

Conscious Marketing for Today's Business

White Paper prepared by Carolyn Tate

*The business of business is no longer business.
The business of business is to leave the world a better place.*

Carolyn Tate, Virtual Marketing Director
Carolyn Tate & Co.



Two years ago I was on the verge of giving up my profession for good. After 20 years as a seasoned marketer in both the corporate world and in my own business Connect Marketing for more than 10 years, I was sick and tired of the 'smoke and mirrors' world of marketing. I didn't feel like my work was making a difference in the world. I had no purpose and felt the last thing the world needed was yet another small business marketing expert teaching people how to sell more stuff.

So I sold my lovely home in the seaside suburb of Coogee Sydney, gave away most of our possessions, and took my 12 year-old son off to Aix-en-Provence in the South of France for five months. While Billy went to school in a nearby village, I wrote a book (absolutely NOT on marketing), did yoga, had long lunches with friends, learnt a smattering of French (very poorly) and pondered my life and my vocation.

In January 2011, we returned to live in Melbourne. I was still not yet ready to jump back into my business, so I went to work with a not-for-profit in the hope that I could continue to feel good by doing good.

My problem with marketing

So what was my problem? Why was I sick of my vocation? I'd been feeling for some time that the marketing profession had lost its way and that the world of advertising and marketing was deeply broken. And even worse, I knew I'd had a hand in it. I'd been an unconscious marketer and it didn't sit well with me.

Let's face it, most marketing and advertising sucks.

While the media options have increased ten-fold, the quality of the message has regressed in direct proportion. With over 3000 (that's 2 per minute) marketing messages received in any given day, is it any wonder that people are tuning out and turning off? And if we do tune in, most of what we witness is predicated on fear, sells us stuff we don't need, attacks the

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competition, talks to us like we have an IQ of 5, is bland and unforgettable and promises something it simply can't deliver.

Marketing and advertising has made us sick, sad, fat, lonely, dumb, numb, stressed, grasping and broke. We live in a world where shopping and buying stuff is a priority over spending time in meaningful, loving relationships. It has made us feel less than, unloved and unsuccessful. The more we consume, the more we need to earn and the more complex our lives have become.

Marketers and advertisers have rearranged and reordered our lives and our environment to place their commercial graffiti in our faces at any opportunity. There is simply no escaping it; from the minute we wake up to the minute we go to bed, we are bombarded with it.

We're both the victim and the perpetrators of unconscious binge marketing and advertising. As marketers, when we need to sell more stuff, we simply turn up the volume and the frequency of our promotions and add to the already over-polluted marketing atmosphere.

In 2009, 11 billion was spent on paid advertising in Australia. Now I'm going to take a wild but conservative guess here because there are no statistics, but if we were to take into account all the other costs associated with this industry including the costs of agencies, marketing departments, website development, printing, SEO, video production, direct mail and much more, I'd estimate an industry spend of more than 100 billion. What the overall return on investment is, in financial terms is anybody's guess. The ROI in human terms is far more evident.

Don't get me wrong. I don't believe that marketing and advertising is evil. It's an essential ingredient of any free-market economy. It's just that the fundamentals of good marketing have been lost and hijacked by social media and advertisers. The model is broken and it needs an overhaul, drastically.

Brilliant marketing starts from the inside out and that's what this paper is all about.

It's time to change the marketing paradigm and join the revolution and become a conscious marketer.

My 'aha' moment

Now back to my personal conundrum on what to do with the rest of my working life. I knew the NFP sector was not for me and that I just had to put my entrepreneurial hat back on, in some way shape or form. I had three distinct options; 1. Ignore my feelings and get back on the marketing mouse wheel into my old business 2. Leave my profession once and for all and find a whole new business to start 3. Lead a marketing revolution and change the paradigm starting with my own business.

It happened on the 1st of May this year. I'd just finished the groundbreaking book *Firms of Endearment* and was at the launch of *Conscious Capitalism Australia* in Sydney. Raj Sisodia, a Professor of Marketing at Bentley University and co-author of the book, was the keynote speaker. He made a declaration that literally brought tears to my eyes and caused a physical reaction in my body.

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'The 21st Marketing Paradigm reflects a customer centric mindset that turns marketers into healers where our role is to cure, restore health, soundness and spiritual wholeness.'

This single statement made me fall in love with my vocation all over again. I knew right then and there that I could lead a revolution to change the marketing paradigm and make marketing a force for good in the world.

The evolution of personal consciousness

Our world has progressed through the industrial and information ages. We're now in an age of transcendence, where millions of people are searching for higher meaning and a deeper purpose. We're becoming more interested in the evolution of our own consciousness and the consciousness and depth of our relationships than we are in accumulating possessions and acquiring power.

We're evolving through the layers of *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* depicted here in another manner by Richard Barrett in *Liberating the Corporate Soul*.

As we progress through the stages of our personal evolution towards self-actualisation, making a difference and being of service becomes our driving force.

Human Needs	Personal Motivation
Spiritual	9. Service
	8. Making a Difference
	7. Meaning
Mental	6. Personal Growth
	5. Achievement
Emotional	4. Self-Esteem
	3. Relationships
Physical	2. Health
	1. Safety

Thanks to lobby groups such as [Occupy](#) (in 95 countries), [Avaaz](#) (15 million+ members) and [Getup](#) (610,000 members in Australia) and the power of social media we're becoming blindingly aware of the unethical and incongruent practices of corporations, religious institutions, government and the media. We're developing deep distrust and cynicism towards hierarchical, self-interested structures like never before and we're actively boycotting companies that don't operate with a deeper sense of purpose where profit is the by-product rather than the single-minded goal.

As individuals evolve, so must the world of business.

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What makes a conscious company?

A great company is one that makes the world a better place because it exists, not because it outperforms the market. Firms of Endearment

The [Conscious Capitalism](#) movement defines a conscious company as one that possesses a humanistic soul and who is driven by the following four pillars:

- Higher Purpose – the business exists to serve a higher purpose beyond making money.
- Stakeholder Integration – the business operates in order to optimise value for all stakeholders not just share holders (that includes the environment, the community, suppliers, employees, clients, investors and management).
- Conscious Leadership – the leaders of the business are driven to serve the purpose of the business and all stakeholders.
- Conscious Culture - the business fosters a conscious culture.

What makes a conscious business leader?

'Explore this next great frontier where the boundaries between work and higher purpose are merging into one, where doing good really is good for business.' Richard Branson

A business can only become conscious if the people leading the business are personally conscious. A conscious leader has also personally evolved through the layers of *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* and she or he understands the imperative to bring their company and its people through those same levels of needs.

A conscious leader fosters peace, respect and happiness throughout the stakeholder eco-system and is unwilling to sacrifice one stakeholder group in order to fulfill the needs of another. A conscious leader understands that profit is the result of operating from a deep purpose and will do all they can to ensure that the company purpose drives all business decisions.

What then, is conscious marketing?

When it comes to marketing, our goal is to become the beehive, not the bee. Carolyn Tate

Conscious Marketing is not about corporate social responsibility or philanthropy. It's about building something so fundamentally good and compelling right into the heart of your offering that people simply want to join up.

Conscious Marketing is about ensuring your marketing activities are aligned with your higher purpose - the WHY behind what you do. It's about pricing and packaging your offering with deep regard for the client and their needs while taking care of and engaging all stakeholders in your eco-system.

And finally *Conscious Marketing* is all about promoting your offering with honesty, transparency and congruency and with messages of joy, hope, love and humanity.

Ultimately your business will be sustainable and profitable because your product or service and your message will leave the world a better place. It's all about profiting on purpose.

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An example of unconscious marketing at work

Recently I was at a networking breakfast with a group of small business owners in the professional and financial services sector. Each person was asked to introduce themselves and state where they needed help in their business.

One of the attendees, Ken, made this announcement.

'My name is Ken. I'm a mortgage broker. My problem is marketing. I desperately need more business leads. I have about 600 clients and I've tried every trick in the book to drum up some new loans from them and nothing seems to work. I do quarterly newsletters, send Christmas cards, send blogs and invite them to our events. I'm running out of ideas. Can anyone help?'

I took a deep breath and remained mute, while the rest of the group dished out a whole range of ideas for him to sell more loans... tweeting, direct mail letter, free consultation certificates, a mobile app and more.

When it came to my turn, I suggested that Ken first find out if his clients actually wanted a relationship with him and if so, what they really want and need from him. What I really wanted to blurt out was *'stop being an unconscious binge marketer and treating your customers as merely a means to an end. Start marketing from the inside out. What is your purpose? Why do you do what you do? How do you make a real difference to the lives of your clients? What is so good about your business, your service and your products that clients really love you?'*

As I've stated before, when business is slow, many business owners make the mistake of becoming an unconscious binge marketer by simply turning up the volume and frequency of their marketing and adding to the already over-polluted marketing atmosphere. The most powerful and enduring activity Ken could have undertaken would have been to take the time to look inside and address who he is, why he exists, what he offers and what his clients would really value.

Are you guilty of unconscious binge marketing? Awareness is the first step in your journey towards conscious marketing.

An example of conscious marketing at work

Contrast Ken's story with this one. A few months ago, I started work at [The Hub](#), an awesome co-worker space in Bourke Street, Melbourne. The Hub is a 'profit for purpose' company, with a professional membership community of 600 people.

Recently all members were invited to take part in a Townhall with Brad Kaupskof the CEO. The purpose of the meeting was for us to help paint a vision for the future of The Hub. Brad gave us a 100% transparent overview of the financial situation of the company. He advised us that we needed 100 more members in 100 days to break-even in our first 18 months of operation.

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And he asked us for our help. He asked us - his customers, members, ambassadors to do what we could to support them in their quest to be the best co-working space in the world and to help market the company and make it profitable.

And within 91 days we had achieved our goal to get 100 more members. And it was a task every Hub member took to heart because it was in our interests to make it the most successful, profitable company we can. And we did it simply because we love The Hub. We love everything it stands for. We share a vision for its future and we want to be an integral part of it.

And the best part for Brad and for all of us? The only cost associated with this marketing activity was the cost to put on a BBQ for 100 Hub members to celebrate.

How can you make your business so good that your clients or customers become your most passionate marketers?

The key ingredients to becoming a conscious marketer

Customers don't buy what you do. They buy WHY you do it. Simon Sinek

My *Cycle of Conscious Marketing* model covers everything from branding, messaging, promotions and much more but at the heart of the model are three key elements; Purpose, Product and People.

It's imperative to get these three things right before undertaking any marketing or promotional activity. Get them right and the profit will follow.



Purpose* – This is all about WHY you do what you do. It's about defining at the core how your business will make a difference in the world. All your marketing and communications then become aligned with your purpose.

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Product – Build a product or service that is so good and so compelling that people simply want to join up. When you get this right, people will want to know more and will refer you to others. The promotional activity then becomes almost effortless.

People – Ensure that the product or service is built with your ideal customer in mind (not your purse) and engage all stakeholders that support you in the delivery of your product such as staff, suppliers and your community.

*A good place to start with purpose, is to ask yourself this simple question. *'What's so broken about your industry that needs fixing?'* Then go fix it.

The 11 principles of conscious marketing

Conscious Marketing	Unconscious Marketing
Purpose-driven – All marketing and communications are underpinned by your deepest purpose and really engages hearts and minds.	Profit-driven – All marketing and communications focus on selling as much product to as many people as possible for as much money as possible.
Customer-centric – All marketing and communications focus on what really matters to your customer and how you truly make a difference to their lives.	Company-centric – Marketing that talks all about how many awards you've won and how brilliant you are rather than how you really can help your customers.
Value-driven – The product or service offered delivers real outcomes for clients and is valued accordingly. Services are priced with fixed fees and income is earned because of results achieved.	Price-driven – The pricing strategy is all about undercutting the competition. Services are sold at hourly rates and the time taken to complete a project not on value offered. Eg Accountants and lawyers that sell their time by the hour.
Stakeholder Advantageous – Your company and your marketing actively promotes the health and wellbeing of every stakeholder in your stakeholder eco-system. Creating a community around your business is a primary motivator in your marketing.	Stakeholder Detrimental – Your marketing is incongruous and promotes your great corporate citizenship to customers while other stakeholders are screwed in the process. Eg Big supermarket chains promoting the goodness of their company while strangling their suppliers.
Collaborative – Marketing that is designed to improve the reputation of your industry. You believe there is enough to go around for all reputable companies and you have a genuine interest in helping everyone succeed.	Competitive – Marketing that attacks the competition rather than focusing on what is good and right about their own offering. Eg Bank's that attack the competition.
Positive Message – Your marketing is authentic and spreads love and joy and leaves people feeling warm-hearted and affectionate towards your brand, even if they don't buy from you. You don't do the hard sell, you tell people how you help and invite them to join you.	Negative Message – Your marketing message is predicated on fear to make people feel unworthy, unloved or unsuccessful if they don't buy your product. Your message has a negative impact on humanity in general and you take a hard sell approach.

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<p>Narrow Media – You use a limited number of medium to get your message out very well and frequently to target your niche market rather than spreading your promotions across as many medium as possible (up to 6 maximum).</p>	<p>Broad Media – You use every medium possible from TV to twitter to interrupt your client and to get your message out to as many people as possible. You pollute the atmosphere with your message at every opportunity.</p>
<p>Simplicity – All products and services are packaged simply with the customer in mind and all communications are clear and simple. A 'less is more' approach is taken at all times.</p>	<p>Complexity – Products and services offered are confusing and designed to create loyalty through inertia. Eg telco's with phone packages and pricing models that are complex while also binding.</p>
<p>Respectful – Your marketing and communications respect the lives of your customers and are not intrusive, disruptive or annoying.</p>	<p>Disrespectful – Your promotional attempts focus on disrupting people at any opportunity. Eg Charity workers on commission who accost passers-by on the street.</p>
<p>Honest – Your marketing is ethical, truthful, transparent and congruent and promises a product, service or experience that you absolutely know you can deliver.</p>	<p>Dishonest – Your marketing promises something that you know you can't deliver. Eg Insurance companies that advertise outstanding service and can't deliver at the coalface.</p>
<p>Intelligent – Your marketing assumes your potential customers are conscious, thoughtful and adept at making sound purchasing decisions without the need for the hard-sell.</p>	<p>Unintelligent – Your marketing talks down to the customer and assumes they have an IQ of 5 and zero SQ or EQ (Spiritual or Emotional Quotient). Eg Most commercial radio station ads.</p>

A real life conscious marketing makeover

By now you might be wondering how you can possibly implement conscious marketing in your business or you're thinking that's all very well and good but does this new approach really bring in more business and profit?

Let me demonstrate with a real life case study of an accounting client who has transformed her business in a matter of months by taking a conscious approach to her marketing.

Louise Neville is the director of Accounting Solutions, a Chartered Accounting and Business Advisory service based in Christchurch New Zealand. Louise is not your average accountant. She's an engaging, warm and compassionate woman with a head for numbers and a heart for business.

Before the earthquakes Louise had already decided that she needed a marketing overhaul and had made contact with me. Little did she know what was about to happen in her home town and it wasn't until some time after the devastation that she was able to pick up the phone again and say *'I'm ready to do this now, let's go'*.

'Our city had been devastated and many, many businesses suffered and closed. I was more adamant than ever that I had to rebrand and reposition. I wanted to send a message to the business community that we're here to stay and help, that we're willing to innovate, improve

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our services and put our client's success at the heart of our business during the process of rebuilding our city,' says Louise.

Following the *Cycle of Conscious Marketing* process we conducted an audit of her marketing, built a marketing plan, executed the plan and embedded the processes and measurement systems while educating her team to ensure ongoing return on investment.

'The most powerful outcome of our marketing makeover has been the ability to realise and communicate our deepest purpose for being in business – to help our clients be successful so that collectively we'll contribute to employment and growth and rebuild the Christchurch community. It's helped shaped our whole service offering and our communications,' says Louise.

This was reflected in their brand name and tagline. They went from being positioned as a number cruncher *'Accounting Solutions|Experience beyond the numbers'* to being purpose-driven *'Accounting Solutions|Chartered Accountants & Business Advisers'* with a tagline of *'Your success is our business.'*

Secondly we reviewed their whole service offering to put their client's needs before their own. They transitioned from the old self-serving charge-by-the-hour model to a suite of new packages charged at either a one-off fixed fee or by regular monthly debit.

'We were serious about putting our purpose at the heart of our business so we had to change the way we charge. We needed to be seen as passionately caring about the growth and success of our clients. We wanted them to feel they could call us at the drop of a hat if they needed advice instead of being scared to call because they'd be charged every time they picked up the phone. It has really helped clients trust us and rely on us much more. They are really starting to see us as partners in their business success, not just number crunchers,' reflects Louise.

As a result, Accounting Solutions are starting to see clients better manage and improve their cash flow and start to achieve real growth and success. They've become much more forward thinking and trust them for advice. The relationships are becoming much deeper and more fulfilling for both clients and staff.

After their service packages were designed, we established a clear and compelling promotional plan that again was very purpose-driven. Their marketing messages changed from being all about selling accounting services to offering education and advice so that clients could learn how to build a financially successful business. The promotional activities included a new website, a blog, social media, customer success stories, a brochure, appearances on local TV, speaking, networking and alliance partnerships.

'Everything we do is about educating our clients and offering them the best advice to help them be successful. Carolyn taught us that marketing is all about building something so compelling into our offering that people just want to be our clients, without the real need for us to have to sell to them,' says Louise.

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By focusing on their purpose, they've become much more profitable very quickly. In the three months since launching their refreshed business, they've increased their projected revenue by 25% and are set to double their revenue in 12 months.

'We've already well and truly recouped the money we spent on our marketing and at this rate we'll achieve our turnover and profit projections far quicker than we had anticipated,' says Louise excitedly.

This story highlights that it's absolutely possible for you to transform your business with a conscious approach to marketing. What have you learnt from this real life story?

My own business transformation

Since my 'aha' moment in May this year I've been reflecting deeply on my own past business and marketing practices. There's an old saying that *'If you can spot it, you've got it!'* I realise now that I too was an unconscious binge marketer and it was the cause of my deep dissatisfaction with myself and my profession.

Ever since I launched my business Connect Marketing in 2001, I've positioned myself as a small business marketing expert (all about me) and my market has been any small business owner that will listen (that's a market of 2m people in Australia!) I've had many products and services from books, to DVDs, speaking, workshops, consulting and more and I've promoted them far and wide using as many promotional tactics as I could get my hands on.

While my intent was good, my purpose was hazy and my business model was fundamentally broken. Ironic for a marketer.

And I know that I'm not Robinson Crusoe. Many professionals in marketing and advertising are guilty of this and they teach their clients how to do it too.

It pains me to write about my own unconscious marketing practices, but honesty and authenticity are required if I'm going to BE the change I want to see in the business world.

A number of events collided to bring me to where I am today. It started by finding myself increasingly unhappy at the unconscious practices of big business, which led me to be a founding member of Conscious Capitalism Australia. I started work at The Hub and have been inspired by some of the most conscious, purpose-driven business people on the planet. I met my business coach Damien, the most conscious and challenging mentor a woman could ever have, on both a personal and business development level. These events and my own willingness to dig deep have led me to the transformation of my own business.

So where am I today? What's my new purpose and business model?

PURPOSE (WHY): I help my clients create awesome, sustainable and profitable businesses that leave the world a better place for our children and future generations.

PRODUCT (WHAT): I do this by acting as the Virtual Marketing Director for my clients and helping them embed conscious marketing practices into the DNA of their business. I work

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with few clients deeply, over a 12-month period through both my Premium Marketing Program and Silver Marketing Program.

PEOPLE (WHO): My clients are SMEs in the professional and financial service sector who are serious about putting purpose before profit but who also want to see a real return on their investment in marketing. I nurture the whole stakeholder eco-system by working with conscious suppliers, agencies and employees.

In a nutshell, my new business model encapsulates everything I've learnt over the last 20 years about what does and doesn't work when it comes to marketing for SMEs. I've put them all into one model to help my clients market their business from the inside out by:

- Defining their purpose and putting it at the heart of their business and marketing
- Engaging the hearts and minds of those closest to the business; staff, suppliers, customers and the community
- Creating a compelling brand and products and services that really serve clients
- Educating and empowering all staff to take responsibility for marketing
- Embedding processes around marketing to ensure daily action is taken
- Establishing a leadership position in the industry to improve public perception
- Building a community around the business with messages and activities that are positive, joyful and embrace humanity
- Ensuring ROI and exponential growth in profit is achieved as a result of investing in marketing.

Connect Marketing will eventually no longer exist. I learnt so much and will lay that part of my business journey to rest with love and fondness. My new company will be Carolyn Tate & Co. (short for Company, Collaborative, Connecting, Co-operative and oh yes... Conscious ☺)

PS Note to Marketing Consultants, Agencies and Information Marketers: It's a sad fact that we don't have a great track record and that our public reputation is tarnished. We can each do our little bit to change that paradigm by rethinking the way we do business by embedding conscious marketing practices into our own business. We can do this by setting up our clients for success way before we start work with them and by teaching them how to leverage their marketing spend to ensure results are achieved not just in financial terms but in humanistic terms too. Being of service to our clients, exceeding their expectations and role modeling good marketing practices working from the inside out, is the way to endear ourselves to clients and in turn their customers. I hope this paper has given you some ideas on how to get on purpose and create an awesome, sustainable and profitable business that really makes a difference to the people you serve.

Contact me to:

- Share your story of conscious marketing or other practical examples of conscious business practices
- Find out more about Carolyn Tate & Co. and my Virtual Marketing Director services for SMEs (Premium and Silver service)
- Find out about my one day in-house workshops and keynote speaking services on *Conscious Marketing for Today's Business*
- Discover more about [Conscious Capitalism Australia](#)

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A few useful resources for conscious business owners

Websites

[Conscious Capitalism Australia](#)

[Why do you do what you do?](#)

[Waking up the workforce](#)

[Wakeup Sydney](#)

[Conscious Capitalism](#)

[Sacred Economics](#)

[The Story of Stuff](#)

Books

Firms of Endearment by Raj Sisodia and Co.

Liberating the Corporate Soul by Richard Barrett

Drive by Dan Pink

Path to Purpose by William Damon

Creating Brand Energy by Cath Sutherland

Movies

[The Corporation](#)

Blogs

[Chris Guallibaeu – The Art of Non-Conformity](#)

[The Purpose Fairy](#)

TED Talks

[Chip Conley – Measuring what makes life worthwhile](#)

[Ray Anderson – On the business logic of sustainability](#)

[Ken Robinson – Do schools kill creativity?](#)

[Simon Sinek – How great leaders inspire action](#)

Conscious workplaces

[The Hub](#)

[Chipotle](#)

[The Eventful Group](#)

[Intrepid Travel](#)

[Whole Foods Market](#)