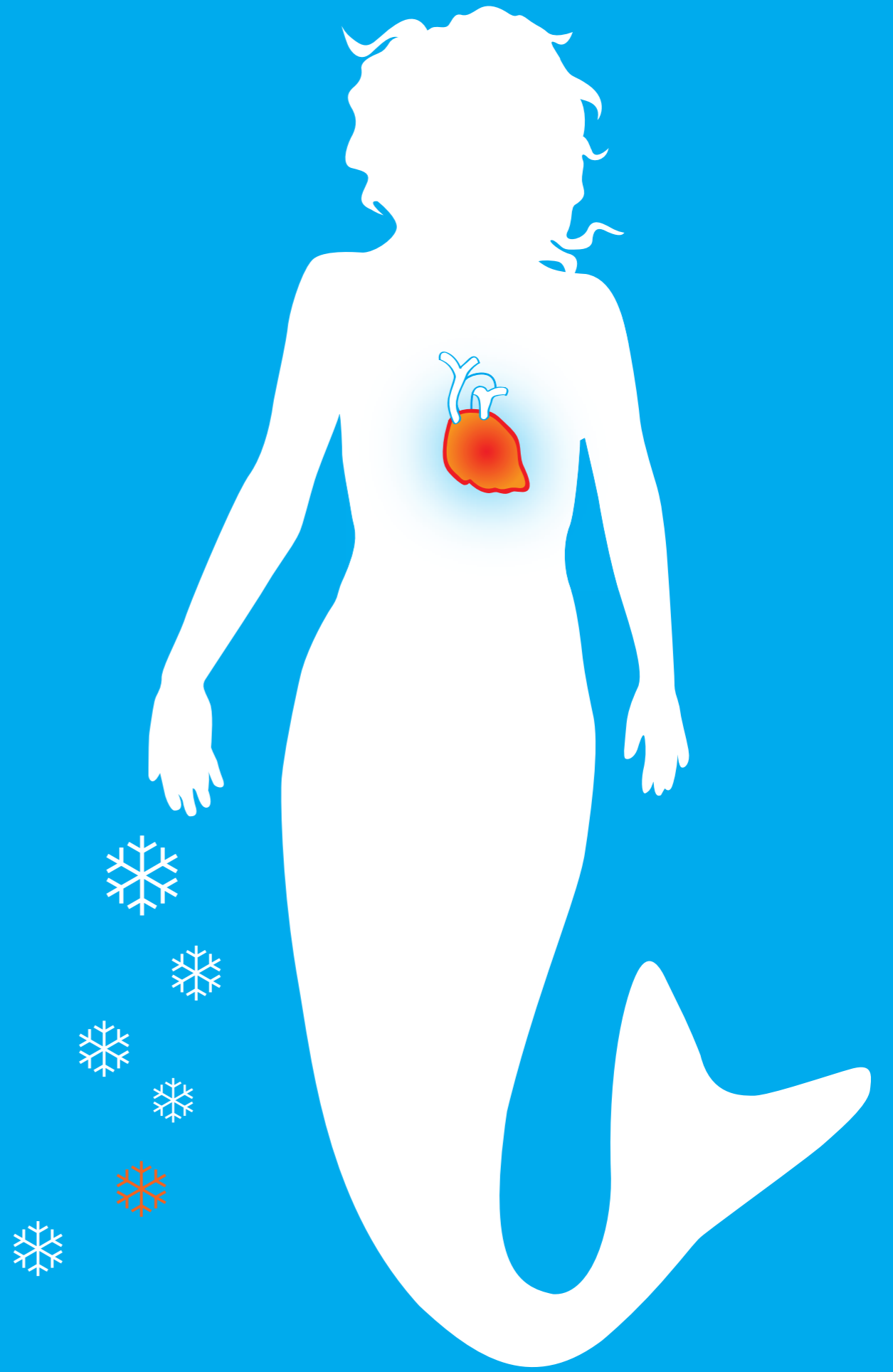
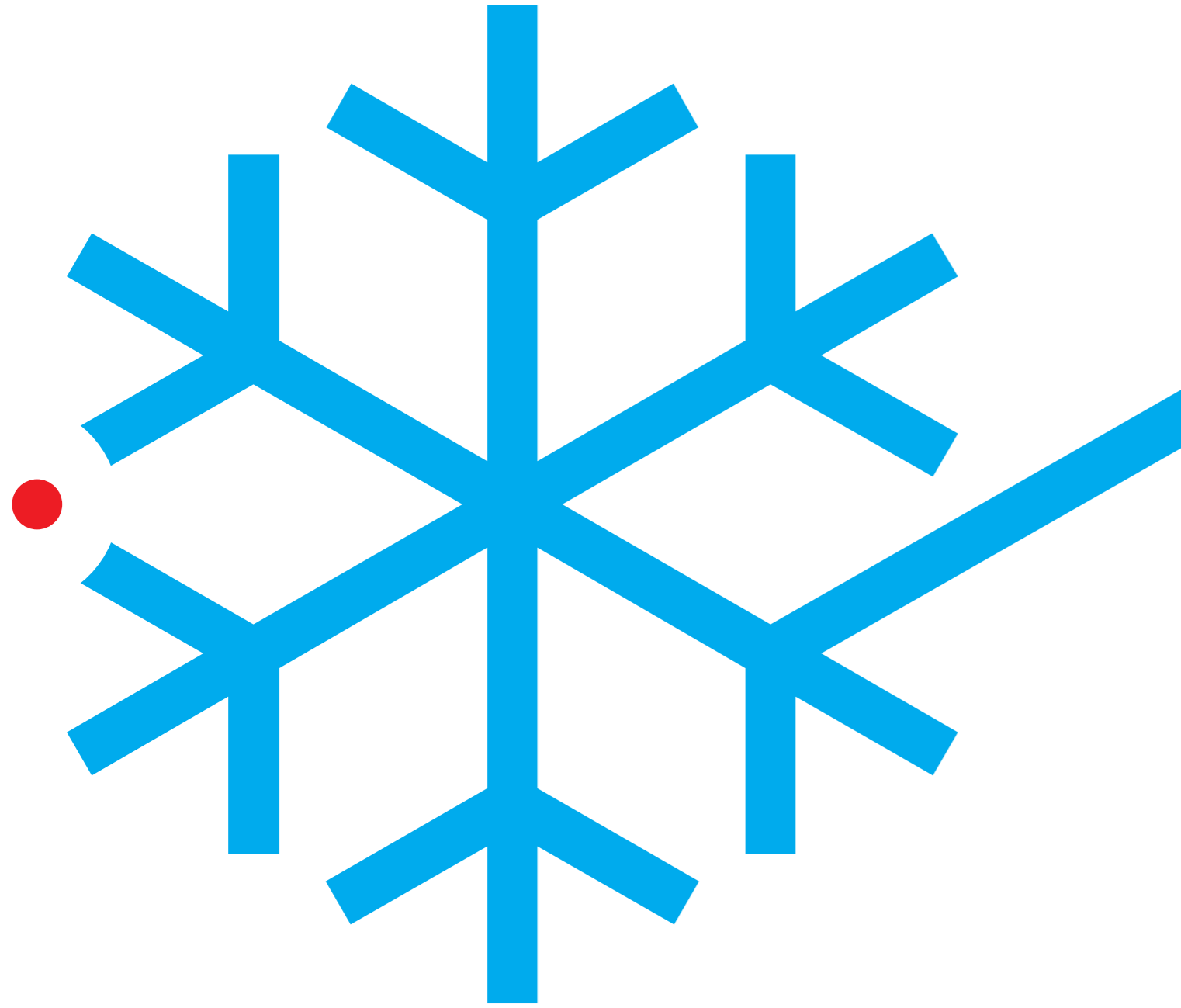


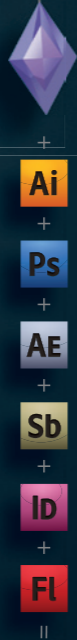
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volume 02 / issue 01







Wait less. Create more.

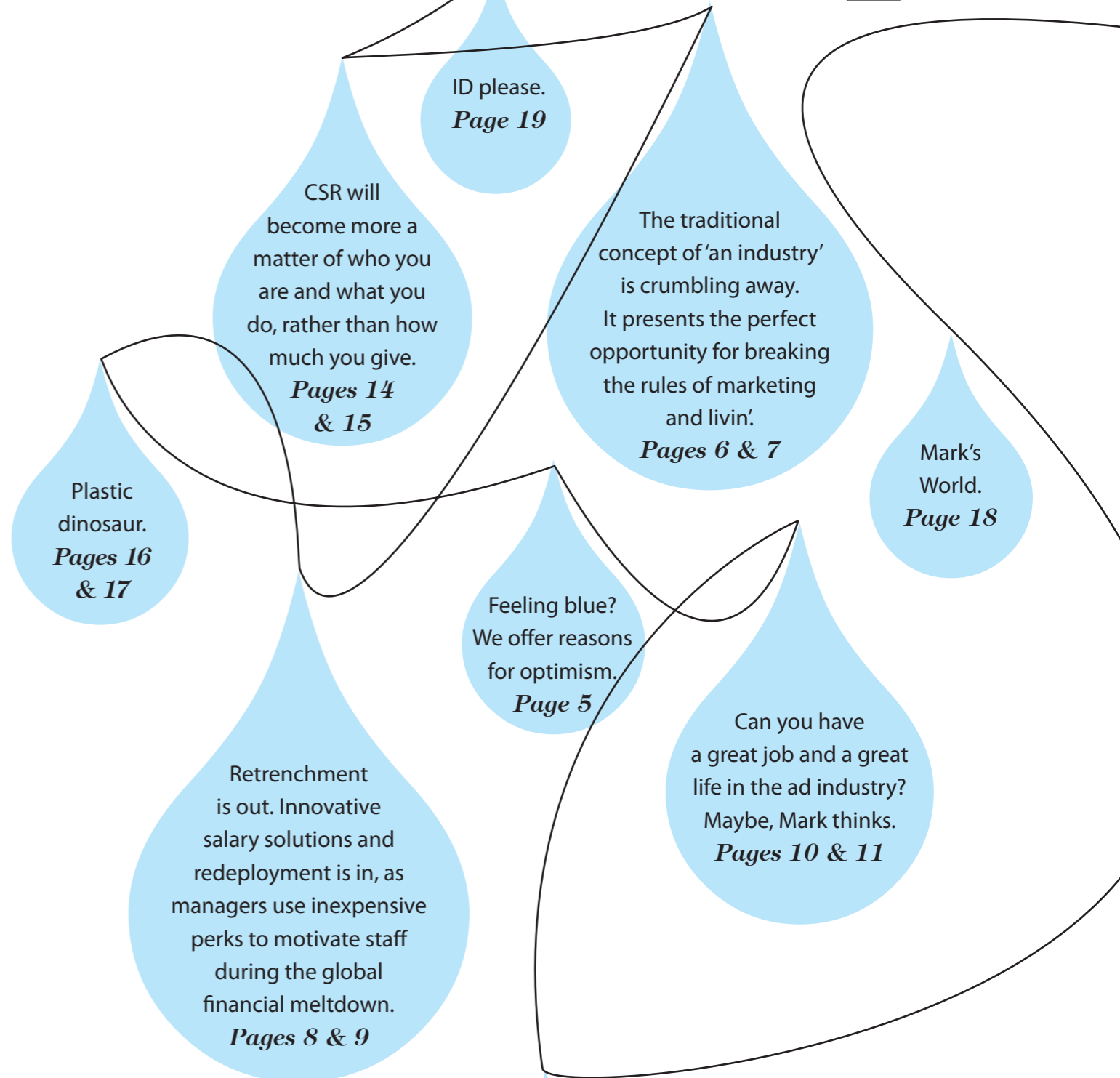
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# mark's map 1





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## listen here ¶

Feeling blue? You're not the only one. Research by comScore Marketer clearly illustrates where most of our minds are by relating growth in search terms to the current economic downturn. ¶

- "Coupons" searches up 161%
- "Unemployment" searches up 206%
- "Discount" searches up 26%
- "Mortgage" searches up 72%
- "Bankruptcy" searches up 156%
- "Foreclosure" searches up 67%
- "Unemployment benefits" searches up 247%

The economic crisis is gripping all industries and the publishing and advertising communities are seeing retrenchments and closures. It's a hard time. It is also time for change. Y&R's Executive Planning Director Simon Silvester describes recessions as brooms that brush out the old and make space in the world for new ideas. It was time, wouldn't you say? How long were we going to cling onto the greedy "let's develop every plot of green we see", plastic-everything 90s anyhow? ¶

Uncertainty is part of every recession. We don't know when it will end: we do know we must all find a way of surviving it. Does your boss know retrenchment is out? Innovative salary solutions and redeployment is in, as managers use inexpensive perks to motivate and keep staff during meltdown: just point him or her to pages 8 & 9. And the traditional concept of 'an industry' is crumbling away – the perfect opportunity for breaking the rules of marketing and livin' (page 6 & 7). Maybe the crisis reminds you that life is not balanced if it means only work (pages 10 & 11). Even giving is changing, from how much to who you are and what you do (pages 14 & 15). ¶

*It's good to see good come from bad times. It helps chase the blues away.* ¶

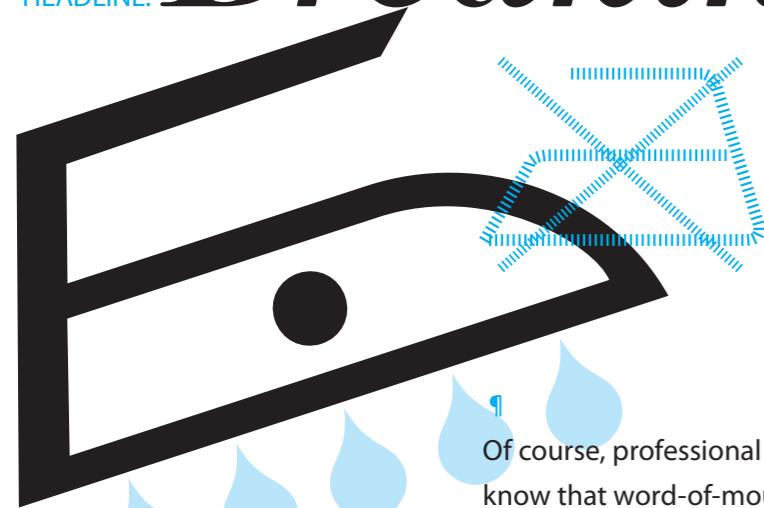
*Herman Manson – Editor* ¶





HEADLINE:

# Breaking rules & livin'



LINKED TEXT:

I often have people come up to me, people who have successful businesses, who say: "I'm really good at what I do, but I'm bad at marketing."

To which I often reply: "How do your customers feel about you? How do new customers get to hear about your business most of the time?" Then these people – the down-to-earth, short-sleeved, checked-shirt tucked into jeans, not-stylish-but-practical type – usually respond: "They're happy, but word-of-mouth seems to be the main way we get customers."

Of course, professional marketers know that word-of-mouth promotion is not easy to pull off, and you generally need to be doing something remarkable if people are going to be making, well, remarks about your business.

The point is these checked-shirt chaps wouldn't be doing as well as they are if their marketing weren't up to scratch. They wouldn't have relevant products or services and their innovations would be out of touch with what people need or want. Marketing is fundamental to what a business does, and whether you have a marketing department or not – if you're kicking ass and people are paying you for it, then you're marketing.

Let's take a step back though, and just clarify what I mean by "marketing". In the most fundamental sense of the word, "marketing" is making sure that people will buy whatever it is that you produce – ensuring that there's a market for it. It doesn't require a department in order for it to happen. In fact, it gets better when it's more of a mindset than a job title.

If you went to marketing school, you probably would have been taught about the 4 Ps of the Marketing Mix: Product, Price, Place and Promotion. All are fundamentally important, especially, as the Dalai Lama once pointed out: "You have to know the rules in order to break them properly".

What I find interesting is that marketing tends to be more effective the less conventional it is.

I'm not talking about advertising here, but marketing as a whole – the Mix, if you will. Its champions are those mavericks who break the rules, don't follow the established order of things, and make decisions based on original insights about their customers, rather than broadly acceptable "best practices" for their industry.

The fact that benchmarking is becoming less relevant is perhaps indicative of the fact that our traditional concept of "an industry" is crumbling. It is becoming difficult to pigeonhole the best performing new businesses into an "industry" and still understand them properly. For example, is Google in the "internet industry", the "media industry" or the "search industry"? Depending on how you look at it, each has different norms, benchmarks and best practices. In fact, as with most market leaders, it's in a category of its own and defines its own industry.

So, a blueprint, which I base on the principles of Evidence Based Management:

- # Face the hard facts, and build a culture in which people are encouraged to tell the truth, even if it is unpleasant.**
- # Be committed to getting the best evidence about and from your customers and use it to guide actions.**
- # Look for the risks and drawbacks in what experts recommend – most medicines have side-effects.**
- # Avoid basing decisions on uncritical "benchmarking" of what winners do.**
- # Treat your organisation as an unfinished prototype. Learn by doing.**

Is Aston Martin in the business of creating vehicles to get people from point A to point B, or are they in the dream fulfillment business? Furthermore, with a product or experience of that level of exclusivity, I'd venture to say their customers are not just those who buy their cars, but those who buy their vision too.

One of the truest things I've heard recently is that because of the cornucopia of new products and services we all have access to, we're moving from an era of finding customers for our products to an era of finding products for our customers.

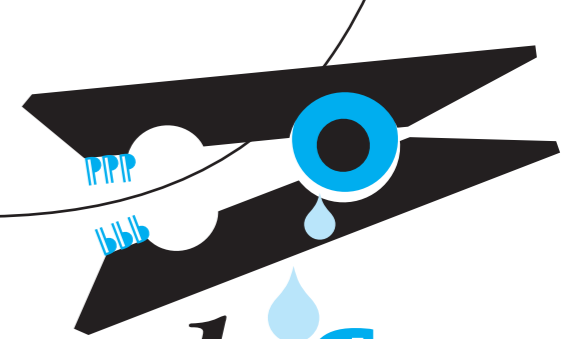
Often, breaking the rules is the only way to ensure that you aren't engulfed in the brutal competition of statically defined market categories. So, know the marketing rules, but more importantly: be prepared to rewrite them for your particular context.

AUTHOR:

Dave Duarte is an internet and mobile marketing consultant for HuddleMind Labs. You can catch him on Twitter at: [www.twitter.com/DaveDuarte](http://www.twitter.com/DaveDuarte)



# *Kill fear. Build agency brands*



LINKED TEXT:

“Am I going to be retrenched?” That’s the first question that runs through an employee’s mind in an economic down-turn.

Thanks to capitalism that gave us the sub-prime crisis and a full blown recession, the memory of Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, lingers: Neutron Jack decimated workforces, reduced pay rolls and cut 10% of management each year.

Loss of provision is a primal fear that strikes deep and is counter-productive to increasing revenues and innovation, the two things most needed when money is tight.

Good to see, then, that times are changing and the “Welch way” is out. New research from the Chartered Management Institute in the UK shows that lessons were learned from the 1991 recession and the trend now is to redeploy rather than retrench. Staff redeployment levels have doubled in the past year, as employers try to find an alternative to redundancy. Retaining competence is a far more cost-effective option than rebuilding a talented team from scratch.

In an effort to tackle retention difficulties and the drop in year-on-year earning power, companies are innovating and using inexpensive employee benefits to keep staff motivated. This includes increasing annual holiday entitlements, paying exam fees and covering book costs and looking at other incentives that can be offered to motivate staff without breaking the bank.

Gloria\* (name changed) is a 23-year-old brand executive who works for a Sandton-based marketing agency. She says that redeployment entrenches loyalty, because it shows good faith. “This would offer me more security and could mean new

challenges for me to sink my teeth into. I would have more respect for the company I work for if they did this. This shows my needs are being considered instead of just the bottom line. If I commit myself and my career to a company, I feel it needs to be a two-way street.”

When asked whether she would consider a pay cut or perks instead of a bonus, Gloria said: “I am studying part-time so would welcome a perk like extended paid leave or flexi-hours, which wouldn’t cost the company anything.”

Agency owners are also hiring more carefully and looking at more innovative ways to beat the recession. “We have been employing very carefully on a permanent basis due to the fact that we are aware of the recession globally and want to avoid retrenchment,” says Nicole Capper, Joint-Owner, Mango-OMC in Cape Town. By keeping a small team of permanent staff and using a stable of self-employed, external consultants they can be flexible, well resourced and avoid layoffs. “We would definitely look at restructuring salary packages before we retrench, and laying people off would be the last possible decision for us,” says Capper.

Retrenchment is also not an option for Giles Shepherd, Managing Director of brandalive® who says: “We will always look at all other options first. Previously when we needed to dramatically cut costs we convened a meeting with staff to lay the cards on the table and get their input. People got into the same boat to row out the storm. It’s a much better approach to the brutality that is retrenchment and entrenches a positive sense of loyalty to the brand. Staff appreciate that the brand has real humanity to it and it is not just an inanimate object chopping off heads to make the numbers work.”

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# Unbalancing the ad industry



LINKED TEXT: ¶

Advertising is pretty dumb for an industry that thrives on the creativity and diversity of lots of smart people, particularly when it comes to nurturing its own. Just mention “work/life balance”, a term which describes a balance between an individual’s work and personal life, and many ad agency execs fall silent. Momentarily that is, until they stumble across a “sell” soon enough.¶

Is working in the ad industry or at marketing agencies an awful job? Not at all. But few are playing it smart when it comes to the well-being of their employees even though the benefits of healthy living is well documented and work/life balance is far from being a new idea.¶



Tracy\*(name changed), a young creative in Cape Town, worked in advertising for three years. At her first agency, life consisted of working overtime followed by drinks with colleagues at the bar. Taking lunch breaks was frowned upon, and if she left the building at 5.30pm she was accused of working half-days. “I burnt myself out, had a nervous breakdown and ended up in a clinic for two months,” she says. Her new employer, Ogilvy Cape Town, is an altogether different experience says Tracy, and she feels looked after. ¶



Mark Deuze, author of Media Work, argues in an interview with website Influx Insight, “The problem is that media workers are a special breed of people – they tend to be more interested in getting their own creative voice across and receiving peer acknowledgement than securing benefits or a steady pay check. That makes them more vulnerable to exploitation (of labour), and the consolidation of agencies certainly can be understood in this context.”¶

What he is saying is that you are now working harder for less reward than ever. That means more stress and less time for family. It can’t be healthy.¶



While few agencies have formalised work/life balance policies, there is innovation in this sector. Y&R, for example, closes the agency at 2.30pm every Friday afternoon and invite speakers, artists and businesspeople in to teach staff (note: not just creatives) and keep the agency on the cutting edge of communication.¶

According to Mediaedge:cia’s Chief Talent Officer in the US, Laura Agostini, her company is establishing policies to support employees during the current economic crisis by offering access to a 24-hour Employee Support Programme that covers support on everything from mental health



to elder care to tax advice. It has also implemented a flexi-time policy, a concierge service to collect dry cleaning, pet care through discounted dog walkers and much more. “Finding the right work/life balance is not just an employee issue, but an employer one too,” says Agostini.¶

Vladimir Jones, the oldest agency in Colorado, has gone as far as adopting its positioning to “An agency of exciting minds”. Company president Meredith Vaughan says work/life balance is “not just a way to prevent burnout in our often intense industry, but rather a way to truly foster creativity and innovation”. The firm allows employees time off



for outside interests, whether it is training for a marathon or playing in a bluegrass band. ¶

The secret, as Vladimir Jones and a selection of other agencies have discovered, is that it’s often the interesting things people do outside the office that fuels the interesting things they do inside. ¶

AUTHOR:

Herman Manson is the editor of Mark and blogs at marklives.com





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# How the crisis changed giving



LINKED TEXT:

“How do we create a way of living together on the planet that actually has a future, because the one we have right now doesn’t really have much of a future? How do we create a truly regenerative economy that, like other living systems, creates further conditions for life?”



If questions are more important than answers, then those that Peter Senge asks are the questions for our time. The top scientist and director of the Center for Organizational Learning at the MIT Sloan School of Management recently authored the best selling *Necessary Revolution*, a book that looks at the woes facing us and what must be done to create a more sustainable world.



This new management thinking is a remarkable departure from Nobel economist Milton Friedman who in his famed article *The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Profits* stated that all business needed to do was to avoid corruption and to make a profit.



It is this “money before all else” mantra that has inspired a century of greed in modern capitalism which hopefully will now expire with the current recession. What is certain is that the world will not tolerate another century (or less) of the kind of greed that has brought wide-scale poverty, environmental degradation and a consumption-based world.



The talk is no longer how to give, but how to change. In the face of this, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is no longer an off-shoot of a brand, but it must become the brand defining a new conscious capitalism that will rebuild the world rather than destroying it.



For the most part CSR has been the means of easing corporate guilt while greed, consumption and reckless business has continued unabated. That in itself has been part of the problem. It is not that business must do good; rather that business should be good: to contribute, uplift and develop the environments and communities it operates in as part of its daily operations. The change in focus here is a shift in CSR from being an adjunct to being the brand lens through which business is built.



This thinking is eloquently expressed by Tex Gunning, former president of Unilever Bestfoods Asia, who when asked whether big business could change the world, said: “I don’t want to live a life creating an illusion of meaningfulness while deep in my heart I know that every five seconds there is a child dying.

None of us can pretend anymore. We cannot.”



AUTHOR:

Mandy de Waal (mandyldewaal@gmail.com) is a columnist, freelance journalist and writer for hire. Read her blog: <http://mdw.typepad.com/>



STRAP: s'hot



LINKED TEXT: ¶

*This ambient in store piece for Pick 'n Pay by agency Y&R was aimed at encouraging customers to stop using plastic bags and switch to reusable long life green bags. People took their kids to go see the plastic bag dinosaur.*

**Creatives:**

*Clinton Bridgeford,  
Stuart Mc Creadie  
and Kevin Portellas*



LINKED TEXT: ¶

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STRAP: *the end*



LINKED TEXT: ¶

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