Marketing can change the world

THE WHIPPLE EFFECT
Seven levels of office politics, meetings that should’ve just been emails and applying blue sky thinking to hit your KPIs. Become the biggest, baddest boss the marketing world’s seen in this new game that will keep you on the edge of your seat. Brought to you by content powerhouse YRS TRULY and digital heroes at Good Praxis. So real you’ll forget it’s a game!

Also available on cartridge and fully playable on your 16-bit game console.
By YRS TRULY and Good Praxis.
08 | VOX POPS
Guest editor Brian Whipple gathers an envious panel of magnificent industry minds for the purpose of discussing purpose.

14 | TECH, THE HIGH GROUND
Brands have set themselves lofty purpose-driven ambitions, but how are they actually using technology to bring these to life?

36 | GOOD TALK
Brian Whipple sits down with celebrated creative David Droga to talk about the role of creativity in improving people’s lives.

24 | REALITY CHECK
What happens when you apply immersive tech to societal challenges? We look at how VR, AR and AI are moving beyond gimmicks.

32 | CLEANING UP
As brands realize purpose pays, and value-for-money gives way to money-for-values, how are mission statements evolving?

44 | THE LIFE OF BRIAN
We take a look at the real-life, non-techy influences on one of the biggest names in digital – Brian Whipple.

46 | CREATIVE WORKS
Our guest editor takes us through what he considers the most exciting, innovative and life-changing new uses of tech.

54 | A CLIMATE FOR CHANGE
Is our industry’s attempts at doing good all for naught if we don’t urgently turn our attention to safeguarding the planet?
Meet the team

Gordon Young
Editor-in-chief
Gordon helped found The Drum more than 25 years ago and has been at the helm ever since.

Thomas O’Neill
Magazine managing editor
Thomas edits the print edition of The Drum and is responsible for enriching the reader experience across all of our platforms.

Stephen Lepitak
Editor
Stephen oversees The Drum editorial direction globally, including thedrum.com which covers trends from the UK, US and Asia.

Cameron Clarke
Deputy editor
Cameron has covered the marketing industry for a decade and is primarily responsible for our media and agencies coverage.

Charlotte McEleny
APAC publisher
Charlotte leads the team in Asia Pacific, which covers the latest happenings from India to China to Australia.

Kyle O’Brien
Creative Works editor
Kyle heads up The Drum’s Creative Works section, highlighting the best creative campaigns and stories from around the globe.

Sonoo Singh
Associate editor
Sonoo has two decades’ experience as a business journalist and plays an advisory role at The Drum. She is often found speaking at events.

Now open for entry...
• The Drum Design Awards
• The Drum Chip Shop Awards

Go to thedrum.com/awards to download entry packs. To chat about what awards are right for you, contact katy.thomson@thedrum.com
Deadline day: 19 March

Choose your weapon.

The Drum Chip Shop Awards
Slay the industry
Enter now.
PARTNER WITH A LEADER

Analytic Partners
Top Ranked in both Strategy and Current Offering Categories and named a Leader in The Forrester Wave™: Marketing Measurement And Optimization Solutions, Q1 2020

LEARN MORE AT analyticpartners.com
Accenture Interactive captain Brian Whipple steers The Drum this issue. And he plans to take us to a place where purpose and innovation come crashing together, and set off a wave of change that could have far-reaching, meaningful consequences for clients, customers and community alike. ‘The Whipple Effect’ we’ll call it. Get ready to dive right in.

As we march into a new decade, the way we experience the world around us continues to change. We are living in a present that many of us would not have imagined possible only a short time ago. We can almost feel the threads of innovation weaving their way into the fabric of our day-to-day lives, making our Experiences easier and ultimately better. Everything from ordering groceries, diapers for your newborn or even seeing a healthcare practitioner has been made to align with modern lifestyles and future ones.

For us practitioners of marketing, technology and innovation... well, on most days we can see that so many things have the potential to be reinvented. I’d even take it one step further to say that we expect it to happen. But businesses have arrived at a divisive fork in the road. It is an appropriate goal for most enterprises to pursue profit - that is not in question here. Instead, the question is: how do we get there? One path is to try traditional methods... sell more, drive margin, find new consumers, innovate. But a second path takes into consideration that the world is about to have a major transfer of wealth into the hands of new generations of consumers and citizens. These people care about the future of our collective society and they want their brands to stand for something connected to improving life in some way. That includes your employees too. They are the most powerful representation of your brand. This second path, where we pursue profit through purposeful innovation, is where I believe we need to focus our efforts. There’s a lot at stake.

I would like to use this wonderful opportunity, as guest editor of The Drum, to raise the bar for a new journey – using technology-driven innovation to help brands achieve their purpose and do their part in changing the world. This is the best way for brands to differentiate themselves and make real, powerful change. Experiences that sit at the intersection of purpose and innovation are not only something the world craves, but they also have the potential to generate huge business outcomes.

When I talk about purpose-led innovation, I want to make it clear that it is not the rebadging of old purpose (such as organizing the world’s information), which brand purpose was traditionally about. It is meaningful change that transcends the Experiences of one person to revolutionize the Experiences of many. It’s aligning brand messaging with authentic social, environmental, and economic purpose and building deeper, more aligned relationships with our customers.

With this issue, I would like to share some of the most exciting creative minds, work and products reaching, meaningful consequences for clients, customers and community alike. ‘The Whipple Effect’ we’ll call it. Get ready to dive right in.

Brian Whipple

The Drum is published by Carnyx Group Limited. On no account may any part of this publication be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the copyright holder and publisher, application for which should be made to the publisher. © Carnyx Group Limited 2020 ISSN 2046-0600

The Drum™ is a registered trade mark in the UK (number 2018351), USA (number 5471910) and European Union (number EUI3847678). The Drum™ is also an unregistered mark in the UK, EU and all other territories of publication. The Drum is also registered under an international trade mark application at WIPO. All Rights Reserved.
Guest editor Brian Whipple gathers an enviable panel of magnificent industry minds for the purpose of discussing purpose. First, do brands need to stand for something?

Jeff Brecker, global vice-president of creative, design and content, Kimberly-Clark Corporation

It’s more important than ever that brands are clear about what they stand for – in doing that, brands need to differentiate between promise and purpose. All brands make a promise to consumers and purpose conveys why you exist. This powerful lens, formed at the brand’s founding, lies at the core of every decision. Some of Kimberly-Clark’s brands are shaped by a purpose established 100 years ago. Kotex was the first brand to challenge period stigma, bringing menstrual pads to the market in 1920 because of a belief that a period should never get in the way of women’s progress, which still holds true today.

Karsten Jankowski, general manager of marketing and PR, Infiniti Middle East

A strong sense of purpose has always been a prerequisite for brands. If we do not honestly assess the role we play in our customer’s lives and fulfill that purpose, we cannot succeed. Increasingly, of course, our customers are living their lives according to a new set of values. Which brings us to the question of social purpose. Is social purpose essential for brands right now in 2020? I would say no. The evidence is all around us that brands without it can continue to perform. But is it becoming a more important question for marketers year-by-year? Categorically yes. And the reason is simple: because our customers say so.

Jay B Wilson, vice-president of research, Gartner for Marketers

Purpose-driven brands outperform their peers across almost every dimension – from customer acquisition and loyalty to advocacy and employee engagement. Brands that prioritize purpose have stronger revenue growth than those that don’t. However, you can’t just slap ‘purpose’ on a brand and expect results. It’s important to look within – to your history, your leadership, your employees and your customers – to identify the purpose that’s true to your brand and ensure it comes to life across every layer of your organization. You must have long-term commitment to purpose – it can’t be subject to the winds of leadership, changes and budget fluctuations.
Guest editor Brian Whipple gathers an enviable panel of magnificent industry minds for the purpose of discussing purpose. First, do brands need to stand for something?

Jeff Brecker, global vice-president of creative, design and content, Kimberly-Clark Corporation

It’s more important than ever that brands are clear about what they stand for – in doing that, brands need to differentiate between promise and purpose. All brands make a promise to consumers and purpose conveys why you exist. This powerful lens, formed at the brand’s founding, lies at the core of every decision. Some of Kimberly-Clark’s brands are shaped by a purpose established 100 years ago. Kotex was the first brand to challenge period stigma, bringing menstrual pads to the market in 1920 because of a belief that a period should never get in the way of women’s progress, which still holds true today.

Karsten Jankowski, general manager of marketing and PR, Infiniti Middle East

A strong sense of purpose has always been a prerequisite for brands. If we do not honestly assess the role we play in our customer’s lives and fulfill that purpose, we cannot succeed. Increasingly, of course, our customers are living their lives according to a new set of values. Which brings us to the question of social purpose. Is social purpose essential for brands right now in 2020? I would say no. The evidence is all around us that brands without it can continue to perform. But is it becoming a more important question for marketers year-by-year? Categorically yes. And the reason is simple: because our customers say so.

Jay B Wilson, vice-president of research, Gartner for Marketers

Purpose-driven brands outperform their peers across almost every dimension – from customer acquisition and loyalty to advocacy and employee engagement. Brands that prioritize purpose have stronger revenue growth than those that don’t. However, you can’t just slap ‘purpose’ on a brand and expect results. It’s important to look within – to your history, your leadership, your employees and your customers – to identify the purpose that’s true to your brand and ensure it comes to life across every layer of your organization. You must have long-term commitment to purpose – it can’t be subject to the winds of leadership, changes and budget fluctuations.

Kyoko Matsushita, global chief executive officer, Essence

Brands can no longer afford to think about purpose as a marketing tactic. To be credible with consumers in 2020 and beyond, purpose has to be central to how the entire company operates. When a brand takes this approach and allows purpose to guide the way it makes decisions, from the chief exec on down, it creates value and authenticity that shows up in every touchpoint and interaction. This allows brands to grow beyond in-the-moment relevance to create deeper, trust-based connections with all of the stakeholders that matter to their business, and benefits not just the company and its consumers, but the wider industry as well.
Norman de Greve, chief marketing officer, CVS Health

Yes. Employees, customers, investors and others are demanding companies take more responsibility for improving the world and demonstrate that commitment through meaningful action. Purpose frames where a company focuses, how it will help others and what will guide decision making.

Todd Newman, vice-president of innovation, Keurig Dr Pepper

Brand purpose and impact are different animals. I think it is possible for brands – particularly big ones – to have social impact without a purpose-built mission baked into a brand’s DNA.

Alysia Borsa, chief business and data officer, Meredith

Every brand should have a purpose, but purpose only drives value when it is meaningful and authentic. Purpose can’t just be something you say or do externally – it isn’t a label you just slap on to your marketing efforts. Your purpose should infuse everything you do externally and internally, from top to bottom. It should be part of your culture and something employees rally around. At Meredith, we are all about women and we engage 90% of US millennial women every month. She comes to us every day with intent and questions that we help her solve. Our trusted brands speak to her and align around what’s important to her, so it made perfect sense for us to partner with #SeeHer, an industry initiative to ensure women are portrayed accurately and equally in media. That purpose existed before we joined the movement, so our participation has been embraced and driven meaningful value internally and externally.

Jennie Weber, vice-president of customer and user experience, Best Buy

Not necessarily, but it’s an important question for all brands to ask themselves. For some brands, I’d say it’s absolutely essential. That’s the case for Best Buy. We have seen how impactful technology is in our lives. Knowing this, and how central that is to who we are as a brand, our purpose – to enrich lives through technology – is critical because it is where our work starts. It underpins our entire strategy and it is at the core of every decision we make. Our purpose is inspirational and motivating for all of us. We are all part of something bigger than ourselves.

“Purpose can’t just be something you say or do externally – it isn’t a label you just slap on to your marketing efforts.”
IS PURPOSE-WASHING THREATENING TO UNDERMINE THE GOOD DONE BY THIS INDUSTRY?

Our panel of magnificent marketing minds ponder purpose-washing, and the dangers of simply doing what is popular in the moment.

Norman de Greve, chief marketing officer, CVS Health

It is impossible to be a purpose-driven brand unless you are, first and foremost, a purpose-driven company. Purpose should affect everything a company does, from operations to talent management to reward systems and acquisitions. Stunts used to suggest a commitment to purpose that are thinly veiled marketing campaigns carry little weight with today’s consumers and can harm the brand. The key is to take meaningful and recurring action on things that are useful and valued by consumers. Only then will consumers, employees and others see the brand as committed to its purpose.

Alysia Borsa, chief business and data officer, Meredith

In this case, I think peer pressure (to have strong purpose) is good! Let’s make all brands rethink their core values and invest more to do good. The result will be more positive than negative. If your purpose isn’t authentic, it has the potential to turn off consumers and hurt business. We have to bank on the fact that consumers are smart. They will find out if your words are hollow or if they’re backed by real action. As brands, we have to show proof. We have to prove our purpose is real and share what we’re doing to promote positive change every day, through the work we do and the products we create.

Jay B Wilson, vice-president of research, Gartner for Marketers

Agencies and marketing leaders play an essential role in bringing purpose to life for brands, but they can’t be its exclusive owners. Purpose must live across an organization – from C-level leadership to frontline employees, from advertising to IT. Weak links – in the supply chain, for example – will be identified and attacked by consumer groups, politicians and competitors, threatening to cause significant backlash. In this era of fake news, bad actors – who until this point have been focused in the political arena – will target commercial enterprises that take societal stands, using everything from networks of Twitter bots to fake video.
Jeff Brecker, global vice-president, creative, design and content, Kimberly-Clark Corporation

Consumer and brand relationships are built on trust, and today’s consumers are quickly becoming savvy enough to differentiate between attempts to appear socially conscious and brands that are actually making long-term social impact. Companies that are founded on social purpose, or those like Kimberly-Clark that find their purpose in solving real-world problems, will continue to thrive because of their authenticity. We believe that, when purpose is truthfully delivered, there’s an opportunity to create social, environmental, and financial value.

Kyoko Matsushita, global chief executive officer, Essence

Consumers want to align themselves with brands that have purpose, but they also expect that purpose to be real and authentic. It’s exciting to see more and more brands championing important causes and using the power of advertising to create change. As an industry, however, we have to ensure we are treating purpose as more than a convenient way to drive engagement and sales. Advertising is playing a critical role in creating more diverse, more inclusive societies around the world. For that progress to be sustainable, we need to ensure we help clients root both their marketing and decision making in their authentic values, not simply what’s popular in the moment.

Karsten Jankowski, general manager of marketing and PR, Infiniti Middle East

The bottom line is that brands who say one thing and do another are heading for trouble. It’s reputation management 101. In reality, of course, it is much more nuanced. Who decides, for example, whether a brand’s deeds adequately match its words? How do brands distinguish between those who shout (or tweet) the loudest and those that matter most – our consumers and customers? In the cauldron of social media, there’s a risk that well intentioned brands and meaningful campaigns are too easily shut down. Campaigners have every right to be vocal, but if perfect becomes the enemy of the good, who wins?

Jennie Weber, vice-president of customer and user experience, Best Buy

Purpose-driven brands have to be authentic. When they are, it isn’t purpose-washing. It can improve our collective work within the industry because it gives us a more solid foundation. What could be better than brands, companies and individuals working to make things better? I think that, as long as brands focus on a purpose that is meaningful and true and remain consistent to that purpose, great things can happen.

Todd Newman, vice-president of innovation, Keurig Dr Pepper

I can’t criticize brands for creating awareness of societal and environmental problems. The hazard lies in oversimplifying issues into marketable soundbites that fragment public interests around piecemeal claims and incomplete approaches to incredibly complex and layered issues. Marketers must consider the noise and competing interests we can unintentionally create by taking a too-narrow view of the very issues we want to solve.

Dipanjan Chatterjee, vice-president and principal analyst, Forrester Research

Call me a cynic, but I think the purpose bandwagon has gone careening off the rails. Steve Jobs’ Apple epitomized purpose rooted in the customer – demystifying technology and bringing it to the kitchen table, putting 10,000 songs in your pocket and so on. Jobs, as we have come to know, was no social warrior. Many marketers confuse brand purpose with social good. They would do better to address fundamental brand values (such as uniqueness, transparency and approachability) before they take on social values. The exception would be firms like Patagonia, where brand and social values are inextricable. I don’t mean to trivialize doing good, but that’s become table stakes where brands stand out by exception, not by compliance. When marketers chase purpose rather than lead with the brand, they end up with inauthentic expressions (like Gillette’s toxic masculinity campaign) at the cost of showcasing real purpose connected to the brand (like its Treo razor, designed for caregivers). There is a way to do purpose right, but it must come from deep within the brand.
HEED WEED

Former chief marketer at Unilever, a non-executive director of WPP, the president of the Advertising Association... it's fair to say Keith Weed knows a thing or two about marketing. So, what would you like to ask The Drum's advice columnist?

Q. Keith, I remember you being quoted (in The Drum I think) as saying that when marketers feel left behind by their consumers, it’s usually because they are. So, how do you galvanize an organization around the need to move with your consumers when you have embedded and proven growth drivers in place that are holding you back?

Kristy McCready, chief marketing officer, Homeserve

A. Firstly, I’d say that most companies would celebrate having embedded and proven growth drivers! I think you’re right to be concerned about whether these drivers will continue to be so, as consumers’ lives and aspirations change. It is important, as a chief marketer, to challenge this. As a marketer, you need to know where consumers are – and, more importantly, where they are going – to ensure you can serve them better. If you can understand the dynamics of the consumer and the market, and then share that in your company, you will be providing a valuable insight.

I believe the best way of galvanizing leaders or a team around a new agenda is to immerse people in those changes and bring the outside in. Seeing is believing. Consumer safaris are one option, where you take people out to see consumers in their homes or to do assisted shopping trips. However, given the time pressures on senior leaders, reverse mentoring could be a powerful approach. So pairing leaders with younger team members who represent some of these advances in consumer behavior, or connecting people directly with consumers so they can experience first-hand the change that is coming.

This is so much more powerful than sharing reports, which often end up unread by busy executives. Our role as marketers is to spark people’s curiosity in what is happening so they are more receptive to the need for change. Good luck driving that change!

Q. Keith, as you know, we are only as good as our team and talent pipeline is one of the biggest issues facing chief marketers today. What have you found to be the most progressive and effective ways of recruiting top, senior-level talent?

Syl Saller, chief marketing officer, Diageo

A. Syl, I think you’re right in identifying that there is a different challenge in recruiting top senior talent into marketing today. It seems many companies invest in building the capability of younger talent and then, at a certain stage, you are somehow meant to know it all and the training dries up. This means there is a great deal of good quality senior talent in marketing not being developed for the challenges ahead. It’s left to the senior talent to be curious and invest in themselves with ongoing learning to refresh their skills and capabilities for the new marketing world. In my view, this is wrong and needs to change.

The pace of change has been so fast that much of the homegrown talent in an organization does not have the right specialization for the challenges ahead. 80% of my direct reports were from outside the organization at one stage in my previous chief marketing officer role. Recruiting them was not easy. The first thing you need to do is to identify the individuals. The second thing is then to set out a program to engage with them emotionally and intellectually. This will take time which can also result in there being a gap in your organization as you attempt to recruit the right person. I was once told you’re better to have a hole in your organization than an arsehole! It was useful advice, so keep the space until you find the right person.

What this means though is a chief marketing officer has to be more externally orientated, connecting with people across the extended industry to identify talent in different areas. Then, of course, all the due diligence with head-hunters and references is still needed. But I would not rely purely on head-hunters alone to bring you the senior people you need.

Keith Weed is the president of the Advertising Association, the UK industry body that promotes the role, rights and responsibilities of advertising [adassoc.org.uk]. If you have a question you’d like to see answered in these pages, email it to keith.weed@thedrum.com.

“I was once told you’re better to have a hole in your organization than an arsehole! It was useful advice.”
Brands are setting themselves very lofty, purpose-driven ambitions. And rightly so. The public demands it. And for those looking to deliver real change and not just dabble in a bit of purpose-washing, it is technology that’s bringing these ambitions to life. At speed and at scale. Here we take a look at brands making a real difference through tech.
Brands are setting themselves very lofty, purpose-driven ambitions. And rightly so. The public demands it. And for those looking to deliver real change and not just dabble in a bit of purpose-washing, it is technology that’s bringing these ambitions to life. At speed and at scale. Here we take a look at brands making a real difference through tech.

**Adidas**

In 2015, Adidas launched its first ever shoe made from reclaimed and recycled marine plastic as part of a collaboration with Parley for the Oceans. Last year, it launched a 100% recyclable runner – the Futurecraft.Loop – and sold over 11m pairs of shoes containing recycled materials. Granted, this is but a fraction of the 400m pairs of shoes it makes a year, but with a commitment to exclusively use recycled polyester by 2024 and to up the number of pairs of shoes made from plastic waste to 20m, the numbers are moving in the right direction.

Adidas’ manager of technology innovation, Tanyaradzwa Sahanga, explains: “We set out to create a new type of product that we can take back, grind up and reapply into new Adidas products. We knew this was a far-reaching vision in every way – technically and even behaviorally. There were times when it didn’t seem like we could get over some of the technical hurdles, but now we’ve made the first leap, the playing field has changed.”

The company plans to follow up with a second phase in the second quarter of 2021, using the insights generated from the initial shoe launch.
**Huawei**

Chinese smartphone giant Huawei claims its mission is to make the world a better place. And while those could easily sound like empty words from a company that reported $122bn in revenue last year, its follow-up quote – “we believe that technology should enrich people’s lives and AI can extend the boundaries of what is humanly possible” – certainly chimes a lot truer. Especially when you look at how it has applied its mobile technology and expertise in AI and augmented reality to address the fact most of the 32 million deaf children in the world struggle to read because they can’t learn phonetically.

And so, with the help of FCB Inferno and in partnership with the European Union of the Deaf, the British Deaf Association, Penguin Books and Aardman Animations, it has created StorySign – the world’s first literacy platform for deaf children, which scans words within certain children’s books and translates them into sign language through an Aardman-created avatar called Star.

The free app is available on all Android devices in 11 countries and opens up books to an entire generation of deaf children. Such has been its impact since launching in December 2018, Huawei is keeping the story going with a £375k donation to deaf literacy projects and by expanding the app into China and on to iOS devices, as well as adding dozens more books.

“We believe that when you bring together human imagination with the power of our AI technology, we can make the world an even better place,” says Walter Ji, who heads up Huawei’s consumer business group for western Europe.

**Airbnb**

While we can all agree that its technology has revolutionized short-stay accommodation, few would proclaim purpose a major concern for Airbnb. Despite all its talk of community, disruption has always been the name of the game. And so it comes as a surprise every time its Open Homes initiative makes its way back into the news and we see the company’s impressive technological capabilities pointed towards making a real difference to displaced people by matching them with free temporary accommodation on the platform. Just like it did as bush fires burned throughout Australia recently. And in the aftermath of 2018’s Hurricane Michael.

“Open Homes is Airbnb’s way of putting a roof over the heads of those in the greatest need of one,” explains Joe Gebbia, one of the company’s co-founders. “It’s taking what we have provided to travelers for years and providing it for those who have been displaced. It’s a new way to give back – you don’t have to cut a check; you just have to simply share the extra bedroom down the hall.”

Airbnb hosts are also offering up their homes to people needing to travel for medical procedures, providing potential short-term stays during their treatment and recovery. Accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers has also been offered through the platform, helping those moving to a new country to find their feet and begin a new life. For Open Homes hosts, Airbnb provides a free 24/7 help line and a guarantee to reimburse property damage up to $1m.
Dove
When we talk about the purpose brands serve beyond the basic services they provide, Unilever – and in particular its Dove brand – is an easy go-to. Unilever chief exec Alan Jope is busy furthering the thoughts of his predecessor that doing good is good for business, and Dove’s continued aim to make a positive difference by promoting body positivity and helping improve female self-esteem is reflected throughout the work it does and its debt deployment of creativity. Recently though, it has been turning to technology too.

Unilever has been trialling ‘ethical adtech’ where anyone who watches one of its video ads online can choose which charity to donate 50% of the ad revenue to. Experimenting first with its Knorr and Lynx brands, which have run their ads through the technology (created by Good-Loop) on traditional publisher sites, it recently took that same technology to Instagram with a series of ads for Dove. Every time someone watched to the end of an Instagram Story spot, they were presented with a swipe-up link where Unilever would make a donation to either the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women or the Dove Self-Esteem Project.

“The extension of our Unilever partnership to the Instagram environment is hugely exciting, not least because it is a testament to our ability to connect charitable donations with digital advertising at scale,” says Good Loop’s chief executive Amy Williams.

At the time of writing, and according to Facebook’s data, around half a million people have viewed the advert from a spend of below £10,000, consequently raising nearly £30,000 for women’s self-esteem projects.

Bó
40% of UK adults have less than £100 in savings. That was the insight that gave birth to Bó, the new banking app from Royal Bank of Scotland that aims to help users control their spending habits and save better.

The fintech brand’s chief marketer, David Erixon, explains: “We know there is a huge market currently under served by both neobanks and traditional banks. And one of the key things about Bó is that we break down people’s spending for them by retailer and category, which can lead to some surprising revelations. It might be the first time they have really been made aware just how much they’re spending on takeaways or taxis or clothes.”

Bó, Erixon argues, empowers users to start tweaking their daily spend so that less goes on incidentals and more is kept for things they really love or to go into savings. And to make sure saving remains front of mind, instant alerts are sent to their devices after each transaction.

“Instant alerts every time you use your card add friction back into spending. Contactless payments have made it really easy to spend, but getting a reminder when money leaves your account helps turn digital money into cash again. You start to notice what you’re spending, which can help you spend less.”

Another feature of the app is the ability to create a set budget, limiting the amount able to come out of an account. “Our purpose is at the heart of everything we’re doing. It has shaped how we work so we’re customer-centric and it motivates us daily to give our best. In terms of what success means to us, it’s several million people with at least £100 in savings that they can call on when they need it.”
We talk trash with Plastic Bank’s David Katz, finding out how making plastic worth something has motivated people to pick it up and cash it in.

David Katz likes to talk in parables. It’s a useful habit, since the organization he leads aims for little less than miracle-making at scale. “Let’s say you were to walk over a field of diamonds,” he begins. “You’re struck by the wealth in them, all these beautiful diamonds glimmering in the sun. You want to pick them up, but realize there’s no bank you can deposit them in. There’s no store to spend them with and no one would barter for them. Would you pick them up? Probably not.”

The ‘diamonds’ Katz mentions are one of the least valuable commodities on the planet – plastic waste. Katz is the co-founder of the Plastic Bank, a Vancouver-based social enterprise that aims to help those in the developing world convert plastic waste into cash and goods, providing an additional source of income for those in the poorer parts of the world while preventing more plastic from entering the world’s oceans.

“It’s plastic as money,” he explains. “We’re a chain of bank branches. When you deposit plastic garbage by mass, you can withdraw cash or use a digital wallet to pay for the things you and your children need, like dental care, education, books, nutrition, cooking fuel, cell phone minutes… Everything you need and
Katz claims the company’s system means the world’s poor can be incentivized to recycle, “so that every single home – especially in the developing world – looks at packaging as a secondary income. Then, it’s never burned or put into the river or dumped in the streets to begin with.” Meanwhile, the blockchain technology underpinning its digital wallets provides an “authentic platform for the value of plastic to be revealed, so there’s no opportunities for that value to be degraded by middlemen and mafia”.

Once the Plastic Bank’s customers have deposited a load of plastic at their local branch, the company sells it to manufacturers across the world as ‘social plastic’, to be recycled into new products. The company is already working with chemicals-maker Henkel AG, CPG conglomerate SC Johnson and retailer Marks & Spencer. Katz says the bank’s B2B side makes it simple for brands to contribute to “the repair of the Earth”.

After seven years in business, the bank has helped collect over 8,000 tonnes of plastic waste, which is the equivalent to about 400m plastic bottles, or about a billion coffee cup lids, or 500bn plastic straws. It’s now active across the globe, from Indonesia to Egypt to Brazil to the Philippines – territories home to stark economic inequality, but also responsible for a disproportionate amount of the world’s plastic waste according to a 2013 report by McKinsey.

Katz tells us that the original inspiration for the Plastic Bank came from his childhood on the western coast of Canada, where he’d walk along the beach to school collecting debris brought in by the tide. “Over the course of time I discovered that what we called beachcombing was just other people’s garbage showing up.”

Later, scuba diving led to a renewed appreciation for the beauty of the oceans. “You truly understand the magnetic existence of the ocean when you are in her. To truly understand how powerful and how significant the ocean is, you need to venture into her depths.”

Despite the idealism that informs the work behind the bank, Katz also holds respect for plastic itself. “Plastic is remarkable. But it has emerged into adulthood amid insecurity, expecting to see hyperinflation, mass protest and shortages. And they’ve been met with ocean acidification, climate change and marine debris. They’ve been living under the products of degeneration, of taking for the self before giving for others. The companies that will win that generation are the companies that stand for the Earth’s repair and the benefit of all, not just the rich few.”

The Plastic Bank’s plan to monetize recycling and turn waste products into a proxy currency is the kind of imaginative scheme made for the regeneration economy. “We’re beyond a tipping point,” Katz declares. “There’s about 9bn tonnes of plastic on the Earth and all the plastic we’ve ever made is pretty much still here. If we do something that removes all economic value in the material, it’ll all make its way into the environment.

“This is the very moment that society needs to increase the price of recycled content. This is the very moment that we have to turn it into money for the world. And that’s precisely what we do.”

“It’s plastic as money… Everything you need and couldn’t previously afford can now be bought using the garbage beneath your feet.”
plastic itself. “Plastic is remarkable. But it has
behind the bank, Katz also holds respect for
you need to venture into her depths.”
truly understand the magnetic existence of the
appreciation for the beauty of the oceans. “You
was just other people’s garbage showing up.”
I discovered that what we called beachcombing
brought in by the tide. “Over the course of time
along the beach to school collecting debris
the western coast of Canada, where he’d walk
the Plastic Bank came from his childhood on
waste according to a 2015 report by McKinsey.
disproportionate amount of the world’s plastic
economic inequality, but also responsible for a
to the Philippines – territories home to stark
the globe, from Indonesia to Egypt to Brazil
or 500bn plastic straws. It’s now active across
plastic bottles, or about a billion coffee cup lids,
400m
using the garbage beneath your feet.”
couldn’t previously afford can now be bought
“It’s plastic as money… Everything you need and
helped collect over 8,000 tonnes of plastic
brands to contribute to “the repair of the Earth”.
says the bank’s B2B side makes it simple for
SC Johnson and retailer Marks & Spencer. Katz
chemicals-maker Henkel AG, CPG conglomerate
products. The company is already working with
world as ‘social plastic’, to be recycled into new
developed
the company sells it to manufacturers across the
deposited a load of plastic at their local branch,
middlemen and mafia”.
opportunities for that value to be degraded by
value of plastic to be revealed, so there’s no
provides an “authentic platform for the
technology underpinning its digital wallets
for the world. And that’s precisely what we do.”

Despite the idealism that informs the work
Later, scuba diving led to a renewed
Katz tells us that the original inspiration for
Once the Plastic Bank’s customers have

He predicts that brands will soon be judged
“this new generation, Generation Z – or as
He notes how unforgiving the court of public
on their dedication to environmental repair –
instead, he argues that brands have business
opinion can be. “It’s either going to be Coca-
and notes how unforgiving the court of public
on their dedication to environmental repair –
reverse it.
Instead, he argues that brands have business
and moral imperatives not only to ameliorate
environmental damage but to actively work to

Unusually for the co-founder of a company

THEDRUM.COM
By-products
Reframing the discourse around waste, there are some companies out there choosing to look at it as the solution rather than a problem. Such as the Ukrainian startup Ochis, which makes spectacle frames from coffee grounds that would usually be thrown away, rather than from the petroleum-based plastic used by the majority of manufacturers. British eyewear brand Cubitts, meanwhile, created an experimental range of spectacles last year made from by-products including corn husks, wool, yogurt pots and even human hair.
Ecover, the alternative cleaning products maker founded by a bunch of Belgian hippy scientists 40 years ago, is waging a daily war on single-use plastic and constantly looking at ways to use less water in its products and manufacturing. Its new bottle is made from 100% post-consumer recycled, 100% recyclable plastic. But it is the Too Good To Waste washing up liquid inside that's perhaps even more interesting. Working together with a Belgian brewery, it has created a formula that includes at least 25% waste ingredients (water and ethanol) from the beer brewing process as it looks to get people to rethink their throwaway culture.
We take a look at more wonderful ways in which brands are waylaying waste.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

**SHAKING UP**

by the majority of manufacturers. British than from the petroleum-based plastic used that would usually be thrown away, rather makes spectacle frames from coffee grounds that would usually be thrown away, rather look at it as the solution rather than a problem. are some companies out there choosing to Reframing the discourse around waste, there By-products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WASTE NOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PICK OF THE LITTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRIAN WHIPPLE GUEST EDIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THEDRUM.COM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

by-products including corn husks, wool, yogurt pots and even human hair. experimental range of spectacles last year made eyewear brand Cubitts, meanwhile, created an 100% post-consumer recycled, 100% recyclable manufacturing. Its new bottle is made from its Market Place counters to anyone who brings offering packaging-free, refillable products. M&S, meanwhile, is offering a 25p discount at its Market Place counters to anyone who brings their own container. And Walmart-owned Asda is the most recent supermarket to get in on the act, with plans to launch a sustainability store later this year in partnership with some of the UK’s best known brands - so shoppers can expect to fill their own containers with Asda’s own-brand coffee, rice and pasta as well as Kellogg’s Coco Pops and Unilever’s PG Tips tea.

**Recycling robots**

It’d be easy to dismiss Apple’s recycling efforts as mere greenwashing and point out that it would be better making products that didn’t become obsolete so quickly. But the Cupertino company’s aim to build all its products from only recycled or renewable materials is commendable when you consider the estimate that, previously, around 35kg of raw materials were mined to make an average iPhone. Its vice-president of environment, policy and social initiatives, Lisa Jackson, says it is “constantly working toward smart solutions to address climate change and conserve our planet’s precious resources”. And while a trade-in scheme for old devices doesn’t exactly sound Apple-level ‘smart’, a robot that strips 200 iPhones an hour, separating parts and recovering valuable materials as it goes sounds like something far more fitting.

Named Daisy, the robot was announced on Earth Day 2018 and consists of some parts that came from Apple’s previous recycling robot, Liam - making it a recycled recycling robot. Created through years of R&D, it incorporates technology based on lessons learned from Liam and can recover materials that traditional recyclers can’t, and at a higher quality.

**Machine learning**

UK households throw out about 20m slices of bread a day. And about 4.4m potatoes, 2.7m carrots, 2.2m slices of ham and 1.2m tomatoes. Across a year, we chuck about 120m chickens. If you combine households’ yearly food waste (6.6m tonnes) with food waste from the hospitality industry, manufacturers, retail and wholesalers, it adds up to about 10m tonnes in our bins – 70% of which was perfectly edible according to Wrap, the efficiency advisors behind these stats. And remember, that’s just the UK. Worldwide it is closer to 1.5bn tonnes, according to the UN.

Retailers are making some attempts to address these numbers. Ikea, for example, has been working with Winnow Vision’s cutting-edge AI bins to automatically recognize and monitor what gets thrown out at its food halls, and to empower chefs to take action. It claims to have halved food waste since implementing.

Meanwhile, UK online grocery retailer Ocado - which has its own technology division that has designed everything from automated warehouses and robots to machine learning-based fraud detection systems – has been applying data analytics, machine learning and AI to the food wastage in its chain. It anticipates demand to precisely determine how much it needs to stock, with the result that it has virtually no food waste.

This of course makes good business sense, but until machine learning makes its way into our homes and helps change the bad habits of the biggest culprits, those numbers will remain depressingly high.
REALITY CHECK

by Kyle O’Brien
What happens when you apply immersive technologies to societal challenges? We find out how VR, AR and AI have moved beyond gimmicks and gaming to help make the world a better place.

Immersive technologies are still finding their place in the modern marketing world. TV is still king, print still holds prestige and billboards remain the gold standard for out-of-home engagement. But augmented and virtual reality are increasingly making it into the toolboxes of creatives and strategists the world over - especially as they prove their worth as platforms for immersive, purposeful work.

And while VR is emerging as a powerful teaching tool and AR is developing as the consumer engagement channel of choice, AI is accelerating the speed at which creatives can operate. Pioneering creative production company MediaMonks, headquartered in the Netherlands, has begun to utilize machine learning to connect its teams around the globe with better communication.

Better-run teams produce better creative, the logic goes according to Wesley ter Haar, the agency’s co-founder and executive director. He tells The Drum that the tech frees up time for marketers, and frees up more money for brands.

“There’s a lot of weird, repetitive manual labor that is part of being a creative, especially a design-focused creative, so the more that can be automated and taken away from manual labor, the more space you have for your team and talent to do the bigger push... So I’m always interested in that, because it frees up our talent.

“A lot of our clients are global and have to deal with what I call the hidden work of tool kits and formats and versioning. The more you can automate that, the more the teams are open to more exciting work - plus, more budget becomes available to do that work.”

Real understanding
On the other side of the Atlantic, Accenture Interactive is actively utilizing technologies to better the world on several fronts. One breakthrough from the last couple years has been its use of VR to train social workers. With the help of New York-based digital agency Friends With Holograms, the company created a training program for social workers utilizing VR headsets that place trainees in realistic field simulations. The immersive program also uses voice recognition to make the situations even more authentic.
In the project’s companion film, case workers are placed inside a house, talking to a family about their children. The virtual action escalates depending on what questions are asked and what choices are made, giving the social worker the feeling they are actually in a live situation.

“In that scenario, it’s been incredibly impactful,” says Rori DuBoff, Accenture Interactive’s head of content innovation. “Not only does it create emotional impact, it makes it feel like you, as a social care worker, are responsible for making a decision in the scenario to determine the welfare of a child.”

It’s one of the many ways Accenture Interactive is employing what it calls ‘XR’ – extended reality – to educate and help people to empathize with others.

“In the past, technology was operational and functional, but now we’re using it for human experiences. Particularly when you get into technologies that are experiential, such as VR and AR, that takes it to a whole new level,” says DuBoff, who adds that immersive learning is a big area of focus for the company.

The company says VR use has led to a 76% increase in the effectiveness of training, over traditional methods, which is why it has also created VR learning experiences for other organizations as part of its Accenture Virtual Experience Solution (AVEnueS). Each is designed to not only accelerate the pace of learning, but to enhance the scope of awareness.

Accenture Interactive worked with the State of California to help improve the way it evaluates welfare eligibility. “It gets at stories where you feel like you know what’s going on, but you don’t. In that situation, you meet a family where the kid is wearing expensive sneakers and you think: ‘Why would this family need any assistance or support? They look fine.’ Then you find out that the father divorced the mother and he doesn’t give any child support, he just buys the kid expensive gifts and they don’t have enough money and the mother’s now married to a new husband and he doesn’t want to provide for the kid.”

Following the company’s first projects in the area, its commitment to VR work has expanded. Accenture Interactive is now talking to clients in the airline, insurance, electronic and retail industries, says DuBoff. “They’re all realizing that, for their employees
to effectively communicate with the next generation of people, there needs to be a change in how we understand things. This concerns diversity and inclusion, so training projects really help people to understand how to be more personable and empathetic. This generation wants to learn differently from the past. It’s not about watching videos, it’s about taking the time to have these experiences. I think there’s a yearning for businesses to have a better way of managing people, developing talent and relating with customers.”

**Personalized experiences**

In the retail sector, a range of immersive applications have sprung up to help consumers visualize versions of themselves and their spaces. There are now apps that let you try on virtual clothes or arrange virtual furniture, empowering imaginations and enabling choice.

She notes that these technologies are each being fine-tuned to provide better, more personalized experiences, and to serve each consumer as an individual.

**History repeats itself**

Is it possible to recover things that have been lost to history? In South Korea, technology is doing just that. An AR and VR experience has recreated the monumental Dongmun Gate of the Joseon dynasty, which was destroyed in 1915 by the Japanese occupation.

Plans to rebuild the gate are on hold. So in the meantime, the Cultural Heritage Administration, Seoul Metropolitan Government and developers Woomi Construction, together with Cheil Worldwide, are using AR to allow people to experience the historic gate using a mobile app that displays the monument in different lights based on different times of the day.

"**In the past, technology was operational and functional, but now we’re using it for human experiences.**"

For example, IKEA’s AR-powered Place app lets shoppers try out its furniture in their homes by pointing a mobile device at an area and dropping in a chair, table, lamp or couch. Similarly, both Adidas and Gucci are letting people ‘try on’ shoes with mobile apps.

Notably, the beauty industry is making good use of AR. YouTube has an app called AR Beauty Try-On that lets people trial new makeup looks. High-end cosmetics retailer Sephora has been using the technology since 2016 to let people see what they would look like in certain shades of lipstick or eyeshadow, while L’Oreal has rolled out ModiFace, an ‘artificial intelligence-powered skin diagnostic’ that can overlay new makeup looks on to users’ photos and videos.

“What’s happening in the beauty industry is incredible,” says Accenture Interactive’s DuBoff. “It’s super transformational, the ability to use these filters, but now it’s gone way beyond that. When you start using things like artificial intelligence, you start looking at people as individuals.”

A nearby experience center also offers visitors a VR experience of the gate in its original glory, where they can hear accounts of life in historical Seoul.

**Practical and purposeful**

For DuBoff, immersive applications aren’t just about gimmicks and gaming. In the past few years, she says, they’ve evolved into practical and purposeful technologies. More accurate shopping experiences mean customers don’t have to return as many packages, softening their carbon footprint; virtual fitting rooms allow consumers to engage with fashion while reducing waste.

DuBoff also points to an Accenture Interactive partnership with the National Theatre in London, which utilized AR glasses to make productions more accessible to the hearing-impaired.

She adds: “Making experiences more accessible, more personalized, more meaningful for people in a way that never before was possible – that’s the value of these technologies.”
DON'T HAVE A COW | IMPOSSIBLE'S MISSION

THE WHIPPLE EFFECT

GOOD FOOD

Burger - Copy.indd   28
Burger - Copy.indd   28
19/02/2020   14:48
19/02/2020   14:48

THEDRUM.COM
From Katy Perry tagging it while dressed as a giant burger to shops consistently selling out of its products and the boss getting into a beef with the big meat lobby, food tech company Impossible is pushing all the right marketing buttons.

It’s pretty much impossible that you’ve not, by now, heard of Impossible. The Redwood City mock meat maker has grown into a technology powerhouse since founder Pat Brown first boggled burger lovers with his bleeding plant-based patties.

The 60-something, former Stanford professor’s animal-friendly approach to fast-food quickly caught the attention of tech world titans, with Bill Gates, Google Ventures and Menlo Park’s Khosla Ventures all among its investors. Google even attempted to buy it outright for a few hundred million in 2015, but Brown wasn’t interested. Now, after 12 rounds of funding, Impossible has raised over $700m, pushing its value to around $2bn.

Also among that list of investors are Katy Perry, Jay-Z and Serena Williams, with the tennis ace saying she invested to help “provide plant-based options for people that may not have ever had those choices due to cost and availability”. Perry, meanwhile, attended a Met Gala after-party dressed as an enormous Impossible Burger.

The Impossible Burger, its flagship product, is now sold in more than 17,000 restaurants across the United States, from Fatburger to Red Robin to Hard Rock Cafe - and, of course, White Castle, which was the first big fast-food chain to offer the Impossible Slider. The slider’s unveiling at CES 2019 won Impossible several awards, including Most Unexpected Product, Most Impactful Product and Best of the Best. Burger King has since brought Impossible to the UK with its Rebel Whopper, while you’ll also find its products in Singapore, Hong Kong and Macau.

Pent-up demand
Scale, however, has proved an obstacle (one it’ll be hoping all that investment helps it overcome). Restaurants are regularly reported to be selling out, while Impossible’s wooing of McDonald’s has been put on a back burner until it can commit to the kind of numbers needed to make such a deal work. Despite the shortages, it has still been named the most popular late-night snack on Grubhub and made Yelp’s 2019 Hot List. And in September, when it made its retail debut, it immediately became the number one product at some of America’s favorite grocery stores, including Gelson’s which has since sold more Impossible Burgers than all types of ground beef from cows. The retailer’s chief merchandising officer John Bagan says “no one could have predicted this level of pent-up demand” and tells how people have been buying up 10 packs at a time.

A keen marketing mind has, of course, created this demand. That road to retail was deliberately unrushed (a rarity among new food brands), with the strategy instead to first get it into as many restaurants as it could and to reap the free exposure. And push media has been deliberately spurned while it leverages social influencers to build its following among millennials unswayed by radio, TV or print. And again, all this is for free. Katy Perry tagging it on Instagram after the Met Gala? Wasn’t paid for. All the celebrity endorsements? Entirely authentic according to Impossible.
Perhaps its biggest marketing masterstroke, though, was its decision not to gear its products towards vegans or vegetarians. Its plan, rather, is to get them into all the spaces where animal-derived meat is currently sold – hence all those fast-food chains. It is part of a bigger plan from Impossible to completely eliminate animals from the food chain by 2035, according to vice-president of communications Jessica Appelgren.

“Our intention is to make everything that comes from an animal – meat, fish, dairy – directly from plants,” she says. “And the way we do that is through a process of reverse engineering, at the molecular level, figuring out what makes meat taste like meat and then recreating it from the plant kingdom.”

**Time and scale**

At its lab in California’s Redwood City, she says the food tech company is constantly experimenting with texture, flavor and aroma. Most recently these experiments resulted in Impossible Pork, which Appelgren was at CES 2020 to launch. It is a breakthrough that could fast-track that 2035 goal and is central to the brand’s push into China where half the planet’s 1.5 billion pigs are consumed.

The idea, she says, is to give meat lovers exactly what they love about meat while demanding very little sacrifice on their part. “If you’re giving the same flavors, the same textures, the same price point, the same health benefits and more, plus all the sustainability aspects of our product versus a products from an animal, why wouldn’t you switch? Our hope is that consumer will begin to understand that meat from plants can be as delicious or even more delicious than what comes from an animal, and with a fraction of the environmental footprint.”

While Appelgren admits that Impossible Meat is, at present, slightly more expensive, she says that as it scales that price will come down. “We have a great opportunity to bring the price much lower than the price of meat from a cow. It will just take some time and some scale.”

And speaking of scale, to achieve its 2035 goal, founder and chief exec Brown says Impossible needs to scale up more than 100,000-fold: “That means that, on average, we need to double our production, sales and impact every year for the next 16 years.” In early 2019 it announced it was looking to bring in at least 50 new employees as it added a second production line at its manufacturing plant and introduced a third shift of workers.

Then, throughout the year, it bolstered its leadership team by bringing in Dennis Woodside, whose résumé includes C-suite roles at Dropbox and Google, as its president; Sheetal Shah as senior vice-president of product and operations; former Apple and Motorola Mobility product lead Ravi Thakkar as vice-president of product management; Netflix and YouTube veteran Jessie Becker as senior vice-president of marketing; and former Twitter and Google exec Dan Greene as senior vice-president of US sales.

**Meat is heat**

As 2019 (a year in which 3 million young people across the globe mobilized and marched out of school) drew to a close, Brown was in Madrid, at the UN Climate Change Conference, accepting the 2019 United Nations Global Climate Action Award. There, he joined activists looking to accelerate the transition to a sustainable food system and launched Impossible’s #MeatisHeat social campaign, which looks to highlight how our demand for meat is behind catastrophic collapses in wildlife populations and ecosystems.

“We must act quickly to reduce or eliminate the use of animals in the food system, we are racing toward ecological disaster,” he said. “But I’m hopeful because younger generations are quickly discovering that ‘meat is heat’, and they are uniquely poised to turn us away from the brink of catastrophe.”

Not everyone is on board however, with some more interested in the cost to their pockets than the cost to the planet – like America’s meat lobby, which appears to have a problem with Impossible’s mission to shut down what is globally a trillion-dollar industry. A group calling itself The Center for Consumer Freedom even went so far as to run an ad in Washington, DC during this year’s Super Bowl, in which kids on a spelling bee struggle to spell the names of ingredients in synthetic meats. The rather dubious message seems to be that, because they can easily spell ‘bacon’, processed animal meat must somehow be better.

Proving it’s possible to still have a sense of humor while fighting the good fight, Impossible’s marketing team quickly turned around a parody response in which Brown chairs his own spelling bee. In the video, he tasks a school girl to spell ‘poop’, explaining: “There’s lots of poop in the places pigs and cows and chickens are killed and chopped to bits to make meat, and there’s poop in the ground beef we make from cows.”

What both ads get right, of course, is their focus on youth. Thankfully, those activists who joined Brown in Madrid, plus a lot more young people all around the world, are of a mind that climate change and biodiversity are absolute priorities, while millennial parents are driving the acceleration of plant-based meat in households around the world. As Appelgren sums up: “When you look at the true cost of the meat we consume, it is an eye opener and makes you really think about your choices every day.”
“Our intention is to make everything that comes from an animal directly from plants. We do that through reverse engineering at the molecular level, figuring out what makes meat taste like meat and then recreating it from the plant kingdom.”
CLEANING UP

As brands realize that purpose pays, and as value-for-money gives way to money-for-values, the language of mission statements is evolving. But are we in danger of just talking the talk?
There was a time when a brand’s only purpose was to convince consumers that its product was bigger or better or faster or cheaper. That it would make their hair shinier, their carpets cleaner, that its lightbulbs would stay brightest the longest or that its cake mix tasted the most homemade.

For 30 years, we were content for Gillette to be ‘the best a man can get’ and to add increasing numbers of blades to its razors and claim a closer, cleaner shave. For almost 100, John Lewis just had to be ‘never knowingly undersold’. But brand purpose had a rebrand, and now comes with its own new language and semiotics. Now we have Gillette encouraging men to be ‘the best men can be’ as it taps into conversations around toxic masculinity. And John Lewis is no longer only concerned with price as it takes a more human touch, telling us, ‘for us, it’s personal’. Everyone, it seems, has a position on the most pressing social, political and environmental issues of the day.

And the theory has been held up by practice, as brand after brand finds that purpose pays well. In 2019, Unilever announced that its Sustainable Living Brands – some 28 lines, from Dove to Lifebuoy to Vaseline, that “communicate a strong environmental or social purpose” – have grown 69% faster than the rest of its business and deliver 75% of the company’s growth. Unilever chief executive Alan Jope also stresses that “two-thirds of consumers around the world say they choose brands because of their stance on social issues, and over 90% of millennials say they would switch brands for one that champions a cause.”

The importance of purpose-driven language for brands appealing to younger consumers is a phenomenon Stewart Steel, strategy director at brand consultancy Good, has also observed: “The interesting thing about the new generation is that they are all about kindness.” They want to give their money to brands that communicate with compassion, he tells us.

Certain brands have latched on to the vernacular of compassion earlier than others, particularly in the FMCG and the beauty sectors. Not least Unilever’s own Dove, which has been promoting messages of body-confidence and self-esteem since its ‘Real Beauty’ campaign in 2005. While not without its history of faux pas, the toiletries giant remains one of Unilever’s top-selling brands – last year it made its latest development in ‘kindness’ and was certified cruelty-free by Peta.

“Enrich not exploit” is how The Body Shop, meanwhile, expresses its ambition to become “the world’s most ethical and sustainable business”. That choice of words by the high street cosmetics company was not made lightly. The Body Shop has held B Corporation status since 2019, meaning it now meets exacting standards regarding its environmental and social footprint, as part of a global movement to “balance purpose and profit”.

B Corp certification legally requires companies to “consider the impact of their decisions on workers, customers, suppliers, communities and the environment,” in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
Advertising Week Europe features over 200 events bringing together the brightest minds across advertising, media, marketing and technology. Join leaders from around the world to embrace the intersection of creativity and technology.

Register now at europe.advertisingweek.com/register

PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL, LONDON

16TH - 19TH MARCH 2020

Advertise your product or service here
As Chris Davis, The Body Shop's global director for corporate social responsibility, tells The Drum: “Certified B Corporations meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability. This is something that we feel is true to our founding principles and the DNA that runs through the company today.”

Lush, The Body Shop's youth-orientated shopping center rival, has also emphasized its commitment to 'high-quality ingredients from ethical sources'. Yet, while The Body Shop highlights its dedication to 'ethical' business, Lush rejects the word as a company descriptor as part of its brand mission.

The brand's ethics director Hilary Jones says: “We have never called ourselves an 'ethical business' internally, and when others started to put the label on us it made us feel very uncomfortable.”

“Our main concern about the term is that inherent in it is the implication that other businesses are not ethical. The idea that there are two categories - your business can be ethical or, what... unethical? Doesn’t that mean that we are accepting that normal business is not ethical, and can choose to opt into ethics if it fancies?”

Lush’s mission-statement instead points to its life-long commitment to being kind to both customers and the environment by continuing its fight against animal testing, investing in the development of vegetarian and vegan products, as well as new innovations in packaging to name a few. Jones highlights that for Lush’s customers, it is ingredients, such as preservatives, that elicit by far the most questions.

“We have always wished to give customers a choice by producing plenty of products that contain no preservatives. Packaging waste and other environmental concerns are probably the current fastest growing areas of customer questions... we’ve always prioritized ‘naked’ products that require no packaging.”

Lush’s attitude contrasts with The Body Shop’s by-the-book approach to sustainability. While the L’Oréal brand hews to B Corp standards and has vowed to improve its record on sustainability on an ‘ongoing’ basis, Jones takes a more radical view.

“We reject the idea that it is OK for companies to be anything other than ethical, to do any less than strive to cause no harm to those it touches along the way during the process of doing business. All business should be ethical, nothing less should be accepted as the norm,” she says.

Lush’s argument that ethical business should be business as usual recalls other brands that have chosen to differentiate in the market with moral positions and challenge what ethical commitments are possible for a profit-making concern. Patagonia’s ‘Don’t Buy This Jacket’ campaign set a high bar back in 2013, when it rejected the Black Friday sales by discouraging consumers from unnecessary purchases and subsequently donating all sales made on the day to grassroots environmental groups.

The outdoor brand continued its activism-marketing in 2017 with a campaign of murals spelling out what the brand stands for: ‘Build the best product. Cause no unnecessary harm. Use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis.' In 2018, it piped up again promising that ‘Patagonia is in business to save our home planet.’

Patagonia’s purpose stems from its origins as a company founded to help people explore wild places, and its language has subsequently shifted to acknowledge the fact that those wild places must be protected in order for the brand to survive in future. The company’s significant commercial success over the last 10 years is more evidence that purpose can serve profit but only, as Jones stresses, if marketing messages match up with business models.

“It is action not words that we have tried to focus on. Our worry has always been that these words are sometimes used as hollow marketing claims rather than having true meaning,” she says.

“We reject the idea that it is OK for companies to be anything other than ethical, to do any less than strive to cause no harm to those it touches.”

Steel agrees, saying that “everywhere you look at the moment we seem to be surrounded by division and cruelty, and the only ‘purpose’ that can really challenge that is policy.”

It is this sentiment that was at the heart of Jope’s appearance at Cannes Lions last year, when he warned against brands engaging in what he dubbed ‘woke-washing’ and merely co-opting the language of purpose without inciting the necessary change.

“Woke-washing is beginning to infect our industry,” he said. “It’s putting in peril the very thing which offers us the opportunity to help tackle many of the world’s issues. What’s more, it threatens to further destroy trust in our industry, when it’s already in short supply.”

Of course, Jope conceded that the pursuit of purpose will always be in the interest of the sale, as “done properly, done responsibly, purpose will help us restore trust in our industry, unlock greater creativity in our work and grow the brands we love”. But as Steel concludes, while brands seeking to learn the language of purpose can never be entirely altruistic, “if it’s still change, then that’s still good.”
GOOD TALK
BRIAN WHIPPLE: So, my friend David, I’d love to have a little chat with you about the role of brands and brand advertising in pursuing purposeful innovation. Do you believe that brand creative has, historically, played a role in purpose – in making human lives better, more efficient?

DAVID DROGA: Definitely. It has evolved from being very practical – where you sold a product or a brand for what it does – to where people started to ask questions about what a brand stands for beyond what it says on the tin or what comes out of the packet. They want to know what role something has in their life and who the people behind it are.

This had been a fairly slow change, but then the internet and the fact every piece of information about a brand is just there has meant that what you stand for and what you do has to be in sync. People now make judgment calls not just on what a product does but what it stands for. And it’s only going to keep moving that way.
It has been much to the chagrin of our chief financial officer that we have turned down some very, very, very big opportunities as they were completely out of sync with what we believed.

“This has been much to the chagrin of our chief financial officer that we have turned down some very, very, very big opportunities as they were completely out of sync with what we believed.”
It has been much to the chagrin of our chief financial officer that we have turned down some very, very, very big opportunities as they were completely out of sync with what we believed.

BW: The word 'purpose' can take many shapes, from brand authenticity to improving human lives and making them more efficient and effective and, overall, better. How does the idea of purpose feature in the work of Droga5?

DD: Clients don't just come to us because of the creative. The creative gets all the glory, but strategy is our secret sauce. And clients see us as being in sync with them as far as trying to find a brand that has a consistent, authentic narrative – and, as you say, a purpose. And it runs the gamut. Some, like The New York Times, are very overt in what their mission is – The New York Times doesn't hide behind its mission, it's very proud about it and if anything has distilled it down into a singular statement, the fight for journalism and truth. And then we have some even bigger clients, that touch many aspects of people's lives, like JPMorgan Chase – the largest bank in the country, that 50% of Americans have a relationship with. Its purpose is very much about how it can help its consumers make more of their own money and you see that in the products it creates, in its philanthropy – and we spend as much time talking to it about that stuff as we do about selling stuff or putting out advertising. That, for us, is the ultimate. It helps the people working in a company and the people working for a company – as in us, the outsiders – that we all march to the same beat. You know what I mean? There's no making things up as you go along. That's why it's fantastic to work with purposeful companies.

BW: And ultimately, that's what advertising is: making it clear that what's good for a company is good for the consumer of that company...

DD: 100%. We're all consumers of the product. I mean, when we first kicked around the idea of Accenture Interactive and Droga5 joining forces, we aligned on more than just our charming personalities! We aligned with the mission you're on, how it is consistent to where we want to go. So I'm sure that, from the most long-standing employees at your company to the newest, everyone is coming in thinking: 'OK, we want to do that, we want to stand for something that is different from the clutter and the mess of all the other companies out there.'

BW: So, let me ask you a hard question. A hypothetical. Let's say your growth is less than you want it to be and you have two large opportunities in front of you. One of them is large in revenue but completely devoid of purpose, while the other is large only in terms of significance and purpose. Which one do you pick?

DD: It is an easy thing to answer, but my ego is a speed bump in that it depends on whether the huge company devoid of purpose had no interest in standing for anything, or whether I thought we could go in there and help it find it. My ego thinks we can unearth what its purpose is and give it a valid point of view, you know? So that's attractive to me. But if it was in a category that had no interest beyond just the functional – make money at any expense, at any cost, no morality or anything – I wouldn't want to touch that with a 10-foot pole.

One of the privileges in our history is that we never had to choose based on revenue or anything. And I believe that there are enough great entities and companies out there of all sizes that they're going to keep us in business and growing.
WHEN WHIPPLE MET DROGA | CREATIVITY & PURPOSE
“Many brands think it’s a race to make the most noise at all times... Because you can advertise everywhere and anywhere, we’re bombarded so much and it makes me hate advertising.”

BW: Can you give an example? If not the client, the industry at least?
DD: It’s dangerous thing to say, right, because I don’t want to slam anyone publicly. And I don’t pretend to be Mother Theresa. I feel no guilt about selling beer, but I wouldn’t sell things that I would ban from my own household.

I won’t name the name, but the biggest electronic cigarette brand in the country wanted us to do its work and would have paid us a fortune. This was two years ago and we were like: ‘Absolutely not, no matter what, I don’t care how much you pay us.’ Like, if I would scold my kids for doing it, why would I try to get someone else’s kids to do it?

I’ll tell you a funny story. When we first launched the agency, when we were just five or six people, one of the first clients that wanted us to do a campaign for it was a very well-known porno magazine. We were invited to its offices and were being talked through what it does and its issues, and I was just laughing inside thinking: ‘There is no way I can take any of this money – even though we’re only in month three and still a nothing agency – because I can’t have our very first client be a porno magazine!’ I think some of the team might have lifted a few of their magazines on the way out though...

BW: Wise decision... So what projects are you currently working on that have, in your view, tremendous purpose or purpose potential?
DD: We’ve just taken this fantastic new opportunity with Kimberly Clark – a massive, global brand – and it’s more than just selling diapers and nappies and stuff like that. If we can, without overstepping the mark, understand our role with mothers and the most precious thing in their lives, that’s a noble purpose right there. If we can add value in that ecosystem and talk to them on terms that are appropriate for them, at times when they need it... it sounds weird, but innovation in that space is crucial. You know that, you’re a parent, I’m a parent. That’s a great purpose-led brand that we’re just starting off on.

BW: What’s fascinating, from an Accenture Interactive perspective, is what you just described - that instead of doing advertising for diapers you’re getting into what the parenting or mothering experience is. And that is what we are discussing and trying to help people with, and education around diapers and those physical products is just a small part of that.
DD: That’s what’s so seductive and attractive to me. Yes, I understand at the end of the day it is running a business where it has to sell a certain amount of units. I 100% get that. But there’s going to be so many times where we’re developing apps and services that are just in service of the mother, and that might not be a direct sale to a nappy.

But it’s building a relationship and the experience of the brand is developed across multiple touch points. That, for me, is exciting. And it is very liberating for creatives because, as much as we love making glorious TV commercials and out-of-home and things like that, if we can also take that narrative and translate it into a channel or an app or a device, that is amazing.

BW: So, imagine you’re a Fortune 2000 company, the chief marketing officer or chief experience officer as it’s sometimes called. What are the biggest challenges you have today?
DD: There are so many challenges as people have so many options not to participate with you, and there’s so much noise out there and so many brands pretending to have purpose but not really standing by it or sticking to it. So the challenge is to be relevant, and to know
There’s a misconception that more equals better. And that’s just not true. You know what equals better? Better equals better. Occasionally better is more, but more does not mean better.

WHEN WHIPPLE MET DROGA | CREATIVITY & PURPOSE

BW: Yeah, there’s this misconception in the digital era that more equals better. And that’s just not true. You know what equals better? Better equals better. Occasionally better is more, but more does not mean better. Anyway, last question. Was there ever a turning point for you, a moment that you remember when you realized that not only could you build a great company but that you could actually help people?

DD: I think I started the agency because I wanted to do that. I’d been fortunate in my career before then, moving up the ladder and working on some great brands, but at the end of the day I wanted to work on brands that I believed in, that I wanted to be part of, and I wanted to work with people I respected and found mutually motivating.

And I was very lucky because one of the first things we did as an agency was this hoax where we pretended to spray graffiti on Air Force One, which got a lot of attention and led to Esquire magazine’s then-editor David Granger putting me in his ‘best and brightest’ issue. This was only six months in. But he was very smart because he called me on my bullshit and said he wasn’t just going to write about all the things I was telling him I stood for – how we were making a positive contribution and that ideas are more than just disposable ads. He said: ‘Well, you gotta prove it to me.’ And when I asked what he meant he said he was going to give me one page in Esquire to do anything I wanted with in order to prove all this to him.

I was like: ‘Wow, OK, amazing.’ But also: ‘This is quite terrifying.’ So my first reaction was to do an ad for one of the few clients we had back then. But then I thought: ‘No, go back to why you first started this and prove that creativity really can have a seismic impact.’ I needed to do it for something I believed in and I’d been reading a lot about water issues in Africa, so I decided I was going to do something for these kids who were without water.

I was in a diner brainstorming and it struck me as weird that they’d just put this glass of water in front of me, for free. I thought: ‘I’m not paying for this, but what if I was? What if I could actually get people in the US to pay for tap water?’ So I called up Unicef and said I wanted to convince restaurants to add a donation on to bills every time someone has tap water. We came up with this thing called the ‘Tap Project’, and Esquire said let’s do it and we got a couple of thousand restaurants in New York to agree to it.

Unicef then took it on and ran it for 10 years and it raised tens of millions of dollars. And all I had done was create a logo and a brand – I hadn’t created a product, just framed something that already exists. And what that did for me personally, and for the agency, was phenomenal. It proved a point that, actually, we creative people – and what might seem like tiny ideas – can actually create massive momentum.
There's a misconception that more equals better. And that's just not true. You know what equals better? Better equals better. Occasionally better is more, but more does not mean better.

It's a weird thing because so many brands just think it's a race to make the most noise at all times, and it just creates this white noise. Brands that know where their place is and where their place isn't, that's the biggest challenge. Because you can advertise everywhere and anywhere now, we're bombarded with stuff so much and it makes me hate advertising.

Any time I go anywhere, someone is trying to have a conversation with me. And most of the time it isn't appropriate. Done well though, it is magnificent. So the biggest challenge facing brands is restraint, understanding context and finding the thing that differentiates them – their reason for being. Let's do something to earn people's attention that is worthy of their attention.

BW: Yeah, there's this misconception in the digital era that more equals better. And that's just not true. You know what equals better? Better equals better. Occasionally better is more, but more does not mean better. Anyway, last question. Was there ever a turning point for you, a moment that you remember when you realized that not only could you build a great company but that you could actually help people?

DD: I think I started the agency because I wanted to do that. I'd been fortunate in my career before then, moving up the ladder and working on some great brands, but at the end of the day I wanted to work on brands that I believed in, that I wanted to be part of, and I wanted to work with people I respected and found mutually motivating.

And I was very lucky because one of the first things we did as an agency was this hoax where we pretended to spray graffiti on Air Force One, which got a lot of attention and led to Esquire magazine's then-editor David Granger putting me in his 'best and brightest' issue. This was only six months in.

But he was very smart because he called me on my bullshit and said he wasn't just going to write about all the things I was telling him I stood for – how we were making a positive contribution and that ideas are more than just disposable ads. He said: 'Well, you gotta prove it to me.' And when I asked what he meant he said he was going to give me one page in Esquire to do anything I wanted with in order to prove all this to him.

I was like: 'Wow, OK, amazing.' But also: 'This is quite terrifying.' So my first reaction was to do an ad for one of the few clients we had back then. But then I thought: 'No, go back to why you first started this and prove that creativity really can have a seismic impact.' I needed to do it for something I believed in and I'd been reading a lot about water issues in Africa, so I decided I was going to do something for these kids who were without water.

I was in a diner brainstorming and it struck me as weird that they'd just put this glass of water in front of me, for free. I thought: 'I'm not paying for this, but what if I could actually get people in the US to pay for tap water?' So I called up Unicef and said I wanted to convince restaurants to add a donation on to bills every time someone has tap water. We came up with this thing called the 'Tap Project', and Esquire said let's do it and we got a couple of thousand restaurants in New York to agree to it.

Unicef then took it on and ran it for 10 years and it raised tens of millions of dollars. And all I had done was create a logo and a brand – I hadn't created a product, just framed something that already exists. And what that did for me personally, and for the agency, was phenomenal. It proved a point that, actually, we creative people – and what might seem like tiny ideas – can actually create massive momentum.
Our world’s oceans represent our deepest mysteries and fears. A chasm of cold and dark that is mostly unexplored, where humans as a species cannot survive. I have the utmost respect for these ecosystems and I’m often in awe at how tiny we are in comparison. When you are in a 27 foot boat 40 miles from land and imagine someone above in a commercial jet looking down at you, you realize that you are just a little speck. It offers a fascinating and humbling perspective on existence.

**Mystery of the ocean**

While it is true that I catch fish and lobster on my boat (a Grady-White 271 FS in Seafoam Green) I’m not into fishing for what most people believe to be the typical reasons. Instead, I’m fascinated with marine biology. I’m always asking questions. (What do they eat? Where do they eat it? How do they live? And what do the tidal and other environmental conditions have to do with this?) I also believe that you should harvest what you can eat fresh, and enjoy that, but let the rest go, to swim away. There is this crazy subculture in the US north-east fixated on landing a bluefin tuna on lightweight gear, and my eldest son and I are in the middle of that challenge. It has become an official quest.

**On boat, at peace**

Visit Eleuthera

**The Out Islands**

To know the real Bahamas, you have to get away from the giant megaplex resorts. I’ve spent time exploring the small islands that have only a handful of restaurants and limited transport. Typically, I don’t idle well, but I do reasonably well here. One of my favorite spots for tranquility is a fly fishing flat on a small island off Eleuthera – Harbour Island. That is true peace to me.
We should all have quests. A quest, to me, is something you decide to do and you do not give up easily. I take on one substantial quest per year. In my experience, once an idea gets to quest status, it is pretty much going to happen. For example, in 2018, my quest was to actually paint something myself that would be respectable enough to hang in my home, despite having zero artistic talent or instruction.

Life of Pi

Over the past decade, this book is one that has really stayed with me. It is spiritual and suspenseful and dramatic, and filled with ambiguous metaphors. One line in particular, at the end of the book, always comes back to me: “If you stumble at mere believability, what are you living for?” In our line of work, believability should never be a barrier. But, on the whole, I don’t read enough… not even close.

The Last of the Mohicans

An iconic, must-watch film. It was written and directed by Michael Mann and stars a young Daniel Day-Lewis. Shockingly, it is verging on 30 years old, but the music and drama are as fresh today as they ever have been. And it has that inimitable line: “Stay alive, no matter what occurs.” For me, it has it all.

Baseball

I still play baseball as an adult. The finer nuances of this game reveal that it is about mental strategy as well as raw skill. When you watch sports movies, they are usually about the physical aspects of the game. But think about it. Most, if not all, of the great baseball-themed movies are related to the mental aspect. Despite living in the Boston area, I am a die-hard Yankees fan. My dad took me to Yankee stadium once a year as a child growing up in New Jersey. I’ll never switch my allegiance, despite now living 200 miles north.

He keeps me sane and is my best friend. I am a bit of an innovator with George. Because I travel a lot, I share him with another family. Like many innovations, so many said it would not work. But how many times have you heard: “I would like to have a dog but I travel?” Well, George happily goes between his two families and loves us all. George gives many sermons that would benefit anyone. His most popular include: “How to be super happy with just ‘going’ – the ‘where you are going’ part doesn’t matter.” And: “One gram of salmon is still worth it.” And, lastly: “How to always give a proper greeting.”

Thoughts on leadership

While I don’t really read many business books, I do think about this stuff a lot. I have a strong view that, among other things, surrounding yourself with super smart people with different skills and backgrounds is the number one key to success. Those who hire people like themselves tend to repeat mistakes that are avoidable. I also believe that long, opinionated slides are more for the benefit of the author than the audience. And when I’m asked about what how people can be more successful, I advise them to have an opinion (don’t be a processor), be known for something and strive to make others successful.
Guest editor **Brian Whipple** talks us through what he considers the most exciting, innovative and life-changing new uses of technology from around the world, including Accenture Interactive tackling elderly loneliness through artificial intelligence and Peek Vision making eye care more accessible with its smartphone app.
Brian Whipple talks us through what he considers the most exciting, innovative and life-changing new uses of technology from around the world, including Accenture Interactive tackling elderly loneliness through artificial intelligence and Peek Vision making eye care more accessible with its smartphone app.
Tackling elderly loneliness with artificial intelligence
by Stockholm Exergi

Across the developed world, loneliness is becoming a crisis, and especially for the elderly. We aren’t loving our relatives any less, but so many of them feel isolated from their families. This is especially true in Stockholm, where it is estimated that 250,000 people live alone. This makes the Swedish capital the loneliest city on earth.

What Accenture Interactive has done with utility company Stockholm Exergi in response to this crisis is something that I think is truly inspiring. We’ve used AI to create a software called ‘Memory Lane’, which talks to people in order to create their own life story. It’s a voice assistant that can ask intelligent follow-up questions and identify a link between answers, meaning that the life story it creates is something that can be retold in human and engaging ways. It’s an amazing way to give new life to old memories and share them with the world, connecting generations in a way that is so healthy and needed. At Accenture Interactive, we’re currently looking at ways that we can build on this concept and bring it to new audiences.
Tackling elderly loneliness with artificial intelligence by Stockholm Exergi

Across the developed world, loneliness is becoming a crisis, and especially for the elderly. We aren’t loving our relatives any less, but so many of them feel isolated from their families. This is especially true in Stockholm, where it is estimated that 250,000 people live alone. This makes the Swedish capital the loneliest city on earth.

What Accenture Interactive has done with utility company Stockholm Exergi in response to this crisis is something that I think is truly inspiring. We’ve used AI to create a software called ‘Memory Lane’, which talks to people in order to create their own life story. It’s a voice assistant that can ask intelligent follow-up questions and identify a link between answers, meaning that the life story it creates is something that can be retold in human and engaging ways. It’s an amazing way to give new life to old memories and share them with the world, connecting generations in a way that is so healthy and needed. At Accenture Interactive, we’re currently looking at ways that we can build on this concept and bring it to new audiences.

Helping child welfare caseworkers see more with virtual reality

While in New York, I had the opportunity to try out Accenture’s AVEnueS VR training; and it was awesome. It’s a solution that uses VR technology to transport Department of Health and Human Services caseworker trainees into simulated environments and engage them with realistic scenarios.

For example, one of the scenarios sees the user trying to untangle a case of family separation by asking questions to real actors in an extremely lifelike environment. The fact it is in VR has a massive effect on how we process the situation, as we experience a much more pressured - and therefore realistic - simulation. It’s an amazing way of refining staff’s decision-making skills and a prime example of using emerging technology to impact people’s lives.
Testing visual acuity using only a smartphone

by Peek Vision

Andrew Bastawrous is an inspiration. Eight years ago he moved to Kenya to pursue a simple, impactful mission: to improve basic eye health in local communities.

In Kenya, millions of people live with completely needless blindness – 80% of them could retain their sight with a simple surgery or quick treatment. Bastawrous’ resourceful, creative smartphone solutions have made eye care accessible to everyone.

His story is a brilliant marriage of purpose and innovation and has been inspirational across the world – in 2018 it formed the basis of his keynote speech at the Commonwealth Service at Westminster Abbey (delivered in front of the Queen herself), and in 2016 it was voted the best social impact startup in Europe by Google and McKinsey. Check out his Ted Talks if you’re looking to bask in some of that inspiration yourself.
Creating positive impact in communities around the world using sport
by Nike

Always ahead of the curve, Nike has been putting purpose at the forefront of its business for decades. The brand was built to create a better world through ‘the power of sport’ - a brand purpose it reinforces through aspects of its business, ranging from consumer products to new community relations programs.

Crucially, the company leads by example when it comes to making the business case for operating at the intersection between purpose and innovation. How, for example, can a sports business thrive in the future when fewer and fewer kids consider sports a part of their daily lives? This kind of purpose-led thinking is something we’re seeing more and more among the most successful brands.

Understanding emotional engagement using facial coding
by Affectiva

Software company Affectiva – founded by research scientist Rana el Kaliouby following ground-breaking work on emotion recognition artificial intelligence at MIT’s Media Lab - analyzes facial cues and physiological responses to better understand human emotions.

Its Human Perception AI detects all things human: nuanced behavior, emotions, complex cognitive states, behaviors, activities, interactions and objects people use and interact with throughout their day.

The sum of these perceptions can be used to promote diversity and inclusion, improve products and technologies, and increase the emotional and intellectual resonance of marketing and advertising campaign activities. It’s a great example of how AI and data-driven technologies can bring us closer together.
Predicting breast cancer using artificial intelligence
by MIT and Massachusetts General Hospital

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. Perhaps that adage has never been truer than in the case of Regina Barzilay. The professor of computer science turned her personal battle with breast cancer into inspiration for innovation by developing algorithms and using AI to predict a patient’s likelihood of developing breast cancer in the next five years.

It uses data in the same way that online retailers map your shopping habits to predict your ‘suggested purchases’; spotting the tiniest of changes in tissue health and identifying complex patterns that indicate increased risk. And her work is influencing healthcare more widely. Now, breast cancer patients can benefit from data that shows how certain types of tumors respond to various forms of treatment. It’s admirable and important work.
Predicting breast cancer using artificial intelligence by MIT and Massachusetts General Hospital

They say that necessity is the mother of invention. Perhaps that adage has never been truer than in the case of Regina Barzilay. The professor of computer science turned her personal battle with breast cancer into inspiration for innovation by developing algorithms and using AI to predict a patient’s likelihood of developing breast cancer in the next five years.

It uses data in the same way that online retailers map your shopping habits to predict your ‘suggested purchases’; spotting the tiniest of changes in tissue health and identifying complex patterns that indicate increased risk.

And her work is influencing healthcare more widely. Now, breast cancer patients can benefit from data that shows how certain types of tumors respond to various forms of treatment. It’s admirable and important work.

Seeing a doctor instantly online using a mobile app by Babylon Health

For too many people, healthcare has become much less accessible than your favorite cholesterol-heavy snacks. Babylon Health’s answer – delivered together with a brilliant campaign from Karmarama – is the GP at Hand app.

For its launch, billboards across the UK reading ‘Get Well Soon’ had the ‘Soon’ crossed out and replaced with ‘Now’. It sums up the app, which allows users to book an appointment with their GP from the palm of their hand, perfectly. Babylon is opening up healthcare to give us more control and engagement.

It’s another example of innovations that have become commonplace for the likes of music, transport and travel being applied to make a better world.

Personalizing vacations using location tracking wearables by Carnival

Technology-enabled design that improves everyday lives? That’s what Accenture Interactive’s Connected Products and Spaces offering is achieving through an integration of physical, digital and service design. A great example is cruise provider Carnival’s ‘Ocean Medallion’ project.

We set up over 7,000 sensors and 4,000 portals on each Carnival cruise ship, designed to understand guests’ activities and desires in real time so that on-ship staff can respond to them. One area in which travel providers often fall down is keeping their customers coming back – a 2018 survey suggested that three out of four travelers feel that only a handful of travel companies really excel in relevance. But with Ocean Medallion, Carnival can provide a uniquely tailored experience to each and every guest, making an unforgettable holiday for them and adding more value to its brand.
Throughout this issue we’ve marveled at how marketing minds are applying technological talents to solving society’s woes. But with the world at a tipping point, is it all for naught if we don’t urgently turn our attention to safeguarding the planet and its living species?
2019 was a busy year in the stark contrasts business. It started with a brutal deadline from the United Nations when it declared the world had 11 years to reduce emissions and prevent irreversible damage from climate change. At the same time, governments influenced by climate change skeptics connived to keep energy companies comfortable. And while Nasa was busy recording the second-warmest year ever recorded, in the warmest decade ever recorded, Donald Trump was pushing for the militarization of outer space. The year ended with fireworks over Sydney as the city’s outskirts (and indeed much of the country) blazed.

Going back to that UN warning, it didn’t make for easy reading at the time and it makes for difficult writing a year on. I’d forgotten all about it. The industry I cover also forgot about it – or ignored it, or exploited it. But as the temperature increases, so could friction between consumers, brands and governments.

The global average temperature has been regularly recorded since 1880 when communications technologies, travel and science each reached the level of sophistication necessary to provide an accurate mean temperature. Just four years earlier, the modern combustion engine had been invented. Globalization allowed the petroleum engine to spread throughout the world, and enabled scientists to track its footprint.

With the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) almost certain that humans can take credit for damaging our pale blue dot, you don’t have to be Nikolaus Otto (he invented the internal combustion engine, but you knew that) to realize that the businesses and industries that brought us to the brink will soon have more to worry about than profit margins.
The greenwashing flood
A boom in purpose marketing has followed the steady rise in global temperatures. Former P&G chief marketing officer Jim Stengel’s 2011 book Grow argued that purpose helped drive profit at the FMCG giant. Flaws have been since poked in his methodology, but a decade later there’s broad agreement that green and sustainable marketing initiatives are vital to long-term brand health. But this conclusion is a tough sell. Can we really consume ourselves out of the hole we’re in?

Greenpeace executive director John Sauven successfully demonized palm oil products with Rang-tan, the cartoon orangutan that helped retailer Iceland win the UK’s Christmas ad war in 2018. Most recently, he had Wallace & Gromit creators Aardman portray the plight of the ocean turtle in a harrowing claymation drama.

“The ad industry spends up to $800bn a year to sell us a dream,” Sauven tells us, before going on to explain how it creates demand and stokes desire. We could save the Earth if we “removed this influence” he says.

“Advertising creates a sense of dissatisfaction and unhappiness. We think our needs are not being met, but they are. Advertisers could save the world, but their income still comes from companies that are hell bent on destroying the planet.”

Writing this feature during Veganuary ensured constant inbox interruptions from fast-food companies launching vegan options. The campaign had a record 400,000 people join in this year, and it is estimated that millions more participated informally. However, only 12% say they participated for environmental reasons. And while Veganuary’s research claims 47% of participants stay on the meat-free wagon after January, Sauven is conflicted about its impact.

“We’ll have to encourage people to buy less, and better, but that’s a total mind-fuck for most marketers and a hard sell internally.”

The Guardian has stopped accepting ads from the fossil fuel industry and even at The Drum we’ve been committing greater resources to the conversation while internally reducing our own footprint.

How to save the world
Solitaire Townsend, co-founder of sustainable comms firm Futerra, criticizes the ad industry’s “deep schizophrenia”. A wave of reputational damage is coming for the industries that can’t, don’t or won’t adapt, she says. Futerra leads a network of around 100 agencies and creative groups that have pledged not to work on fossil fuel briefs. The networks might not be joining the queue to turn down fossil fuel money, but perhaps top talent will.

“The world needs a real sense of urgency,” Townsend tells us. “We have to get the hard sell to consumers.”

More recently, Coca-Cola’s head of sustainability, Bea Perez, argued that consumers still want to use plastic bottles. Her comments at Davos were not well received, given that the soft-drinks giant produces around 200,000 bottles a minute. While it is introducing more recyclables into its manufacturing stream, it has no plans to ditch plastic outright.

On plastic, there is some hope. Single-use plastic bags and plastic straw have been successfully phased out in several markets, and plastic will never again be regarded as a miracle material.

Can the world change marketing?
One year into our 11-year UN deadline, the doomsday clock is proving difficult to read. Greta Thunberg has crisscrossed the Atlantic, people around the world have protested and glued themselves to trains, The Guardian has stopped accepting ads from the fossil fuel industry and even at The Drum we’ve been committing greater resources to the conversation while internally reducing our own footprint.

The green energy standard has been taken up particularly enthusiastically by fossil fuel providers, but all is not as it seems. In December, legal activist group ClientEarth lodged a complaint against BP in a British court, calling for the firm’s “biggest marketing blitz in a decade” to be banned. It said the flurry of renewable energy ads from the company positioned it as the solution to the climate emergency. This, the group claimed, was a mere smokescreen, with BP spending “less than £4 in every £100 on low-carbon investments each year”.

More recently, Coca-Cola’s head of sustainability, Bea Perez, argued that consumers still want to use plastic bottles. Her comments at Davos were not well received, given that the soft-drinks giant produces around 200,000 bottles a minute. While it is introducing more recyclables into its manufacturing stream, it has no plans to ditch plastic outright.

On plastic, there is some hope. Single-use plastic bags and plastic straw have been successfully phased out in several markets, and plastic will never again be regarded as a miracle material.

How to save the world
Solitaire Townsend, co-founder of sustainable comms firm Futerra, criticizes the ad industry’s “deep schizophrenia”. A wave of reputational damage is coming for the industries that can’t, don’t or won’t adapt, she says. Futerra leads a network of around 100 agencies and creative groups that have pledged not to work on fossil fuel briefs. The networks might not be joining the queue to turn down fossil fuel money, but perhaps top talent will.

“There is a growing disquiet from creatives who are serving the solutions and the problem...
at once,” she says. “For some there’s a willful blindness, but a lot of young creatives and the best talent won’t handle that any more. They won’t go from working on amazing pro bono briefs one day to fossil fuel briefs the next. They will want to work on the solutions, so the best creative agencies won’t need to take the fossil fuel briefs.”

On how to handle the transition towards sustainability, Reuben Turner, co-founder and executive creative director at Good Agency, urges brands to set targets, embrace pressure and have incentives to adapt to the new world. Fast-moving consumer goods might have to be that bit slower moving, he says. “We’ll have to encourage people to buy less, and better, but that’s a total mind-fuck for most marketers and a hard sell internally.”

Turner claims that 60% of emissions are driven by consumerism. “There is no survival strategy that assumes endless growth – at least not if it’s driven by owning more, driving more, flying more and eating more meat. But more movies, more music, more learning, more experiences? Why not? That’s still consumption. And when it comes to physical products, we can share, rent or just own fewer, better things. We need to look to a regenerative economy that’s not based on buying things then throwing them away.”

Futerra’s Townsend sees the seeds of sustainability coming to life in the fashion industry. Rather than the one-and-done transactions of fast-fashion, she speaks of sharing, buy-backs and rentals of longer-lasting, higher-value garments.

If you had pitched the concept of Airbnb or Uber decades ago, you’d have been laughed out of the boardroom. But they’ve shown that rapid disruption of the hotel and transit industries is possible, she says. Just imagine if that same ruthlessness was applied to world-saving solutions.

“Brands will talk about sourcing, supply, reuse and impact, positioning around humanity’s needs not just consumer needs.” But, she adds, consumers can only buy what’s in front of them.

In this brave new world, smart brands could back their words up with actions. They could demonize legacy industries while positioning themselves as the solution to our impending doom. Turner concludes with crossed fingers: “Unfortunately, our collective guilt hasn’t lowered the planet’s temperature. But that collective guilt has to reach a level where we – marketers, consumers, citizens – are demanding change at a structural level.”

Marketing can save the world, but first it needs to stop destroying it.
As Iris marks its 21st anniversary, The Drum catches up with co-founder Ian Millner who reflects on how the agency’s outsider past continues to shape its present.
With over a thousand employees across 15 cities from Bangkok to Boston, and with a client list that boasts names such as Samsung and Starbucks, Iris has, by anyone’s measure, long been one of advertising’s top tier agencies. And it got there by never letting go of the risk-taking mentality that fueled its creation 21 years ago, says chief executive and co-founder Ian Millner.

“The moment you see yourself as part of a ‘category,’ you begin to conform to the conventions and expectations of that category,” he explains. “If, however, you see yourself as an outsider, you remain free to innovate, challenge, experiment and improve. To succeed today, businesses need all of those attributes. So we don’t just acknowledge our outsider status, we actively nurture it in ourselves and in our clients.”

This is the sentiment behind the agency’s new ‘The Outsiders’ program, which it recently kicked off in partnership with The Drum as it looks to celebrate the marketers and brands challenging the status quo. “The Outsiders is all about celebrating people who can think outside of the industry bubble and be truly fearless,” explains Millner. “We’ve never worried what others think about our decisions and it’s the reason we can be so agile as a business. I guess it’s something we want to instill in others too.”

The founding of Iris back in 1999 was the result of the “pure frustration” felt by Millner and five of his colleagues at IMI who had become disillusioned at how often rules would get in the way of building relationships with some of the network agency’s biggest clients.

“Everyone had specific roles and it was very siloed. It was like: ‘That’s your swimming lane and don’t you dare leave it!’ If you were to do what was right for the client, you’d get in trouble with someone else in the agency. And so the six of us wanted to right the wrongs of the industry and find the right way to do things. We were in our 20s and had no idea what we were doing, but we just acted on instinct and survival.”

Having persuaded Ericsson (then one of the biggest mobile phone operators in the UK with around 25% market share) to become its first client, Iris was born. “You only need one client to start an agency.” Currently, Iris is majority owned by Cheil, but Millner insists that having external partners allows the agency to retain its independence and to use the financial security to focus on doing what it does best – “being great marketers”.

Millner describes Iris as a “series of experiments”, saying that it is prepared to get some things wrong and not sit inside a safety net. “We’re the definition of a disruptor. For me, it’s important we don’t stand still and rest on our laurels.

“On any given day, my mind is a mix of thinking about how to win in a post-martech world, opening an office in another international market or finding ways to heal consumers who have had their trust eroded. Yes, we’re bigger nowadays, but the mentality is exactly the same and that’s the reason we’ve grown every single year – well, apart from that one year.”

The year Millner is referring to is the global financial crisis of 2008. Iris had been rapidly opening offices in America and Asia when suddenly the economy imploded. “The Bank of Scotland was a major investor in the business, so when it went under you can imagine the kind of headaches it created.

“That experience taught us how to stay calm and to focus on the bigger picture, and that helped us shift from being an entrepreneurial, lifestyle kind of company to become a more sensible business. We haven’t looked back since.”

Looking back at the last two decades, Millner says he’s most proud of the times Iris was a pioneer, such as when it developed a TV series for mobile or when it became one of the first British agencies to create a Super Bowl ad. Millner also has fond memories of launching a campaign called ‘Night Tennis’ for Ericsson, with famous tennis players hitting balls in night clubs and neon-lit nocturnal urban areas. Iris also surprised its competitors when it won the 2012 Olympic Mascots pitch, and again in 2015 with ‘There will be Haters’ for Adidas.

And what about today? How have things changed? “A lot of the big networks are becoming more integrated, reducing their brands and teaming around clients. We did that from the beginning. There’s a lot of in-house work and management consultancies getting involved with this space. We bought a management consultancy business 10 years ago. Agencies are trying to have more personal relationships with clients, but that intimacy has always been with Iris. We’ve never looked to the agency scene for inspiration. If we do that, we start to adopt the conventions.”

Some of the biggest challenges that brands will face will be around the erosion of trust he says, particularly around data. It is
IT CAN BE A CHALLENGE FOR BRANDS TO FIND YOUR AGENCY.
We’ve made it easy. Find out more at recommendedagencies.com

The Drum Recommends
In the club

I really enjoyed hosting this panel on influencer marketing to mark the launch of February issue of The Drum. It was the first of a new monthly event series set to coincide with each new edition of the mag. A massive thanks to Jo Sharff and h Club London for hosting us. This panel included Andrew Jude Rajanathan, Lore Oxford, Lucy Robertson and Dudley Nevill-Spencer. See you there next month!

Outside view

An insider’s perspective on the power of being an outsider! I really enjoyed doing this edition of The Drum Show on a topic close to my heart. Thanks to Ian Millner of Iris Global for sharing his insights on how he has built a global business by challenging convention; Jon Evans, who explained how time at BrewDog can be measured in dog years; and Beverley D’Cruz, who explained how a disruptive approach at Pizza Hut has started a domino effect. Big thanks to Sonoo Singh for coordinating all this. You can see the full show online.

Maximum effort

This is a snap from when The Drum met Ryan Reynolds. This was for a great piece by Katie Deighton on why the film star, also the ‘literal sexiest man in the world’, has launched ad agency Maximum Effort with ex-McCann creative George Dewey.

Emergency filmmaking

Sometimes you need the creative emergency services. We made a fun short film to promote this year’s Chip Shop Awards with the students of the School of Communication Arts. Thanks to Marc Lewis for joining in! You can see the whole film online.

Jordyn’s debut

One of my favorite projects this year has been making this video with the amazing team at Twitter during CES. It is a spoof awards presentation designed to mark some of the best launch campaigns Twitter saw in 2019. Both Twitter Next’s Alex Josephson and The Drum’s very own Jordyn Davis were brilliant presenters. Thanks to Laura Pacas for making this happen and also to Alex Newton for making the film! Well done also to the honorees: Joao Chueiri and the Anheuser-Busch InBev team, Todd Alan and the Visual Concepts for NBA2K20 team and Emily Kayla Smith and the Unilever team for Popsicle.

Strange medicine

“Granny, there is no need to stare, but this is a drone. You shouldn’t be wandering around without a face mask. Hurry home, and once you get home, wash you hands.” These messages are being boomed to people in Inner Mongolia by drones, part of a bid to ensure people stay indoors to prevent the spread of coronavirus. One wonders if the cure might be worse than the disease...

Land of milk and copy

It’s been a long time since I have been motivated to take pics of outdoor posters, but I have to say that I love the tone of voice and attitude of Oatly, the Swedish oat milk brand. The communication is consistent through everything it does, and I also love the irreverent tone of its packaging, which I actually enjoy reading. (How often do you say that?) In fairness though, the brand has provoked a bit of a backlash in its native Sweden – by suggesting that its product is ‘like milk, but made for humans’. Still, the fact that it gets everyone talking can be no bad thing.

Completing the whole set

A brilliant surprise waiting for me and Fergus Gregory when we visited Stein IAS in sunny Bollington. Chief exec Rob Morrice commissioned this drum kit made out of The Drum Awards trophies. It will now take pride of place at our reception in London. Pictured with me and Rob is Reuben Webb, who has won quite a lot of these trophies by now. Thanks guys, this gesture will be much appreciated by the entire team.
What’s on...

UK

16-19 March
The Drum Arms London
Our antidote to the usual conference scene. Our pop-up pub provides you with pints, panels and parties you won’t get anywhere else.
All day, London

24 March
Hospital Club presents
The Drum Live: Religion
Join us at an exclusive breakfast with editors and contributors of the latest issue of The Drum magazine.
8.30–10am, Hospital Club, London

25 March
Agency Acceleration Day
An essential day filled with actionable insights and practical advice to help agencies reach the next level of success.
8.30am-6pm, London

21 April
The Drum Marketing Awards Europe
6.30pm-late, London

22 April
The Drum Search Awards
6.30pm-late, London

23 April
Hospital Club presents
The Drum Live: Space
Join us at an exclusive breakfast with editors and contributors of the latest issue of The Drum magazine.
8.30–10am, Hospital Club, London

28 April
The Drum Online Media Awards
6.30pm-late, London

29 April
The Drum Recommends Awards
6.30pm-late, London

30 April
The Drum Digital Advertising Awards Europe
6.30pm-late, London

13 May
The Drum Awards breakfast workshop
It’s always difficult to get started writing your report for an awards entry. How much information should you really include? Become an expert in awards report writing with The Drum Awards Workshop.
9-10.30am, London

US

15-16 March
The Drum Arms Austin
Our antidote to the usual conference scene. Our pop-up pub provides you with pints, panels and parties you won’t get anywhere else. All day, San Jac Saloon, Austin

9 April
The Drum Marketing Awards US
6.30pm-late, New York

For more details go to thedrum.com/calendar