

Annual Report 2017

Overview

SumOfUs is a community of people committed to curbing the growing power of corporations. We want to buy from, work for, and invest in companies that respect the environment, treat their staff well, and respect democracy. And we're not afraid to stand up to them when they don't. Together, our 10 million members act as a global consumer watchdog.



Digital technology allows us to run and win campaigns in record time. We connect consumers, workers, and investors from around the world at the touch of a button.

Our Campaigns in 2017

SumOfUs campaigns combine public education, rapid-response online organizing and long-term strategic campaigning. Some of our recent and current campaigns are:

Tech Corporation Accountability

One of our major foci this year has been holding to account the major tech corporations whose power and impunity are increasing throughout the world. These companies have had dramatic effects on our democracies, ability to obtain fair working conditions, and freedom from censorship, and our campaigns have addressed many of these issues.

Breitbart

From late 2016-mid 2017, we targeted the advertisers and companies that do business with white nationalist website Breitbart News. Breitbart is a platform for the “alt-right” and publishes racist, xenophobic, and sexist views that denigrate women, people of color, refugees, and immigrants. Steve Bannon, Trump’s most powerful advisor until recently, is the former chairman of Breitbart. Our goal was to disrupt Breitbart’s ability to expand into Europe and Australia by thwarting its revenue sources. We want to stop Breitbart from exporting its hateful influence around the world. This campaign also gave our members opportunities to speak out against rising racism, xenophobia, and homophobia.

Together with our partners, (Sleeping Giants), we set out to pressure enough businesses to pull advertising dollars from Breitbart to interrupt Breitbart's ability to expand globally. By May 2017, Breitbart had 90% fewer brands advertising on their site. And over 2000 brands confirmed that they blocked their ads from appearing.

As most large companies pulled their ads from Breitbart, the website was forced to ratchet up

sales on its online store to try and make up for the losses. We planned for this possibility, and also targeted the company that runs its online store, Canadian e-commerce platform Shopify. The pressure was so high that Shopify was just forced to respond publicly—which resulted in the CEO receiving even more backlash for deciding to keep doing business with Breitbart. Finally, Shopify updated its acceptable use policy to include a section on hate speech. While implementing a hate speech policy is a good first step—Shopify’s effort is pretty half-baked, given the fact there are still products sold in Shopify stores that promote harassment.

At the same time, we doubled down on Amazon, one of the last remaining big brands that hasn’t taken a stand against Breitbart. Our petition to Amazon has gathered over half a million signatures, significant press coverage, and created some internal turmoil at Amazon. A few weeks into our campaign Amazon’s ad team announced it was looking into a “longer term solution to use a 3rd party brand safety which may block Amazon ads from showing up on certain pages on sites like Breitbart in the future.” This announcement showed us that our pressure was working. We are planning to deepen the Amazon campaign in 2018.

Uber

In 2017, we emphasized a workers’ rights framing in our campaigning on Uber. Our goals were to inform and mobilize consumers internationally and in key cities, and work in partnership with other NGOs and workers’ rights organizations. Uber is likely to remain a strategic target, and we are researching and testing campaigns now about more cities and other targets.

We’ve been engaging with Uber for a few years now with mostly a workers’ rights lens, which has included:

- Commissioning polling on attitudes towards Uber and which framing of Uber’s wrongdoings is the most convincing
- Creating a microsite and a special report in the Guardian about Uber’s lawbreaking behavior around the world
- Pushing to Travis Kalanick to step down as CEO. Uber’s board eventually fired him, but public pressure was a part of the context that allowed them to do so. We contributed to the public pressure with a petition, original videos, and original illustrations.
- City campaigns in London and Edmonton
- Engaging media and public space with OpEd, coverage, original content

Facebook

Last August when Baltimore police killed Korryn Gaines, Facebook set a dangerous precedent by removing her live broadcast videos at police request. For the past year plus, we have called on Facebook to adopt a more transparent policy on censorship and the company’s collaboration with law enforcement. We’ve exerted pressure through a coalition-based online campaign, multiple meetings with staff at Facebook, extensive media coverage, and a shareholder resolution. Mark Zuckerberg has acknowledged the campaign in public comments, and our shareholder proposal earned 49% of the non-insider vote—the second-highest turnout of any

proposal on the table!

Protecting the Rainforest: Sustainable Palm Oil Production

We have been campaigning against the deforestation caused by palm oil plantations built on virgin rainforest since June 2013.

Over the past year, the SumOfUs palm oil campaign has contributed to wins that will transform the palm oil industry, and in turn, the destiny of the rainforests of Southeast Asia and the animals and people who call them home. In summary:

- We continued to confront PepsiCo and to hold them accountable to a palm oil commitment, specifically in a coordinated effort with Rainforest Action Network (RAN) and the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) at this year's AGM.
- We successfully pressured Nestle to take action to make sure it doesn't source from unethical suppliers and have been contacted by Nestle's French division to discuss the efforts they are making.
- In partnership with Mighty Earth, we helped secure a meeting with Samsung to discuss a petition calling on them to cut ties with joint venture partner Korindo—an infamous palm oil offender—and to adopt a No Deforestation, No Peat, No Exploitation (NDPE) policy
- We joined a coalition led by our partners Friends of the Earth. With our unique consumer perspective and their expertise, we started our first palm oil campaign targeting a financial institution, TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC (TIAA).

Climate: Supply Chain Carbon Emissions

Over the past year and a half, SumOfUs has collaborated with ClimateWorks and key partners on a number of projects to reduce carbon emissions in supply chains.

Together with expert researcher Renilde Becque and members of the ClimateWorks team, we created an accessible and actionable report on European regulations on supply chain carbon emissions. In this report we determined although it was unlikely for any EU country to make reporting Scope 3 emissions mandatory in the near future, there is a good opportunity to launch a campaign in France focused on public procurement, similar to the California Buy Clean bill.

At the same time, we conducted extensive testing to determine the best way to engage progressive members of the public on a campaign to get companies to disclose their Scope 3 emissions (we wanted to find an engaging way to talk about supply chain carbon emissions—not an easy task!). Our testing showed that the strongest messages focus on the risk of climate change to panda habitat, the human health impacts of air pollution from burning coal, and the need for companies to step up in the wake of Trump's abandonment of the Paris Agreement.

We then pivoted to launch the Filthy Fashion global online campaign against the apparel sector, aimed at getting denim companies to commit to disclose and reduce their Scope 3 emissions. Together with our partner Stand.earth, we did a three-month intensive public push against seven major denim brands, which has already created waves in the industry - at an announcement in September, six major apparel brands committed to set Science-Based Targets.

Other Campaigns

We ran many other campaigns throughout 2017 to reduce corporate power and strengthen human rights, environmental sustainability, and democracy. Just a few of our other wins and “wedge” victories in 2017 were:

Monsanto’s Glyphosate

On October 25, the EU Commission met and couldn’t muster enough votes for licensing Monsanto’s favourite weedkiller chemical glyphosate for another ten year —in fact, they didn’t even get EU governments to agree to a shorter license. All of our target countries voted the right way, and an even broader coalition of member states stood with us!



SumOfUs, alongside a fantastic coalition, has made sure EU member states are feeling the heat. Members have signed petitions, sent thousands of emails and tweets to key politicians, shared a rapidly produced video, and chipped in to fund polls in five key EU member states that will be critical to the campaign outcome.

That’s great news—but we need to double-down now! Our goal is an outright ban of glyphosate and the clock is ticking. EU Commission and member states need to agree on something before the current glyphosate license runs out on December 15, 2017.

Water and Environmental Rights in Canada

We contributed to two massive victories for the water and environment led by Indigenous communities, local groups, and environmental activists in Canada.

Tens of thousands of SumofUs members stood in solidarity with First Nations and local groups who have fought tirelessly for years to prevent Malaysian gas giant Petronas from building a giant LNG project. This project would have destroyed our climate, devastated the second largest salmon run in Canada, and had severe impacts on First Nations and communities in the Skeena Watershed.

We can also celebrate a landmark win for Indigenous rights in Clyde River, Nunavut. The Inuit Hamlet just won a six-year battle to stop seismic blasting in the Arctic that could have destroyed

marine life such as seal, beluga, and narwhal populations, which Inuit rely on for food. SumOfUs played a small part spreading the word about the seismic blasting and Clyde River's fight for their rights.

DACA Fundraiser in the US

The Trump administration killed DACA (Deferred Access for Childhood Arrivals) that allowed 800,000 young people to attend school, find jobs, and build a life in the US. DACA recipients had to renew their status by October 5 or risk deportation. The process of renewing DACA is complicated and costs \$495.

We reached out to our list and raised enough to grant a total of \$30,000 USD to three groups (United We Dream, The Undocublack Network, and the Youth Leadership Council), working directly with people to get renewals in before the October 5th deadline. This is enough to cover 64.5 renewal fees!

Our Value Add

Rapid Response Campaigning

SumOfUs is built from the ground-up to be nimble and global, which allows us to respond quickly to emerging events around the world, and rapidly disseminate communications. This is especially important when working with partners who have deep issue expertise but lack the broad outreach capabilities of SumOfUs.

Viral Online Storytelling

We have deep experience in leveraging social media and use it in all of our campaigns. For example, we created a viral video about deforestation and palm oil plantations which reached over twenty million people because of its clever message and strategic timing.

With a growing capability for developing social video and testing content on social media, we are increasingly well-placed to experiment with the narrative of corporate power.

Global Campaigning

We engage our significant supporter bases in North America, Europe, and Australia to take the fight to companies wherever they operate internationally.

Shareholder Advocacy

Corporations care deeply about managing risk and protecting shareholder value, and they don't want to see messy, public shareholder campaigns. We have several value-adds in the world of shareholder advocacy:

- First, our huge member list includes people who own shares from many publicly-traded companies. We are able to quickly identify dozens of shareholders in most corporations

we want to target, then work with them to file shareholder resolutions in their names.

- Second, we're also able to mobilize tens of thousands of our members to contact their pension funds, mutual funds, and other investment middlemen, pressuring those big investors to vote on shareholder resolutions on everything from climate disclosure to CEO pay.
- Third, we are able to mobilize hundreds of thousands of consumers to put pressure on brands from the consumer side, adding credibility to the threat of brand risk.

Partnership

SumOfUs was founded on the basis that not every organisation can be effective in every facet of corporate campaigning and that we should focus our efforts on rapid response and mass mobilisation opportunities as they materialise.

In-house Tech Capacity

Our thirty-five person staff includes an in-house development team of five developers and two data scientists, with significant experience building new open source tools to empower campaigners to mobilise SumOfUs members in innovative ways.