



TIME

themichelliexperience

Insights

October 2013

Greetings From The Michelli Experience!

Soulful Business - A Customer Magnet



According to the 2013 survey of the International Ice Cream Association (IICA), "vanilla" continues to be the most popular ice cream flavor. While vanilla's popularity holds strong in the frozen treat department, vanilla leadership is not a great formula for overall business success today. In my recently released book, [Leading the Starbucks Way](#), I argue that far too many business leaders seek vanilla-like neutrality when it comes to social causes or engagement in social action. As a result of this posture, their companies are perceived as "soulless" and ultimately less attractive to consumers.

By contrast to "vanilla companies," Starbucks leadership tackles social problems head on and in the process has catapulted the brand to record-breaking sales numbers. As an example of this social engagement, senior leaders at Starbucks took out full-page ads in national magazines during the last election cycle encouraging other business leaders and customers to forgo contributing to political campaigns and instead divert that money into Starbucks [Create Jobs for USA](#) program. Those funds were then used to help small businesses grow and hire. While some shareholders viewed this social involvement as potentially bad for business (given that some customers might churn in response to the vocal nature of the brand), leaders at Starbucks spoke out in keeping with core values concerning the treatment of people and community. More importantly they championed a leadership solution that allowed the brand to engage with customers to "do good" while governmental leadership was lacking.

Starbucks non-partisan social leadership approach also serves the longterm interest of shareholders since a lack of jobs in the broader economy makes it difficult for people to pay \$4 for a latte. So here are some questions for you... Are you a vanilla brand? Where do you or can you take a stand such that customers can make an authentic and soulful connection with you? Will your areas of social involvement create interactivity with your customers and serve the longterm interests of your

business?

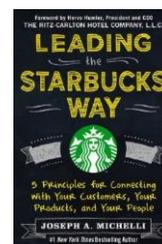
Prizes as Promised



Last quarter I foreshadowed a PRIZE giveaway attached to this newsletter - so here goes. **We are giving away TWENTY \$25 Starbucks gift cards** to newsletter readers (that's the price of my new book). All you have to do is write a review of **Leading the Starbucks Way** on [Amazon](#) or [Goodreads](#). I am not asking that you rate the book positively - only that you take *a few minutes to compose a couple sentence honest review and post it on either one of these book review sites*. After you complete your review, simply send an email to kelly@josephmichelli.com citing the title of your review and provide us a mailing address. Voila! The **\$25 Starbucks gift card** is on its way. Feel free to pass this offer on to someone you know!

Leading the Starbucks is Out and Flourishing

Thank you for your support of the new book **Leading the Starbucks Way** which is readily available at [800ceoread](#), [Amazon](#) or [Barnes & Noble](#). As a newsletter subscriber, I would love to offer you an additional PRIZE in the form of a signed and personalized bookplate that you can affix to your copy. Simply send an email to kelly@josephmichelli.com and we will get one right out to you.



Next Newsletter



I will visit your email box again in about 3 months. Until then, I remain committed to serving those who seek to serve well!

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