

# Selling something to people is not enough any more.

We also have to improve the quality of their lives

by **Róbert Slovák**, Founder / Partner at Respect APP ad agency and president of KRAS - Club of Advertising Agencies Slovakia



There was a time when we did not have to expect too much from branding. It was sufficient if it met its basic function by identifying a product, service or country enabled its differentiation from another. Later, emotions were assigned to branded products, adding more differentiating features; marketing got involved in the process. The aim was (and still is) about selling the product, getting it among people and improving profits. However, for a long time, brands used to be "infatuated" with themselves. They showed off and competed for which one was better, nicer, more innovative or more valuable. It was a legitimate and effective way to improve a brand's value on the market and, ultimately, income derived from it.

Gradually, brands and their related marketers started taking note of their target groups. At first, there was only a minimum amount of data; later they realized that their target groups were composed of actual

people – living people with emotions, ambitions, happiness and sadness. Sophisticated tools have been developed to get the brands under their skin, to find and hit the mark, thanks to which they could aim a campaign exactly as needed. The brands made an effort to bring benefits to their consumers. We learned to think as a target group and think about what the user would obtain by using the product or service.

The individual consumer and his or her needs, which the ambitious brands aimed to fulfil, moved to the forefront. Marketers began to ask what people wanted and needed, what they liked, and then began to offer it to them.

Today we have to go even further. Every brand that wants long-term profits on the market must think in a broader context and go deeper. It is not sufficient that an individual is satisfied with the brand. The producers and providers of all products and services must think about

what they are doing, what their attitude is towards the environment and, mainly, what impact their work will have on a larger group of people – society as a whole. The duty of branding and marketing at present isn't only to sell the brand, it also has to strive to improve the life quality of its consumers.

It is a challenge and I often hear that it is impossible and it cannot be achieved. Then I mention the example of a beer brand, the target group of which were men, specifically fathers. In the country of its use, Mother's Day was a day off but Father's Day was a normal working day. The brand initiated a movement and petition and, finally, lobbied Parliamentary legislators to make Father's Day a day off too. Thus, now, one day per year, fathers can rest and spend time with their families and kids. Via their marketing campaign, the brand improved the quality of its consumers' lives.

If beer can do that, we can too.

## BIOGRAPHY

### WORKING EXPERIENCE

- Owner / Creative Director at Dätelina (1996 – 2000)
- Team Creative Director at Wiktor Leo Burnett (2000 – 2004)
- Founder / Partner at Respect APP ad agency (2004 – )
- Member of the Board of Directors of Voices ([www.voices.sk](http://www.voices.sk)) (2008 – )
- President of the Art Directors Club Slovakia (2009 – 2014)
- Owner / Producer Furča Film (2009 – )
- Member of the Media Committee of the Government Council of the Slovak Republic (2013 – )
- Member of the Arbitration Commission of the Council for Advertising (2013 – )
- President of KRAS - Club of Advertising Agencies Slovakia (2014 – )

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