

## **Final Round**

### **II. Social Fragmentation (Subsection Topics)**

#### **D. “Cancel/Call-Out culture”; accusations of “Wokeness” - Accountability or over-reaction?**

In recent years, corporations have increasingly found themselves at the center of politically charged consumer boycotts. The slogan “go woke, go broke” has been used to describe situations where companies face backlash for social or political advocacy perceived as controversial. For example, Bud Light saw sales drop by nearly 25% following a high-profile marketing controversy. In contrast, Nike maintained its stance during criticism, and eventually experienced a stock increase of more than 60%. Marketing experts suggest that a company’s long-term outcome often depends less on its stance and more on the clarity and consistency of its response. Brands that appear to reverse course risk alienating both supporters and critics.

Your consulting firm is a preferred partner of the Global Retail Marketing Association (GRMA). The GRMA has hired your team to develop a 4-step Crisis Response Protocol for corporations facing politically motivated boycotts. Research recent examples of companies that faced politically charged boycotts or social backlash. Consider cases in which companies reversed their position and those in which they stood firm. Analyze the risks and rewards of a company responding publicly versus remaining silent. Incorporate this analysis into your Crisis Response Protocol by explaining how each step of your plan minimizes risk and maximizes long-term brand strength.