

Editorial: *Romanian Nation Branding New Moment of Reference, the Challenge of Creating Social and Economic Value, and Improving Social Constructs and Paradigms*

Continuing to “devworking” – considering Deloitte’s Human Capital professionals’ future perspective view on learning and work as two constantly connected sides of every job (we referred to in our last HMM Journal issue) – ***it is our honor and pleasure*** (being well-known – by the practitioners – the need to deploy and coordinate nation-branding efforts, knowing who a nation is and where it wants to get to, on the basis of an inspiring and attainable strategic goal, increasing understanding between nations, engaging and doing culture and history together, giving an added value coming from a new general perception, using soft power by attraction and agenda setting and so on) ***to highlight the significant Romanian Nation branding new moment of reference generated by the Romanian President Klaus Werner Iohannis as the designated recipient of The International Charlemagne Prize of Aachen, April 2020***

(<https://holisticmarketingmanagement.ro/romanian-president-klaus-werner-iohannis-the-designated-recipient-of-the-international-charlemagne-prize-of-aachen-april-2020/>). ***On December 17, 2019, our Friend Prof. Dr. Bernd Hallier*** (Member of the Editorial Board of our HMM Journal) ***congratulated us on the designation of our President Klaus Werner Iohannis as recipient of the Karlspreis of the City of Aachen.***

It is worth to remembering that on June 1st, 2011, Romanian American University (RAU) awarded the prestigious “Diploma of Special Academic Merit” to Professor Bernd Hallier in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the promotion of the international transfer of know-how between business and universities, bringing more transparency on retail-research and retail-education, his successful involvement in the Social Dialogue project “Establishing a European Network for Anticipating skill needs in the commerce sector”, the attention paid to the evaluation of philosophies offered by the steady upgrade of retail-technologies, and his active involvement in developing cooperation between Germany and Eastern markets. *Diploma was handed over to Professor Bernd Hallier by RAU Rector Ovidiu Folcut.*



Prof. Dr. Bernd Hallier and RAU Rector Ovidiu Folcut

Well-known as the oldest and best-known prize awarded for the work done in the service of the European unification, this reputed Prize of Aachen is named for Charlemagne, the Frankish king revered by his contemporaries as the “Father of Europe” (<https://www.karlspreis.de/en/>).

Fifty years ago this reputed Prize of Aachen was awarded to the Commission of the European Community, a European institution for the first time, rather than to a person

(<https://www.karlspreis.de/en/charlemagne-prize/who-is-awarded-the-prize>). The Statement of the Board of Directors of the Society for the Awarding of the International Charlemagne Prize to our President Klaus Werner Iohannis is suggestive and impressive at the same time (<https://www.karlspreis.de/en/news/charlemagne-prize-2020>).

And being at the end of 2019 and looking globally at companies' challenges while facing 2020s, our first thought did go to what the reputed Boston Consulting Group (BCG) highlighted: *"Companies will thrive in the 2020s – and beyond – only if they have sustainable relationships with the social, political, and environmental systems they participate in"*. According to BCG, by creating social as well as economic value, companies must be part of the solution, competing on their ability to learn and adapting to constant change (survival depending on this ability), imagining totally new possibilities, and collaborating in business ecosystems, helped by technology to gain insight from data, adequately combining both artificial and human intelligence, decoding what works and what doesn't thanks to data and analytics, increasing the diversity of the workforce and creating an environment welcoming and encouraging new perspectives. (BCG, winning-the-20s, 2019) BCG is also attracting our attention on the fact that in this era of uncertainty and volatility in which is growing the gap between winners and losers, and talent is a scarce commodity, traditional managerial capabilities are challenged by fundamentally new competitive imperatives (for instance, to focus more on nurturing the organizational capabilities necessary to evolve and grow sustainably over time), being a true need for a reinvented enterprise by *adopting technologies for seamless learning, integrating machines and humans, embracing new ways of working, committing to "always-on" transformation, making diversity a business requirement, and combining business and social value*. (BCG, how-to/thrive-in-the-2020s, 2019)

And as we are witnessing Artificial Intelligence (AI) advancement, we fully agree with the opinion expressed at the end of November 2019 in the prestigious "European Business Review" with regard to the need for better frameworks to understand *"how to create value from changing human-AI relationships"*. (Esposito et al., 2019) In fact, the authors' conclusive thoughts are speaking for themselves, they pledging for truly understanding that *"the real power of this technology is not for the sake of technology, but for the improvement of social constructs and paradigms, currently so needy of a true reset button"*. According to their well-documented approach the expectation from AI is very clear, shaping the way in which people's needs are expressed, understood, and changed, being the organizations' demand and responsibility to understand both how to address those problems, and how any methods might create unintended consequences in turn.

In other words, this is the current context, and context always matters. Three years ago, the American Marketing Association (AMA) CEO, Russ Klein, showed that "Context is the last frontier for marketers who know that mobile ubiquity and wearables powered by the Internet of

Things are closing in on the holy grail of contextual understanding”. And as “Marketing has problems”, within that “context” underlined by AMA CEO, there were reviewed seven big problems in the Marketing Industry, Bernard Jaworski (the Peter F. Drucker Chair at the Drucker School of Management, and winner of all three major awards from the Journal of Marketing), Rob Malcolm and Neil Morgan, who were starting from the fact that identifying the highest value source/sources of growth for a brand, product or service, remains the proven and reproven foundational issue as having a disproportionate impact on the created value for a business. (Jaworski, Malcolm and Morgan, 2019)

Many years ago, the father of modern marketing, Philip Kotler (Drucker’s disciple) shortly defined marketing as the art of brand building. In August 2019, in The Marketing Journal, Donald Fomby was diving into several predictions and marketing trends CMOs should expect in 2020 concluding that “The Future is in Marketing”. (Fomby, 2019) While in November 2019, in the same Journal, Emmanuel Probst approached the topics of “Brand Hacks and the Search for Meaning”, recommending to make difference between a “fad” (which is meaningless), a “trend” (which is lasting longer than a fad and can potentially influence a market), and a “meaning” (personal, social, cultural, having a deeper impact on us, being consistent overtime, and driving us to do the things we do and buy), underlining that “*all brands can benefit from understanding meaning*”. (Probst, 2019) Only six days later, also in The Marketing Journal, in an article entitled “Competing on Stories: Marketing and Cultural Narratives” (a cultural narrative being seen as creating meaning for our place in the world, and providing a map for the journey; see the structure of a cultural narrative in the figure below), Christian Sarkar and Philip Kotler recommended brands to become more authentic, more human, more believable, the receiver’s worldview being influenced by myth, ideology, history, and identity. (Sarkar and Kotler, 2019)



Figure no. 1: Structure of a Cultural Narrative
Source: Sarkar, C. and Kotler, P. (2019). “Competing on Stories: Marketing and Cultural Narratives”, The Marketing Journal, November 19 (work cited)

And allow us to end by coming back to the above mentioned last dimension influencing the receiver's worldview, identity (which being the most personal is considered the most important), and recalling that on the cover of our book entitled "Sustainable Development: Principles and Action" (Beniamin Cotigaru, Theodor Purcărea, coordinators, Millenium Publishing House, May 2000; an interdisciplinary research representing a turning point in developing a national strategy for sustainable development) there is an image with the earth globe encircled by five words: Bucharest – Romania, National Identity, Integration, Globalization.



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