

CORPORATE AMERICA ABANDONS DE&I, BUT BLACK-OWNED BRANDS ARE THE FUTURE

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NNPA NEWSWIRE — Black entrepreneurs continue to build, innovate, and thrive. According to NBC Select, over three million Black-owned brands are in the U.S., spanning every industry imaginable.

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Corporate America Abandons DE&I, But Black-Owned Brands Are the Future

By Stacy M. Brown

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While corporations retreat, Black entrepreneurs continue to build, innovate, and thrive. According to [NBC Select](#), over three million Black-owned brands are in the U.S., spanning every industry imaginable. As corporate America abandons its DE&I commitments, the power shifts to conscious consumers who invest in businesses that uplift and sustain marginalized communities.

Here are just a few standout Black-owned brands leading the charge:

Clothing & Accessories

- Telfar – The brand that revolutionized luxury fashion with its motto: “Not for you—for everyone.”
- Hanifa – A trailblazing womenswear brand founded by Anifa Mvuemba, known for its stunning digital fashion shows.
- Pyer Moss – Founded by Kerby Jean-Raymond, this label merges activism and high fashion.
- Grayscale – A streetwear brand bringing bold aesthetics and social commentary to the forefront.
- Sassy Jones – A standout accessories brand built on bold, unapologetic self-expression.

Beauty & Skincare

- Fenty Beauty – Rihanna’s globally inclusive beauty empire that set a new standard for shade diversity.
- Mented Cosmetics – Beauty products created specifically for deeper skin tones.
- The Lip Bar – A Black-woman-owned brand disrupting the beauty industry with bold, non-toxic lipstick shades.
- Pattern Beauty – Founded by Tracee Ellis Ross, specializing in products for textured hair.
- Alikay Naturals – Natural haircare products with a devoted following.

Home & Lifestyle

- Estelle Colored Glass – Hand-blown glassware that brings Black excellence to fine dining.
- Jungalow – A home décor brand from designer Justina Blakeney, blending culture and bohemian flair.
- Linoto – Luxury linen bedding made with sustainability in mind.
- Yowie – A modern design studio curating unique home goods from independent artists.

Food & Beverage

- Partake Foods – A Black-owned snack company offering allergen-friendly cookies and treats.
- McBride Sisters Wine Collection – The largest Black-owned wine company in the U.S., run by two sisters redefining the industry.
- Uncle Nearest Whiskey – Honoring Nathan “Nearest” Green, the Black distiller behind Jack Daniel’s original recipe.
- Capital City Mambo Sauce – The D.C. favorite taking over the condiment industry.

Meanwhile, corporate America’s performative commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) is unraveling at an alarming rate. In the years following the murder of George Floyd, corporations made bold promises to support marginalized communities, pledging billions in investments to level the playing field. But as the political landscape shifts and accountability wanes, those commitments are being discarded. A staggering number of major corporations have scaled back or eliminated DE&I programs: **Amazon, Target, Amtrak, Goldman Sachs, Disney, Deloitte, PBS, Google, Pepsi, General Motors (GM), GE, Intel, PayPal, Chipotle, Comcast, Accenture, The Smithsonian Institution, the FBI, Meta, Walmart, Boeing, Molson Coors, Ford Motor Co., Harley-Davidson, and John Deere** have all abandoned or severely reduced their diversity efforts. The very companies that once paraded their commitment to racial equity in multimillion-dollar ad campaigns are now quietly erasing those initiatives from their bottom lines.

Not everyone is staying silent. Dr. Jamal Bryant, the influential pastor of New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in metro Atlanta, is leading a [40-day economic fast—or boycott—of Target in direct response to the retailer’s decision to phase out its DE&I initiatives](#). Target, headquartered in Minneapolis—the city where George Floyd was murdered in 2020—originally pledged \$2 billion in investments toward Black-owned businesses. That commitment was due in December 2025, but on January 24, Target announced it would end its DE&I efforts, effectively abandoning that financial commitment. Bryant, appearing on the Black Press’ [Let It Be Known news program](#), condemned the move. “After the murder of George Floyd, they made a \$2 billion commitment to invest in Black businesses,” he said. “When they pulled out of the DE&I agreement in January, they also canceled that \$2 billion commitment.”

Target is just the beginning. Bryant calls for 100,000 people to halt their spending at the retail giant

as a direct challenge to corporate America's retreat from racial equity. "Black people spend \$12 million a day at Target," he said. "Because of how many dollars are spent there and the absence of commitment to our community, we are focusing on Target first." The boycott, designed to coincide with Lent, aims to leverage Black economic power to hold corporations accountable. Within just one week, 50,000 people had already signed the petition at targetfast.org, signaling the growing momentum behind the movement.

Bryant's demands go beyond reinstating DE&I. "White women are the number one beneficiary of DE&I," he noted. "What I am asking for is a quarter of a billion dollars to be invested in Black banks so that our Black businesses can scale." He also called for Target to partner with HBCUs by integrating their business departments into its supply chain infrastructure. Meanwhile, the [National Newspaper Publishers Association \(NNPA\)](#)—the nation's largest Black-owned media organization—has announced its own national public education and selective buying campaign in response to corporate America's retreat from DE&I. "We are the trusted voice of Black America, and we will not be silent or nonresponsive to the rapid rise of renewed Jim Crow racist policies in corporate America," said NNPA Chairman Bobby R. Henry Sr.

NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. reinforced the need for financial realignment. "Black Americans spend \$2 trillion annually. We must evaluate and realign to question why we continue to spend our money with companies that do not respect us. These contradictions will not go unchallenged." In response, Bryant has partnered with Ron Busby, president and CEO of the U.S. Black Chambers, to provide consumers with a directory of 300,000 Black-owned businesses. "You can't tell people what not to do without showing them what to do," Bryant said. "If you're not going to Target or Walmart but need essentials like toilet paper, soap, or detergent, we'll show you where to get them and reinvest in Black businesses."

And the impact of the boycott is already felt. Since Black consumers began boycotting Target, the company's stock has dropped by \$11, Bryant noted. Stockholders are now suing Target due to the adverse effects of the boycott on its stock value. Bryant said the question is no longer whether corporate America will keep its promises—it's clear that it won't. He said the same companies that plastered Black squares on social media and made grand statements about inclusion are now proving where their true priorities lie. "America has shown us time and time again: if it doesn't make dollars, it doesn't make sense," Bryant stated.

Excerpt:

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