

# Introduction

## *Movement Thinking: How to lead a revolution at work*

We started writing this book just as COVID-19 descended on New York City. We sat on the 48th floor of the Empire State Building in early 2020 and mapped out what we felt was an important advancement in helping leaders create a competitive advantage. On that day, we coined the idea of Movement Thinking™. Just as Design Thinking gave designers a human-centric approach to creating things, Movement Thinking is a human-centric approach to changing things in a peer-to-peer world and the purpose economy. It uses the principles of societal movements to mobilize the people that matter to your brand inside and out. Many great entrepreneurs, as well as innovators in literature, art, music, science, engineering, and business, have practised it. The premise of Movement Thinking is that the processes that create great social movements can help us systematically apply a human-centred approach to solve problems in a creative and innovative way – in our lives, in our businesses, in our communities and countries.

As we brainstormed that day, we had no way of knowing just how relevant our work would become to purpose-driven companies. Because of the results of our Purpose Power Index – the world's first empirical measure of purpose-driven brands – we had unequivocal evidence that brands that activated their purpose inside and outside their organization fared better than those that did not. But the COVID-19 crisis made this even clearer. Companies that had a purpose and actualized it were avoiding panic, shifting into recovery, and thriving better than those that did not.

We introduced the marketing world to movements over 20 years ago with the launch of the Smart Car, developed and brought to the world by Swatch

and Mercedes Benz. Back then the Movement Marketing idea was ‘to reinvent the urban environment’. In those days the problems at the heart of cities, like unending traffic jams, automotive sprawl, lack of parking, pollution, rental car parking lots full of cars on weekends made no sense. In fact, it caused people to feel unhealthy both emotionally and physically. Our idea was to launch the new B-Segment automobile, not with ads talking about unique features and facilities of the car, but rather by positioning it as the mobility solution to the enemy of us all: *urban congestion*. This was a breakthrough. On a collective level, the stakes were high. We knew that we lived in complex times with complex thoughts and needs. We knew that we were having more complex conversations about the urban problems we all faced as a collective and that together we could overcome them. Together we could rethink old orthodoxies and create new solutions. The movement to reinvent the urban environment provided limitless connectivity to people and organizations with the same goal of righting a common wrong and fixing a common problem. In effect, we brought to bear what Josh Newman, a former client at Walmart, describes as ‘the power of people to push ideas into action’.

We continued to spark external marketing movements around the globe for brands ranging from Emirates Airline to Google, Jim Beam, LG in Korea, Pampers, Northwell Health, and the Government of Dubai (many of these cases were presented in Scott Goodson’s first bestselling book, *Uprising: How to build a brand and change the world by sparking cultural movements*, 2011). But over the years, we’ve come to realize that the principles of societal movements can solve even broader problems.

Today, we are applying Movement Thinking not just in marketing to grow brands, but to internal employee engagement, culture, and habit change, to organizational transformation, and leadership advisory for clients like Coca-Cola, LifeBridge Health, and Walmart. Based on our combined experience, and hundreds of movements behind us, we’ve learned a thing or two about defining purpose and making it sticky by activating it with Movement Thinking. We’ve expanded our company and today it lives at the intersection of creative, funky agencies with rebel attitude, and purpose experts, change management consultancies, and innovations companies.

This book is about how to think about purpose today, how to activate and actualize it with a movement inside your organization and outside among different stakeholders as a powerful transformative approach. Movement Thinking is designed for this new time, the time of Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat, to capitalize on our natural human desire to belong

to a bigger idea that galvanizes us to do something. In this book, we'll be illustrating several movements that will serve to inspire you to think bigger.

We are movement-makers and problem-solvers. Many of the ideas in this book formed over years of working through business problems and arguing the importance of purpose and designing a movement to activate that purpose, sometimes with leaders who didn't see the point. We can't help but ask a question: how can we simply do business transformation and more marketing/advertising when the world faces great problems? Thus, our purpose strategies and movements drive positive change around ESGs in a time when a greater number of consumers demand it, not to mention the CEO participants of the Business Roundtable.

One thing we've noticed about movement culture is that it can be contagious. When you spend time with others around an idea you feel passionate about, you invariably start to pay close attention to the things that matter in this new shared reality. In modern life, where our attention spans are briefer than a goldfish's, a movement helps you notice and engage with things and also avoid engaging with things. Movement is about how to render a reality for millions of people inside and outside your company. These aspects suggest to us that Movement Thinking is a revolutionary management change and marketing idea in revolutionary times.