

The background of the page is a photograph of a densely packed favela on a hillside at dusk. The buildings are illuminated with warm lights, and the sky is a mix of purple and blue. In the distance, a mountain peak is visible against the twilight sky.

Balancing purpose with profit

BRANDS OF THE FUTURE

ALASTAIR BANNERMAN, GLOBAL DIRECTOR, MEDIACOM & CHRIS HAYEK, HEAD OF MEDIA, SHELL 12 FEB 2018

Today, more than ever, consumers want to be associated with brands that share their beliefs. But when, where and how should brands 'take a stand'? MediaCom's Alastair Bannerman asks Shell's Chris Hayek how his company is working to balance purpose with profit.

Alastair Bannerman: Why is it important for brands to have a purpose?

Chris Hayek: More and more, people want to know what brands stand for, and they tend to choose those which reflect their own personal values. So brands need to show why they make sense in people's lives. That means showing they care about providing something

meaningful, and not just their own pursuit of profits. It's what lets them talk about a topic legitimately and do something about it.

AB: How do you define your brand purpose?

CH: At Shell, we want to enable progress by providing more and cleaner energy solutions. We believe the answers to tomorrow's energy challenges lie in the power of people's ingenuity, and that together we can #makethefuture today. As part of this campaign, our brand team is working hard to invite anyone and everyone to join the conversation.

AB: What benefits do you ascribe to having a purpose, both internally and externally?

CH: We know companies that have a clear brand purpose tend to outperform those which don't for a number of reasons. Primarily, because people work better – and stay at companies for longer – when they are engaged by, and committed to a cause they believe in. Having a vision also helps these companies attract the best new talent, too.

As brand marketers at Shell, we are developing new strategic initiatives to engage our consumers and stakeholders alike. We are trying to demonstrate our company's commitment to cleaner energy through meaningful actions rather than words.

Externally, as part of #makethefuture, we have developed initiatives such as 'Best Day of My Life', a music video collaboration between global artists, which showcases some of the innovative energy solutions we are helping to implement in communities around the world. We hope it will get more people engaged in what Shell is trying to achieve.



Above: Shell's 'Best Day of My Life' music video showcases innovative energy solutions

AB: How has your purpose changed your culture?

CH: We don't want Shell's commitment to cleaner energy to feel like a gimmick. Rather, we want people to know that this commitment runs through everything our company does, and really does create tangible, meaningful benefits for everyone involved – inside and outside of Shell.

As an example, in 2014, we teamed up with Pavegen to install the [world's first kinetic football pitch](#) in the Morro da Mineira favela in R o de Janeiro. The pitch contains special tiles under the surface which turn the kinetic energy from the players' footsteps into electricity to light up the pitch at night. It provides a sustainable and clean source of energy people can enjoy powering together.



Above: This kinetic football pitch turns energy from players' footsteps into electricity

AB: Is it easy to apply and demonstrate purpose in a technology-driven marketing landscape? Why?

CH: In this age of social media and online opinion-sharing it's easy to talk about purpose, but putting it into practice is a different matter. Fortunately, tech can help with that.

As part of our broader goals in the brand team, it's our job to launch Shell's innovative, cleaner energy solutions among communities who need them the most. And being more

connected has allowed us to collaborate on more projects with more people and innovators to improve our energy products and services.

Over the last two years, for instance, our team has worked with some amazing entrepreneurs to develop an 'Energy Relay' as part of our #makethefuture activities. It has seen us launch a number of sustainable energy solutions around the world, like solar panels in Brazilian favelas and lighting powered by gravity in Kenyan communities.



Above: Shell's innovative energy solutions include clean sustainable lighting powered by gravity

AB: How have you worked your message into your campaigns?

CH: Our team uses strategic framework tools to ensure that everything we do beyond our campaign messaging is in line with our company's commitment to cleaner energy.

One example is the [Shell Synergy Truck](#), a food truck which incorporates renewable energy technologies. The Synergy Truck is the brainchild of Shell Eco-marathon Americas students, who took part in the hackathons across Europe and the US. They were guided by designers and industry experts, and valuable insight from Chef Ludo Lefebvre.

The Truck is designed to get people engaged in the conversation by tapping into a universal passion – food. After a tour through the colleges, the two US Synergy Trucks will be donated to social enterprises to help benefit local communities.



Above: The Shell Synergy Truck incorporates renewable energy technologies from around the world

AB: How does your brand purpose affect your marketing process and the way you handle media?

CH: Traditional media strategies always used to use paid, owned and earned media, in that order and investment priority. But nowadays, paid media is all about what the brand says; owned media is the means by which the brand can actually demonstrate what it does. Then there's earned media, which is what the brand inspires.

For us at Shell, purpose really is all about doing. So we only talk about what we've done when we've done it and can show why it was meaningful. That's why we concentrate most of our efforts on owned media (doing). We want to talk about things we have done and their impact on communities, rather than just talking for the sake of it.

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