Toluna and Unmetric surveyed over 1,000 US consumers in October 2018 by using Toluna’s QuickSurveys platform and social data from Unmetric’s Analyze platform. The research revealed interesting insights into how consumers react when brands weigh in on social or political topics and measures the impact of past branded content around such issues.

Brands That Take a Position on Controversial Issues Drive Positive Social Engagement and Purchase Intent, According to Toluna and Unmetric.

50% of consumers said they are aware of ads where a brand took a stance on a controversial political/social issue.

67% of those who were aware of these controversial ads said they saw at least one of them in the past 1-3 months.

43% of consumers said they would view a brand more positively if they took a stance on a controversial political/social issue that aligned with their beliefs. Nike added 30 times more Twitter followers on the day the ‘Colin K’ ad campaign debuted compared to its daily average and saw 312 times more @-mentions by users on Twitter.

Patagonia added 19 times more fans on Facebook on the day it debuted. ‘The President Stole Your Land’ campaign compared to its daily average.

Airbnb saw 17 times more @-mentions by users on Twitter on the day the ‘We Accept’ ad campaign debuted compared to its daily average and the post was shared 438 more times than its average.

26% of those surveyed said they would be willing to pay a higher price for a product that aligns with their beliefs versus an alternative less expensive brand.

58% of consumers said if a brand they currently buy from were to take a stance on a controversial political/social issue that counters their beliefs, they would not get rid of that brand’s products. However, 39% said they would boycott that brand.

Source: Unmetric.com