



GUEST EDITOR'S PERSPECTIVE

The business of peace

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Over the past seventeen years, the notion that business can contribute to peace has grown from an idiosyncratic idea championed by a few scholars (Fort, 2001; Fort & Schipani, 2003; Haufler, 2001; Nelson, 2000) to a vibrant field of scholarly inquiry, with hundreds of scholars, governmental task forces (such as the U.S. Institute of Peace Task Force on Business and Peace), NGO activity (such as the Oslo-based Business for Peace Foundation), and business associations (such as Rotary International and the International Chamber of Commerce) not only embracing the idea, but leading the cause.

The contours of this still relatively young field have begun to emerge. Of course, the connection between trade and business has long been acknowledged by moral philosophers such as Kant (1795) and Montesquieu (1748), as well as by free market economists such as Hayek (1988) and politicians of varying political stripes. Yet, the field of business and peace asserts that, underneath this macroeconomic connection, it is worthwhile to examine the conduct of individual businesses. They are the agents of trade. They are the institutions and individuals that interact with human beings who make war and who also suffer from it.

Some businesses enthusiastically attempt to contribute to peace, a group of businesses I have called 'peace entrepreneurs.' These companies specifically have peace as a mission as part of their business strategy. Other businesses recognize that their profitability tends to be enhanced when bombs do not drop on their buildings and their employees avoid

being shot. They carefully calculate the company's position in the world and conduct corporate foreign policy in their work. These companies take an instrumentalist approach to peace. Finally, some companies simply conduct themselves in a sound, ethical way. Over these past seventeen years, I have argued that ethical practices correlate with the conduct anthropologists have found to be practices of relatively non-violent societies. Thus, whether or not a company intends to pursue peace, it may do exactly that by being a sound, ethical company (Fort, 2015).

Another differentiation can be made among peacekeeping, peacemaking, and peacebuilding. The first two will inevitably be associated with companies doing business in conflict zones. Companies may address root causes of conflict, negotiate at the bargaining table to settle disputes, and provide political and economic support for governmental resolution of disputes. But peacebuilding can have a wide application: any company, anywhere, can do it (Fort, 2015).

These distinctions form the backdrop for the articles in this special issue. The contributors have attempted to build a bridge between academics, NGOs, governments, and business through a variety of perspectives that share a pragmatic sensibility. This goal falls directly within the purposes of *Business Horizons*. It also resonates with a central aim of the Center for International Business Education and Research (CIBER) at the Kelley School of Business, which has provided foundational organization and support for this project as well as a follow-on conference featuring the contributors.

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There is some theorizing in this special issue, but also a good deal of practical reality. Indeed, the first three articles offer practical realities of business' contributions to peace. The first, written by Coca-Cola's Hamish Banks, explains his company's work in this area. It would be hard to find a more ubiquitous, global brand than Coke, or one that has been so for so long. Given that longevity, Banks offers specific examples of Coke's efforts to bring people together. Certainly, much of this can be explained as good marketing, but the fact that it is good marketing is—in and of itself—an important point. Notions of peace and good marketing can go hand-in-hand. Given that its brand is liquid, sustainability issues also arise, as Banks explains.

The second article, whose lead author is John Katsos of the American University of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, is based on direct interviews with winners of the 2015 Oslo Award. The Business for Peace Foundation, founded and run by Norwegian investment banker Per Saxegaard, bestows the Oslo Award on business people whose actions promote peace in their work. Thus, this article captures the thoughts of these leaders and also attempts to articulate common grounds and practices.

The third article provides a case study of the work of financial company ABN/AMRO in Brazil. Patricia Kanashiro and Mark Starik examine this company's actions through the prisms of business and peace and base of the pyramid literature. ABN/AMRO's work was not an unqualified success, but the authors draw lessons from these shortfalls.

With these three pieces providing a practical foundation for how businesses can, in fact, contribute to peace, the content shifts to realities of the rationales for which businesses might contribute to peace, and also the political realities of how this work of business is evaluated by outsiders. It suggests that hybrid models of corporate governance are already developing that make business contributions to peace more likely.

Angelika Rettberg, a professor at the Universidad de los Andes in Colombia, has long written about the various rationales business leaders use in taking a strong role in peacemaking and peacekeeping. Rettberg's scholarship has been devoted to case analysis of such issues in places like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Colombia; in this article, she synthesizes that scholarship. She describes the motivations companies have in terms of Need, Greed, and Creed, and provides examples of each.

Political scientist Molly Melin, of Loyola University Chicago, takes an outsider's perspective. She not only examines how business activity might be viewed by other institutions (e.g., governments) that have long been considered the primary parties

in determining issues of war and peace, but also considers how businesses interested in peacemaking and peacekeeping might utilize some practices from these long-standing institutions. She offers some perspectives on how businesses might further engage in peacebuilding by practicing these diplomatic approaches.

Ans Kolk and Francois Lenfant, writing from the University of Amsterdam, offer a governance alternative of hybridization. This model provides a way for businesses to blend social and economic objectives. While hybridization has implications for a number of socially-related objectives that a business might engage in, Kolk and Lenfant specifically tie their research to how this concept—which is gaining legal currency in many areas of the world—serves as a potential structure for businesses interested in pursuing peaceful aims.

With case studies and external perspectives set out, the third theme of this special issue becomes how one might empirically assess business actions and how such quantification might be valuable for businesses and society alike. Drawing on her field study in India as well as her dissertation research addressing the empirical assessment of business, Smita Trivedi offers an approach that attempts to capture business activities in a meaningful way that would allow for more statistical analysis. Her approach, a mixed method of empirical research, sketches a quantitative way to capture an elusive set of behaviors and impacts.

Taking this argument a step further, one might propose an index that rates the actions of companies. This is offered in *The PACO Index*. Lead authored by John Forrer of George Washington University, the article claims that the literature on business and peace is robust enough to be able to draw some conclusions regarding what and how businesses contribute to peace. The article sets out some general principles of how such an index could be constructed. If successfully developed, competitive business leaders might be inspired to vie for index recognition, and investors and other stakeholders would have a tool to evaluate business just as they already do with respect to issues of sustainability, human rights, and other socially investing fund filters.

It seems to make sense to conclude this special issue with consideration of emerging technological issues. In the words of Business for Peace Founder Per Saxegaard: "The Internet changes everything." Indeed, the fast-paced cyber world raises multiple issues of cyber security and privacy that are not unrelated to peace.

Indiana University's Scott Shackelford has quickly established himself as one of the world's leading

scholars in the field of cyber security. Shackelford, of the Kelley School of Business, extends cyber security to notions of cyber peace. This proactive approach draws in many of the themes already laid out in this special issue, and that includes—foremost—the call for businesses to be at the forefront of creating cyber peace rather than waiting for other institutions to do so.

Independent scholar Stephanie Hare coined the term 'corporate foreign policy' as a way to characterize the political assessments companies make in forming corporate strategy. In this final article, Hare emphasizes issues of data use and security, and points to the ramifications of not finding mutually agreeable ways of balancing issues of privacy, security, and data.

With a topic as big as peace, one can inevitably cover only a portion of the issues involved. Nevertheless, I believe that this special issue has provided a needed contribution in building bridges between various kinds of institutions, especially among businesses and academics. Hopefully, this special issue

and its contents will help these entities recognize the importance and compatibility of the mutual work they do and provide foundations for concrete, practical business engagement in and contributions to peace.

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