

Social Issues, for instance, estimates that nearly 2,000 individual and charitable organizations conduct nationwide fundraising in a market worth billions. Here, too, IMD carried out CI and CD projects for the German wing of the UN refugee agency, Doctors Without Borders and the German Workers' Welfare Association (AWO). The "meta-level" of service and the stories it generated helped make these NGOs truly distinct:

- the German arm of Doctors Without Borders expresses its worldwide emergency services with "Human. Unconditionally"
- the German wing of the UN refugee agency has positioned itself as the "advocate for refugees on behalf of the world"
- the AWO now speaks more decidedly, and with more emotion, as "the assertive advocate for social issues in policy-making."

What's more, by integrating the corporate or brand story into CI, the 5 levels of activity in strategic corporate and brand communications provide a narrative anchor for conversations in social media and Web 2.0 – where companies have little to no control. Embedded in comprehensive CI, the corporate or brand story builds a much-needed bridge between traditional communications and the dynamic world of Web 2.0.

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An interview with Helmut Bayer, managing director of the Steinbeis Enterprise TQU Business GmbH

“There’s no panacea”

Mr. Bayer, Bain & Company, a management consultancy, recently reported that managers are feeling increasingly underserved by management tools. Has this approach stopped being useful?

Overall, I believe that methods and tools are there to help managers make decisions with regard to strategy, products and processes. In my experience, people don't always fully understand why they're using tools. So tools are being used just for the sake of using tools – and the context and underlying idea fall by the wayside. As a result, success doesn't materialize, and the blame falls on the tools. Today's economic constraints give us the opportunity to whittle down the number of tools while integrating really useful ones into a more holistic approach. You see, it isn't just about leveraging the right tool; it's about being able to overcome challenges.

Rankings show that benchmarking is an uncontested leader when it comes to tools. Yet a majority of managers also reported dissatisfaction with it. Sounds like a paradox – can we take this as a cry for help from managers?

Benchmarking goes hand in hand with the hope of finding the philosopher's stone. When companies use benchmarking to seek out new momentum for the business, this means a lot of work and eats up resources because you need to compare your company to others. Since many companies recoil at this investment, the results they see are superficial at best.

Bain & Company make it clear that some tools do in fact work and enjoy a high level of satisfaction – as long as they're used to full capacity. So, there's a panacea after all?



Helmut Bayer

I've been a consultant, trainer and managing director for 20 years, and I've never encountered a tool that could be called a panacea. What I can say is that less is often more when these tools are used with the consistency and continuity that they deserve.

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