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The 2006 Cone

# Millennial Cause Study

The Millennial Generation: Pro-Social and Empowered to Change the World

By Cone Inc. in collaboration with AMP Insights.

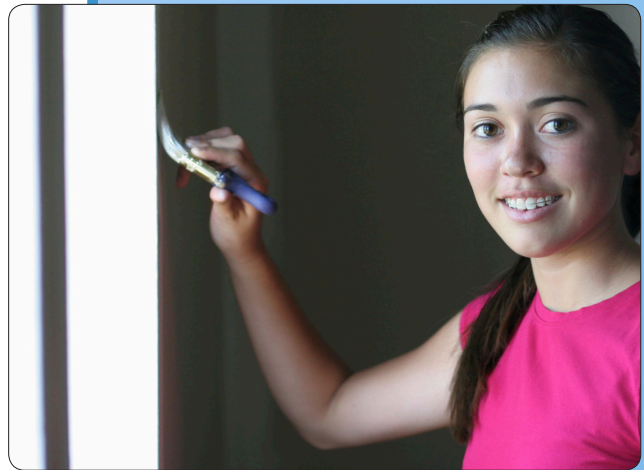
***“Everyone has an equal responsibility to make this world a better place.” (15 year old female from the West)***

***“A company [should] do everything in its power to follow the laws and give back to the community while providing a safe and enjoyable place to work for its employees.” (23 year old female from the Midwest)***

***“A company is no different than a single person. I believe that every person should take his or her time to support the community, so a company should also.” (19 year old male from the South)***

Tragic world events such as 9/11, coupled with recent natural disasters have motivated the Millennial Generation to develop a strong social conscience. Technology has given them a loud and powerful voice. As a result, Cause Branding® has emerged as a valuable tool for reaching Millennials. Cause Branding is a business strategy that integrates a social issue or cause into an organization’s brand equity and identity. If authentically embraced and sustained, it allows that business to gain significant bottom line and community impacts.

To better understand the emotional link that connects Millennials to causes and Millennials to companies that support causes, Cone Inc., a pioneer in Cause Branding and Corporate Responsibility, collaborated on this study with AMP Insights, the Consumer Insights and Planning division of AMP Agency, a leader in youth marketing and promotions. The goal of the research was to understand the role that causes play in a Millennial’s life as an individual, employee and a consumer.



# Millennials: Civic-Minded Individuals and Consumers

Millennials have been referred to as the most civic-minded generation since World War II. This study suggests that Millennials are the most socially-conscious consumers to date. In fact, 61% of respondents are currently worried about the state of the world today and feel personally responsible to make a difference. They are attempting to live up to that responsibility by volunteering, recycling, educating friends and family on social and environmental causes and donating money. In the past year, 81% of respondents have volunteered in some way (either weekly, monthly or once or twice a year).

Millennials are trying to make a difference in the world and expect others to do the same. This rationale extends to their peers, parents, neighbors, communities and to companies. Their expectations are high and they evaluate companies on a whole host of factors extending beyond products or services and price, to how the company operates within the local, national and global communities.

When those expectations are met the rewards are great. This is especially true for companies that are socially and environmentally responsible. Millennials are more likely to trust these companies, seek their employment and buy or recommend their products/services to others.

**83% will trust a company more if it is socially/environmentally responsible**

**66% will recommend products/services if the company is socially responsible**

**69% consider a company's social and environmental commitment when deciding where to shop**

**89% are likely or very likely to switch from one brand to another (price and quality being equal) if the second brand is associated with a good cause**

**74% of Millennials are more likely to pay attention to a company's messages if the company has a deep commitment to a cause**

## Millennials as Employees

This trend also extends to Millennials' professional lives. The oldest Millennials are beginning to enter the work force, extending their expectations to their employers. Of the 28% of respondents who describe themselves as employed full time:

**79% want to work for a company that cares about how it impacts or contributes to society**

**69% feel that their company's social and/or environmental activities make them feel proud to work there**

**64% report that their company's social and/or environmental activities make them feel loyal to their company**



## Cause Interests

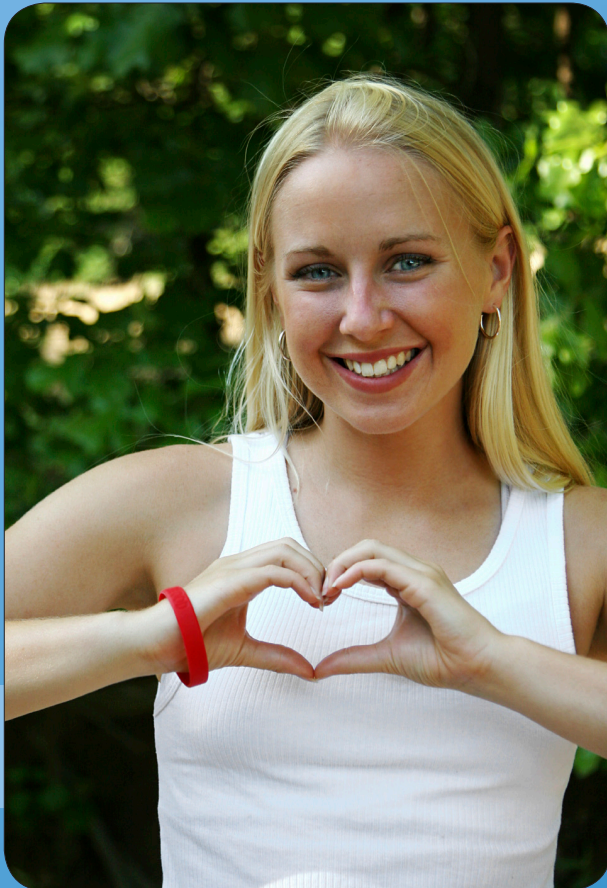
Whether they are acting as consumers or employees, Millennials' support of causes is broad. Causes that topped the list include: education, poverty, the environment and health and disease.



## Harnessing the Power of the Engaged Millennials a.k.a. The “Doers”

Millennials who are actively engaged with causes respond very differently to the world around them than those who are not as engaged. “Doers” are volunteering at least once a week and represent close to 20% of the Millennials surveyed. Millennials’ direct participation with causes unleashes a more engaged citizen, consumer and employee. They not only have a more positive outlook and attitude toward responsible corporations, they actually go out of their way to support companies and products that give back. There are an estimated 15.6 million “Doers” in the United States alone, representing a huge potential opportunity for companies embracing Cause Branding.

The “Doers” are not only the most loyal brand ambassadors a company can have, but they are also ready to listen and endorse companies that have put a stake in the ground within an issue. To support the causes they care about, the “Doers” will reward a company that meets its standards and are not afraid to refuse to work for an employer that does not.



**87% of the “Doers” have purchased a product that supports a cause in the past year’s as opposed to 48% of non-volunteers**

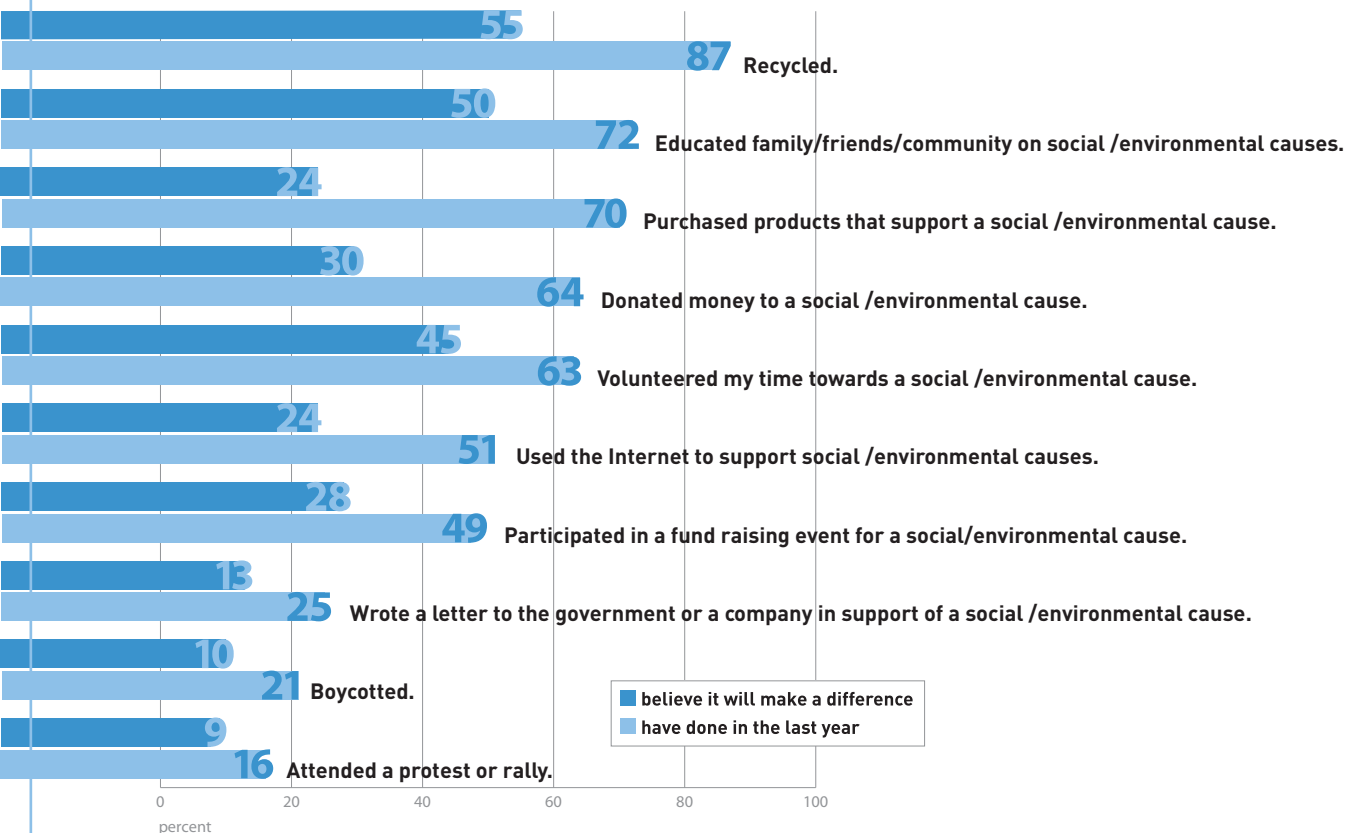
**68% would actually refuse to work for an employer that is not socially responsible**

**56% are likely to pursue working at a company that is socially responsible**

## Where is the Impact?

Though Millennials “give back,” there is something important missing from their experiences. The missing link is that they do not understand the impact of their efforts. This is a major challenge for companies. Millennials are recycling, purchasing products, donating money, participating in fund raising events, writing letters, boycotting companies and attending protests, yet question the impact of their efforts supporting a particular issue ( as seen in the chart below ).

As a generation accustomed to instantaneous feedback and gratification, Millennials are frustrated because they are not shown the direct impact of their efforts. This lack of communication from companies is causing them to question if they are making a difference. To keep Millennials informed, companies need to utilize varied communications to help them better understand their role as a part of the solution.



# Millennials are Changing the Rules

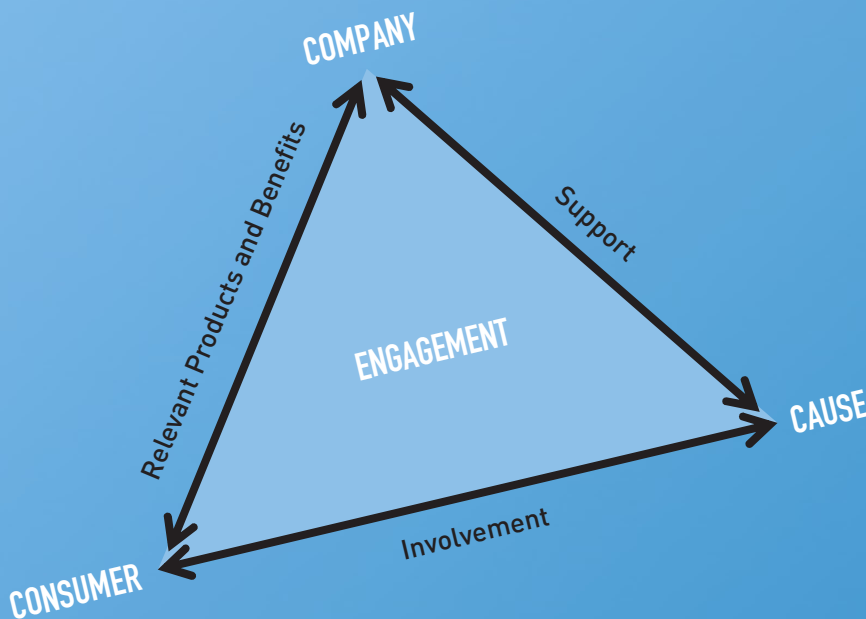
## Cause Branding is Emerging as a Loyalty Strategy

With such tremendous resources at their fingertips, Millennials are skeptical of the advertising they encounter on a daily basis. This savvy generation will not respond to products/services or companies that are not genuine. Products/services need to be priced fairly, be of good quality and most importantly have emotional relevance to Millennials.

A significant way to gain Millennials' trust is by walking the walk through substantial cause alignment. Yet, few companies are doing so. 70% of Millennials believe that companies are NOT doing enough to support the causes that they care about. Companies are only in the early adopter stage when it comes to effectively embedding causes into their brand and engaging young people in a larger social purpose. Only a handful of pioneers, such as ALDO, Mudd, MAC, Cartoon Network and MTV are actively engaging Millennials and communicating their impacts.



## Millennial Cause Engagement Paradigm



To best reach these consumers, traditional marketing must evolve. A third dimension needs to be added to the brand marketing experience. This is especially true with Cause Branding. To be truly effective, the cause related campaign also needs to foster a relationship between the cause and the consumer. By making an effort to engage the Millennial Generation, companies have the opportunity to create a new generation of fiercely loyal customers who are passionate about working with corporations to change the world.

Millennials are ready to reward and punish companies when it comes to their commitments to cause. This is a call to action for companies to raise the bar and meet this generation's expectations by providing them with hands-on cause-related experiences, as well as sufficient communication for them to feel engaged.

Sharing the impact with Millennials will create a generation of brand ambassadors – ready to stand up and conquer pressing world issues, while being loyal to the brands, companies and employers that they trust most.

## About The 2006 Cone Millennial Cause Study

The 2006 Cone Cause Millennial Study presents the findings of an online survey conducted among a national probability sample of 1,800 respondents comprised of 895 males and 905 females, between the ages of 13 and 25 years old. This survey captured the opinions, perceptions and beliefs of three distinct segments; Teens (13-17), College (18-22) and Young Adults (23-25).

This survey was completed during the period 5/16/06 and 5/27/06. The margin of error is +/- 2.31 percentage points. This Executive Summary cannot be reproduced without permission from Cone Inc. For additional information or a customized presentation of the findings, please contact Kiva Starr at Cone: 617.939.8335 or Allison Bacon at AMP Insights: 617.837.8163



### About Cone Inc.

Cone ([www.coneinc.com](http://www.coneinc.com)) is a Boston-based brand strategy and communications agency that builds brand trust. Cone creates stakeholder loyalty and long-term relationships through Cause Branding, Corporate Responsibility, Brand Marketing and Issues/Crisis Management. Cone's team of experts specializes in working with corporate strategy, marketing, communications and philanthropy professionals to maximize the business and community benefits of integrating social commitments into companies and brands.

As a pioneer in the field of Cause Branding, Cone has partnered with leading organizations to create and implement some of the nation's most impactful cause initiatives, including: the Avon Breast Cancer Crusade, Reebok Human Rights Awards, PNC Grow Up Great, American Heart Association's Go Red For Women and ConAgra Foods' Feeding Children Better.



### About AMP Insights

AMP Insights, the strategic planning and consumer insights division of AMP Agency, focuses on providing targeted knowledge and insights to organizations interested in better understanding more about kids, teens, and young adults. We employ talented team researchers and planners with diverse backgrounds and experience. This team has created and developed innovative and custom methodologies that enable us to truly learn how teens and young adults are communicating, uncover their key influencers and establish what motivates them best. We understand the business challenges facing our clients and work with them to uncover the key consumer insights so that they are best able to answer those challenges. Our clients include companies such as M.A.D.D., Levi's, American Eagle, Ben & Jerry's, Girl Scouts, Kellogg's, Burt's Bees and Disney.

