

WARC

Press Release

For immediate release

Redefining Purpose - WARC Toolkit 2018

Recognising when and how purpose can drive sales as well as social good is a key challenge.

Global, 5 February 2018 – Even after a backlash against the use of social causes in brand advertising in 2017, plenty of brands will pursue purpose strategies this year. However, the challenge will be recognising when and how purpose can drive sales as well as social good.

Global marketing intelligence service WARC highlights redefining purpose in Toolkit 2018, an annual guide to key trends and challenges that marketers around the world will be faced with in the year ahead.

Recent studies have suggested that purpose done well reduces price sensitivity, especially among socially and environmentally-conscious millennial consumers. In a tempestuous socio-political global landscape, eight in 10 consumers believe that businesses bear as much responsibility as governments for driving social change.

Freya Williams, CEO, North America, Futerra, comments: "There is nothing faddish about purpose. Purpose is nothing more or less than the next incarnation of brand. We began with brands built on rational benefits. Then came emotional benefits. Brand purpose is next. It's what happens when business - and brands - grow up."

Williams went on to say, "The rise of purpose is inexorable. The moment we are in is not just a seismic shift in marketing. It's a seismic shift in business."

For brands looking to stand for something bigger than their businesses, identifying which elements of purpose are worth pursuing will be testing.

Bridget Angear, Chief Strategy Officer, AMV BBDO, says: "I still think that brand purpose matters, when it is done well and when it is done with integrity, and when it is driven out of how a brand behaves, and not just out of its communications strategy. The backlash has [occurred] because, when it is not done in that way, brands can look a bit superficial, and as if they are jumping on the purpose bandwagon. It feels fake and insincere."

David Tiltman, head of content, WARC, comments: "Brand purpose is an increasingly divisive topic, and the theory behind it has come under scrutiny over the past year. Although there have been high-profile failures, there are also examples emerging of brands succeeding through a purpose-led strategy. Case studies from brands like Ariel and Whirlpool show how a long-term

focus, a clear fit with a brand, and a strategy to overcome cynicism can help purpose reach its potential.”

Redefining purpose, alongside voice-enabled technology, digital transparency, customer experience and data management are five key brand challenges for the year ahead, outlined in Toolkit 2018, which also includes a guide to best practice, potential pitfalls and video interviews with industry leaders to help overcome the issues.

On 12 February, WARC will be hosting a webinar: 'Toolkit 2018 - How brands can respond to the year's biggest challenges'. Key priorities, opportunities, obstacles and industry issues which marketers have highlighted for the coming year as well as how to develop a voice strategy and how to respond to the growing use of voice technology, will be discussed. To join register [here](#)

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WARC hosts four global and two regional case study competitions: WARC Awards, WARC Innovation Awards, WARC Media Awards, The Admap Prize, WARC Prize for Asian Strategy and WARC Prize for MENA Strategy.

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