

# LGBT Legislative Issues and Brand Reputation



**October 6, 2010**

*Prepared by*



# Agenda

- **Today's Legislative Landscape and the LGBT Community**
  - *Wesley Combs, President, Witeck-Combs Communications*
- **American Airlines – A Case Study**
  - *Mike Wascom, Managing Director, International and Government Affairs*
- **Levi Strauss & Co.**
  - *Laurie Goldman, Senior Manager, Worldwide Government Affairs and Public Policy*
- **Your Questions**

# About Witeck • Combs Communications

A nationally recognized and award-winning strategic public relations and marketing communications firm, specializing in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) market.

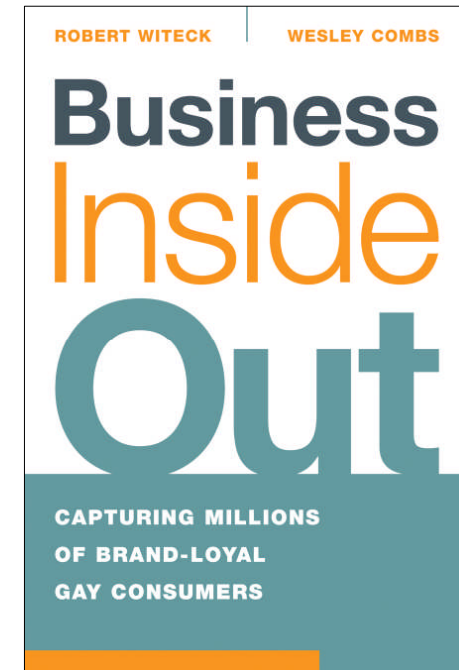
***“Witeck-Combs, the preeminent gay marketing and consulting firm.”***

*Fortune Magazine December 11, 2006*

**Bob Witeck and Wes Combs:**

**Co-authors, “*Business Inside Out*” (Kaplan 2006)**

*Named two of the top 25 people of the last 25 years by American Demographics Magazine for identifying gay market and social trends.*



# Our Clients in the LGBT Market



# Counting America's Gay Population

## The Numbers

- 15-16 million adult Americans over age of 18, between 6 to 7 percent of adult population (2007 estimate)
- 83% of gays and lesbians consider themselves to be “out” to others

## Gender Breakdown

- Roughly 58-42 split between males and females who self-identify as LGBT - over 8 million men and 6 million women



Sources: US Census (2000), Witeck • Combs/Harris Interactive (2007)

# 2010 LGBT Buying Power

**Buying power** is *not* wealth – it is the sum total of what we have to spend after paying our taxes. [It is also another term for *disposable personal income or DPI.*]

Niche Market	Population	2010 Buying Power
<b>LGBT Adults</b>	<b>16 Million</b>	<b>\$743 Billion</b>
<b>Hispanic-Americans</b>	<b>46+ Million</b>	<b>\$978 Billion</b>
<b>African-Americans</b>	<b>43+ Million</b>	<b>\$910 Billion</b>
<b>Asian-Americans</b>	<b>15 Million</b>	<b>\$509 Billion</b>

Sources: Selig Center for Economic Growth, University of Georgia, US Census projections (2007), U.S. Bureau of Economic Affairs, Packaged Facts, Witeck • Combs /MarketResearch.com estimate (2007)

Note: The gay, lesbian and bisexual population estimate, unlike the other population segments, is based only on adults 18 years of age and older.

# LGBT Brand Loyalty

- **78%** of LGBT people are extremely likely or very likely to consider brands that are known to provide equal workplace benefits for their employees, including LGBT workers.
- **70%** of LGBT people are likely to consider brands that support non-profits/causes important to LGBT consumers.
- **69%** of LGBT people say their purchases would be influenced by a buyer's guide that shows companies with positive workplace policies towards LGBT employees.
- **47%** of L/G people say they would be very likely to remain loyal to a brand they believe to be very friendly and supportive even if costs more or less convenient

Source: Witeck • Combs and HPOL data 2007, 2006)



# The Business Case for LGBT Diversity

## LGBT Marketplace Issues

- **Multiculturalism** – how LGBT issues fit into target marketing strategies
- **Market segmentation**
  - Reflects your customer base
  - Market share
- **Preparing and managing for customer reactions**

## LGBT Workplace Issues

- **Getting to 100 on CEI**
- **Addressing LGBT-related recruitment and retention issues**
- **ERG development**
- **Corporate communications and messaging (internal and external)**

## LGBT Public Policy Issues

- These issues impact your ability to be competitive in today's multicultural environment:
- **ENDA**
  - **Marriage equality/ partner recognition**
  - **Tax Benefits Equity Act**
  - **Transgender parity**

# Corporations and Public Policy

- **Government Relations Staff**
  - **Strategic Counsel**
  - **Monitor legislation relevant to their industry**
  - **Lobbying at state and Federal level**
  - **PAC and candidate donations**
- **Community Engagement**
  - **Neighbors and Partners**

# Public Policy and LGBT Issues

- **Endorse LGBT legislation**
  - ENDA
  - Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act
- **Support coalitions**
  - Business Coalition for Benefits Tax Equity
  - Business Coalition for Workplace Fairness
- **Lobby elected officials**
  - Letters from company to elected officials
  - Testify before legislatures
    - Nationwide – Ohio
    - American Airlines – U.S. Congress

# Companies and Public Policy Issues

- **If you knew that a seemingly gay-friendly business made a financial contribution to a political candidate who had expressed anti-gay opinions:**
  - **51% of gays and lesbians said that it would cause them to stop shopping there because they could no longer trust that the company is committed to LGBT equality.**
- **If you learned that a business where you shop made a political contribution to a candidate or cause that you oppose, would you:**
  - **34% of gays/lesbians and 28% of heterosexuals would avoid shopping there only if there were other comparable and accessible options.**
  - **28% of gays/lesbians and 17% of heterosexuals would stop shopping there.**

*Source: Witeck-Combs Communications and Harris Interactive 2010*

*Source: Witeck-Combs Communications and Harris Interactive 2010*



## **Case Studies:**

**American Airlines**  
**Levi Strauss and Co.**