If you were Jim Koch, what would you have recommended to change the outcome, and why?

How can being socially responsible sometimes lead to lower profits?

I cannot discern the intent of the question, “what would you have recommended to change the outcome…” The outcome of the project was a high alcohol-content beer with a hefty price tag. The insinuation is that there is something morally reprehensible about producing such a product. I find that insinuation morally reprehensible.

Jim Koch is a successful brewer and businessman. Brewer is first and will most likely remain long after he leaves business pursuits for a retirement enjoying the benefits of his labors and risks. That he chose a totalitarian icon for the name of the creation in question is remarkable in that Utopians (More, 1516) are exactly the type who, like the author of the course text (Dubrin, 2013) presume some social preeminence over Koch and right to denounce his product because someone might abuse it, and therefore intone that Boston Brewing Company is irresponsible and should be shunned. Maybe it is an indicator of how distorted our understanding of collectivism is as a culture that Koch chose his name. I guess it is OK for a beer to be strictly controlled, with all but the most highly-favored ingredients kept and reduced first to mash and then stewed by fermentation action, and then served up for the enjoyment of elites who can afford such luxuries.

On the other hand, free people should reject such treatment and find the term Utopia as Sir Thomas More certainly intended it, as a harbinger of something advertised as desirable for the masses but in fact oppressive and a blight on society. A socially responsible business would make this clear and part of their business plan.

Following the ruse of social responsibility proffered in the text, by bowing to political correctness, Jim Koch might repress himself completely and stick to making the predictable run-of-the-mill approved low alcohol beverages the government likes people to imbibe, thereby enabling them to exact huge tax revenues from the sale of relatively flavorless watered-down drinks. However, this only looks like responsibility. It would encourage totalitarians to ever-more bold steps to increase tax revenues from new products. (If a person drinks one flavorful beer, there is one tax transaction. If one has to drink a six pack to taste the stuff, there are six tax transactions.)

Jim Koch should continue following his artistic and business pursuits and listen to his consumers for guidance, not any busybody who claims to know what is best for someone else. This will be true social responsibility, and lead to more sales and higher profits.

References:

More, T. (1516). *Utopia*. Louvain: Thierry Martens.