

The story of an unusual chocolate bar

Ynzo van Zanten, 'Choco Evangelist' at Tony's Chokolonely, told the story of their roadmap to 100% slave free chocolate.

Article by Lisa Vermaeren of 4P square

While chocolate is one of those things that makes people happy, the hard truth is that most chocolate bars are produced in poor and illegal circumstances. Children are forced to work at cocoa plantations in terrible conditions, cocoa farmers are severely underpaid and live well below the poverty line. Tony's Chokolonely started to make a difference. Their mission: to end modern slavery in the cocoa industry and create 100% slave free chocolate worldwide. This is their roadmap of how they did it...



Awareness

Are we aware that chocolate is produced in such devastating circumstances? I'm not sure. The problem is that there is no direct relation to the chocolate bar you are eating and the cocoa beans that were used to make this bar. So, you have no idea if you are eating slave free chocolate. Okay, you may be eating 100% Fairtrade chocolate, however this does not mean that this bar contains 100% Fairtrade cocoa beans.

Therefore, the first step is to create awareness and inform chocolate lovers about the cocoa industry. Tony's Chocolonely may be a small company but they create a lot of buzz. They do this via their packaging, social media and word-of-mouth. They strongly believe that if customers and retailers together ask for fair chocolate, chocolate producers will feel the pressure and start reconsidering their way of working.

Lead by example

Secondly, they want to give the right example and show the world that it is possible to produce chocolate in a fair and honest way. They create and aspire fair working conditions in the cocoa industry. How? Not only does Tony's Chocolonely have a recipe for their delicious chocolate bars, they also have their own and unique recipe for 100% slave free chocolate bars:

- Buy **traceable cocoa beans** directly from six corporations in Ghana and Ivory Coast;
- Provide an **honest payment** and a bonus of 25% of their market price to the farmers;
- Create **strong farmers** by motivating them to work together and set up corporations so they can benefit from economies of scale;
- Invest in **long term relationships** with their farmers;
- Support farmers in order to get **better quality and improve the productivity** at the farms.



Inspire to act

Lastly, they inspire people so they start acting on this issue. Most companies do not want their business model to be copied. Tony's Chocolonely on the other hand could not be happier if this happens. Not only do they want their model to be used, they want other businesses to improve it. How do they inspire to act? To say it in Ynzo's words: ***"We are crazy about chocolate, but serious about people."***

Their employees are the most important. They believe that a happy and enthusiastic team can help reach their goal. So, working at Tony's Chocolonely is fun. They even won 'Best Employer of the Year' of

the Netherlands. Furthermore, they invest in long-term relationships with the 6,000 farmers with whom they work directly with. Consumers can call Tony's and they can talk immediately to someone who will answer all their questions. Important too are the retailers who sell their products and the companies producing the chocolate bars and their packaging.

Together we make chocolate 100% slave free

Tony's Choclonely is taking over the world with their conversation-starting chocolate bar. They started the conversation about the child slavery and the poor circumstances in the cocoa industry. There is still a lot that needs to change but Tony's recipe of 'awareness, lead by example and inspire to act will certainly get them to realize their goal of 100% slave free chocolate worldwide.