

FRAMEWORK PAPER

# THE REGENERATIVE MARKETING COMPASS

*An Integrative Framework for Regenerative Leadership and Marketing*

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## ABSTRACT

The Regenerative Marketing Compass introduces an integrative framework for organisations seeking to align leadership, marketing and long-term value creation around the principles of regeneration.

As artificial intelligence transforms the economics of communication and makes content increasingly abundant, trust has become one of the scarcest and most valuable assets an organisation can create. Traditional marketing models, built around attention, persuasion and short-term performance, are proving insufficient in a world where stakeholders increasingly expect businesses to create value not only for shareholders, but also for society and the living systems upon which all economic activity depends.

Rather than presenting regeneration as another sustainability initiative, this paper positions regeneration as the organising principle through which organisations strengthen nature, people, culture and trust while creating enduring commercial value.

At the heart of the framework is The Regenerative Marketing Compass—a practical model that helps leaders navigate complexity by integrating regenerative leadership with regenerative marketing. The framework proposes that marketing should no longer be viewed merely as a function for communicating value, but as a discipline capable of shaping healthier relationships between organisations, communities, economies and ecosystems.



*Ultimately, this paper argues that regenerative marketing is not a new marketing strategy. It is the visible expression of regenerative leadership.*

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## KEYWORDS

Regenerative Leadership · Regenerative Marketing · Trust · Artificial Intelligence · Sustainability · Systems Thinking · Purpose · Brand · Culture · Stakeholder Value · Living Systems · Organisational Transformation

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A MANIFESTO

# MARKETING HAS ALWAYS SHAPED THE FUTURE.

For more than a century, marketing has done far more than sell products. It has shaped economies, aspirations, cultures, and how societies consume, what they value, and how they define progress. Marketing has never been a neutral business function. It has always been one of the most powerful forces influencing human behaviour.

*Today, that influence carries a new responsibility.*

We are entering an era in which the challenges facing organisations can no longer be understood in isolation. Climate change, biodiversity loss, declining trust in institutions, social fragmentation, technological disruption and accelerating artificial intelligence are not separate problems. They are interconnected symptoms of systems under increasing pressure.

Yet many organisations continue to address them independently — one strategy for sustainability, culture, customer experience, ESG, brand, innovation. The result is often complexity without coherence.

The future demands something different. It demands organisations capable of seeing relationships rather than silos. It demands leadership that understands long-term value cannot be created by extracting more from the systems upon which business depends, but by strengthening those systems.

Marketing has a critical role to play in this transition. Not because marketing alone can change organisations. But because marketing influences how organisations create value, how they build relationships, how they earn trust

and how they shape the narratives that define society itself.

The purpose of marketing can no longer be limited to generating demand. Its purpose must expand to generating conditions in which people, organisations, communities and natural systems can flourish together.

This is the essence of regenerative thinking. Regeneration is not simply about reducing harm. It is about contributing more than we take, and leaving relationships stronger than we found them. It is about recognising that enduring commercial success depends upon the health of the living systems that surround every organisation. Nature. People. Culture. Trust.

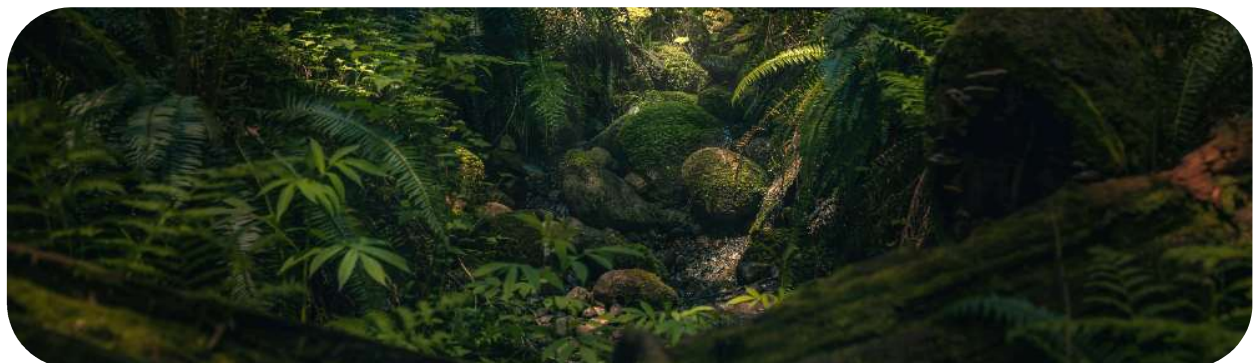
These are not external stakeholders to be managed. They are the foundations upon which every successful organisation ultimately depends.

This paper introduces The Regenerative Marketing Compass as a framework for navigating this new reality. It is not another sustainability model. It is not another marketing methodology. It is an invitation to rethink the role of leadership and marketing in creating enduring value.

*The question is no longer whether marketing shapes the future. It always has.  
The question is: what future will it choose to create?*

## PART 1

# WHY MARKETING NEEDS A NEW COMPASS



Marketing has always evolved in response to profound shifts in society. The Industrial Revolution gave rise to mass production and mass advertising. The digital revolution transformed communication into a measurable, data-driven discipline. Social media empowered consumers to become creators, critics and communities rather than passive audiences.

Today, marketing stands at the beginning of another transformation—one that is likely to be even more significant than the digital revolution itself.

Artificial intelligence is fundamentally changing the economics of communication. Content that once required specialised skills, substantial budgets and weeks of production can now be generated within minutes. Images, video, copy, strategy documents and entire campaigns are becoming increasingly abundant and accessible.

The implications extend far beyond marketing efficiency. As the cost of producing content approaches zero, content itself becomes less valuable as a source of competitive advantage. Organisations can no longer expect to differentiate simply by producing more communication or communicating more frequently. When every organisation can publish unlimited amounts of high-quality content, information becomes abundant while attention becomes fragmented. The competitive landscape changes accordingly.

For decades, marketing has largely competed for attention. Success has often been measured by reach, impressions, engagement, click-through rates and conversion. These metrics remain somewhat important, but they are increasingly measuring activity rather than enduring value.

*In a world of information abundance, attention is fleeting. Trust is scarce.*

This represents one of the most significant shifts in the history of marketing. Unlike attention, trust cannot be purchased through advertising or generated by algorithms. It develops over time through consistent behaviour, transparent

decision-making and meaningful relationships. It reflects not what organisations say about themselves, but how their actions are experienced by customers, employees, partners, investors and society.

Marketing therefore faces a challenge that is fundamentally different from those of previous decades. The question is no longer simply how organisations can communicate more effectively. The more important question is whether the organisation itself is worthy of trust. Increasingly, this is the question that stakeholders are asking.

Consumers seek authenticity rather than polished messaging. Employees choose workplaces whose values align with their own. Investors are paying closer attention to long-term resilience alongside short-term financial performance. Regulators demand greater transparency, while communities increasingly expect businesses to contribute positively to the places in which they live and operate.

These expectations are not independent trends. They are expressions of a broader transformation in how society defines value.

For much of the twentieth century, business success was primarily measured through financial growth. Over recent decades this perspective has expanded to include environmental performance, social responsibility and governance. Sustainability has become an essential strategic priority for many organisations, encouraging businesses to reduce negative impacts and operate more efficiently within planetary boundaries. This has been an important and necessary step.

Yet sustainability alone may no longer be sufficient for the challenges organisations now face. Reducing harm is essential, but reducing harm does not necessarily create healthier communities, restore ecosystems or rebuild trust. An organisation may become more sustainable while the systems around it continue to deteriorate.

This insight represents a profound shift in strategic thinking. Instead of asking, “How can we minimise our negative impact?” organisations are increasingly beginning to ask, “How can our presence actively strengthen the systems upon which our long-term success depends?”

This is the central question of regeneration. It invites leaders to move beyond optimisation towards contribution; beyond efficiency towards resilience; beyond short-term transactions towards long-term relationships.

For marketing, this shift is particularly significant. Marketing has never simply reflected society. It has helped shape it. Every campaign influences cultural narratives. Every brand shapes expectations. Every purchasing decision reinforces particular economic models. Marketing influences not only what people buy, but how they understand success, identity, aspiration and progress.

Recognising this influence changes the purpose of marketing itself. Rather than asking only how marketing can create value for the organisation, regenerative marketing asks how marketing can create value for the living systems that enable organisations to exist in the first place.

This requires a broader perspective than traditional marketing frameworks typically provide — one that understands the interdependence between commercial success, ecological health, human wellbeing, organisational culture and societal trust, and that integrates these dimensions into coherent strategic decision-making rather than treating them as separate initiatives. This has been the purpose behind The Regenerative Marketing Compass.

The Compass does not replace established marketing disciplines such as brand strategy, customer experience, innovation or communications. Instead, it provides a broader context within which these disciplines can work together to create enduring value.

*Rather than asking how marketing can become more effective, the Compass asks a more fundamental question: how can marketing become a force that strengthens the living systems upon which business itself depends?*

## PART 2

# FROM SUSTAINABILITY TO REGENERATION

For more than three decades, sustainability has fundamentally changed the way organisations think about responsibility and value creation. What was once considered a niche concern has become a strategic priority in boardrooms across the world. Concepts such as environmental stewardship, stakeholder engagement, circular economy and ESG have reshaped corporate decision-making and broadened the definition of business success.

This transformation has been both necessary and significant. Sustainability has encouraged organisations to reduce waste, improve resource efficiency, lower emissions and take greater responsibility for their social and environmental impacts. It has challenged the long-held assumption that financial performance alone defines organisational success.



Yet despite this progress, the global challenges confronting society continue to intensify. Climate change accelerates. Biodiversity continues to decline. Freshwater resources are under increasing pressure. Trust in institutions is

falling in many parts of the world, while social polarisation and economic inequality continue to grow.

These trends raise an uncomfortable but important question. If sustainability has become a strategic priority for so many organisations, why do the systems upon which society depends continue to deteriorate?

The answer is not that sustainability has failed. Rather, sustainability has often been asked to solve a challenge it was never designed to solve. Much of the sustainability movement has focused on reducing harm — minimising emissions, reducing waste, improving efficiency and complying with increasingly ambitious environmental and social standards. These efforts are essential and must continue.

But reducing harm is not the same as creating health. An organisation can become carbon neutral while local ecosystems continue to decline. It can reduce its water consumption while watersheds become increasingly degraded. It can publish comprehensive ESG reports while employee wellbeing deteriorates or public trust erodes. But doing less harm does not automatically create more good.

*Regeneration begins where sustainability reaches its limits.*

Rather than asking, “How can we reduce our negative impact?” regeneration asks, “How can our organisation leave the systems it touches healthier, stronger and more resilient than they were before?”

This shift changes the role of business fundamentally. Nature is no longer viewed merely as a resource to manage responsibly, but as a living system that organisations both depend upon and influence. Communities become partners in long-term value creation rather than external stakeholders to be managed.

Customers are no longer simply consumers, but participants in relationships that can strengthen or weaken trust. Employees become co-creators of organisational culture rather than resources to optimise. Leadership itself

evolves from directing performance to cultivating the conditions in which people, organisations and ecosystems can flourish together.

Regeneration therefore represents more than a new sustainability strategy. It represents a different way of understanding organisations. Traditional management has often viewed organisations as relatively independent entities competing within markets. Regenerative thinking instead recognises organisations as participants within larger living systems—ecological, social, cultural and economic—whose long-term health ultimately determines business success.

Success can therefore no longer be understood solely through organisational performance. It must also be understood through the organisation's contribution to the resilience of the systems that enable that performance.

This perspective has profound implications for marketing. Historically, marketing has been exceptionally successful at creating demand, building brands and influencing consumer behaviour. It has shaped markets by helping organisations communicate value and compete for customer attention. But marketing has also shaped something much larger — it has influenced cultural norms, normalised patterns of consumption, and shaped aspirations, identities and perceptions of success. In many respects, marketing has helped define the economic system within which modern organisations operate.

Recognising this influence also reveals a new opportunity. If marketing has contributed to shaping extractive patterns of growth, it can also help shape regenerative patterns of value creation. Instead of encouraging ever-increasing consumption regardless of consequence, marketing can strengthen relationships between organisations and the communities they serve. Instead of reinforcing short-term transactional thinking, it can cultivate long-term trust. Instead of communicating sustainability as a peripheral initiative, it can help embed regenerative principles into the identity and everyday decisions of the organisation itself.

This does not diminish marketing's commercial purpose. On the contrary — organisations that strengthen the resilience of the systems around them are likely to strengthen their own resilience as well. Healthy ecosystems, thriving communities, engaged employees and trusted brands are not competing objectives. Increasingly, they are mutually reinforcing sources of long-term value creation.

Seen from this perspective, regeneration is not an additional responsibility layered onto existing business models. It is a different organising logic for creating value. This shift cannot be achieved through marketing alone, nor delivered solely through sustainability departments or corporate responsibility initiatives. It requires leadership capable of aligning purpose, strategy, culture, operations and communication around a shared understanding of what value truly means — moving organisations from managing isolated initiatives to nurturing interconnected systems.

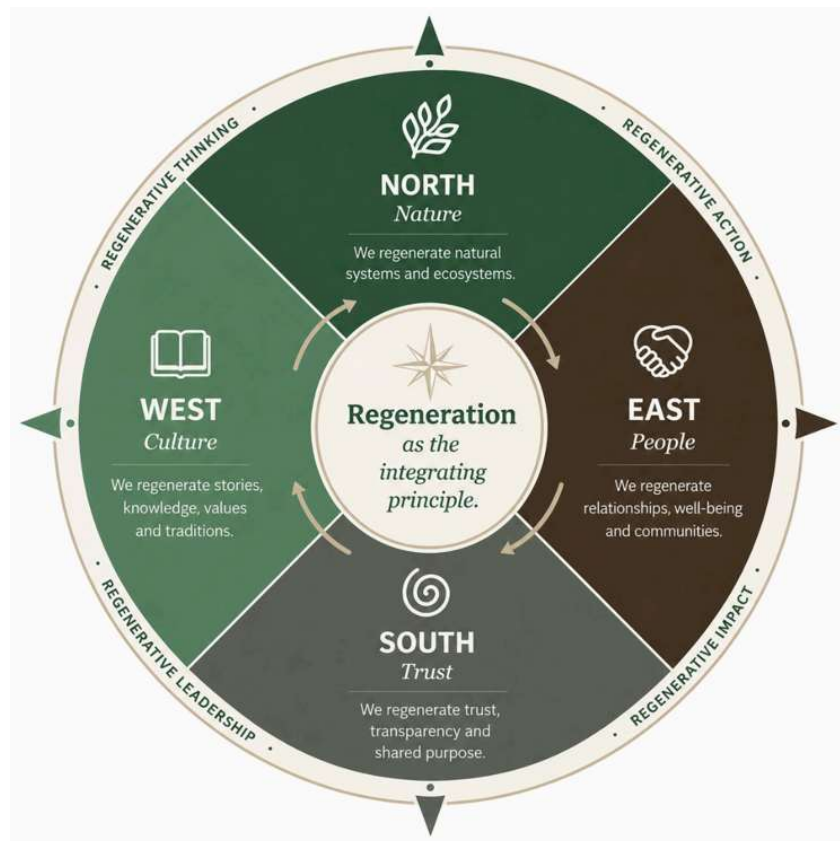
This is precisely the challenge that The Regenerative Marketing Compass has been designed to address, offering a practical way of integrating leadership and marketing around a single question:

*How can every significant organisational decision contribute to creating healthier living systems while strengthening the long-term success of the organisation itself?*

That question marks the transition from sustainability to regeneration—and it forms the foundation upon which the remainder of this framework is built.

## PART 3

# INTRODUCING THE REGENERATIVE MARKETING COMPASS



Every management framework begins with a simple question. Porter asked how organisations create competitive advantage. Simon Sinek asked why organisations exist. The Triple Bottom Line asked how organisations create economic, social and environmental value simultaneously.

*The Regenerative Marketing Compass begins with a different question: what are we seeking to regenerate through the way we lead, create value and engage with the world?*

This question fundamentally changes the role of marketing. Traditional marketing frameworks typically begin with markets, customers, products or competition, asking how organisations can create, communicate and capture value more effectively than their competitors. These questions remain important, but they no longer capture the full complexity of the environment in which organisations operate.

Every organisation exists within larger living systems. It depends on healthy ecosystems that provide natural resources and stable climates. It depends on people whose wellbeing, creativity and commitment determine organisational performance. It depends on cultures that shape values, behaviours and expectations. And it depends on trust—the invisible social infrastructure that enables every meaningful relationship between organisations and the people they serve.

When these systems become weaker, organisations eventually become weaker as well. When they become stronger, organisations become more resilient, more innovative and better equipped to create long-term value.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass has been developed to help leaders navigate this interconnected reality. Rather than treating environmental responsibility, people, organisational culture and trust as separate strategic priorities, the Compass integrates them into a single framework for decision-making. Its purpose is not to simplify complexity by reducing it to isolated metrics — the purpose is to help leaders see the relationships between the systems upon which enduring success depends.

## Regeneration as the Organising Principle

Most organisations already operate with an organising principle, whether they recognise it or not. For many decades, efficiency has served as the dominant organising principle of business, with decisions evaluated primarily through their contribution to productivity, scale, cost reduction and financial

performance. More recently, sustainability has become an additional organising principle, encouraging organisations to minimise negative impacts and operate within environmental and social boundaries.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass proposes a further evolution, where regeneration becomes the principle through which decisions are evaluated. This does not replace financial performance, nor sustainability. Rather, it reframes them within a broader understanding of long-term value creation.

*The central question becomes: will this decision strengthen or weaken the living systems upon which our organisation ultimately depends?*

Every significant decision can be viewed through this lens — a product launch, a recruitment strategy, a supply chain decision, a customer experience, a brand campaign, a leadership decision, a partnership, a pricing strategy. Each contributes either positively or negatively to the health of the wider systems in which the organisation participates. Regeneration therefore becomes less an initiative and more a way of thinking.

It provides direction rather than prescriptions. Like a geographical compass, it does not tell leaders exactly which path to follow. It helps them determine whether they are moving in the right direction.

## The Structure of the Compass

The Regenerative Marketing Compass consists of two complementary layers.

**The Inner Compass** defines what organisations seek to strengthen — the four living systems that underpin enduring value creation:

- Nature
- People
- Culture
- Trust

These dimensions are not independent objectives. They are deeply interconnected. Trust cannot flourish in unhealthy organisational cultures. Healthy cultures cannot emerge without people feeling valued and empowered. People cannot thrive in societies where natural systems are in decline. And nature, people, culture and trust continually influence one another.

**The Outer Compass** describes how organisations create regenerative value through four mutually reinforcing practices:

- Regenerative Thinking
- Regenerative Action
- Regenerative Impact
- Regenerative Leadership

Together, the inner and outer compass create an integrated management framework. The inner compass defines the direction. The outer compass defines the practice. One answers the question: what should we strengthen? The other asks: how do we strengthen it? Neither can function effectively without the other.

## A Compass Rather Than a Checklist

Many business frameworks become implementation checklists: complete the actions, measure the indicators, publish the report, repeat the process. The Regenerative Marketing Compass has a different purpose. It is designed to support judgement rather than compliance.

Living systems cannot be managed through linear checklists alone. They require observation, adaptation, learning and continuous reflection. Consequently, the Compass should not be understood as a maturity model or a certification framework. It is a strategic orientation tool that helps leaders ask better questions before making decisions.

Rather than asking only, “How can we maximise the return on this campaign?” the Compass encourages leaders also to ask:

- How will this decision affect trust?
- What culture does it reinforce?
- Does it strengthen people?
- Does it contribute positively to the natural systems upon which we depend?
- Will this decision create value that endures beyond the next reporting period?

These questions do not replace commercial objectives. They deepen them. In doing so, the Compass positions marketing not merely as a function that communicates organisational value, but as a discipline that helps shape the quality of the value an organisation creates.

#### PART 4

## THE INNER COMPASS

### *The Living Systems That Create Enduring Value*

Every organisation depends on assets that rarely appear on its balance sheet: healthy ecosystems, capable and engaged people, strong organisational cultures, trusted relationships. These are not simply desirable outcomes. They are the living systems that determine whether organisations are able to create value over time.

Traditional management frameworks often separate these dimensions into different organisational functions. Environmental issues become the responsibility of sustainability teams. People belong to Human Resources. Culture is considered an internal leadership issue. Trust is managed through branding, communications or public relations. While this division of responsibilities may support organisational efficiency, it can also obscure a more fundamental reality: these systems are deeply interconnected.

A decline in organisational culture eventually affects employee engagement, innovation and customer experience. Weak trust undermines commercial relationships regardless of how effective marketing campaigns may be.

Environmental degradation creates supply chain risks, regulatory pressure and increasing operational uncertainty. None of these challenges exist in isolation.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass therefore treats Nature, People, Culture and Trust not as separate priorities, but as four interdependent dimensions of organisational health — together providing leaders with a broader understanding of value creation, one that recognises that long-term commercial success depends upon the resilience of the systems surrounding the organisation.

## Nature

Every organisation is embedded within the natural world. Whether producing software, manufacturing products, delivering healthcare or providing financial services, every business ultimately depends upon functioning ecosystems. Stable climates, fertile soils, clean water, biodiversity and healthy oceans are not external environmental concerns. They are fundamental business infrastructure.

Historically, organisations have often viewed nature primarily as a source of raw materials, energy or operational efficiency. Sustainability has challenged this perspective by encouraging businesses to reduce emissions, minimise waste and operate within environmental limits. The Regenerative Marketing Compass builds upon this progress by asking a different question: how can the organisation contribute to restoring the natural systems upon which it depends?

For marketing, this perspective changes the purpose of communication. Environmental responsibility is no longer communicated primarily as a reputation-building exercise. Instead, marketing becomes a means of helping customers understand and

participate in regenerative value creation. Nature is therefore not an external stakeholder. It is the foundation upon which every market ultimately depends.

## People

Organisations do not create value. People do. Employees generate ideas. Customers create relationships. Partners build capability. Communities provide legitimacy. Every organisation exists within a network of human relationships that determine its long-term capacity to innovate, adapt and thrive.

Traditional marketing has frequently viewed people through transactional lenses — customers to acquire, employees to retain, audiences to influence. A regenerative perspective expands this understanding. People are not merely participants in economic transactions. They are active contributors to living systems of knowledge, creativity, wellbeing and trust.

Marketing therefore shifts from maximising customer lifetime value towards maximising relationship value. Internally, the same principle applies: leadership, organisational design and communication should strengthen employees' capacity to contribute, collaborate and develop. Healthy organisations create healthy relationships. Healthy relationships create resilient organisations.

## Culture

Culture is often described as “the way we do things around here.” In reality, culture is much more than organisational behaviour. Culture shapes how people think, what they believe is possible and how they

understand success.

Marketing has always been one of the most influential creators of culture. Advertising has shaped aspirations. Brands have influenced identities. Stories have normalised patterns of consumption. Marketing does not simply reflect culture. It helps create it.

The regenerative marketer therefore asks a different question before launching a campaign: what culture does this communication help create? Rather than pursuing attention at any cost, regenerative marketing seeks to cultivate narratives that strengthen cooperation, resilience, responsibility and hope.

## Trust

Trust is perhaps the most valuable asset an organisation can possess—and the most difficult to build. Unlike awareness, trust cannot be purchased. Unlike attention, trust cannot be automated. And unlike reputation, trust cannot be managed through communication alone.

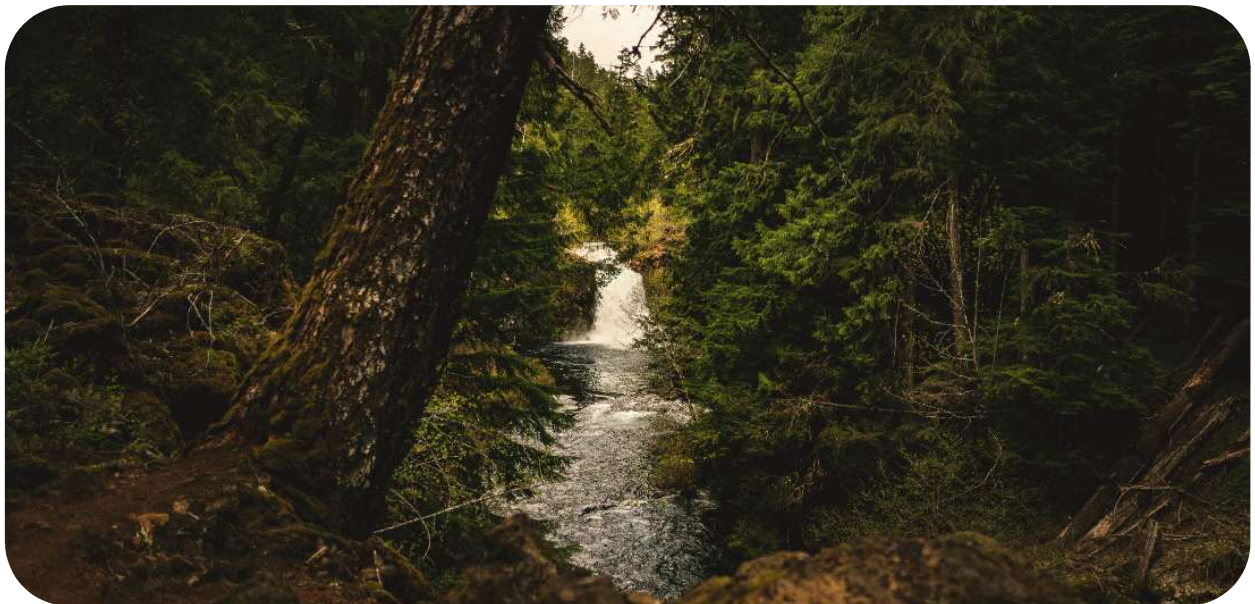
Trust emerges through consistency. It develops when purpose, behaviour and experience align over time. As artificial intelligence makes communication increasingly abundant, trust becomes the defining differentiator between organisations. Customers may struggle to distinguish between AI-generated content and human-created content. They are far less likely to confuse authentic organisational behaviour.

Marketing cannot create trust independently. It can only reveal the trustworthiness of the organisation behind it. The strongest brands of the future will not necessarily be those with the largest marketing budgets. They will be those whose actions consistently justify the confidence that stakeholders place in them.

## Seeing the Whole System

The four dimensions of the Inner Compass should never be viewed independently. Nature influences people. People shape culture. Culture determines whether trust can flourish. Trust enables collaboration, innovation and long-term relationships that ultimately strengthen both organisations and the systems around them.

The strength of The Regenerative Marketing Compass lies precisely in this systemic perspective. It reminds leaders that no decision affects only one dimension. Every significant organisational decision creates consequences across multiple living systems simultaneously. The challenge of regenerative leadership is therefore not to optimise one dimension at the expense of another. It is to strengthen the health of the whole system.



# THE OUTER COMPASS

*From Direction to Practice*

Knowing what matters is not the same as knowing how to act. Many organisations already understand the importance of protecting nature, investing in people, nurturing culture and earning trust. Yet these ambitions often remain disconnected from everyday decision-making. Sustainability becomes a department. Culture becomes an HR initiative. Trust becomes a communications objective. The result is fragmentation.

If the Inner Compass defines what organisations seek to strengthen, the Outer Compass defines how they do so. It translates regenerative intent into organisational practice through four mutually reinforcing disciplines, together forming a continuous cycle of learning, adaptation and value creation.

## Regenerative Thinking

Every transformation begins with a shift in perspective. For generations, management has largely been shaped by linear thinking — problems divided into smaller parts, departments optimising their own performance, success measured through efficiency, growth and short-term outcomes. This approach has enabled extraordinary progress, but it has also made it easier to overlook the relationships between the systems upon which organisations depend.

Regenerative thinking begins with a different assumption: everything is connected. Rather than asking how to optimise individual functions, it asks how decisions influence the health of the wider system — recognising patterns rather than isolated events, relationships rather than silos, long-term resilience rather than short-term optimisation.

For marketers, this changes the starting point for strategy. The first question is no longer “how do we sell more?” It becomes “what system are we seeking to strengthen?” Every subsequent decision is shaped by the answer.

## Regenerative Action

Thinking only becomes valuable when translated into behaviour. Regenerative action is the practical expression of regenerative intent — where purpose becomes visible through the choices an organisation makes every day: product design, supply chains, partnerships, procurement, customer experiences, pricing strategies, innovation, community engagement. Every interaction either reinforces or undermines the organisation's regenerative ambition.

For marketing, this means moving beyond storytelling alone. Marketing becomes a facilitator of regenerative relationships. Campaigns encourage participation rather than passive consumption. Brands create communities rather than audiences. Customers become collaborators rather than targets.

This is also where the original principles of regenerative marketing become tangible: ecological accountability demonstrated through products and services that actively restore natural systems; community wealth strengthened by investing in local suppliers and inclusive economic participation; relational engagement reflected in marketing that builds dialogue rather than interruption; and narrative responsibility, ensuring the stories organisations tell contribute to hope, cooperation and long-term thinking rather than fear, manipulation or division.

## Regenerative Impact

What organisations measure inevitably influences what they prioritise. Traditional marketing metrics remain valuable — reach, engagement, conversions, revenue, customer acquisition. These indicators help organisations understand commercial performance. They do not, however, fully explain whether the organisation is strengthening the systems upon which future performance depends.

Regenerative organisations therefore expand the definition of impact, asking questions such as:

- Are ecosystems healthier because we exist?

- Are our customers better informed and more empowered?
- Are our employees growing in capability and wellbeing?
- Is our organisation contributing positively to the culture in which it operates?
- Is trust increasing across our stakeholder relationships?

Success is measured not only by what the organisation extracts from the system, but by what it contributes to it.

## Regenerative Leadership

Leadership is the discipline that makes every other element of the Compass possible. Without leadership, regenerative thinking remains theory. Without leadership, regenerative action becomes fragmented. And without leadership, regenerative impact becomes another reporting exercise.

Leadership provides coherence. It aligns purpose, strategy, culture and behaviour around a shared understanding of value creation. This is why regenerative marketing cannot exist independently of regenerative leadership. Marketing communicates organisational identity. Leadership creates it. Marketing tells the story. Leadership determines whether the story is true.

Regenerative leadership asks leaders to become stewards rather than controllers — not simply to maximise quarterly performance, but to cultivate the conditions under which people, organisations, communities and ecosystems can flourish together over time. When leadership adopts this responsibility, marketing changes naturally. Trust grows because behaviour changes. Culture evolves because decisions change. Brands become stronger because organisations become stronger.

*Marketing no longer attempts to create credibility. It reveals the credibility that leadership has already earned.*

The four disciplines of the Outer Compass are not sequential steps. They are mutually reinforcing capabilities: regenerative thinking informs action, action creates impact, impact generates learning, and leadership integrates them all

— providing direction for continuous adaptation. Together, they transform the Compass from a conceptual model into a practical framework for organisational decision-making, and a different understanding of how organisations create enduring value.

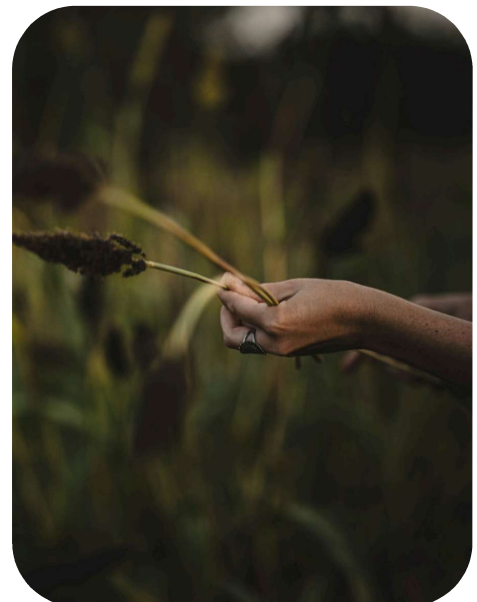
## PART 6

# FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE

*Embedding the Compass Across the Organisation*

The true value of any management framework lies not in its elegance, but in its ability to influence everyday decisions. Many organisations have ambitious sustainability strategies, compelling purpose statements and well-defined corporate values. Yet these often remain disconnected from the routines that shape daily behaviour, resulting in a gap between aspiration and reality.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass seeks to close that gap. It is not designed as an additional programme to sit alongside existing business activities, nor another reporting framework. Instead, it provides a common language for decision-making across the organisation, encouraging leaders, marketers, product developers, HR professionals, finance teams and operational managers to evaluate their decisions through the same regenerative lens.



The objective is not that every department becomes responsible for everything. The objective is that every department understands how its decisions influence the wider system. This creates coherence — marketing no longer

communicates one set of values while procurement rewards another; leadership no longer speaks about trust while internal incentives encourage short-term behaviour. Culture no longer becomes something organisations describe. It becomes something they consistently practice.

## Products and Services

Every product or service represents a series of choices: what problem does it solve, how is it produced, who benefits, who bears the cost, what relationships does it strengthen? Traditional product development has often focused on functionality, quality and profitability. A regenerative perspective expands these questions — does this product contribute positively to the health of people, reduce pressure on natural systems, encourage responsible consumption, or strengthen local communities rather than extract value from them?

The objective is not perfection. Few products can satisfy every regenerative ambition simultaneously. The objective is conscious design that continually moves products and services towards creating greater net positive value. Marketing plays an important role by ensuring that customer insight informs product development and that communication accurately reflects the product's genuine contribution.

## Customer Relationships

Perhaps the most profound shift in regenerative marketing concerns the nature of the relationship between organisations and customers. For decades, marketing has largely focused on customer acquisition, conversion and retention. These concepts remain useful, but incomplete. A regenerative perspective asks a broader question: how does every interaction leave the customer — more informed, more capable, more confident, more connected, more likely to trust?

If the answer is consistently positive, commercial value will often follow naturally. Marketing no longer seeks merely to persuade. It seeks to educate, empower and build relationships that continue long after a transaction has taken place. The most valuable customer relationship is not necessarily the one that generates the highest short-term revenue — it is the one that creates mutual value over many years.

## Partnerships and Supply Networks

No organisation creates value alone. Every organisation depends upon suppliers, distributors, communities, educational institutions, public authorities and numerous other partners, so regeneration cannot stop at organisational boundaries.

The Compass encourages organisations to view supply chains not merely as mechanisms for reducing cost, but as ecosystems capable of creating shared resilience. Long-term partnerships frequently generate greater innovation, trust and adaptability than relationships based solely on price competition; local suppliers often contribute value that extends beyond the immediate transaction by strengthening local economies and community wellbeing. This changes procurement from a purchasing function into a strategic capability for building resilient systems.

## Communication and Narrative

Stories shape behaviour. They influence what societies admire, what organisations celebrate, what customers aspire to become. Fear can attract attention. Scarcity can accelerate purchasing decisions. Status can stimulate consumption. These approaches have often been commercially successful, yet they may also reinforce cultural patterns that weaken long-term wellbeing.

Regenerative marketing seeks a different narrative — stories that strengthen agency rather than dependency, collaboration rather than competition alone, possibility rather than anxiety, participation rather than passive consumption,

hope rather than complacency. This does not mean avoiding difficult truths. It means recognising that the stories organisations tell help shape the future people believe is possible.

## Innovation

Innovation is frequently associated with technology. A regenerative perspective broadens the concept: true innovation asks not only “what can we create?” but also “what relationships can we improve, what systems can we restore, what unnecessary complexity can we remove?”

Some of the most regenerative innovations may not involve new technology at all — they may involve new business models, new partnerships, new ownership structures, new ways of sharing value, or entirely new definitions of organisational success. Marketing becomes essential because it helps organisations understand emerging societal needs and translate those insights into innovations that create value for both business and society.

*Business is no longer positioned as separate from society or nature. It becomes an active participant in strengthening both.*

The Regenerative Marketing Compass therefore does not ask organisations to choose between purpose and profit. It asks how purpose, trust, resilience and commercial success can increasingly reinforce one another.

# MEASURING REGENERATIVE VALUE

*Beyond Performance Towards Contribution*

Management has long been guided by a simple principle: what gets measured gets managed. For decades, organisations have relied on increasingly sophisticated metrics — revenue growth, profitability, market share, customer acquisition, brand awareness, employee engagement, shareholder returns. Marketing has followed a similar path, with digital technologies enabling organisations to measure impressions, clicks, conversions, engagement and return on marketing investment with remarkable precision.

These measures have transformed marketing into a far more accountable discipline. But accountability is not the same as understanding value. Traditional metrics are exceptionally good at explaining what has happened within the organisation. They are far less capable of explaining how the organisation has influenced the health of the systems upon which its future success depends.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass therefore proposes a broader understanding of organisational performance. Financial performance, commercial success and marketing effectiveness remain essential — but should be complemented by indicators that help leaders understand whether the organisation is strengthening, or weakening, the ecological, human, cultural and relational systems that create enduring value.

*The question is no longer simply “how much value did we create?” It becomes “what kind of value did we create, for whom, and what condition did we leave the system in afterwards?”*

This represents a shift from measuring extraction to measuring contribution.

## From Outputs to Outcomes

Many organisations measure what they produce. Fewer measure what changes because of what they produce. A marketing campaign may generate millions of impressions; a product launch may exceed revenue targets; a sustainability initiative may reduce emissions. These are important outputs. But regenerative organisations are equally interested in outcomes: did customers become more capable of making informed decisions? Did communities become stronger because the organisation was present? Did employee wellbeing improve? Did trust increase? Did ecological systems become healthier?

These questions are often more difficult to answer. They are also closer to the purpose of regeneration. The objective is not simply to optimise organisational performance. It is to improve the condition of the living systems that enable organisational performance.

## Four Dimensions of Regenerative Value

Because the Inner Compass is built around Nature, People, Culture and Trust, these dimensions also provide a useful structure for understanding impact.

| Dimension | Organisations ask |
|-----------|-------------------|
|-----------|-------------------|

|        |                                                                                                                    |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nature | Are natural systems healthier because we exist? Have we restored ecosystems rather than merely reduced our impact? |
|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|        |                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| People | Are employees developing greater capability, wellbeing and purpose? Are customers more informed and empowered? Do suppliers experience fairer partnerships? |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|         |                                                                                                      |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Culture | What behaviours does our organisation reward? What narratives are we contributing to within society? |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|       |                                                                                                                         |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Trust | Do customers, employees, partners and communities trust us? Do our actions consistently reinforce the promises we make? |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The objective is not perfection. It is continuous movement towards net positive contribution. Trust in particular is best understood as a pattern rather than a score — observed across multiple relationships rather than reduced to a single index.

## Developing Regenerative Indicators

The purpose of regenerative measurement is not to create a universal reporting standard. Different organisations operate within different contexts, industries and ecosystems — a regenerative agricultural business will measure different forms of contribution than a software company; a hospital will define flourishing differently from a financial institution. The Compass encourages organisations to develop indicators that are meaningful within their own context while remaining guided by the same overarching question: are we strengthening the systems upon which our future depends?

## Learning Rather Than Proving

Perhaps the most important difference between conventional measurement and regenerative measurement lies in its purpose. Traditional reporting often seeks to prove performance. Regenerative measurement seeks to improve understanding. Every measurement becomes an opportunity to ask better questions: why did trust increase, or decline? What unexpected consequences emerged? Which relationships became stronger, or weaker?

Rather than rewarding certainty, regenerative organisations develop the capacity to observe, adapt and improve continuously. Some of the most valuable outcomes an organisation creates may never be fully measurable — a culture of psychological safety, a renewed sense of purpose, a restored wetland, a relationship rebuilt after years of mistrust. That does not make them less important. The role of measurement is not to replace judgement. It is to inform it.

*The organisations best prepared for the future will not necessarily be those that measure the most. They will be those that learn the most.*

# LEADERSHIP CHANGES EVERYTHING

*Why Regenerative Marketing Begins with Regenerative Leadership*

Every organisation communicates. Far fewer organisations communicate who they truly are. Marketing cannot create trust where trust does not exist. It cannot manufacture integrity. It cannot compensate for leadership decisions that undermine employees, customers, communities or the natural world. Communication can amplify reality. It cannot permanently replace it.

This distinction becomes increasingly important in an age where artificial intelligence enables organisations to produce unlimited amounts of persuasive content. When every organisation can generate compelling campaigns at minimal cost, communication itself ceases to be a sustainable competitive advantage. Behaviour becomes the differentiator.

The organisations that earn trust will not necessarily be those that communicate most effectively. They will be those whose actions consistently justify the confidence others place in them. Marketing therefore changes its role. Rather than attempting to construct credibility, it reveals credibility that leadership has already created.

*Regenerative marketing is not the starting point. It is the visible expression of regenerative leadership.*

## Leadership as Stewardship

Traditional leadership has often been associated with control — planning, prediction, performance, efficiency. These capabilities remain important, but are increasingly insufficient in a world characterised by ecological uncertainty, technological acceleration and growing social complexity.

Regenerative leadership requires a different mindset. The leader is no longer simply responsible for directing an organisation. The leader becomes a steward of the living systems upon which that organisation depends. Leadership therefore becomes an act of cultivation rather than control. Its purpose is not merely to maximise quarterly results. It is to create the conditions in which people, organisations and the wider systems around them can flourish together over time.

## The Alignment Challenge

One of the greatest threats to trust is misalignment. Many organisations communicate values that are not consistently reflected in behaviour. Purpose statements describe one reality; internal incentives reward another. Stakeholders notice these inconsistencies — employees notice them first, customers notice them next, society notices them eventually.

Trust rarely disappears because of a single mistake. It erodes when inconsistency becomes habitual. The responsibility of regenerative leadership is therefore not primarily to create inspiring visions. It is to create alignment — between purpose and strategy, between values and incentives, between communication and behaviour, between ambition and action. When alignment exists, marketing becomes remarkably simple: the organisation's behaviour tells the story before any campaign begins.

## Leadership in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence represents one of the most significant technological shifts in modern history. It will transform marketing, automate communication and accelerate content creation. Yet AI also changes the nature of leadership. When knowledge becomes universally accessible and communication increasingly automated, the most valuable human capabilities become those that cannot easily be replicated: judgement, wisdom, empathy, moral courage, the ability to navigate complexity.

Regenerative leadership therefore becomes less about possessing all the answers and more about asking better questions. Not “how can AI replace people?” but “how can AI help people contribute more meaningfully?” Not “how can we automate customer relationships?” but “how can technology help deepen authentic human relationships?” Technology becomes an amplifier of leadership rather than a substitute for it.

## The Future Belongs to Trusted Organisations

History suggests that organisations capable of adapting to profound societal change are those that survive. The industrial era rewarded scale. The information age rewarded knowledge. The digital age rewarded speed. The emerging regenerative age is likely to reward trust — not trust as a branding exercise, but trust as an organisational capability, created through consistency, transparency, competence and responsibility.

Marketing will continue to play a vital role. Its purpose, however, will evolve. Rather than competing for attention alone, marketing will increasingly help organisations demonstrate their contribution to the health of the systems they influence.

*The strongest brands of the future will not simply be recognised. They will be relied upon.*

# A NEW COMPASS FOR A NEW ERA

Every generation inherits a different business landscape. The frameworks that shaped success in one era rarely remain sufficient for the next. The challenges confronting organisations today are not isolated problems awaiting isolated solutions. They are interconnected expressions of increasingly interconnected systems, requiring a different way of leading, creating value and understanding marketing.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass is offered as one possible framework for navigating this transition — not as a universal blueprint or a final answer, but as an invitation to rethink the relationship between leadership, marketing and the living systems that make both possible.

The future will not be shaped by the organisations that communicate regeneration most convincingly. It will be shaped by those that practice it most consistently. Because in the end, regeneration is not a marketing strategy. It is a leadership philosophy. And marketing simply makes that philosophy visible.

## Concluding Reflection

The age of attention is giving way to the age of trust. In that transition lies one of the greatest opportunities organisations have ever faced — not simply to become more sustainable, not simply to become more responsible, but to become organisations whose success actively strengthens the people, communities, cultures and ecosystems upon which their future depends.

That is the purpose of regenerative leadership. That is the promise of regenerative marketing. And that is the direction of The Regenerative Marketing Compass.

## AFTERWORD

# AN INVITATION TO LEAD DIFFERENTLY



Every generation is called to rethink the assumptions it has inherited. The Industrial Revolution transformed how organisations produced. The Information Age transformed how organisations communicated. Artificial intelligence is transforming how organisations create knowledge. But perhaps the greatest challenge of our time is not technological. It is philosophical.

*We are being asked to reconsider a far more fundamental question: what is the purpose of business?*

For much of modern history, organisations have been encouraged to maximise efficiency, productivity and shareholder value. These objectives have contributed enormously to economic development, innovation and improved living standards. Yet the same systems have also contributed to environmental degradation, declining trust and increasing social fragmentation. The challenge before us is therefore not whether business should create value. It is what kind of value business should create.

The Regenerative Marketing Compass does not claim to provide every answer. No framework can. Living systems are too dynamic. Leadership is too contextual. The future remains too uncertain. Instead, this framework offers a

different starting point: it encourages organisations to view themselves not as isolated competitors operating within markets, but as participants in larger systems whose health ultimately determines their own success.

This shift may appear subtle. In practice, it changes everything. When organisations begin asking how their success can strengthen the world around them rather than merely succeed within it, different decisions naturally follow — different innovations emerge, different partnerships develop, different cultures evolve, different forms of leadership become possible.

This is not idealism. It is long-term realism. The organisations most likely to flourish in the decades ahead will be those capable of strengthening trust while contributing positively to the ecological and social systems upon which trust ultimately depends.

Marketing has a unique role in this transition. Not because marketing alone creates change. But because marketing shapes the stories organisations tell about the future. Stories influence expectations. Expectations influence behaviour. Behaviour shapes culture. Culture shapes society. Every campaign therefore contributes to something larger than commercial performance — it contributes to the future people imagine to be possible.

This is why regenerative marketing matters. Not because it represents another marketing methodology. But because it reflects a broader evolution in how organisations understand leadership itself. Leadership has always shaped organisations. Increasingly, it will shape the health of the living systems upon which civilisation depends. That responsibility cannot be delegated. Nor should it be feared. It should be embraced.

*The strongest organisations do not succeed despite helping the world flourish. They succeed because they help the world flourish.*

If this paper contributes in some small way to that transition—to new conversations, new questions and new forms of leadership—then it has achieved its purpose.

*The Compass is now yours.*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## Mikkel Christian Larsen



Mikkel Christian Larsen is the co-founder of Minds & Mountains, where he works at the intersection of leadership, systems thinking, regenerative marketing, development and organisational transformation.

His work explores how organisations can create enduring value by strengthening the living systems upon which business ultimately depends.

Through executive retreats, keynote presentations, leadership development and strategic advisory work, he helps leaders navigate complexity with trust, purpose and regeneration as guiding principles.

He believes the future of leadership will not be defined solely by technological innovation, but by humanity's capacity to cultivate organisations that enable both people and the planet to flourish together.