

REMAINING CONSISTENT IN BRAND PURPOSE

For Volvo Cars, everything always must “begin and end with safety”, explains the auto brand’s India CEO Charles Frump at BW MWB Summit Delhi **Team BW**

THE WORLD OF MARKETING has changed so drastically that it is unrecognised now and this is because the customer has changed. The customers are a much deeper audience that we have to reach, they are much aware, empowered and fuelled by passion,” said Charles Frump, Managing Director, Volvo Car India. He explained that in this “millennial-driven age” a company needs to have a new approach that is driven by ‘purpose’ and that brands must inspire people.

Speaking at the BW Marketing Whitebook (MWB) Summit’s Delhi chapter, he explained Volvo’s ‘Purpose Marketing Strategy’ that is divided into five major steps.

The first of these is ‘Know It’, which is inherent to the brand DNA being authentic. ‘Own It’, which is to distil the essence down to vision, messages and actions that are relevant to people, is the second step. ‘Deliver It’, which means taking tangible action with purpose at the core, is the third step, followed by ‘Share It’ – the plan for timing and budget platform inclusive of marketing and PR, and finally, ‘Walk It’ – close the loop and make results public.

Frump informed that the company has shared its inventions

with masses to bring change globally. “Safety is at the core of everything we do. Back in the 90s, we released the pattern of safety belt for everyone so that everyone can have safe cars. We have also shared the EVA initiative — digital crash test dummy — with everyone,” he said.

Volvo’s vision is to have zero ‘kill or injury’ by Volvo in 2020, put 1 million electrified Volvo cars on the road by 2025 and have 30 per cent female leaders by 2025. Frump added, “We have taken safety expanded with gender diversity and laid a concrete vision of where we have to go.”

He also highlighted the Volvo campaign, #BreatheFree, that made an impact in the country. Over the course of two years, Volvo Cars India has raised the female employee percentage from 1 per cent to 23 per cent. He said that much of these journeys for a brand find success, courtesy their partners, and mentioned Volvo’s agency partners — WPP, Grey, Mindshare, Integral PR and Forsman & Bodenfors — among these. He said, “The idea is simple but execution can be difficult so make sure you get the right partners.”

His address was followed by an on-stage conversation with Shashi Sinha, CEO of IPG Mediabrands India. Sinha reminded that many companies deviate from their purpose, but Volvo has been consistent with its purpose i.e. ‘safety’. “We have been consistent with what the founder said, ‘everything always must begin and end with safety’. It is so embedded in our culture that it is consistent, and we over-invest in it to make it relevant,” Frump elaborated.

When Sinha enquired what step in Volvo’s ‘Purpose Marketing Strategy’ was the most challenging, Frump cited the second step, ‘Own It’. “Distilling that message down that is relevant for the customer is very difficult,” the Volvo Car India CEO explained.

Concluding the address, Frump said, “Do it only if it is a part of your DNA. The purpose of ‘safety’ is embedded in our DNA and hence, our brand is liked by everyone who knows about it.” **BW**

