

Why is now the right time for a new kind of Vision?

And what's Vision good for, anyway?



Inside every successful organisation, everyone knows the answer to two simple questions:

Who are we?

What do we stand for?

When the CEO has articulated this Vision clearly and aligned everyone with it, there are obvious benefits: the right products are developed, the right customers are attracted, the right people are hired.

There are other, subtler advantages as well:

- 1.** When everyone focuses their time on executing one Vision, the company moves faster and engages its customers more deeply. This makes it harder for competitors to challenge the relationship with their customers.
- 2.** Decision-making becomes more effective at the periphery of the company, leaving the CEO free to look over the horizon.
- 3.** Employees understand the 'why' for their work, and see themselves as valued contributors to the success they're creating.



Although the answers to those two questions need to be simple, finding the answers isn't.

People within an organisation tend to see things only from their point of view and may inadvertently favour their own business unit.

Today, the choice of external advisor is changing.

The best of the big management consultancy firms (Deloitte Consulting, PwC, EY Advisory Services and KPMG Advisory) have an excellent understanding of an organisation's operations – so they define a Vision based on current *operational* capabilities.

Strategy Consultants (McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group and Bain) are highly valued for the intensity of their scrutiny, though they are not trained in the creativity required to produce something that's widely inspirational.

Sales-orientated CMOs often look to Creative Agencies to define their Vision. At their best, a great agency will do something that no one else can - give your product charisma. (Though some might say these leaps of imagination often fail to produce profound organisational change.)

The newest group of advisors are the Brand Strategy Consultancies like Prophet, Saffron (and us, [Verbal Identity](#)). They are increasingly being given the role of defining a Vision because they have been specifically built to combine the rigour of the consultants with the creativity of the agencies.

It's this combination of skills that's needed in today's radically complex and unpredictable modern world, where traditional strategy – 'set and forget' – no longer works.

Now is the time for a new kind of Vision.

At Verbal Identity, we see today's CEO facing 4 major challenges:

- 1.** The correlation between market share and profitability may now be almost non-existent in some sectors.
- 2.** Competitors are entering markets at record speed: it's impossible to know who your competitors will be in 3 years' time.
- 3.** Managers are overwhelmed with information and find it difficult to identify the valuable signals amid the distracting noise.
- 4.** There is intense competition to attract and retain the best talent.

Responding to the market or responding to your competitors is no longer viable and your customers are a moving target. Instead, at Verbal Identity we believe that the guiding Vision needs to come not from the market, but from 'the inside out'.

In this 'inside out' method, the CEO's Vision – who are we, what do we stand for – is clarified by looking at those truly unique parts of their company's DNA which will allow the brand to engage customers, spark innovation, inspire people and build growth.

We have developed our own proven methodology to help CEOs create this 'Vision from within' so that it's true and executable. We build it so that it looks beyond the obvious and does it in a way that aligns and inspires everyone in the company. This has resulted in the successful investment of more than £600m and it has helped our clients to build long-lasting, ongoing transformational change.

And that, we believe, is the ultimate value of a defining Vision.

To find out more about our methodology, [email Chris, our Senior Partner](#).

What's in a successful modern Vision?

A successful Vision guides and inspires the whole organisation. It is a simple (but evocative) statement which captures the unique capabilities of the organisation and defines its long-term direction. It should have:

1. Flexibility

In a rapidly changing world, your Vision has to avoid being dogmatic on the "How?" and instead allow room for people to find their own way to the ultimate destination.

2. Creativity

A Vision should inspire people. They need to remember it next Monday, and in 3 years. Express your Vision with humanity and imagination and it will guide and inspire them.

3. Certainty

Knowing your company's core beliefs and values is crucial. This is about understanding what unique promise your company can deliver, so your employees can strive for it.



Verbal Identity is a strategic consultancy specialising in helping the CEOs of luxury brands define their Vision and align their company with it.