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Measuring Skepticism to Cause Related Marketing: Preliminary Norwegian Results

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Summary

This paper looks at the subject of corporate social responsibility and how companies use it in their marketing communication activities, a practice known as cause related marketing (CRM). Norwegian consumers were asked their feelings toward company's claims regarding their support of non-profit organizations in their advertising and on their packaging. According to the definition of Angelidis and Ibrahim (1993), corporate social responsibility is "corporate social actions whose purpose is to satisfy social needs". Corporate social responsibility requires investment and it yields measurable outcomes.

It is commonly accepted that cause related marketing is a communications tool for increasing customer loyalty and building reputation. The expected change in company's image because of CRM campaigns appears to depend a great deal upon how customers perceive the reasons for company's involvement in cause related programs and the amount of help given to the cause through a company's involvement (Webb & Mohr 1998). Questions measuring skepticism in this study are adapted from Mohr et al. 1998, who suggest that consumers with a high level of skepticism will be less likely to respond positively to CRM campaigns as opposed to consumers with a low level of skepticism. This is one of the first studies to test their methodology.

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Key words:
Corporate social responsibility, cause related marketing, skepticism.

Introduction

It is generally recognized that today's market place is characterized by a great many products with similar quality, price and service. In their ever-increasing need to differentiate themselves and their product, many companies are turning to the use of cause related marketing (CRM) as a communications tool. Basically, the concept entails firms' communicating through their advertising, packaging, promotions, and so on, their corporate social responsibility, i.e. their affiliation or work with non-profit organizations or support for causes. The point is to attract consumers wanting to make a difference in society through their purchasing. However, consumers are looking closely at companies who make claims regarding their involvement in social issues. There is a level of consumer skepticism that often makes consumers doubt what a firm is saying. It has even been suggested that because so many firms are now using CRM, particularly in the UK, skepticism is on the rise (O'Sullivan, 1997; Rogers 1998). This skepticism can lead consumers to reject claims made in CRM campaigns; it can affect their purchasing behavior: and could even lead to stronger actions (Rogers, 1998). Therefore not only is it important for companies pursuing CRM to be genuine in their behavior they must also have a full understanding of their consumers' knowledge of CRM and their level of skepticism before attempting this marketing technique.

The Norwegian case is particularly interesting given the development of the welfare system in all of the Nordic countries. Norway is a country where consumers are accustomed to the government supplying substantial financial support to non-profit organizations (ODIN, 1997). Non-profit organizations are further recognized as personifying the democratic process as most are membership organizations with bottom up influences. Even children's participation in sports clubs is perceived as a way for them to experience their first voice in a democratic process.

Corporate social responsibility is measured by MMI, a large Norwegian marketing research concern, as one section of its yearly corporate image survey. The definition of corporate social responsibility given by MMI is: expectations that people have from a company's ability and willingness to follow the law and rules and to perform just and responsibly towards employees, clients, consumers and authorities (MMI Report 1997). This follows the traditional approach to stakeholders that is not very broad, and it also makes no mention of organizations' responsibility to society at large. The MMI Image Report is Norway's equivalent to Fortune magazine's "America's Most Admired Companies" and the Financial Times' "Europe's Most Respected Companies".

There has been a trend in Norway for organizations to support non-profit organizations and to advertise their association (*Kampanje*, 1998). Questions have also been raised regarding its practice (ibid.). The country's largest insurance company has had a series of national TV ads telling how they are helping to decrease violence through their work with the Red Cross. The product is never mentioned. Norway's leading mineral water brand featured in both advertising and on its bottle labels its

association with a Red Cross project. The national dairy producers' association, Norway's monopoly milk producer, ran a series of full-page ads in the largest national newspaper about their work against violence with Save the Children (again no mention of product). In 1998, McDonald's announced their support for a Ronald McDonald house in association with the newly constructed National Hospital, something that raised a great deal of debate at the time in the Norwegian press. The Ronald McDonald houses provide "homes away from home" for parents of critically ill children. Norwegian socialist political parties were firmly against the project, calling for the parliament to consider outlawing such practices.

Studying cause related marketing on an international level is also important as both the type and extent of the needs expected to be fulfilled from the socially responsible firm will "depend upon the social segment's culture and ethics, the legal environment, and the degree to which the members of the social segment perceive that such needs are not fulfilled" (Angelidis & Ibrahim, 1993). Clearly, countries that adapt practices perceived as successful in other countries without researching their own consumers' attitudes cannot hope to succeed based on the same premises. Erik Dalen, an executive with MMI, indicates that little to no research has been done by Norwegian companies to assess the attitudes of Norwegians to these kinds of campaigns, much less their effectiveness (Dalen, 1998).

Literature review

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the form of corporate philanthropy, or donating to charities, has been practiced since as early as the late 1800s at least in the US (Sethi, 1979). It was legitimate in so far that it directly benefited the shareholders, and corporate donations were mostly on the agenda of those companies that could afford it. Today's concept of corporate social responsibility was developed primarily during the 1960s in the USA with the notion that corporations have responsibilities that go beyond their legal obligations. Different schools of thought on CSR oscillate between two extremes: the free market concept (classical economic theory) (Friedman, 1970) and the socially-oriented approach (Freemann, 1984; Wood, 1991; Smith 1994).

Enderle & Tavis (1998) define corporate social responsibility as "the policy and practice of a corporation's social involvement over and beyond its legal obligations for the benefit of the society at large". According to the definition of Angelidis and Ibrahim, (1993), corporate social responsibility is "corporate social actions whose purpose is to satisfy social needs". Lerner and Fryxell (1988) suggest that CSR describes the extent to which organizational outcomes are consistent with societal values and expectations. At its grassroots, being socially responsible has been a concern very much related to the rationale that businesses are more likely to do well in a flourishing society than in one that is falling apart (McIntosh et al., 1998). Over the past decades both the concept and the practice have evolved as a reflection of the challenges created from an ever-changing society.

Table 1: Key definitions associated with corporate social responsibility.

corporate philanthropy	An activity above and beyond what is required of an organization and can have a significant impact on the communities in which a company operates (Mullen, 1997; Lerner & Fryxell,1988). Giving to charities in the form of percentage of pre-tax earnings, it provides a concrete measure of the social effort of corporate managers. Corporate philanthropy is likely to enhance the image of companies that have high public visibility (84% of American adults believe that CRM creates a positive company image).
social disclosure	Refers to the company's performance in providing information on societal initiatives undertaken by the firm. To the extent that corporations provide data on their societal programs, they are responding to societal needs and expectations regarding social disclosure (Lerner & Fryxell,1988).
company's environmental record	Pro-social positioning of many firms is identified with their pro-environment policies that affect air and water (Mullen, 1997). This increasing concern with environmental issues is explained through a) the influence that consumers' environmental concerns have on product offering, b) the mu ltidimensional character of these issues (Osterhus, 1997).
workforce diversity	Percentage of women and minorities in the board and/or organization are perceived as aspects of company's humanistic contribution for equity in the workplace (Mullen, 1997).
financial health and tendency to grow	Raters attempting to judge a company's social responsibility generally recognize the importance of the company's financial health. Stanwick and Stanwick (1998) provide evidence that supports the view that profitability of the firm allows and/or encourages managers to implement programs that increase the level of CSR, in other words a corporation's level of social responsibility is affected by the firm's financial performance. The financial angle, however, is not enough to judge the level of CSR. A company may have excellent employee benefits but if they go out of business those benefits become meaningless. Instead, growing companies are perceived as more pro-social as they can offer employees more opportunities for advancement (Fombrun, 1998).
community involvement	Company's that best score for their community involvement appear to make more charitable contributions, encourage more employee volunteer programs, and have greater local economic impact (tax revenues, jobs, educational programs, and investments.

In today's competitive marketplace, however, altruistic intentions alone can no longer justify charitable giving and expenditures related to philanthropic activities. Sophisticated and materialistic customers are looking at the behavior of the firm; are they donating just to gain good will or are they truly concerned about particular issues? For their part, corporations regard their contributions today not as outright donations but as investments that are intended to benefit the company as well as the recipient

(Schwartz, 1996). The most commonly encountered categories of corporate social responsibility are shown in table 1.

The most obvious link of CSR to overall corporate performance is through the reputation aspect. Reputations reflect firms' relative success in fulfilling the expectations of multiple stakeholders (Freeman, 1984; Fombrun, 1996). In their research on reputation building and corporate strategy, Fombrun and Shanley (1990) argue that favorable reputation may enable firms to charge premium prices, enhance their access to capital markets, attract better applicants and attract investors. Empirical evidence in their study suggests that the greater a firm's contribution to social welfare, the better its reputation.

Reputation, closely related to brand awareness, aids in brand differentiation and ultimately helps a company gain (through a good reputation) or lose (through a damaged reputation) competitive advantage (Kay, 1993). As Fombrun and Shanley (1990) comment: "well-reputed firms have a competitive advantage within their industries, but poorly reputed firms are disadvantaged". Fombrun (1998) recommends that the pool of criteria used to evaluate corporate reputations should consider: a) multiple stakeholders, whose assessments aggregate into collective judgements and b) the different but overlapping financial and social aspects according to which stakeholders judge companies. This recommendation is important when researching corporate social responsibility and its manifestation through cause related marketing. First, because CSR concerns multiple stakeholders, second because it embraces activities above and beyond legal obligations.

Cause Related Marketing

Cause related marketing (CRM) is defined as the process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by contributing a specific amount to a designated non-profit effort that, in turn, causes customers to engage in revenue-providing exchanges (Mullen, 1997). In the US, CRM is used as a corporate term for "working together in financial concert with a charity . . . to tie a company and its products to a cause" (Ptacek & Salazar, 1997). It is a "dramatic way to build brand equity . . . as it creates the most added value and most directly enhances financial performance" (Mullen, 1997). It (societal marketing) can generate the long-term value needed for a company to survive and achieve competitive advantage (Collins, 1993).

CRM is the latest buzzword for European marketers who have come to realize that alliances of companies with charities can potentially result in growing market shares and customer loyalty (Stewart, 1998). Cause related marketing has a great potential in helping marketers to stay in tune with the mood of the public, as it is more sensitive, trustworthy and relevant to society (Duncan & Moriarty 1997). Surveys have shown that most consumers, if price and quality are equal, are more likely to switch to a brand that had a cause related marketing benefit (R&S Worldwide, 1993; 1996).

Elaborating further in the field of profitable stakeholder relationships, Duncan (1995) refers to CRM from a conceptually different angle. What he calls "mission

marketing" (MM) integrates a non-commercial, socially redeeming system into a company's business plan and operations. Whether it is called CRM or MM, it is "the ultimate brand contact, the manifestation of company's mission and philosophy, which can drive communication campaigns and even strategy" (Duncan & Moriarty, 1997).

CRM has grown because consumers are growing more demanding toward corporations and expect business to use their resources to address community concerns. Changing attitudes of customers have driven marketers to find new ways to make marketing relevant to society, dialogue-seeking, responsive and involving (Ptacek & Salazar, 1997). Consumers demand more value for their money. Furthermore, association with a non-profit can generate positive media coverage, build a reputation of compassion and caring for a company, enhance its integrity, enhance employees' motivation and productivity, and publics' preferences (Duncan & Moriarty 1997).

When properly executed, CRM sells products, enhances image, and motivates employees. However, CRM can be a very dangerous area for companies to venture into if not done properly. According to Duncan and Moriarty (1997) this means, among other things, tying the cause to the organization's mission, making it long term, not using it as a short-term tactic to increase sales, and understanding that the effects are not always easy to measure and whatever effects there are, normally through enhanced reputation, are very long term. The following statement underlines the paradoxes a firm encounters when considering cause related marketing.

> *If they don't say enough about their charity links consumers believe that companies are hiding something and if they say too much they believe that charities are being exploited by the big corporations. It makes the promotion of such schemes one of the most delicate jobs in marketing. Go too far one way and consumers believe you are using the charity, go the other way and they will not even know of your involvement (Tom O'Sullivan, 1997).*

The potential to affect buying behavior, however, does exist and is credited to: a) the value it can add to the brand and thus brand equity, b) the ability to strengthen relationships with internal and external stakeholders, whose support is vital to brand equity and ultimately affects the company's bottom line and c) the ability to make the message believable, less confusing and misleading, and thus lessen negative effects of customer skepticism (Duncan & Moriarty, 1997).

Skepticism
According to the Oxford Dictionary (1982), a skeptic is a person who is inclined to question the truth of facts, inferences, etc. According to Mohr et al. (1998), skepticism is one of two constructs that aid in explaining people's reactions to communications, cynicism is the second. While cynicism is characterized by the authors as an enduring and deep belief, skepticism is more situational and thus not as long lasting. Further, they quote Kanter and Mirvis (1989, p. 301), who say that "skeptics doubt the substance of communications; cynics not only doubt what is said but the motives for

saying it". A highly skeptical person will perceive the accuracy of a claim to be low; a person with a low level of skepticism will rate the accuracy of a claim to be higher. Ford, Smith, and Swasy (1990) have found that consumers are skeptical of all kind of claims, even those that are easily verified.

Several studies indicate that consumers believe it is important for marketers to seek out ways to become good corporate citizens (R&S Worldwide, 1996), that cause related marketing is "a good way to solve social problems" (Ptacek & Salazar, 1997), and that companies have a more positive image of a company if it is doing something to make the world a better place. Yet the level of skepticism toward such schemes that unite the interests of charity and business remains very high. Webb and Mohr (1998) make the assumption that skepticism toward CRM derives mainly from customer's distrust and cynicism toward advertising, which is a component of the marketing mix used in CRM campaigns. The negative attitudes toward CRM expressed from half of Webb and Mohr's (1998) respondents were credited mostly to skepticism toward implementation and or cynicism toward a firm's motives. Half of the respondents indeed perceived the firm's motive as being "self-serving".

Nevertheless, consumers express interest in and appreciation of company's involvement in CRM given that it results in funds being raised for the cause. In their research Webb and Mohr (1998) found that this distinction sometimes led to purchasing based on CRM, and one third of their respondents admitted that these campaigns have at least some impact on their buying decisions. Webb and Mohr's research suggests that consumers with a high level of skepticism will be less likely to respond positively to CRM campaigns than consumers with a low level of skepticism toward CRM.

The most commonly encountered reasons that encourage skepticism are "cause exploitative intentions", questionable honesty and fairness of promotion (Webb and Mohr 1998). Perceptions that the company is making "much ado about nothing" or that its promotion does not correspond to the reality of the help being given to the cause can lead to skepticism.

Since skepticism can affect consumers' purchase decisions (Szykman et al. 1997), it can be a great help when developing campaign strategies to have a more thorough understanding of the level of skepticism in target audiences. It is nearly impossible to influence the opinion of cynics, according to Mohr et al. (1998), due to their enduring beliefs. The authors suggest, however, that skepticism can be decreased as knowledge increases. In Norway, CRM has had a very short history, and, as mentioned, little to no research has been done exploring Norwegian's attitudes toward this type of marketing. Because of their history of government support of non-profit organizations and because of the definition of social responsibility used in the country, it is hypothesized that Norwegians will be skeptical of claims made by firms regarding their affiliations with non-profit organizations. Further, it is hypothesized that their awareness of such campaigns will be low due to the newness of this approach.

Methodology

In order to uncover the level of consumer skepticism and knowledge of CRM among consumers in Norway a methodology was used based on the work of Mohr et al. (1998), who developed and tested a measure of skepticism toward environmental claims in marketer's communications, specifically the "green" claims made by marketers on their packaging and in their advertising. The researchers believe that measuring skepticism is important, as most consumers tend to lack knowledge on environmental issues and claims using environmental terms. They believe this is an important factor as skepticism can be correlated with lack of knowledge. Consequently, the more consumers know about an issue the less skeptical they may be and thus be more positive to the firm and its products.

The point of Mohr et al.'s work was to find a reliable and valid measurement of skepticism. They started with 13 items identified from previous research. After two studies, which they used to refine the measure for reliability and validity, they derived four questions that could be used to measure skepticism to environmental claims made in marketers' communications. The four questions are listed in table 2. Questions 1 and 4 appear to measure the same thing, but Mohr et al. (1998) kept the two seemingly similar questions in order to test or check the consistency of the respondents' answers to the questions. This is important if respondents are not conscious or aware of CRM campaigns.

Table 2. Questions measuring skepticism from Mohr et al. 1988.

1. Most environmental claims made on package labels or in advertising are true.
2. Because environmental claims are exaggerated, consumers would be better off if such claims on package labels or in advertising were eliminated.
3. Most environmental claims on package labels or in advertising are intended to mislead rather than to inform consumers.
4. I do not believe most environmental claims made on package labels or in advertising.

The study reported in this article, according to Mohr (1998), is a first attempt to apply the researchers' measurement instrument. Here, however, it was necessary to adjust the four questions above. Skepticism is measured by asking consumers their opinion on organizations' claims regarding their relationships with non-profit organizations in their advertising and packaging (replacing environmental claims). It is possible to make a case that environmental claims are a subset of corporate social responsibility; therefore the use of Mohr et al.'s (1998) measurements should be applicable to other situations where an organization makes claims regarding corporate social responsibility. After conferring with Mohr (1998), it was decided to go ahead with her measurements for the Norwegian study.

This research was conducted in Norway and it was necessary to translate the questions into Norwegian. To test that the questions did not lose their meaning in translation, a native speaking Norwegian first translated them from English into Norwegian. The Norwegian was then translated back into English by a person with English as their native language. Subsequently, the translations went through at least five different people, the last an expert in questionnaire design and quantitative methods. All parties were eventually satisfied that Mohr et al.'s (1998) original questions were accurately reflected in their Norwegian version. The English questions and their Norwegian translations are provided in table 3.

The four questions were incorporated into a large research project (omnibus) carried out by Gallup Norway using telephone interviews of 1026 people. Demographic information was collected on sex, age, education, marital status, position in household, work background, family income, personal income, and geographic location in Norway. A 7-point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) was used with the neutral midpoint replaced with a "don't know" alternative. This alternative would help avoid the distortion of responses by providing the respondents with a choice in case they had no opinion (Aaker et al. 1995).

Respondents were also given a question to find out their unaided recall awareness. They were asked if they knew of any Norwegian firms or brands that advertise their cooperation with non-profit organizations, and if so which ones? They were then given the names of six specific firms that had engaged in cause related marketing campaigns to aid in their recall.

Table 3: Questions to measure skepticism in this study, English and Norwegian translation.

1. Most statements made by companies in advertising or product labels about supporting non-profit organizations are true.	Det meste av informasjonen angående støtte til veldige organisasjoner på produktpaknnger og i reklame er sant.
2. Most statements made by companies in advertising or on product labels about supporting non-profit organizations are intended to mislead rather than inform the consumer.	Det meste av informasjonen angående støtte til veldedige organisasjoner på produktpakninger og i reklame er laget for å villede meg som forbruker, isteden for å informere meg.
3. Because most statements made by companies that they support non-profit organizations are exaggerated, consumers would be better off if such statements were eliminated from advertising or package labels.	Fordi det meste av informasjonen angående støtte til veldedige organisasjoner er overdrevet, er det bedre for meg som forbruker at denne type informasjon fjernes fra reklame eller fra forpaktningene.
4. I do not believe most statements regarding support of non-profit organizations made by organizations in advertising or on package labels.	Jeg tror ikke på meste parten av informasjonen angående støtte til veldedige organisasjoner som kan benyttes i reklame eller på produktpakningene.

Three additional measurements, which although not part of the intention of this study, were included to elicit willingness to pay a higher price, likelihood of purchasing products from firms supporting non-profit organizations, and loyalty. These questions are provided in table 4. These questions were added to supplement the study and to make comparisons with previous studies done in other countries.

Table 4: Questions eliciting consumers' behavioral responses to firms supporting non-profit organizations.

1. I am willing to pay more for a product, if I know that the company or brand supports a non-profit organization.
2. When I can choose between several different brands with the same price and quality, it is more likely that I will choose the brand that I know supports a non-profit organization.
3. It is not likely that I will switch to another brand if I know the brand I use supports a non-profit organization.

Results

The results of the research are shown in table 5 and are based on a final total of 1023 respondents. The mean for question 1, which asks respondents if they believe companies' claims regarding support of non-profit organizations in advertising or on packaging is true, is 3.5. This indicates that most respondents are neutral and have no particular strong feelings regarding this issue. The mean was slightly lower for question 2, which asks respondents if the companies' claims are meant to mislead. More 30% were also in strong disagreement with this statement. When it comes to the issues of believing if companies exaggerate their claims and therefore the claims should be removed from advertising and packaging, respondents were a little stronger in their feelings. The mean was 4.0 and slightly more than 25% totally agreed with the statement. Respondents were asked point blank if they believed companies' claims and the split here was nearly 50-50, with 10% not knowing. In all cases, there were at least 10% 'don't knows'. Norwegians appear to be not very skeptical to companies' claiming support of non-profit organizations in their marketing activities. They are not strongly supportive, but neither are they strongly negative. And while they don't believe companies necessarily lie about their claims they are skeptical that they may exaggerate, and if this is the case then the claims should be removed from marketing communication.

A critical factor in this study is the knowledge of Norwegians of cause related marketing campaigns. This proved to be very low; 79% of the respondents were unaware of any campaigns even when prompted with the names of specific companies and their current campaigns. Based on Szyckman et al.'s (1997) assertions it would seem that this low level of awareness should lead to a higher level of skepticism.

However, since the level of awareness is so low, it raises the question that this research may have created a hypothetical situation for respondents and their responses are not based on actual experience with marketing claims made by companies regarding their support for non-profits but rather on how they would react if confronted with such claims.
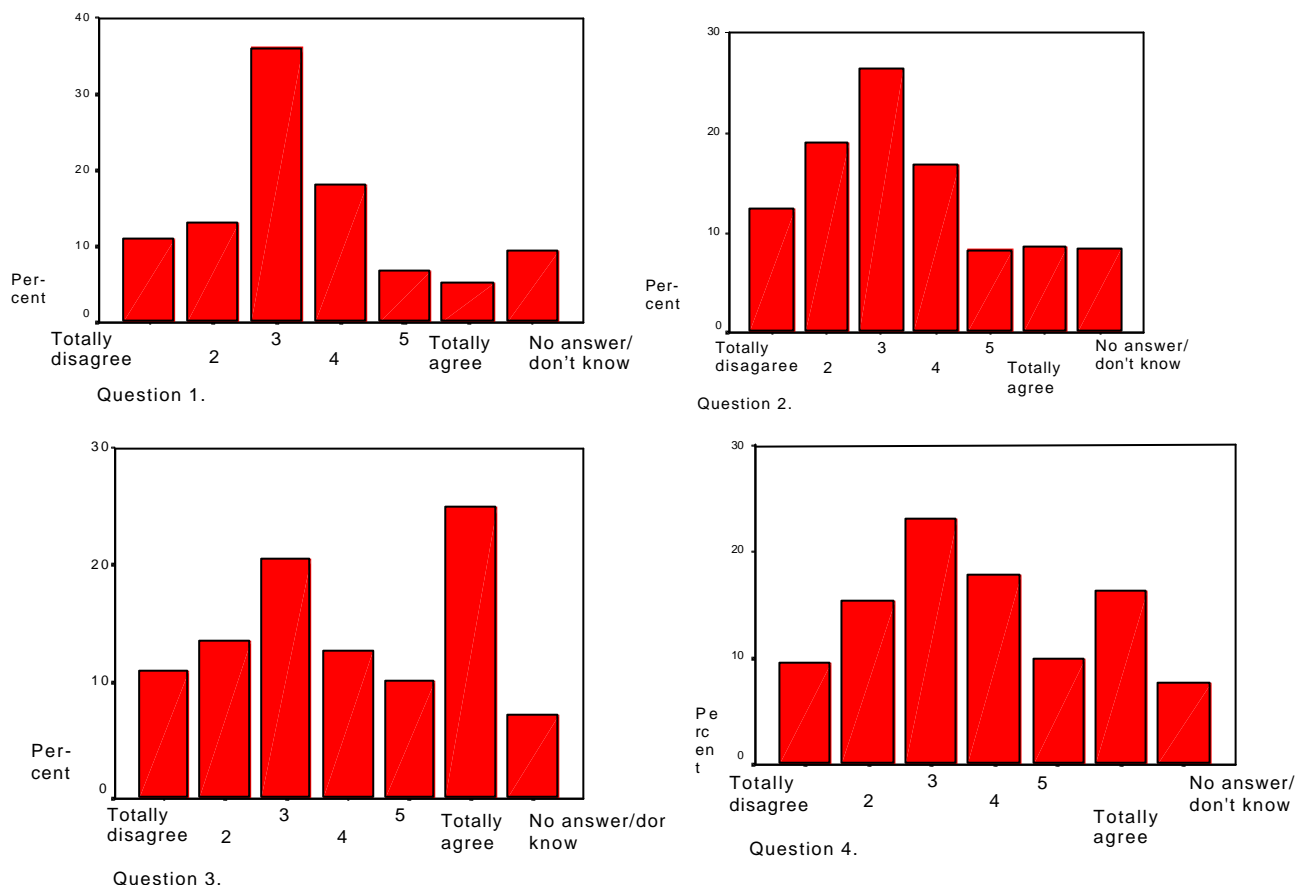

Table 5: Bar chart showing results of four questions measuring skepticism

The means and standard deviation for the four questions are provided in Table 6.

Questions	Mean	Std. Dev.
1. Most statements made by companies in advertising or product labels about supporting non-profit organizations are true.	3.51	1.67
2. Most statements made by companies in advertising or on product labels about supporting non-profit organizations are intended to mislead rather than inform the consumer.	3.49	1.75
3. Because most statements made by companies that they support non-profit organizations are exaggerated, consumers would be better off if such statements were eliminated from advertising or package labels.	4.02	1.86
4. I do not believe most statements regarding support of non-profit organizations made by organizations in advertising or on package labels.	3.83	1.77

Table 6: Means and standard deviation for responses.

When analyzing the three questions on consumer behavioral responses to firms' support of causes, however, there is a clear indication that they would react positively to claims made in advertising. For example, 46.3% would choose brands that stand for a cause and 35.5% would be more likely to switch to another brand if they knew the brand supported a non-profit organization. However, they are less likely to pay a premium price for a brand that they know supports a non-profit organization. Table 7 compares the results obtained here with results of similar studies in other countries.

	USA	UK	Norway
Awareness of companies supporting causes	79%	68%	7.5%
Likely to switch to brands that claim to help a cause	76%	86%	35.5%
Likely to pay more for a brand that supports a cause	54%	45%	29.2%
More likely to buy product that supports a cause	78%	N/A	46.3%

Table 7: Comparison of Norwegian results to studies done in other countries (Duncan & Moriarty 1997, O'Sullivan 1997; RSW 1993; 1996).

Discussion

The study here is meant to uncover Norwegian consumers' skepticism to cause related marketing. It is significant in that it is one of the first studies to actually carry out research based on Mohr et al.'s measurement of skepticism. Although other researchers have acknowledged the importance of consumers' skepticism there is no knowledge of other measurement instruments for assessing consumers' skepticism toward claims dealing with social responsibility. Therefore, this study makes a contribution to the research in this important area.

Clearly, Norwegians lag when it comes to awareness of cause related marketing campaigns. Norwegian firms have an opportunity to aid in building awareness, understanding and support for CRM at an early stage. This is particularly critical for marketers, as it appears Norwegians' buying behavior can be influenced by their perception of an organization's social responsibility. It would be unfortunate if their attitudes toward CRM campaigns were influenced by controversial or negative press coverage of such cases as the Ronald McDonald house.

Knowing how customer publics perceive companies and what they expect in return for their support is fundamental in designing communication objectives and strategies aiming to strengthen relationships with stakeholders. Stakeholders' support for a business is based on their relationship and interaction with the brand as well as the way they perceive the brand and its company. Webb and Mohr (1998) suggest that companies clearly communicate the terms of the offer and the results as a campaign progresses. For customers it is important to feel the campaign is trustworthy. Honesty, long-term commitment to a cause and involvement of non-profit organizations are factors that help to overcome customers' skepticism toward CRM.

Research suggests that knowledge has a negative effect on a person's skepticism level (Szyckman et al., 1997). This would indicate to Norwegian marketers that one of the first things they can do is to increase the awareness of corporate social responsibility and its benefits among Norwegian consumers. By increasing knowledge, they can then decrease, according to Szyckman et al., the level of skepticism and thus achieve even higher favorable behavioral responses. Marketing communications campaigns then should concentrate on using tools that are designed to inform and to make consumers more aware. Norwegian marketers have the opportunity to create a positive awareness in the minds of Norwegian consumers at this early stage of CRM in Norway. Once the market becomes saturated, perhaps they will become more skeptical, mirroring the situation in England mentioned previously.

It is acknowledged that the analysis presented in this paper is preliminary. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done. For example, analyzing the skepticism of the respondents who were aware versus those who are unaware and comparing their behavioral responses; looking at patterns of skepticism according to demographic information: correlation of this information with behavior patterns. Cause related marketing and consumers' response to it is an exciting area of research that is growing more important as companies increasingly recognize the role they must play in making the world a better place.

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