

## Seamless Marketing and Holistic Management®

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When I read Doc Hatfield's evocative comments about his beef, I was reminded that when we develop any business that is holistically-managed, we sell much more than our product. There are values behind that business which should be seen to run right through the product and its delivery. This is seamless marketing - who we are and what we stand for, is evident in everything we do. This creates consistency and clarity, not only for ourselves, but for our clients and customers. We can be secure in the knowledge that *all* our efforts are leading us towards our holisticgoal.

When we started to develop our three-product-based business, we found that using the following marketing process alongside holistic decision-making resulted in tremendous effectiveness.

Previously, marketing had been a 'shot-in-the-dark' affair. It was easy to react to our concerns about income-generation by trying something new. However, this resulted in lack of consistency, wasted resources and minimal results. Once, we began to practice Holistic Management®, we became much clearer about where we wanted to be headed. This in turn provided us with the foundation for the marketing messenger outlined in our brand map and elevator pitch. These frameworks complemented each other perfectly. We went through the whole process for each of our products, but for illustrative purposes, I will use the first that was launched – The Lodge.

### Definitions

#### *Marketing Messenger*

Who we are and what we stand for as reflected in our product and targeted at our market.

#### *Brand Map*

A summary of the values that are reflected in the product against which every marketing message will be gauged.

#### *Elevator Pitch*

A succinct summary of our marketing message

Although we have had an holisticgoal in place since 2003, we decided to begin afresh by writing our Story - a short summary of what had brought us to where we are today. This enabled us to review and identify anything that was out-of-keeping with the quality of life we were trying to create. We then drafted our Vision, which dovetailed beautifully with the process of reviewing our family holisticgoal, and went on to create The Lodge holisticgoal. This in turn, drove our marketing messenger.

We highlighted those feeling words from The Lodge holisticgoal – inspired, passionate, committed, supported, rewarded, nurtured – and translated them into:

- *Tonal values*  
*How we would want people to describe us after meeting us*  
 Friendly (we enjoy the company of our guests and treat them in a relaxed and respectful way)  
 Attentive (our guests are here to enjoy a service where they are catered to as unique individuals)  
 Caring (we are passionate about what we do and demonstrate this through the care we extend to people, physical resources and nature)  
 Authentic (we practise what we preach and our guests see this in the way they are treated, the way we live and farm our land)
- *Service Values*  
*What we want people to think about our services.*  
 Enlightening (the insights we provide open up our guests' minds to new potential in their own lives)  
 Effective (we always meet our guests' needs through deep listening and positive action)  
 Ethical (we take into consideration social, economic and environmental values)  
 Inspiring (our enthusiasm for the life we are creating encourages change)
- *Corporate Values*  
*What we stand for as a business*  
 Sustainable (we leave an increasingly smaller ecological footprint)  
 Partnership (we enjoy establishing local and international supportive relationships)  
 Positive (we work towards making a positive difference in our lives and the lives of others)  
 Professional (we maintain high standards consistent with our tonal values)
- *Core Value*  
*A two or three word description of the brand*  
 In partnership with nature (this provided us with our strap/tag line and unique selling proposition – what would make us stand out from the crowd)

### **Marketing Messenger**

Story

Vision

Brand Map

*Tonal values*

*Service Values*

*Corporate Values*

*Core Values*

Elevator Pitch

*what we do*

*what we believe in*

*who we reach*

*how we work*

Once this process was completed, we were able to compare our 'brand map' to the values in our quality of life statement. We asked ourselves "Are the values that support the kind of life we want to create reflected in our marketing messenger?" When we had the green light, we moved onto creating the policies, strategies and objectives that would reflect both our holistic goal and our marketing messenger. We broke down each of these elements into social, economic and environmental components.

For example, one social policy was that we wished to be seen as friendly, caring attentive and authentic (which directly related to our tonal values, which in turn, related to our

holisticgoal). This was then translated into the following social strategy - that social protocols are clearly outlined, agreed-upon and communicated. Out of this strategy, the following objectives for the year were outlined – create a guest ‘safety and comfort’ booklet, offer 100% money-back guarantee, provide complete website information to help guests plan and enjoy their holiday, provide a complimentary selection of organic produce on guests’ arrival, ensure we communicate at least once a day with guests to attend to their needs, offer the opportunity to purchase organic eggs, milk and bread during guests’ stay and offer to arrange for visits to local sites and other opportunities.

The objectives when then entered onto our Life Plan, to ensure that they would be achieved within the time-fames allocated. We monitored our performance and re-planned as necessary. For example, our first priority was the creation of a website. This ran over-time with the result that when we were ready to take out targeted advertising, we had missed the best time. In order to mitigate this affect, we wrote press releases to a number of magazines and papers, with the result that we were mentioned on the eco-tourism site of the UK national paper The Guardian, resulting in three bookings immediately. We also monitored our performance through our conversations with guests and the comments they made in our visitor’s book.

When we received the following testimonials from a family from New Zealand, we felt that who we were and what we stood for had been reflected from the biggest picture, our holisticgoal, through our marketing message and into the product itself.



“A week has been far too short. You have one of the most outstanding locations I have ever seen. Thank you for all your kindness, the bread, the fruit, the games and the books to keep the kids happy. I will remember our week-long game of ‘Civilisation’ for a long time! The walks too were breathtaking and varied and a highlight for me. I am desperately hoping you will still be here when we next visit Europe”

“This place is really cool. I would love it if I could stay one more week. You’ve got really cool games, like ‘Civilisation’. The puppies are really great with their nice soft coats. Thank you for the chicken book. There were heaps of varieties. The chicken that I liked the best was the Barnevelder.”

The above testimonials reflected our tonal, service and corporate values as well as created the quality of life we wanted. The use of Holistic Management, with its capacity to create clarity of direction, supported by the feedback-loop, together with this succinct marketing process, produced a product and a quality of life that reflected our values. We were able to move effortlessly from the vision to the daily details and back again. This in turn provided us with the economic reward we wanted, Within two weeks of the website going live, we had our first booking and as we near the close of the season, we have had consistently more guests than ever before.