

Corporate Contributions to World Peace

---Corporate Peace Marketing (CPM)

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Statement From Dr. P. Kotler:

Mitsu Shibata has dedicated his life to find ways to produce more peace in the world. Here you can read his latest proposal to bring more companies into peace-keeping roles.

1. Introduction: The Three Missions of Marketing

When the term “marketing” is mentioned, many people tend to associate it with sales promotion through advertising, demand stimulation, or market research. However, as early as 1971, Dr. Philip Kotler, widely regarded as the father of modern marketing, began exploring the possibility of applying marketing methodologies to social reform.

For example, Dr. Kotler proposed the concept of “demarketing,” which seeks to restrain rather than stimulate demand. This concept may be viewed as a precursor to contemporary discussions concerning resource conservation within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, in 1975, Dr. Kotler published *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations*, thereby expanding the scope of marketing beyond the commercial sector.

Beginning in 1971, Dr. Kotler advocated the application of marketing methodologies to the resolution of social problems and the advancement of social causes. This approach subsequently became known as Social (Cause) Marketing.

If conventional marketing aimed at satisfying human wants and demands is regarded as the first mission of marketing, then the application of marketing to social issues may appropriately be considered the second mission. The principal argument of this paper is that corporate marketing capabilities should also be applied to the promotion of world peace. Following discussions with Dr. Kotler, the author has conceptualized this “Peace Marketing” as the third mission of marketing.

The table below conceptually classifies these three missions of marketing into stages and

summarizes their respective “targets of stimulation” and “marketing objectives.”

(Note: These three stages are not developmental phases, but coexist simultaneously in modern society.)

Mission Stages of Marketing		
STAGE	STIMULATION TARGET	MARKETING OBJECTIVE
Conventional Marketing_	Desire and Demand	Economic Growth and Affluence
Social / Demarketing	Behavior and Activity	Social Benefit and Reform
Peace Marketing (New Marketing)	Peace Marketing (New Marketing): Mind and Spirit	World Peace by Contributing to BWP (Building World Peace)

2. The Necessity of Peace Marketing

Why, then, is Peace Marketing (PM)— the third mission of marketing — necessary?

Following the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989, expectations emerged regarding a so-called “peace dividend.” However, rather than progressing toward a more stable international order, the contemporary world has witnessed the continued proliferation of wars and regional conflicts. International society has become increasingly unstable, with major economic powers often exercising influence through military or coercive means.

Reflecting this reality, military expansion has accelerated in numerous countries. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), global military expenditures have reached approximately 460 trillion yen. Given that more than 800 million people worldwide continue to live in poverty, such a level of military spending may reasonably be characterized as an abnormal condition in the development of human civilization.

For many decades, efforts to achieve world peace have been pursued by the United Nations, various international organizations, civil society groups, and countless individuals. While these efforts have generated important achievements, it is difficult to conclude that they have been sufficiently effective in establishing lasting world peace. Regrettably, they have not prevented the emergence of the present international situation.

Humanity must therefore continue seeking new and more effective approaches to the realization of global peace. The concept of Peace Marketing proposed by Dr. Kotler may be understood as precisely such an attempt. Since marketing methodologies have already demonstrated their capacity to contribute to the resolution of social problems, there is no inherent reason why they would not also contribute to the advancement of world peace.

From another perspective, wars and armed conflicts disrupt supply chains, destabilize economic activity, and negatively affect consumer behavior. Marketing, therefore, can fully exercise its functions only within peaceful and stable social conditions.

At the 2022 conference of the World Marketing Summit (WMS), founded by Dr. Kotler in 2012, “Peace” was explicitly added as one of the goals marketing should seek to achieve. Furthermore, during a dialogue with Ms. Miku Hirano at the 2023 WMS, Dr. Kotler argued that because marketing is a beneficiary of peace, all marketing stakeholders bear a responsibility to contribute to world peace.

3. From Peace Marketing (PM) to Corporate Peace Marketing (CPM)

The concept of Peace Marketing originated in 2010, when Dr. Kotler was asked by a member of the Saudi royal family, “Can marketing be used to contribute to world peace?” Subsequently, in 2016, Dr. Kotler contributed a chapter entitled “Can We Market Peace?” to *Peace Marketing*, edited by Associate Professor A. Nedelea of Romania. This publication represented the first major work within the marketing discipline to address peace as a central theme.

In that chapter, Dr. Kotler discussed such issues as solidarity among peace organizations, redistribution of global wealth, the development of conflict-resolution mechanisms, and stakeholder participation in peacebuilding processes. Associate Professor Nedelea, in his own contribution, argued that “Peace is a value. As any other value, it has to be promoted.”

In subsequent PM writings, Dr. Kotler further addressed such themes as ethical trade (fair trade), strengthened diplomatic relations, enhanced international interdependence, regulation of the military-industrial sector, and the constructive role of the media in promoting peace.

Peace Marketing features contributions from three Japanese authors. First, Governor Yuzaki introduced Hiroshima Prefecture's various peace-seeking initiatives and expressed hope for Peace Marketing's role in nuclear abolition. Similarly, President Hiroo Saionji of the Goi Peace Foundation (GPF) highlighted their global peace activities, including the installation of over 200,000 Peace Poles worldwide, while strongly advocating for elevating humanity's peace consciousness. In my contribution, I emphasized the need to fundamentally transform our civilization's development patterns and value systems. *Peace Marketing* confirms that marketing must play a crucial role in reorienting social systems toward peace and transforming people's peace awareness.

Through discussions with various scholars and practitioners regarding Peace Marketing (PM), the author came to recognize two fundamental conceptual difficulties associated with the idea. The first difficulty concerns the abstract nature of the concept of peace itself. Because peace may be interpreted in extremely broad ways, PM likewise becomes highly expansive in meaning. Activities undertaken by peace organizations, musicians, artists, entertainers, educators, individuals, and civil society groups may all potentially be categorized as forms of Peace Marketing. For example, the Hiroshima-based peace education NPO, Peace Culture Village (PCV), founded by Kenta Sumioka under the slogan "Creating jobs that create peace," may reasonably be regarded as a form of Peace Marketing. Consequently, establishing a precise definition of PM becomes difficult.

The second difficulty arises from the fact that conceptions of peace differ according to individuals, nations, ideological perspectives, religious traditions, and social circumstances. As a result, peace itself is difficult to define as a concrete marketing target.

In order to overcome these conceptual challenges and clarify the contribution of marketing to peace, PM requires a more concrete institutional focus. The author therefore proposes corporations as the principal actors of Peace Marketing for the following reasons:

1. Corporations possess substantial driving power in modern society through economic activity and technological innovation.

2. Contemporary society increasingly expects corporations to function as responsible social citizens.
3. Investors and consumers have become more aware of corporate social responsibilities through frameworks such as SDGs and ESG.
4. The growing prominence of Chief Marketing Officers (CMOs) demonstrates the increasing strategic importance of marketing within corporations.
5. Corporate performance and stock prices exert considerable influence upon political decisions and political leaders.

If corporations possessing such extensive social influence actively participate in peacebuilding efforts, movements toward world peace may become substantially more dynamic and effective.

4. Contributing to World Peace (CWP) : The Need for a Peace Contribution Strategy

On the basis of the foregoing discussion, this paper proposes Corporate Peace Marketing (CPM) as a concrete and practical form of Peace Marketing.

It is important to emphasize that CPM must be distinguished from conventional forms of corporate philanthropy, donation, patronage, or volunteerism. Although such activities are socially valuable, they are often difficult to sustain during periods of declining corporate performance and may fail to secure long-term investor support. For the realization of world peace, temporary image-enhancement initiatives or goodwill activities alone are insufficient. CPM must be sustainable and to be so, CPM initiatives must gain investor support.

In order to get investor support, CPM must contribute not only to peacebuilding but also to the development of the corporation's core business activities. This requirement necessitates a new type of strategic framework, which the author terms the "Contributing to World Peace" (CWP) Program.

The author has discussed this concept with corporate executives, marketing professionals, investors, and Jeremy Gilley, whose efforts contributed to the United Nations' designation of September 21 as the International Day of Peace. Through these discussions, the author became convinced that what is truly needed is the formulation of CWP strategies that contribute directly to a company's primary business activities. The creation of such plans should become one of the important missions of the CMO. Here, the author points out several possible examples of CWP ideas across different industries:

(1) Game and Animation Industries

Corporations in the gaming and animation sectors could develop products centered on cooperation, coexistence, and peacebuilding rather than violence and conflict. Properly designed peace-oriented content could simultaneously contribute to social awareness for peace and commercial success.

(2) Packaged Goods Industries

Jeremy Gilley successfully persuaded The Coca-Cola Company to release products bearing “Peace One Day” labeling on September 21. This was a pioneering example of CWP initiative by a major corporation. In the future companies could redesign packaging every September 21 with peace-related messages and offer products with premium features making it as collectible item. Similar initiatives could likely be developed across many industries.

(3) Theme Park Industries

Theme parks other than The Walt Disney Company might introduce attractions promoting peace, similar to Disney’s “It’s a Small World.”

(4) Travel Industries

Travel agencies could organize attractive international tours focused on peace memorials and historical sites associated with reconciliation and conflict resolution.

(5) Corporate Point (Reward) Systems

Various companies could reward customers with points linked to peace-related activities associated with their business fields.

(6) Media and Publishing Industries

Media organizations could establish CWP Awards recognizing outstanding contributions to peacebuilding, comparable to the SDGs Awards sponsored by The Nikkei Newspaper or the World Culture Award associated with The Sankei Newspaper. This attempt would attract new readers and supporters.

Corporations that successfully pioneer effective CWP initiatives may benefit from enhanced publicity, improved corporate reputation, and first-mover advantages. Furthermore, increased public recognition of corporate contributions to peace may generate stronger consumer and investor support, thereby contributing to long-term business growth.

The digital and internet sectors likewise possess considerable potential for advancing CWP initiatives. Possible examples include:

- Adjusting algorithms to prioritize peace-related content;
- Organizing competitions in which avatars attempt to build world peace;
- Encouraging influencers and digital creators to promote and/or to compete peace-related messaging;
- Increasing monetization incentives for peace-oriented online platforms and content creators;
- Expanding rewards for users who post or endorse peace-related content.

The author hopes that many people challenge to utilize artificial intelligence to explore pathways toward achieving world peace.

Peace Marketing approaches may also be adopted by non-corporate actors, including cultural organizations, educational institutions, and individual citizens. For instance, Rotary International has already established Rotary Peace Centers at universities worldwide, producing over 1,400 Peace Fellows active across 140+ countries. Sports organizations also have a global reach, and their potential to contribute to world peace is extremely significant. In addition, I believe that the following kinds of initiatives could also be considered.

- Go associations: organizing World Peace Tournament;
- Music organizations: creating new songs like *We Are the World*;
- Peace organizations: promoting “Peace Consciousness;”
- Marketing societies: at every symposium, require speakers to spend the first five minutes presenting ideas for world peace;
- Individuals: exchanging “world peace high-fives” in public on the International Day of Peace.

In addition, there are many other ways in which governmental bodies can contribute to peace. At the “2025 Hiroshima International Peace & Business Forum,” held in May 2025 under the initiative of Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki of Hiroshima Prefecture, the “2025 Hiroshima Declaration” was issued. This forum has been an ongoing conference in Hiroshima Prefecture since 2016, dedicated to exploring the relationship between peace and business, and this year’s declaration introduced a new concept called *ESGP*. This concept calls for companies to internalize participation in *Peace*—in addition to *Environment*, *Social*, and *Governance*—as an

integral part of their corporate activities. It is fully aligned with the BWP (Building World Peace) framework that the author has been advocating up to now.

Dr. Philip Kotler has expressed the following strong endorsement of the “2025 Hiroshima Declaration, “I fully want to endorse the Hiroshima Declaration. The Hiroshima Declaration is a dramatic appeal to the world’s population to support world peace and never allow nuclear weapons to ever be used against any human beings.”

Even though corporations are expected to implement CWP programs and plans like above, building world peace activities do not rely only on corporations. Since war undermines corporate value and makes people’s life difficult, investors and citizens should strive to build a society in which investors and citizens oppose wars that deteriorate corporate performance, thereby enabling genuine contributions to world peace together.

(Note: I have my own proposal regarding the regulation of the military industry, but I would like to address that in a separate paper.)

5. For the Future : The Necessity of a Change in Mindset

Finally, two remaining challenges confronting CPM should be acknowledged.

The first concerns the mindset of investors. Unfortunately, for the majority of investors today, monetary gain remains the highest priority. This mindset must gradually evolve so that greater value and priority are given to corporate CWP initiatives.

The second concerns the mindset of citizens. Although social values have increasingly begun to influence investment behavior in recent years, this trend remains insufficient. It is desirable that people increasingly prioritize investment in companies actively engaged in CPM and CWP.

As emphasized by the United Nations Charter and the Goi Peace Foundation, world peace ultimately begins within the hearts of individuals. Ervin Laszlo, founder of the Club of Budapest, has argued that today’s rapidly changing world requires a new paradigm. We must transform ourselves so that we can view the world through new modes of thought and spirituality that transcend the current social values centered heavily on material wealth, money, and efficiency.

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