

Chaitanya Cherukuri Talks About Responsible Food Marketing

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[Chaitanya Cherukuri](#) is an editor of a well-known magazine that focuses specifically on the food sector. His focus is on marketing within this sector and he believes that 2018 will be a year of significant change. This is due to a variety of things, not in the least because of the fact that consumers are now more interested in personalization, convenience, and health. Hence, Cherukuri believes that food marketers need to start focusing on the ethics of food if they want to remain relevant. Indeed, he points out that there will be three key issues of importance this year: palm oil, plastic, and food waste.

Palm Oil

It is by now well-known that palm oil is a major cause of deforestation, while also causing many species to be at risk of extinction. Food brands are responsible for protecting the planet yet [Chaitanya Cherukuri believes](#) that not enough is being done about this. In a recent Greenpeace report, it became apparent that many household brands will not disclose whether they use palm oil. Considering that they had committed in 2010 to eliminate this oil from their supply chain by 2020, this is concerning. On the other hand, there are a number of brands that are leading the way, including Pip & Nut, which has embraced healthy fats and removed bad fats from its products completely. Another is frozen food store Iceland, which has disclosed that, by the end of this year, none of its own brand products will contain any palm oil.

Plastic

People are becoming more and more aware of the seriousness of plastic pollution. The World Economic Forum has stated that the oceans will contain more single-use plastic than fish by 2050. People all over the world are now paying attention to this problem, including many food brands. Many have pledged to remove plastic completely from their packaging. Strategies, such as switching to paper straws, are paying off. In some countries, such as the United Kingdom, brands have been petitioned to remove plastic and they have done so. According to Chaitanya Cherukuri, the best way for food brands to achieve this is by focusing on their packaging.

Food Waste



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Wrap is a food waste expert who, in 2016, revealed that the food and drinks industry had wasted 1.9 million tons of food in 2016 alone. Much of this food could have been redistributed to those who need it. This is a tremendous problem and Chaitanya Cherukuri is happy to see that the food and drinks industry is responding. Global "Waste Not Want Not" initiatives have had a tremendous impact, showing brands how they can reduce waste. There are three goals of this campaign:

1. Double the amount of food that is redistributed, which would equate to 100 million meals per year.
2. Lobby national governments to put tax incentives in place to lower the cost of redistribution.
3. Ensure that brands become more transparent and work together with and engage each other to do better.

[Chaitanya Cherukuri explains](#) that the results have become evident. By the start of 2017, nearly 100 retailers and suppliers agreed to double their redistribution rates by 2020, thereby also helping to solve world hunger. Furthermore, many retailers are now being transparent about how much they waste, encouraging them to do better.

Chaitanya Cherukuri's Lessons to Be Learned

Cherukuri feels that there are numerous brands out there that are doing fantastic things and others should learn from them. He has worked with companies that are serious about ethical food marketing in the food and drinks industry and they have made ethics the core of their overall vision and strategy. That said, as Cherukuri explains, much more still needs to be done. Ultimately, every brand has to take responsibility for protecting the planet so it remains for the next generation. While it will take some time before 100% perfection is achieved, it is possible for everybody to start working towards it.

Chaitanya Cherukuri wants to reiterate that the general public and the media alike still see the



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value of cause-related marketing. What this means is that people prefer to buy from brands that they know are ethical, because it makes them feel good as well. This means that being more ethical supports not just the planet, but the company itself as well. It is a true win-win situation, in other words. For Cherukuri, it is essential that brands start to use their advertising and marketing budgets to make a positive change, to work together with others and lead the way for others in terms of showing that a better world is possible.

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