LGBT BUSINESS CASES

(Prudential): Mark Stumpp/Margaret Stumpp
Darden Graduate School of Business, University of Virginia
Written by: Reynaldo Roche
Faculty Advisor: James G. Clawson

This case describes the experiences of Mark/Margaret Stumpp as she underwent sex reassignment surgery (SRS) and the preliminary and subsequent responses of her employer, Prudential Financial, to this decision. The case provides background information related to Stumpp’s personal and professional history; to Prudential’s clientele and its commitment to diversity; and to the physical, psychological, and financial issues surrounding transgender identity and SRS. As a case study examining all aspects of Stumpp’s transition—from her initial decision to undergo SRS to meetings with company executives to her post-operative communications and client outcomes—this document presents an example of a relatively successful treatment by a large financial organization of a potentially sensitive issue. It provides examples of opportunities for improvement and models for adoption for corporations supporting transgender employees undergoing SRS.

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Reference no. 408-104-1

Surviving a Tug-of-War over LGBT Marketing: Ford and the AFA Boycott
Stephen M. Ross School of Business, University of Michigan
Written by: Glauber Teixeira
Faculty Advisor: Christie Nordhielm

This case traces the origins of and the ongoing conflicts between Ford Motor Company and the American Family Association (AFA). It summarizes Ford’s LGBT-friendly policies and describes its LGBT-targeted marking campaign, which incited a boycott from the conservative AFA. In doing so, this case study also explains the types of LGBT marketing available to companies and the risks and benefits of each. It describes the scope of the AFA’s boycott and the response from Ford dealers and company executives. In doing so, it provides profiles of those individuals active in and influential to the campaigns and boycotts, and it poses questions about audience selection, risks of demographic segmentation, and responding to adversarial boycotts.

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Reference no. 508-101-1

Lisa Sherman (A and B)
Harvard Business School
LGBT BUSINESS CASES

Written by: Jens Audenaert
Faculty Advisor: Bill George

These two case files trace the career path of Lisa Sherman, now Executive Vice President of Logo, an LGBT-targeted television channel. As a vice president at Verizon, Sherman remained closeted and suppressed her hurt feelings when colleagues at a diversity training workshop denigrated gay and lesbian people. On her final day, she came out to Verizon’s CEO, who then worked to expand the company’s non-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation and even testified in Congress on the importance of including sexual orientation in the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). This case presents Sherman’s career trajectory both before and after coming out, showing how her openness about her sexuality launched her to even greater success: she worked as a COO for a marketing firm, founded her own company, served as a consultant at a major New York office, and launched Logo as a senior vice president.

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Reference no. 9-408-115

The Pink Dollar: LGBT-Targeted Marketing in a Large Consumer Products Company
Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley
Written by: Fernando Garcia, MBA 2009
Graduate School of Business at The University of Chicago
Written by: Andrew Wong, MBA 2009
Faculty Advisor: Priya Raghubir, Haas School of Business

“The Pink Dollar” presents the dilemma of “Joe Jones,” product director for a well-known fragrance line in the luxury products category of a large consumer products company that produces a variety of personal care products for a number of retail outlets. Its luxury products division maintains 17 fragrance brands for the global market. While Joe would like to investigate the options for producing LGBT-targeted advertising, media, or products, he must contend with the variable policies of the fashion houses that own his fragrance brands, the risks and benefits of gay-targeted advertising, and the lack of reliable long-term demographic data on the purchasing patterns of this segment. This case provides background information related to Joe’s company, the buying power of the LGBT community, and the advertising options available to Joe. It asks you to consider how Joe should present his options at a meeting for brand managers responsible for deciding which strategy to pursue, whether more options exist, and upon which criteria he should base his evaluation.

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The “L” Word: Administering Layoffs in Tough Times
Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley
Written by: Khuram Hussain MBA 2010
Faculty Advisor: Holly A. Schroth

This case chronicles the tribulations of Luke Ward, a Vice President at J.P. Morgan, as he is faced with an impossible decision: following the merging of J.P. Morgan and Bear Stearns, he must lay off one member of his four-person marketing team. “The ‘L’ Word” examines the difficult dynamics of making such a choice, from the history of the two companies to the history of the individuals involved to the sensitive dynamics of the merging of two powerful financial companies. J.P. Morgan has expressed a firm commitment to hiring and retaining diverse employees, and each of the three team members brings a different skill set to the team. Compromising Luke’s decision is his mentoring relationship with Andrew, an openly gay employee who co-chairs the company’s PRIDE organization. After providing detailed overviews of the key players, this case asks you to decide what you would do if you were in Luke’s shoes, and to explain the factors leading to your decision.

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Reference no. 409-071-1