



# RISK & REPUTATION UNIT

# POLITICS CREATE BRAND DISSONANCE

## *The Brain Toggles from Store Shelf to Voting Booth*

*All  
Americans*

82%

Say companies are **becoming more political** than ever before

71%

Aren't interested in **supporting companies** that have become too political, **regardless if they agree** with their stances

78%

Wish their **preferred brands would stay out of politics**

REPUBLICANS

87%

78%

84%

DEMOCRATS

81%

68%

73%

## CONSUMERS ARE CYNICAL *Companies are Seen as Inauthentic*

*All  
Americans*

68%

Believe when **companies speak out today** on social issues, it's a **marketing ploy** rather than an authentic opinion  
(+12%-pts April 2022; Gen Z: 54%, +8%-pts)

59%

Say there is generally **more risk to a CEO speaking out** on social issues than more reward.  
(+5%-pts April 2022)

78%

Say companies are **getting into more controversy** as they try to **appease both the left and the right**

REPUBLICANS

72%

67%

85%

DEMOCRATS

54%

45%

74%

## WHAT THIS MEANS:

### *Speaking Out Requires a Track Record, Relevance*

All  
Americans

84%

77%

77%

Companies need to have a **track record of acting on their values** to be taken seriously

Companies would have a better reputation if they only spoke out on social issues that **directly relate to business operations**

Would respect a companies more if **they were clear in their values, even if they disagreed with them**

REPUBLICANS

84%

65%

77%

DEMOCRATS

86%

83%

79%

*The Result:* 80% BELIEVE WHAT A COMPANY **DOES** FOR SOCIETY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT IT **SAYS**

# 5 TRUTHS TO CREATE REPUTATIONAL STRENGTH

Thinking about ways to build a company's reputation that would be immune to consumer and/or societal backlash, how important are the following?

*% Important*

1.

**Know your customer**



2.

**Live your values**



3.

**Bring people together**



4.

**Don't Flip-Flop**



5.

**Back it up**



**Know your audience and prioritize stakeholders when it comes to social issues**

**Live out company values in all areas of operations**

**Focus on unifying social messages and programs**

**Refuse to backtrack on social stances when facing backlash**

**Have a proven track record in order to quell backlash when information/news moves quickly**

# WHAT A BRAND NEEDS *ahead of Election 2024*

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1. **Holistic understanding of stakeholders**  
– including employees, consumers, investors and media
2. **Vetting process**  
that integrates marketing and communications
3. **A ready defense**  
to ensure you stand by your actions
4. **24/7 monitoring and increased tracking**  
during key flash points on the calendar
5. **Always-on bipartisan advisory team**