not to be relied on.

But for the past two decades, with hundreds of billions of dollars at stake, they have been telling us computers are our trustworthy companions. According to Mark Pesce, a writer for “The Register”, it gets even more confusing.

He shares that conversational AI can excel at telling us exactly what we want to hear because their very survival into the next generation of computing is at stake.

Google's Chat GPT and Microsoft's Bard will make life easier, but they could also completely disrupt our lives.

Check this out: Organizers at the **French Open tennis championships** are using AI to filter out abusive comments about the players on Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. AI can identify and filter out racist and other hate speech. This act helps pro tennis players avoid becoming victims of cyberbullying during the tournament.

Here's a little test for you.

- Choose your favorite search engine: Google, Bing, Safari, or DuckDuckGo.
- Ask yourself which end of the political spectrum you're on regarding politics and hot issues.
- Query your choice (Google or Bing, etc.): What is the best solution to making education more effective?
- Query your search engine again: What is the smartest source of energy in the United States?

Now, reach out to a friend or colleague from the **OPPOSITE** side of the political spectrum and ask that person to do the very same exercise.

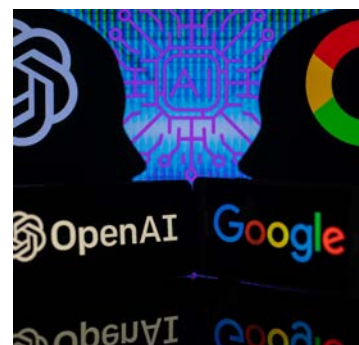
Then, compare the answers you receive.

You will find that the answers **YOU** receive are based on your on your browsing history, social media history, participation in surveys, etc. Your friend will find their answers will correspond to **THEIR** browsing history from a separate perspective.

When the two of you start arguing about a hot topic, you both will be **PARTIALLY RIGHT** in your own mind, but you both will also be **PARTIALLY WRONG** because of one reason: **You have received “skewed facts” that are what you WANT to receive instead of what you NEED to receive.**

This is why we, as a nation, tend to be so passionate about our opinions and vehemently disagree with the other side.

After all --- It HAS to be right. YOU READ IT ON THE INTERNET!



TIEBREAKER: Jazz Louisiana Chicken

I was in Lubbock on May 18 to meet my clients at **AgTexas Farm Credit Services**.

Arriving early, I took the recommendation of a friend and stopped by **Jazz Louisiana Chicken** for lunch. The owner, Tracee Brown, seated me and I noticed all the walls were covered with dollar bills that had names or messages written on them.

She said the “wallpaper of cash,” complete with handwritten notes and names of customers over the years, was part of the restaurant’s ambiance and character, and she told me that she had all the dollar bills taken down and cleaned during Covid as part of the cleaning of the restaurant.

“Rather than put the same bills back up on the wall, we gave them to our employees. We split more than \$8,000 among our employees based on years of service. A couple of employees each received \$1,000!”

That’s what we call a **culture with a purpose** – having fun and then sharing with the folks who make Jazz Louisiana Chicken an entertaining place to dine!

What are YOU doing in your business to show a fun culture that engages your customers?

