

Thought-Leadership Opinion Piece

Building a Better Tomorrow, One Secondhand Item at a Time

As Earth Day approaches, I am reminded of a common mantra that has helped shape my actions and mindset throughout my life: “Try and leave this world a little better than you found it.” This phrase can be interpreted in many different ways, but I always felt connected to the idea of doing everything in my power to help preserve the planet for future generations to enjoy. Some of my daily habits include conserving water, unplugging stagnant electronics, and opting for reusable products in place of single-use items. Some days, tackling the current climate crisis seems daunting, but I take comfort in knowing that younger generations are rising to the occasion and facing it head-on. According to the Pew Research Center, “about a third of Gen Zers (32%) and 28% of Millennials [have done something] to address climate change, such as donating money, volunteering, contacting an elected official or attending a rally or protest” (2021). When people come together and remain committed to making small changes, they can eventually lead to big results.

To serve as a reflection of the community and help instill a team mentality, DICK’S Sporting Goods will continue to work with SidelineSwap and host various events across the United States, offering athletes an opportunity to trade in their used sports gear in exchange for a promotional gift card. By doing so, we hope to make the recycling process rewarding while encouraging athletes to purchase resale products and reduce waste. Based on a recent OfferUp study, 93% of shoppers have purchased a secondhand item in the past year, and 75% of resale purchases are happening outside of apparel (2025). Now, more than ever, there is a demand for secondhand purchases, and we want to empower both the sellers and buyers. Especially since the recommerce market in the United States is projected to hit \$306.5 billion by 2030 (OfferUp, 2025).

Some may argue that not everyone who engages in the secondhand market is actively promoting sustainability. However, this does not alter the importance of the cause. By creating a platform for

consumers to purchase secondhand sporting goods, not only is less waste being created, but the barrier to entry is lowered for those interested in playing recreational or professional sports. Together, we can create an equal and equitable future where everyone is able to pursue their interests regardless of their financial constraints. No task is too big or impossible when approached with kindness and empathy.

Strategy Note

By assuming the CEO's point of view, I was able to create a pathos-based narrative that connected the importance of sustainability with a current DICK'S Sporting Goods program. The main message within the thought-leadership piece aligns with the brand because DICK'S Sporting Goods' leadership team has been historically vocal about topical issues such as youth sports equity and the dangers of gun violence. The piece also helps establish common ground as the brand navigates its presence across various international territories following the acquisition of Foot Locker.

Works Cited

Dunlap, T. (2025, September 26). *OfferUp Recommerce Report 2025*. OfferUp.

https://recommercereport.com/#holidays_update

Funk, C. (2021, May 26). *How Americans' Attitudes About Climate Change Differ by Generation, Party and Other Factors*. Pew Research Center.

<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/05/26/key-findings-how-americans-attitudes-about-climate-change-differ-by-generation-party-and-other-factors/>