

REJOYCED

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As more people are becoming glued to their social media accounts like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, it seems only logical that businesses are now connecting with their customers using these social platforms. Companies are able to publicize their business and respond to customer feedback in order to gain higher customer satisfaction.

However, the interpersonal aspect is gone when these businesses rely on bots to reply to customers' comments. Replying to every post with a generic "Thank you for your feedback!" defeats the purpose of an outlet for feedback because why offer that opportunity if companies are not even going to acknowledge their customers?

To truly gain customer satisfaction, a spokesperson should contact customers by responding to both bad and good experiences in order to not only acknowledge customers' concerns, but also to find ways to improve their business. It's a win-win situation. It's deceptive to say they want customer feedback to improve their services when they are just going to reply with indiscriminate automated responses.

Take American Airlines, for example. Their goal was to respond to every tweet they received on Twitter, no matter the nature of the tweet; unfortunately, it backfired when an automated "Thank you for your support" was sent as a reply to someone who was actually attacking the company for merging with another airline. American Airlines tried to do some damage control by retracting their original, computerized tweet, but the damage was already done and their reputation was defaced by their Twitter faux pas.

It is understandably more convenient to set up an automated response than to actually respond to every tweet. However, there should be an advisory regarding "robo-tweeting" to avoid predicaments like the one American Airlines faced. Social media should be utilized to enhance a brand, not bury its reputation in the ground because of a haphazard attempt at connecting with customers.

Don't Let Your Dreams Just Be Dreams



TINA CHEN
Staff Writer

There was a time in my life when I was convinced that I was going to die. The doctors were waiting for results to confirm this fact, but I knew by their faces that I did not have much time left.

I asked myself, "What is the point of continuing high school when I might not even make it to college?" I started to live my life by counting how many days I had left instead of cherishing every

moment. I spent days moping in bed wondering why I didn't deserve to live longer than anyone else and contemplated ending my life right there and then. Luckily, I didn't because the results came back negative and alas, the heaviest burden was lifted from my shoulders and I knew it was time for a change.

From that moment on, I realized I have spent all my time selflessly pleasing others, because I thought that it made me a good person and that others will view

me the same way.

Thereafter, I started to understand from my experience that life is very short and this is the only life we'll get to live. Someone once said to me, "The saddest summary of life contains three descriptions: could have, might have and should have." I often look back to my past thinking of how I could have done things differently, but these regrets are definitively holding me back. There may be times when we have felt that life is personified to hate us, but we don't always feel content and thankful for what we do have. Compared to those living in poverty and are barely getting by, our #firstworldproblems are so miniscule and self-centered.

Recently, the acronym YOLO, which means "you only live once," has become a motto that people either love or hate. Though it is often overused and used incorrectly, it is conclusively true. We often fill our lives with unnecessary stress and strife by focusing on issues that, in the larger scheme of things, are inconsequential. By doing so, we are concentrating only on the negative and neglecting the positive.

In high school, it is understandable that gossips and rumors circulate like sales at Macy's during Black Friday, but the time wasted from caring about what others say or think about you means that you do not understand the value of life.

The times I have gotten hurt, the times I have felt pain and the times I have lost faith and trust have made me who I am today. Life is ironic, isn't it? You cannot fully understand what is worth living for until you have experienced devastation.

I, however, know that I do not want to wake up with regrets, because at one point in my life, those regrets were what I wanted and strived for. Do something to make every moment count; take those chances that are in front of you, because the opportunities in life's setbacks may wind up being the best things that have ever happened to you.

When life does suck, you just have to remember that death will come along and if you're still reading this, congratulations! You are alive and being alive is a special occasion worth an infinite value.



Exposing Animal Abuse: Stop The Cameras!

DEBORAH CHEN
Copy Editor

Undercover videos have long been used as a form of gaining insight into what otherwise would have remained hidden information. Animal rights activists sneak hidden cameras into farms and slaughterhouses to publicly reveal how workers mistreat animals. Recently, a legislation to halt these undercover videos was proposed in at least five states and is expected to be introduced in three other states.

Animal rights activists have every right to be concerned for the safety and treatment of animals. It does, however, become a problem when they resort to illegal methods to expose the abuse animals endure. Using hidden cameras is definitely not the appropriate way to disclose animal cruelty to the rest of the community.

Last year, a video was taken at a California slaughterhouse that showed the workers using electric prods on cattle that could barely walk

In 2011, an undercover video at a turkey farm revealed that workers were kicking and stomping on birds—some of them with exposed flesh and open wounds.

Using electric prods and abusing birds is morally wrong and should not be tolerated, but hiding cameras to expose their cruel actions is not ethical either. Though it may be argued that the use of undercover videos is considerably more efficient in the exposure of what occurs at some slaughterhouses and farms, it is against the law and a violation of privacy.

How would you feel if someone planted cameras in your home without your consent or knowledge? You'd probably leap into a fit of rage. Infringing on any person's privacy is a very serious offense and should not be condoned by anyone, no matter the intent.

Though animal rights activists may argue that it is their best option to uncover the animal abusers' atrocious behavior, I argue otherwise. There are other steps that can be taken that do

not break the law. For instance, there are numerous organizations that deal with animal cruelty of various kinds, such as the Department of Justice, the American Animal Hospital Association and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

While investigators will acknowledge reports of any kind of animal abuse, they are more likely to follow up if there are credible witnesses present that are willing to verify the report and testify, if necessary. Therefore, it is crucial for activists to gather as much evidence as possible prior to submitting a report.

People are entitled to their own privacy; therefore, the workers have the right to prosecute the animal activists for infringing on their privacy. Yes, the animal welfare groups do need indisputable proof of animals being afflicted with abuse; however, the legal ramifications of such actions should have crossed their minds. Think before acting upon conscience. Is that really so hard to do?

Nipping This in the Bud

MICHELLE PAULINO
Opinions Editor

We love marijuana. Okay, the action of actually using marijuana is debatable, but one thing is certain: the world has an obsession with the infamous "gateway" drug's future.

Whether we are legalizing or illegalizing, engineering synthetic products, or instituting prevention programs, marijuana has always been a hot topic in the average American conversation.

Turn on the television and watch adolescents "blazing it" in the basement or turn on the radio and listen to the expressed euphoria from getting high. It is common to hear teenagers recounting certain experiences having to do with the popular herb. With the media portraying "stoner culture" as harmless and cool, it is difficult to remember that this drug is a hallucinogen that can act as a depressant.

The interesting development with marijuana is that society is coming to accept that regardless

of what laws are passed, marijuana will continue to be present. Marijuana "acceptance" can be seen both internationally and locally. Just this February, the Czech Republic legalized medicinal marijuana use, a law California legalized back in 1996 and later amended in 2004.

Although it seems that marijuana poses a mild threat, the drug is most harmful to the teenage demographic.

Yes, scientific evidence proves that the drug can treat certain ailments; however, developing lungs are subject to 50 percent to 70 percent more carcinogenic hydrocarbons than from tobacco smoke. Early marijuana use increases dependence on the drug, which is known to cause higher rates of anxiety, depression and schizophrenia.

Today, marijuana has lost its stigma. More and more people are easing up to marijuana use. With Colorado and Washington's legalization of recreational marijuana, the future for California is unclear, much like a person's impaired brain when inebriated.