

Branding for good



By Louise Marsland

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There is no doubt the tide has turned in marketing, with products and campaigns from big brands working hard at providing solutions to societal problems. Some phenomenal work was launched recently that demonstrates this.

One of the core messages emanating from Design Indaba this year was that being able to invent new things to solve global problems big and small is not just a key creative skill this millennia, but essential for brands to continue to play a role in future society.

Brands have to think past traditional marketing constructs and come up with core campaigns that provide solutions to tangible problems in communities or work with scientists to invent new solutions. The values that these brands demonstrate, as a result, is what builds brand loyalty, and goes viral. The internet loves good news too.

This past week saw some of the best work and collaborations from international brands and agencies released this year. They are real, solve problems, have global impact. They are some truly great recent examples of global brands getting it right and some of the best work out there currently:



1. Now you see me...: Volvo have collaborated with Grey London and spray paint manufacturer Albedo 100, to invent a new reflective paint that illuminates cyclists at night when painted on, but is invisible during the day and easily washes off. The [glow-in-the-dark 'LifePaint'](#) is designed to save the lives of cyclists riding at night. Volvo is encouraging cyclists to spray it all over themselves and their bikes, like a body spray, before they hit the roads.

The objective is to cut down on annual bicycling-related accidents in the UK. Volvo says this campaign is in line with their 'safety' brand philosophy as there is only so much they can do within their own car designs and technology to reduce accidents. If the product proves to be a success, Volvo may market it internationally. Source: *Fast Company*.



Photo credit: Inhabitat.com

2. Safe haven: Ikea last month unveiled a safer, solar-powered, flat pack refugee shelter for emergency housing for natural disaster victims and refugees. They are more durable than tents and more resistant to the elements. Developed in collaboration between the IKEA Foundation and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNCHR), the shelters can be assembled in a few hours to provide immediate refuge for those in need. The [Ikea refugee shelters](#) will be deployed in Ethiopia this month for the first time.



Photo credit: SavingAslan.com

3. A roar with bite: Procter & Gamble's denture-adhesive brand Fixodent and Saatchi & Saatchi Milan, Italy, have helped a rare South African white lion get his bite back in a moving film in which P&G sponsored a six-hour dental operation for Aslan the nine-year-old lion from the Kevin Richardson Wildlife Sanctuary. Aslan had lost teeth prematurely and was in pain from rotten, broken teeth and an abscess. The Fixodent brand messaging that appears at the end of the compassionate and moving film is: "Giving back the bite to those who have lost it is what we do every day for every denture and partial wearer". An [incredible story](#) and amazing brand collateral. The director was Sven Harding, reports *AdWeek*.



4. Fighting malnutrition: Grey Group again, this time from the Singapore agency, worked with the Neelvasant Medical Foundation and research Centre NGO in India to address iodine deficiency in rural India. Iodine deficiency is linked to breast cancer, fibrocystic breast disease and pregnancy complications as well as other physical and mental health problems. Grey Singapore came up with "iodised bindis" which women can wear on their foreheads. The concept is similar to a nicotine patch, reports [AdWeek](#), as users take in their daily dose of iodine through the 'Life Saving Dot' as it has been named.



Photo credit: Eason Chow

5. Save the planet: There's this "apocalyptic" [video](#) that's gone viral, that aims to demonstrate the effect our conspicuous consumption is having on the planet. Plastic coffee pods, which have become so popular in recent years, can't be recycled and there's a growing backlash to have them banned. The problem, as [Fast Company](#) reports, has inspired Singapore-based designer Eason Chow to design "an edible coffee capsule that fully dissolves into a cup of coffee, creating no waste at all". Sugar is used to form a hard layer around the coffee, which melts away as hot water is added.

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