

EMERGENT, THE HEALTHY LIVING AGENCY

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# Winning in the Era of Food Culture Revolution

The marketing landscape is changing. The path to consumer engagement is shifting with it. Healthy lifestyle is driving this transformation. No other firm knows more about leveraging this insight to grow your business than we do.

For those working to build food, beverage and lifestyle brands or retail businesses, Emergent is the firm with the most innovative insights and strategies to help you navigate the new consumer landscape.





# Reaching Today's Consumer



## Food Culture

A permanent shift has occurred in our food culture. It's fueling a race to replace traditional purchase drivers of taste, price and convenience with new ones.

Now, consumers are responding to and purchasing products that mirror their culturally-influenced values and personally-held beliefs around:

- Health and Wellness
- Transparency
- Ethical behaviors
- Honest labeling
- Supply chain visibility
- Real food ingredients
- Brands built on a higher purpose and a recognizable, human friendly belief system

## Food Marketing

Twenty years ago food and beverage marketing was a mass media proposition: focused on tonnage of media spend – applied in a marketing environment controlled primarily by brands. Persuasion was the operating strategy. The Internet disrupted this entire eco-system:

- Mass media fell from grace as the world of 'new media' proliferated
- Consumers, tired of interruption-style marketing tactics
- Marketers apply traditional advertising strategies against a content-world that rejects it

## Taking Control

"A Deloitte study last year found **55%** of [TV] viewership is now delayed via DVRs, video-streaming subscriptions or other options. And that number rises to **72%** among millennials ages 14 to 25."

- Adweek, 1/11/16

## The Emergence of Digital Content Resistance

The promise of digitally enabled direct engagement has not generated anticipated results and ROI. Why? Consumers increasingly block or ignore much of the content that brands publish.

Brands are too preoccupied with media tools and platforms rather than brand meaning and purpose.



NOW, consumers are at the wheel. They control the kinds of content, branded or otherwise they wish to view and when.

- Messaging built without the filter of cultural relevance is falling on deaf ears.
- Savvy consumers of digital platforms now curate the kind of content they find meaningful and valuable.





## We Now Operate in the Relationship Economy

**Today, credibility, belief and trust are at the center of relevant engagement strategies.**

In parallel with food culture changes, new media and new paths to purchase, consumers **access useful** content that serves their interests and reinforces their personal values.

Brand relationships with consumers must now be:

- Created on foundations of respect
- Built on understanding of the consumers' interests, passions and concerns
- Crafted to offer more user help and less product hype (Help over Hype)
- Less transactional and product-centric

**Winners and losers will emerge as this transformation takes root.**

LOSERS: Legacy brands slow to respond take a back seat to new health-anchored, higher quality, clean ingredient brands

WINNERS: Mission-driven brands lead with their quality, transparency, and ingredient story

**The common thread for brands that are winning is their earnestness and efforts to truly care about improving the lives of their customers.**



## Innovative brands with a defined higher purpose and health story secure shelf space and consumer share –

1. Fast food chains face competition from higher quality options, plus pressure to fix nutritionals and eliminate unhealthy ingredients
2. Supermarkets witness massive shift to perimeter fresh aisles and prepared food cases, as center store declines as volume and profit generator
3. Competition for higher quality emerges with:
  - Online organic food purveyors
  - Meal kit companies
  - Restaurant takeout counters
  - Chef inspired quick-service chains
  - C-store fresh programs
  - Global menus from food trucks
  - Supermarkets battling restaurants for out-sourced prepared meals

Alignment with health, wellness and higher quality food preferences is essential to establishing trust and meaning with ever more discriminating, media savvy and skeptical consumers.

**Failure to adapt to this change is a recipe for declining shares, profit and relevancy.**





## New premium brands invade every relevant category and establish new ones

- **Plum® Organics** moves to secure its growing share of the organic baby food business
- **Annie's®** stretches into a wide variety of packaged convenience foods in grocery and freezer aisles with better ingredients and commitment to the organic ethos
- **Way Better® Snacks** pioneers sprouted grains in the snack and cracker business
- **Bare Bones® Broth** gains momentum in categories catering to both healthy beverage and culinary
- Plant-based beverages from **WhiteWave** ignite sales performance that far outpaces other players in dairy and leads to the **Danone** acquisition
- Big Food looks to capitalize: **General Mills**, **Campbell's®** and others create their own equity investment divisions to acquire innovation, mission, and ingredient stories they find harder to tell
- Staple Big Food brands like **PAM®** innovate to include Olive Oil and Coconut Oil varieties
- **EPIC®** becomes one of the early stars in **General Mills** buying spree, while **Unilever** gobbles up **Seventh Generation™** and **The Honest Company®** brand household and personal care companies
- The supermarket industry faces rapid transformation as middle of the road banners like **Dominick's®** disappear while higher quality, culinary adventure inspired retailers such as **Wegmans** and **Trader Joe's®** rapidly expand

## The future belongs to brands that...

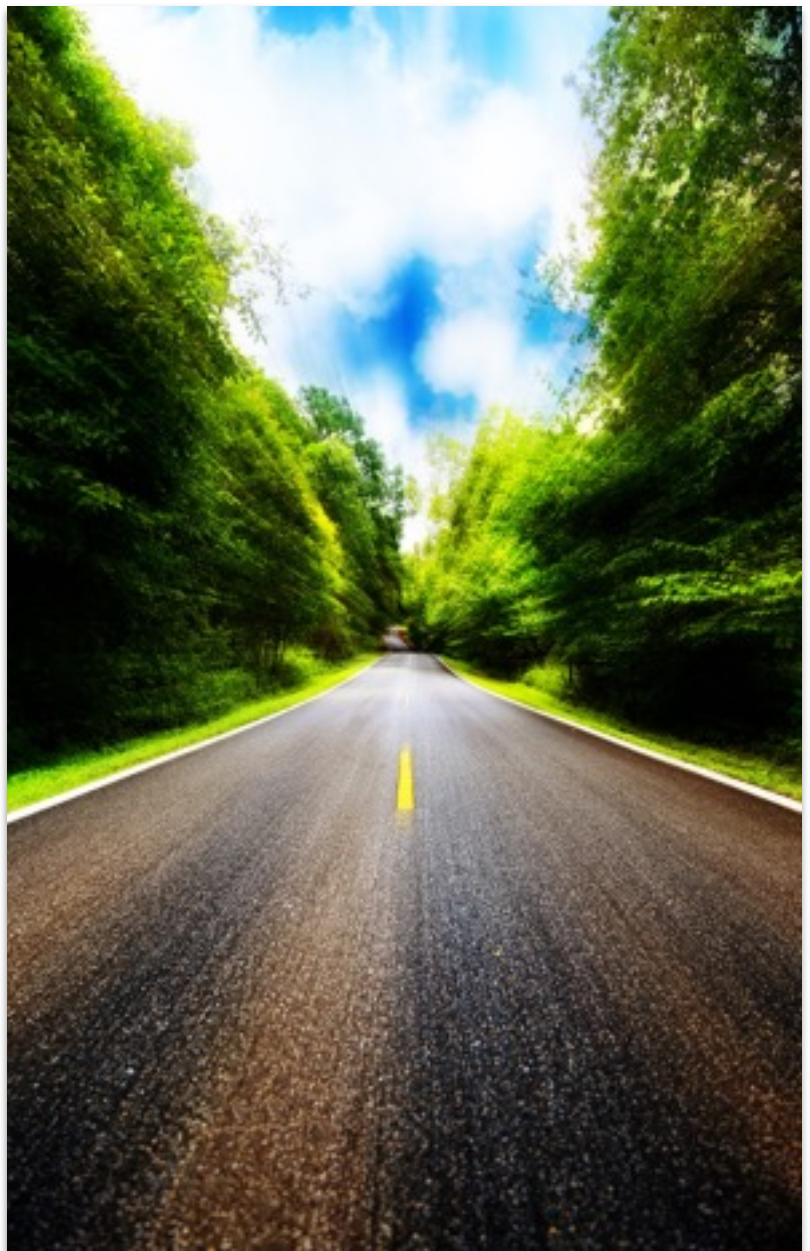
- Understand the *why* and *how* Higher Purpose must inform everything the company does, and stands for – a purpose that puts the consumer at the center of business and marketing strategy.
- Meet and exceed consumer demands for higher quality food and beverage experiences. The definition of quality now includes fresh, real, simple, local foods ethically and sustainably made with care and craftsmanship.
- Earn trust from transparency.

## The Road to New Relevancy

The new marketing toolbox approaches the brand relationship as a mutually beneficial proposition based on enabling, supporting and guiding the consumer's desire for a healthier, higher quality lifestyle.

Five keys to creating growth and relationship in the era of consumer control:

1. A Higher Purpose at the core of sound business strategy.
2. An overarching commitment to trust creation and transparency backed by standards and policies ensuring true north is followed consistently.
3. Engagement of influencers and experts who validate promises and commitments the company makes – providing proof of the value proposition.
4. Focus on how consumers want the outside world to see them using emotional cues and symbols which ultimately **drive** all brand decisions: Heart-over-Head.
5. Commitment to social engagement and community building as social proof is powerful evidence of outcome and truth.







**Here are the the strategic principles that drive growth in the era of consumer control:**

Relationship. Trust. Belief. Purpose. Proof. Transparency.  
Quality. Reciprocity. Education. Experience. Community.

The outcome is sustainable growth and engagement with consumers who “join” the brand as members of its community – and become advocates and ambassadors of the brand’s mission and ethos.

## **Navigating the Path to Food Marketing Transformation**

Turning any ship, no matter the size, is a major undertaking – even with the beacons of increased consumer affinity, product relevance and growth punctuating the need for a more meaningful connection with consumers and profitable course.

Some brands may need to start from scratch.

New brands may benefit from guidance by experienced hands.

Other brands may have viable assets, yet need support to coalesce and deploy to meet consumers where they are today.





## Navigating these waters requires an experienced crew

**Sargento®** needed to elevate and differentiate to connect with the growing quality-seeking, culinary-inspired cheese consumer. A new platform “mass artisanal” was developed and new value-added “Artisanal” product line developed to meet this growth segment.

**Nature’s Variety®** premium pet food needed strategic guidance into the emotional connection pet parents have with their four-legged family members, which led to a nutrition innovation called the Rotation Diet.

**Schuman Cheese’s** (maker of Cello® Cheese and Cello® Whisps) primary category was wrought with product fraud and mislabeling. Leading with transparency and integrity; and providing consumers with information to protect themselves with the assurance of a trust mark; elevated the conversation and de-positioned competitors.

The experienced team with **Emergent, The Healthy Living Agency**, charted these courses for these brands – with more powerful, relevant communications tools.



## Bold, defining moves require the courage to move confidently.

Emergent's team is dedicated exclusively to guiding brands through these changing tides.

### Diagnostic

- Consumer Insights
- Internal Audit
- SWOT Analysis
- Competitive Review
- Consulting Services
- Food Quality, Integrity & Protection

### Strategy

- Trend Analysis
  - Food & Beverage
  - Health & Wellness
  - Culinary
- Brand Sustainability
- Brand Platform
- Strategic Planning

### Marketing

- Consumer Personas
- Messaging
- Partnerships
- Brand Integration
- Experiential (Retail)
- Measurement

### Communications

- Branded Content
- Video
- Influencers & SMEs
- Earned Media & PR
- Social Media
- Graphic & Web Design
- Staff Engagement





To propel your brand and company in this new era of food marketing and the empowered consumer, visit the **[www.emergenthealthyliving.com](http://www.emergenthealthyliving.com)** or get in touch at **[info@emergenthealthyliving.com](mailto:info@emergenthealthyliving.com)**.

