



# CRISISCOMMSMASTERY »

How to Crisis-Proof Your Brand with  
Thought Leadership and Social Purpose

» PRESENTED BY: Scott Baradell, CEO of Idea Grove

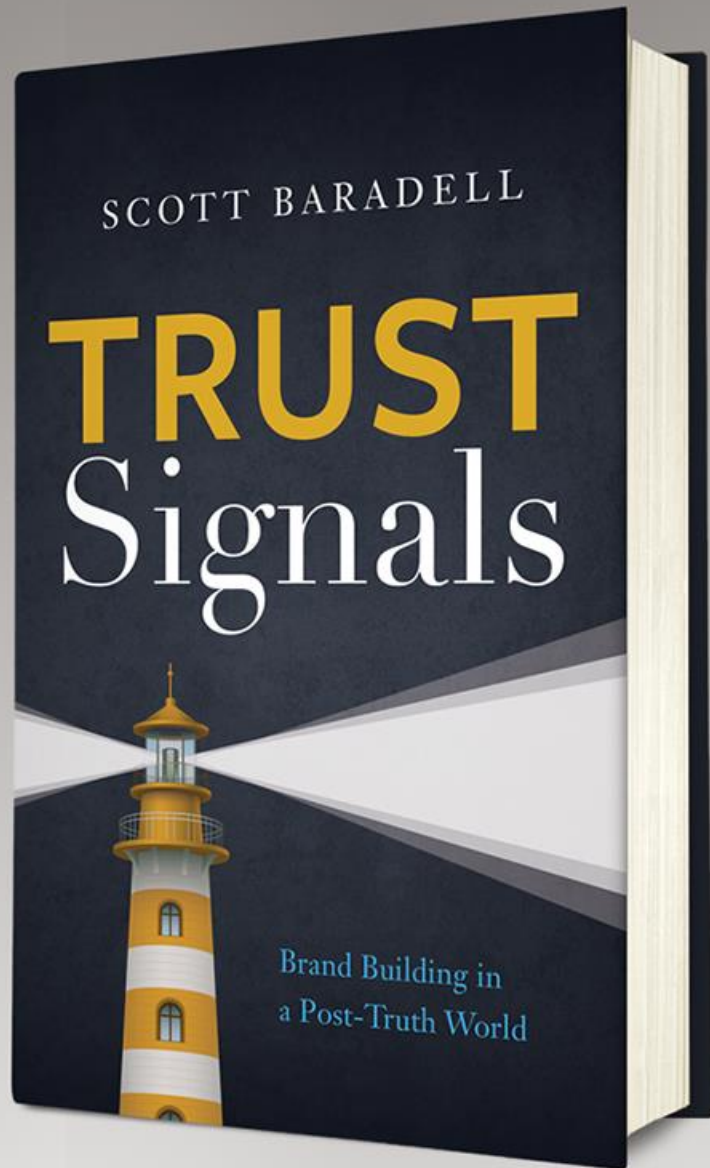
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3 basic components of a  
reputation management  
program



1. Proactive reputation building
2. Crisis preparation and planning
3. Reputation monitoring and management

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- 1. Proactive reputation building**
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**Proactive reputation building:**

Establish a positive presence in the **news media, social media and review sites** before a crisis ever happens. This inoculates your brand to reduce the severity and damage done by the crisis.



## News media

You never want your first contact with the news media to be during a crisis, when you are on the defensive. Work to **establish media relationships** that will humanize your executives and provide a broader context for your brand.

Also, make sure when a **reporter searches** for your brand on Google, they will find lots of positive information to build trust, such as five-star reviews and happy team photos. It will balance their view of your brand.



## Social media

Many brands—particularly B2B brands—complain that they see little ROI from social media. But social media is not primarily a sales platform; it’s a relationship platform. You are **establishing your foothold** on a site trusted by millions of users.

Having an active presence on LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook shows the world who you are and what’s important to you. It also gives you a solid foundation for interacting with customers and responding to complaints and crises.





## Online reviews

Top review sites include Google, Yelp, Facebook and BBB.org, but beyond those, literally thousands of review sites have emerged for specific niches and industries.

Establish a presence on the sites that are most important to your brand, creating detailed profiles with images and product descriptions. Then, invite your customers to leave reviews after a transaction or during a follow-up later. This **provides context and balance** when an unhappy customer leaves a negative review. .

Establishing a **positive brand presence in these channels** is the best proactive step you can take to protect yourself when challenges come.



***But:***

- What is the best way to create a positive brand presence?
- What is the best way to tell your story?
- What content will you use to populate these channels?

The answer is **thought leadership**  
**and social purpose.**



Thought leadership and social purpose  
are key to creating a **three-  
dimensional brand** that is strong  
enough to withstand unexpected  
crises.



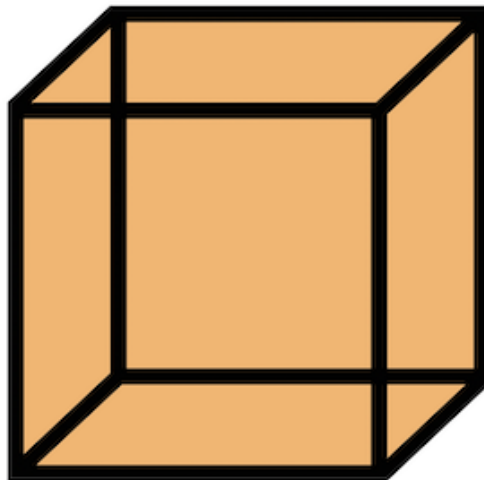
Jeff Bezos once said, **“A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person.”**

Branding is all about personification—giving human traits to a brand.





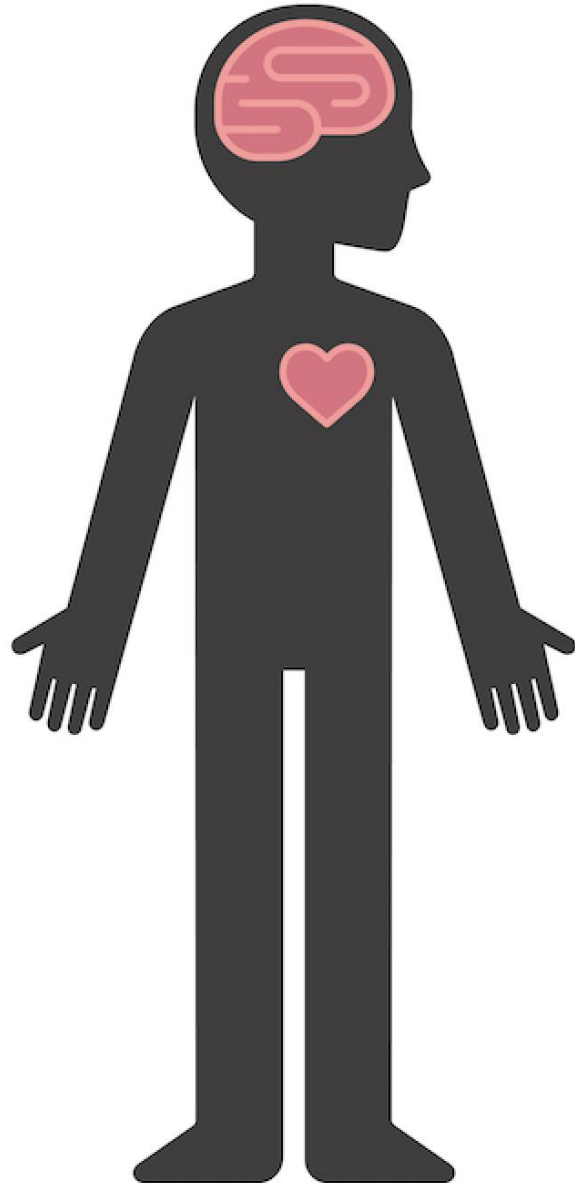
one  
dimensional



three  
dimensional

A **one-dimensional brand** is solely focused on its product and service. It wants every conversation to end up being about what its trying to sell you.

A **three-dimensional brand** is more human-like. While a one-dimensional brand only has a body, a three-dimensional brand has a heart and mind as well.



## The three-dimensional brand:


The product is your brand's **body**.

Thought leadership is your brand's **mind**.

Social purpose is your brand's **heart**.

# Thought Leadership





When most people think of **thought leadership marketing**, they think of it as a top-of-the-funnel sales tactic. But that's arguably not its most important purpose.



Beyond connecting with buyers, thought leadership also shows you have **ideas to share and value to provide freely** to others, which helps to establish a positive reputation online.

The graphic features a dark grey background with a pattern of thin, curved white lines. On the left side, there is a vertical gold-colored bar. The text 'Edelman Trust Barometer 2022' is prominently displayed in the center. 'Edelman' and 'Trust' are in white, 'Barometer' is in white, and '2022' is in blue. A small white plus sign is located in the upper right quadrant of the dark area.

# Edelman Trust Barometer 2022

## **For example**

The PR giant Edelman has used thought leadership to build its reputation for more than two decades with the Edelman Trust Barometer—which PRWeek recently called “one of the most powerful pieces of agency IP ever to exist.”

Edelman’s research on trust, including the recent release of the 2022 Trust Barometer, has far outshone coverage of controversies such as its work for fossil-fuel companies in apparent contradiction to its stated position on climate change.

## Bottom line

According to a 2020 Edelman-LinkedIn study, fewer than half of decision-makers said thought leadership influenced their purchasing decisions.


But nearly 90% said that thought leadership, done well, **improves their perception of the brand.**




# Social Purpose



Having a **social purpose** is fusing your company's product offering with a larger vision to create a better world.



Surveys consistently show that more consumers are **factoring a brand's values into their buying decisions**. Avoiding social issues is viewed negatively by consumers—as a sign that a brand doesn't care.



Embracing purpose **gives your brand an edge** over those who appear to only care about the bottom line.





### **For example**

Danish toymaker LEGO is a \$7 billion company that generated \$1.5 billion in profit in 2020, a 20 percent increase over the year before.

LEGO has long associated its products with helping children to learn and grow—to “inspire and develop the builders of tomorrow.”

LEGO extends this brand promise to a larger social purpose. The brand has consistently invested in initiatives to enrich, nurture and protect the future of children. These includes

- Sustainability initiatives
- Online safety for children
- DEI programs

Not coincidentally, LEGO ranked as the “most reputable company in the world” in RepTrak’s 2021 annual survey for the second year in a row.

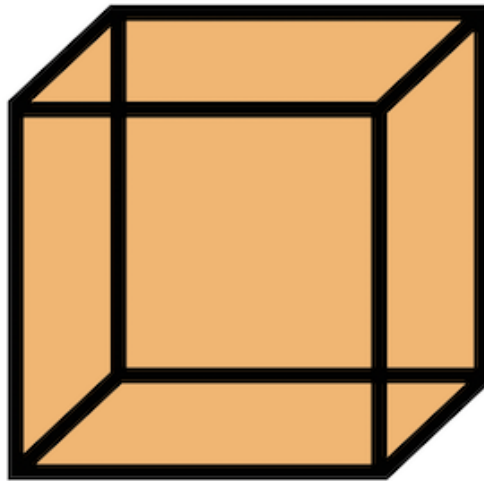
**Bottom line**

In a 2021 survey of 1,000 U.S. adults by the PR firm Porter Novelli, 73 percent said they were **less likely to “cancel” a purpose-driven brand.**





one  
dimensional



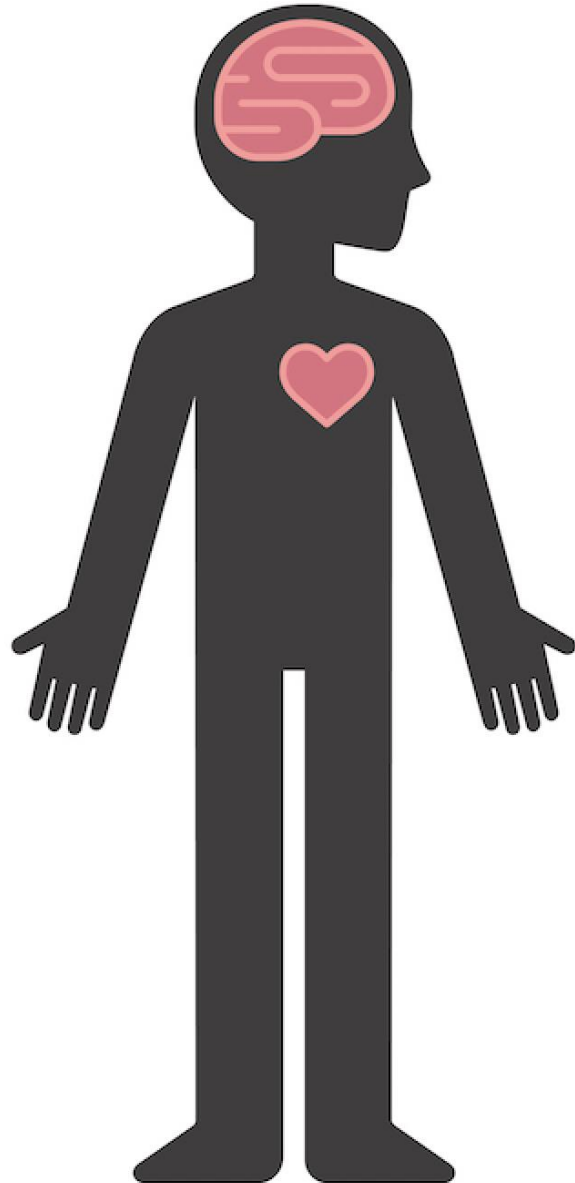
three  
dimensional

## The risk of a one-dimensional brand

Brands that only focus on selling their product—as opposed to sharing their ideas or making the world a better place—are like people with a reputation for only talking about themselves.

They're boring.

Customers and the public consider one-dimensional brands inauthentic and unattractive in 2022. That makes them a crisis waiting to happen.



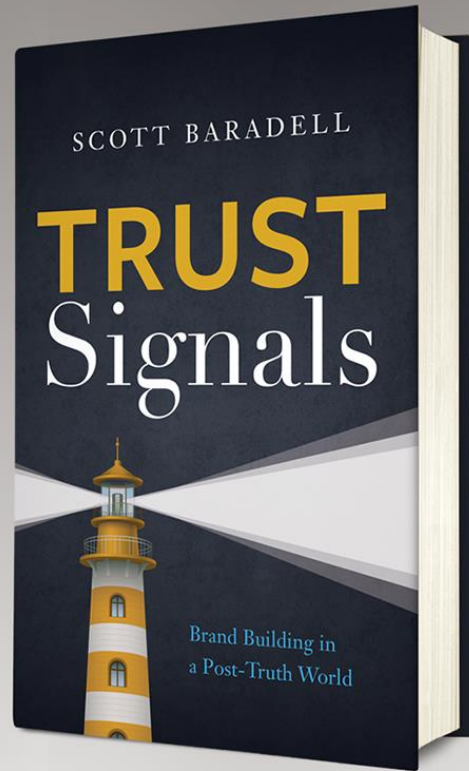
## Creating a brand with body, mind and heart

The more fully human your company is to your customers and the public, the more likely you will be given the benefit of the doubt when a reputation management crisis comes.

Creating three-dimensional brand—supported by the pillars of **product, thought leadership and social purpose**—is your path to a more fully human brand that can crisis-proof your business.

Thank you!





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