

Enter the Catalyst

Energize your brand's purpose and accelerate results

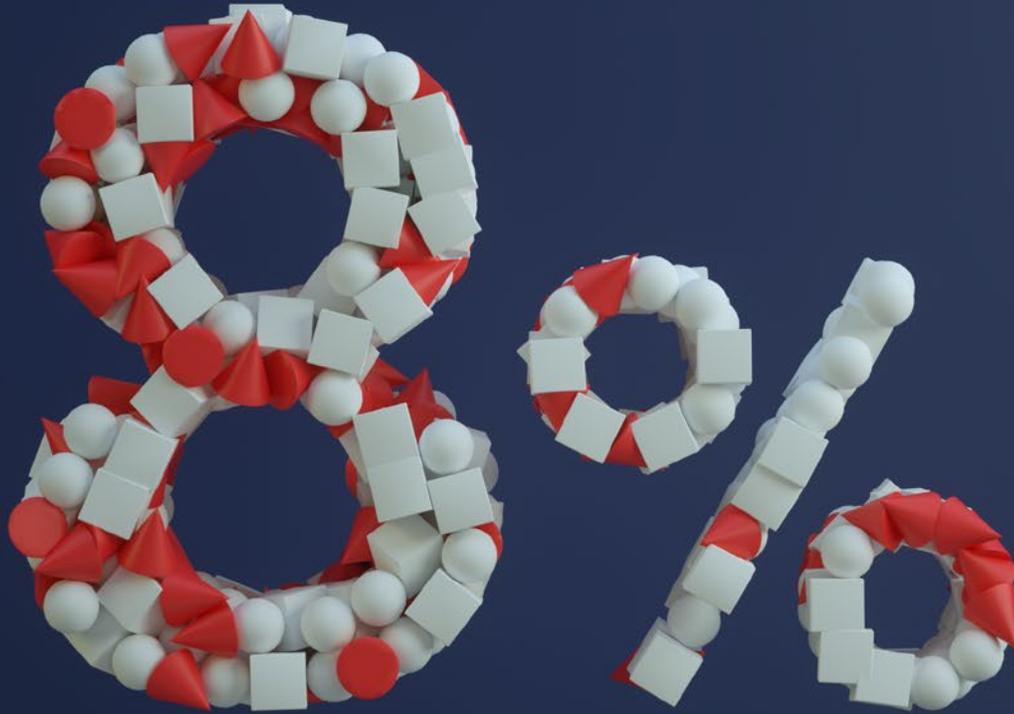


LIPPINCOTT
Sense Perspective

Discover power in purpose

Whether that purpose urges teams to think boldly about brand growth, filters each decision your people make or drives real change through ambition, chief marketing officers agree: with purpose, we clarify direction, unite action and cater to customers in the most effective ways.

**Companies with
a strong purpose
outperform
those without *by***



The Lippincott Brand Study found this to be true annually in shareholder value creation. However, only companies that deliver on their purpose actually achieved such results, and this requires sincere commitment and a ton of hard work. Leaders must change the way they make decisions and empower their teams to innovate. Everyone must come together with a shared vision so the very core of the company's culture can evolve to champion the bigger mission.

Act on what you stand for

What's your brand's purpose? If the answer comes immediately, you may already know about the tremendous value your purpose creates. Yet, many companies — especially big, complex ones — struggle to find a rallying cry beyond near-term sales and category leadership. Asserting what you stand for, and becoming esteemed for it, is a journey that takes time to complete. (Unwanted brand perceptions can stick with a company for as long as a decade.) But you can take the first step by changing the conversation to what you contribute to the world and how you make your customers' lives better.

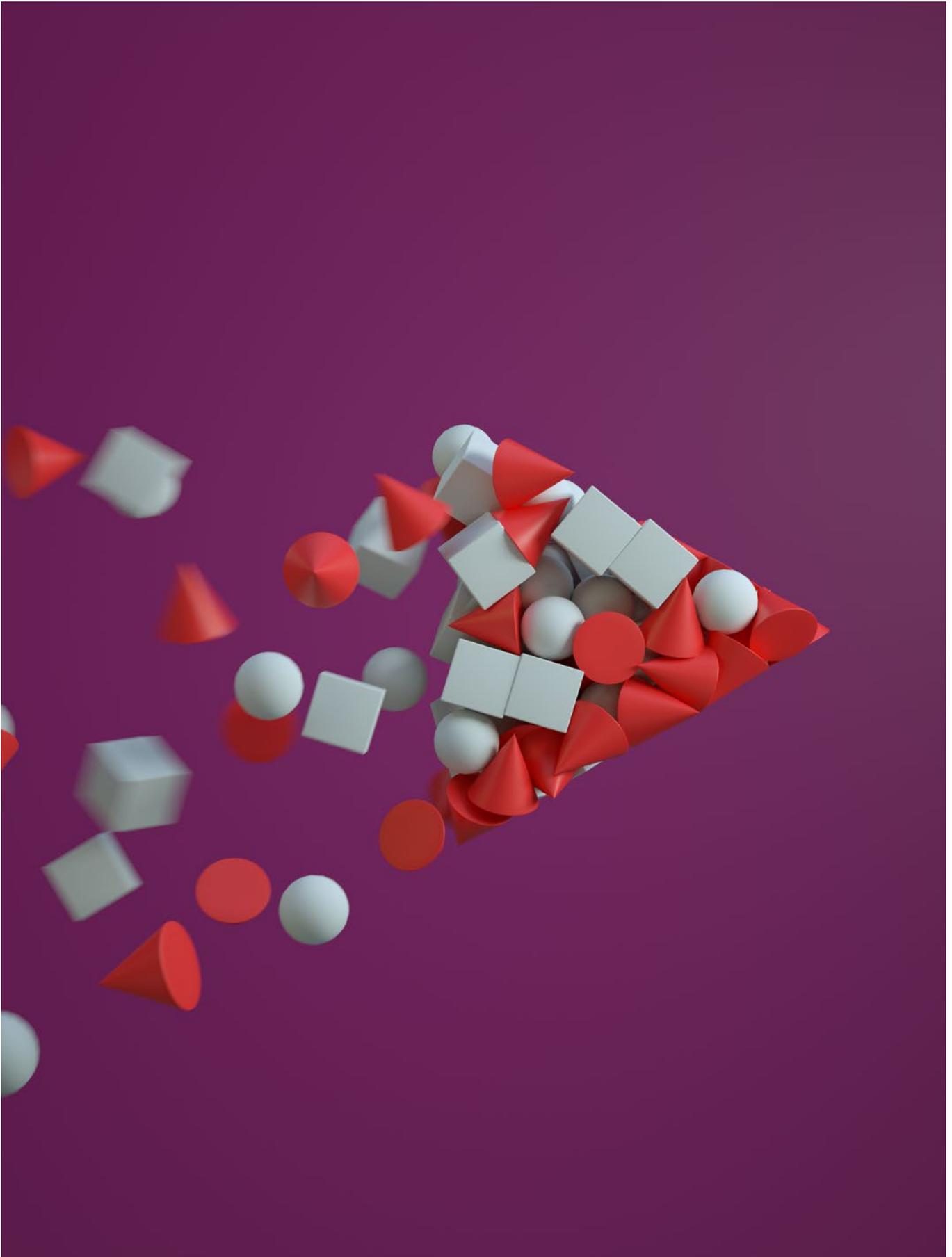
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Then comes the hard part. How do you get millions of customers and thousands of employees to notice, believe and get charged up about your purpose? How do you captivate an audience distracted by posts and pop-ups, texts and tweets, banners and blogs? How do you convince social-minded, media-savvy millennials you mean what you say? How do you turn skeptics into evangelists?

Enter the catalyst. Catalysts are the bold moves that energize your brand's purpose. They show, "This is what we're about as a company." Catalysts grab people's attention. They're buzzworthy and tweetable, and they accelerate the flywheel of change, beginning the virtuous cycle of belief that leads to action, which in turn inspires greater belief.

Catalysts can take many forms — from the brief spark that injects a bolt of electricity into the organization to the more permanent change that fuels ongoing action over a long period of time. Great catalysts refocus a company. They strip away distractions and home in on what matters most; they show leadership and vision; and, if implemented properly, the reverberations of a catalyst will be felt far outside the company. Catalysts can shake up an industry and put the competition on notice.

As examples, look to John Legere, chief executive officer at T-Mobile, who catalyzed the company when he defied convention and eliminated mobile phone contracts; he stood up to the telecom Goliaths, declaring his brand the "Uncarrier," and, best of all, he did it in a neon pink T-shirt and blue jeans. Howard Schultz, chief executive officer at Starbucks, closed thousands of stores for an afternoon to retrain baristas in "the art of brewing the perfect cup of coffee." Elon Musk, chief executive officer of Tesla, gleefully relinquished patents to, well, anyone who wanted them. "The world would all benefit from a common, rapidly evolving technology platform," he said. These bold moves were indeed catalytic. Sure, they involved a bit of showmanship, but the best catalysts entertain as much as they energize. Sometimes arched eyebrows and dropped jaws are signs of positive customer perceptions taking shape and employee attitudes changing.



Qualities that makes a great catalyst

Make a brave move.

Put your stake in the ground.

Today's leaders who create catalysts to spark change aren't conjuring some form of modern magic. A tour through the last century reveals how symbolic action has reshaped even the most rigid organizations and changed the most intransigent minds.

An Indian lawyer voluntarily committing to a life of poverty changed the course of a nation. A politician exhorting the demolition of a wall dividing Berlin precipitated the decline of social oppression for millions. A seamstress refusing

to vacate her bus seat hastened a future of greater racial equality. And, not long ago, a pope washed a Muslim woman's feet, chose a modest residence over the Papal palace, and eschewed the customary limousine for his own 1984 Renault. These bold actions became larger than life because of their deeply symbolic power. Admittedly, it's a stretch to compare our daily jobs as marketers to the iconic work of Gandhi and Pope Francis, but if we're serious about our purpose, we can learn from these lessons. If we create meaningful symbols — big enough so there's no turning back — we too can inspire belief and accelerate action.

1

It reflects your purpose

A catalyst must embody your beliefs, your goals, your vision and your values. It is genuine, principled, straightforward and sincere. A catalyst is only as powerful as it is authentic.

2

It shatters expectations

A catalyst is creative and surprising. The "Closed" sign posted on the doors of more than 7,000 Starbucks stores, so baristas could take the time to hone the craft of brewing espresso, was a tweetable moment. People noticed because it broke the rules. Coffee shops are supposed to stay open for the afternoon rush. Telecom execs are supposed to wear suits, not pink T-shirts. Think about what assumptions may inadvertently define you. Then, see if your purpose inspires you to write your own rules.

A catalyst isn't a clever stunt or a crafty ploy — it's a commitment. It's a declaration of your company's place in the world. An effective catalyst embodies these five qualities:



3

It says you get it

A catalyst strikes an emotional chord, it shows empathy and an understanding of the surrounding world. Dove’s “Real Beauty” campaign addressed an important issue with candor and vulnerability. Use catalysts to connect with customers and employees in new ways, and to show you’re in tune with what matters to them.

4

It shows you’re serious

A catalyst is proof of your commitment. Southwest Airlines didn’t spend millions of dollars painting hearts on its planes only to downplay its reputation as the compassionate airline. Use catalysts to mark a point of no return.

5

It takes courage

A catalyst is for the brave. That’s because it requires putting a stake in the ground — and then tying a giant flag to that stake for the entire world to see. Bold moves may cause discomfort, but that only means they’re working.

Find your catalyst in unexpected places

Catalysts come in countless shapes and sizes. There's no formula. So when searching for a great catalyst, start by probing into your company's intent, asking, "How would our brand like the world to be?" Go big when thinking about what you believe and how you want to answer that question. Then, get specific.

How can you show genuine commitment, in a tangible way that breaks through and creates an emotional connection? What could you do to magnify your purpose? You'll need deep insight about the symbols that will be truly meaningful to customers and employees.

Inspiration lives everywhere, even in some rather unexpected places. Here are some places to look:

How would your brand like the world to be?

Look at your brand's expression.

Words, images and symbols still move mountains. Unforgettable anthemic ads like Apple's "1984" and Chrysler's "Imported from Detroit" heralded assertive proclamations you'd be foolish need deep insight about the symbols that will be truly meaningful to customers and employees. Inspiration lives everywhere, even in some rather unexpected places. Here are some places to look: Look at your brand's expression. Words, images

and symbols still move mountains. Unforgettable anthemic ads like Apple's "1984" and Chrysler's "Imported from Detroit" heralded assertive proclamations you'd be foolish to make if you weren't serious. These brazen ads were catalytic because they invoked the cultural Zeitgeist with a provocative point of view. Done right, a bold new identity is also a measure of commitment and courage. Walmart successfully delivered on its brand purpose by investing in a fully immersive transformation in 2008 — the logo, identity, store design, signage and advertising all aligned around one powerful idea: Save money, live better.

Southwest's recent makeover further proves the catalytic power of design. The airline believes that "without heart, it's just a machine," and so its bold new identity celebrates the heart-as-hero. From the belly of the planes to the threshold of the cabin door to the boarding pass you hold in your hand, the company's emblematic heart promises every passenger that they'll be cared for and it reminds every employee to bring their renowned warmth and kindness to the job.

Design-inspired catalysts shouldn't be thought of as "brand recovery." Southwest and Starbucks were already beloved brands before their visual refreshes. The best brands are constantly injecting new and often surprising meaning into their expression. Catalysts born from your brand's expression can vividly amplify your purpose and proactively maintain your vitality; they become a permanent part of the experience and a constant reminder of what you stand for.

Look at your brand's experience.

If actions speak louder than words, your brand experience broadcasts volumes about what matters to you. Walmart knew this when it doubled down on its purpose with a remarkable offer — the \$4 prescription. Virgin America surrounded customers with its radical experience rethink, restyling its website and in-flight video to reflect its charmingly irreverent attitude. Bank of America discovered a new way to deliver value through an innovative partnership with the Khan Academy, bringing surprisingly simple financial education to the world, for free. Faced with mounting regulatory pressure and heightened public concern, McDonald's championed an emerging social issue and led the fast-food industry with increased transparency into nutrition and ingredients. We don't always need to develop catalysts from scratch. As marketers, we can shine a light on something we're already doing that embodies our brand's purpose. CVS Caremark knew it couldn't credibly build a brand around health and sell cigarettes, so it walked away from a long-standing moneymaker. This was a bold move, made catalytic by the fearless marketing that promoted the change. An important, new strategic decision may actually be a catalyst in disguise. Look for innovative ways to celebrate meaningful changes to your experience.

Look inside.

An untapped catalyst may already reside within your company's four walls. After all, it takes highly engaged, committed people to deliver on a purpose.

Unilever catalyzed employees by uniting behind a big, public pledge to halve the company's environmental impact while doubling sales. United Technologies widely promotes its massive investment in providing access to higher education for every one of its employees.

These are audacious commitments, but even something small can carry real symbolic weight. The Daimler Group touts the importance of work-life balance by automatically deleting emails sent to employees on vacation. Marissa Mayer gave every Yahoo! employee a smartphone to signal renewed commitment to leadership in mobile.

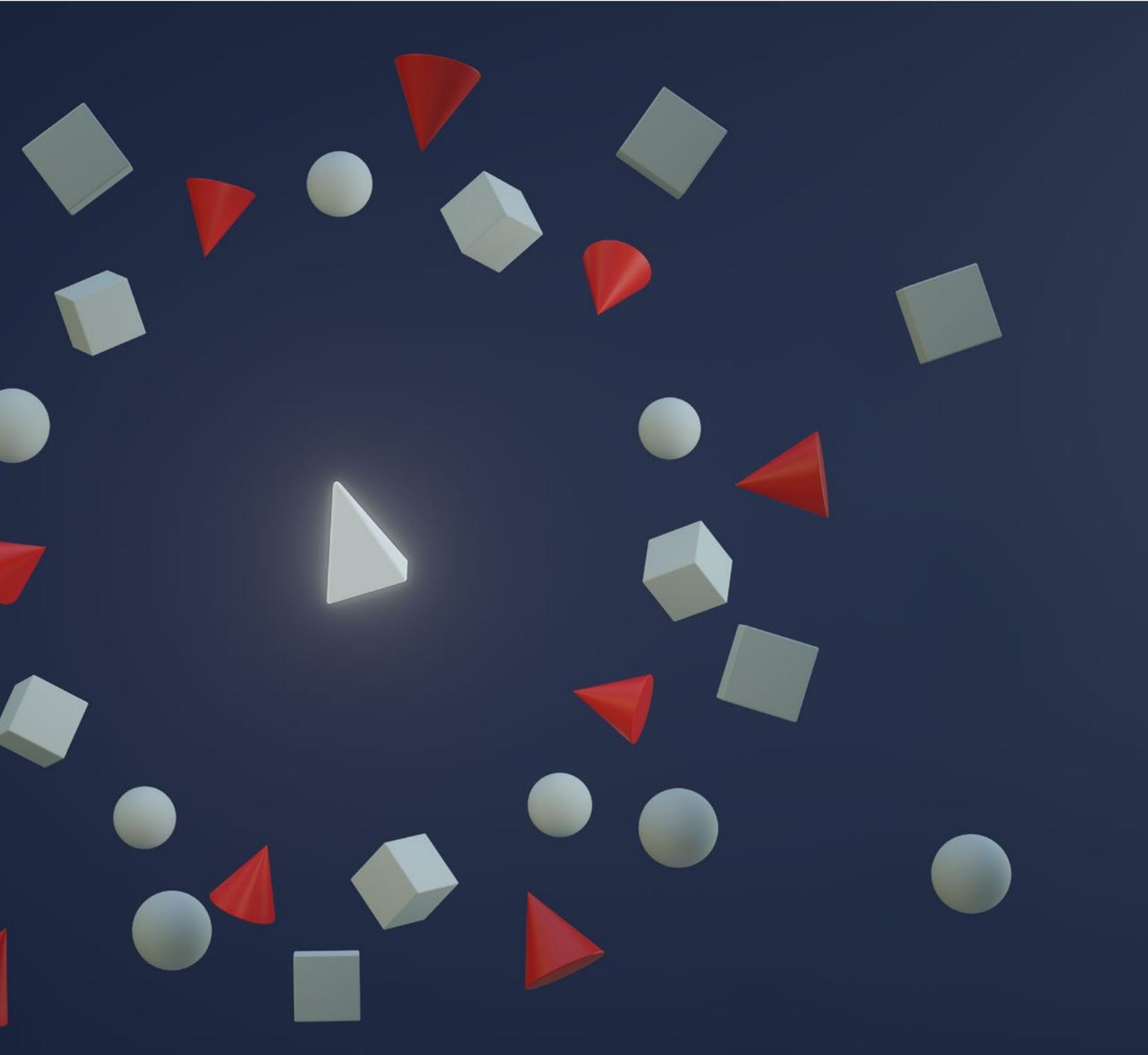
The most powerful catalysts have an effect inside and outside the building. They unite the team around the purpose and display that unity to the world with a single, unambiguous gesture.

Lead with marketing

It's marketers who will deliver your creative insights, energy and “wow” factor.

Inspiring a company to define and deliver its purpose requires the entire leadership team working as one. Granted, many symbolic actions are appropriately viewed as the province of business leadership, the CEO or HR, but marketing is uniquely positioned to lead the charge. By trade, marketers are skilled at the art of winning over hearts and minds, forging emotional connections, building buzz around something new and motivating action. When it comes to deep insight, creative energy and wow-factor, marketers carry the day. Great catalysts require the full force and imagination of a committed marketing team. True brand leadership involves committing to a bigger purpose, one that amplifies the value you bring to your customers and employees. And that's hard work, especially in a world where every move is scrutinized. But catalysts get you going. They don't have to be monumental changes; they are authentic, surprising and meaningful acts that tell your story and propel you forward.





THE MOST POWERFUL CATALYSTS ...

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building. They unite
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Questions to spark a conversation with your team

**How can we symbolize our purpose in
such a clear and committed way that it
will break through?**

**What's the strongest and most irrefutable
demonstration we can make to show
we're serious about our purpose?**

**If we were to do one thing that would get the
attention and capture the hearts of
our employees, what would it be? What do
they think we don't understand, and what
could we do to show them we get it?**

**If we stopped doing one thing that is
getting in the way of living our purpose, what
would that be?**

**Where can we give up control and
let our customers decide?**

**What individual moments will create
energy in our team, thus spurring
dozens of follow-on moments?**

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