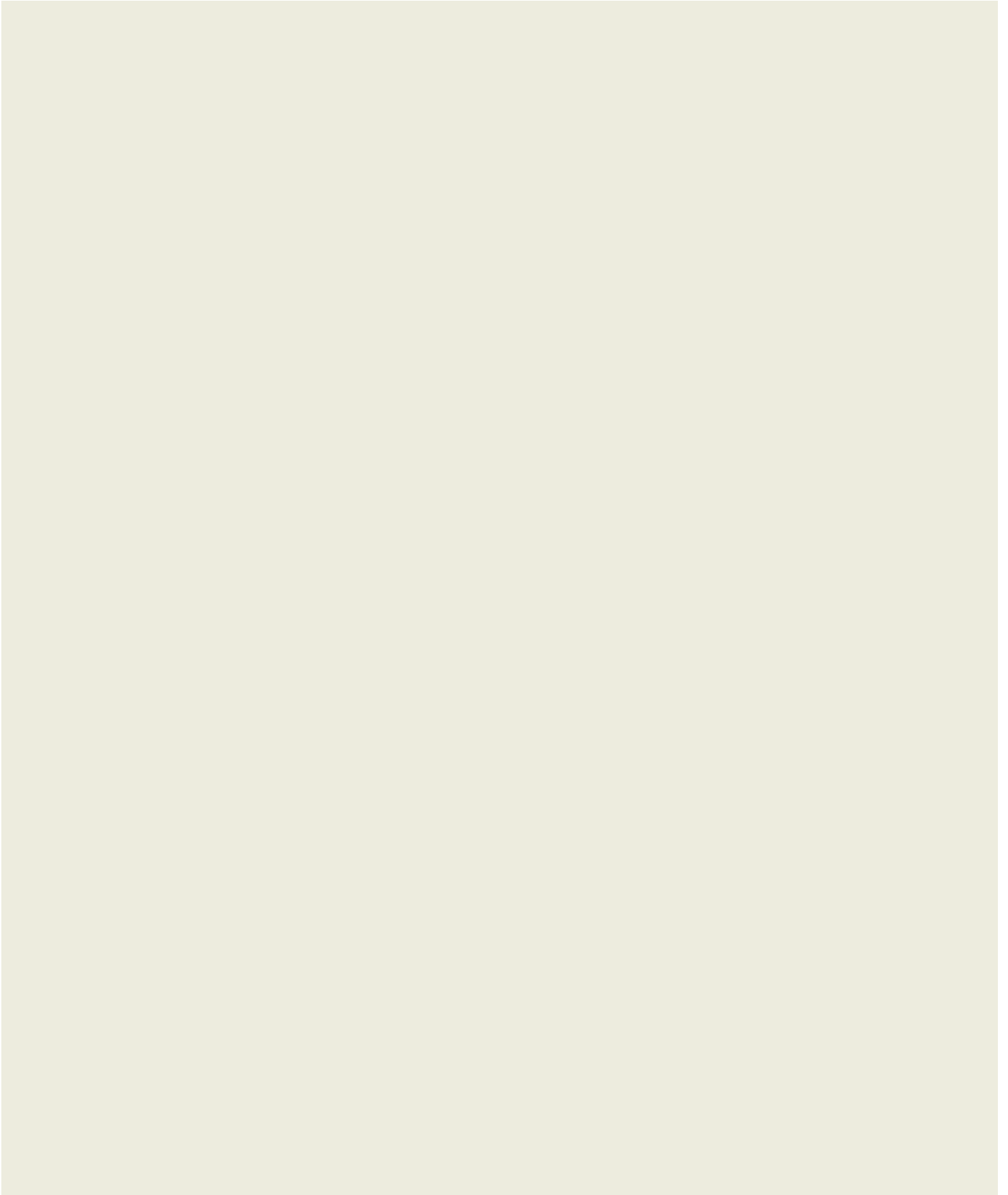


# *The Power and Potential of Purpose*



A selection of case studies showcasing how a Single Organizing Idea (SOI®) aligns values with purpose, informs strategy, drives growth and creates sustainable business success



**In a world of constant change and rising expectations, businesses that lack a clear, unifying purpose risk losing relevance.** A Single Organizing Idea (SOI) provides the strategic clarity and alignment needed to navigate complexity, drive sustainable growth, and create real value for all stakeholders. More than a mission statement or a marketing tool, an SOI embeds purpose into the very core of a business, ensuring that every decision, investment and action contributes to long-term success.

At Neil Gaught & Associates, we've helped organizations across industries harness the power of an SOI to sharpen their competitive edge, strengthen stakeholder relationships, and future-proof their business. These case studies showcase how leading companies have defined and implemented their SOI, turning purpose into a practical and profitable driver of performance.

For leaders looking to secure their company's relevance and resilience, the experiences shared here provide valuable insights into what's possible when purpose leads the way.

**ABET**  
BE CONFIDENT

**Organisation**  
ABET

**Website**  
abet.org

**Sector**  
**Accreditation**

**Country**  
USA

**Operations**  
Global

**Headcount**  
2,300

SOI	<b>Assuring confidence</b>
Positioning statement	We champion excellence worldwide. Our approach, the standards we set and the quality we guarantee, inspires confidence in those who aim to build a better world — one that is safer, more efficient, more comfortable and more sustainable.
Core values	<p><b>Authentic</b> Our international status as a leading world authority is underpinned by our unique heritage and the longevity of our relationships. By balancing objectivity with sensitivity, we instil trust and realise shared goals and mutual successes.</p> <p><b>Business-like</b> We are defined by our professional approach. Our shared dedication and total commitment to thoroughly planning and preparation ensure we deliver world-class results and satisfying experiences.</p> <p><b>Expert</b> Our expertise is based on our knowledge and understanding. By continually challenging ourselves to learn more about the changing needs of academe, industry and the world as a whole, we keep our finger on the pulse and our solutions relevant and compelling.</p> <p><b>Targeted</b> We set our own standards high. By being single-mindedly focused on constantly achieving new levels of excellence, we deliver results and reassurance for all. By continually measuring and monitoring our performance, we assess our progress and practice what we preach.</p>

Founded in 1932, ABET accredits university STEM programs. Widely regarded as setting the gold standard in the sector, ABET is the largest organization of its type in the world and serves over 812 universities in 32 countries.

Despite its success, ABET found itself under the microscope following the 2008 financial crisis. In an age of mounting austerity, heritage and scale could no longer be relied upon to justify its existence — ABET needed to be much clearer about its value and purpose.

**Approach**

ABET is a federation made up of 35 member societies. At the time the SOI research began, it had a Board made up of 55 individuals, 70 head office staff and over 2,200 volunteers. Included in a complex mix of direct and indirect stakeholders, were university deans, faculty leaders, parents, corporations, politicians, a curious media, and of course students from across the world.

In such circumstances it is impossible to engage with everyone, but working with ABET’s leadership, the SOI® team was able to engage with a spectrum of people from around the world using the SOI toolkit and harvest their opinions of ABET, its role and the future role of accreditation in general. Taken together with the benchmarking of peer organisations, communication and brand audits, surveys and workshops, a complete picture of ABET and its potential as a positive force for good was formed.

**Impact**

The outcome of the research helped the defining and holistic buy-in to an SOI, that for the first time in its history, succinctly described ABET’s value and core purpose in the modern world.

The results that come from systematic alignment with an SOI take time, effort, collaboration, leadership, investment, and belief, but already actions taken have resulted in a shake-up of ABET’s governance, the conceiving and implementation of innovation and staff engagement programs, the opening up of new partnership opportunities, realignment of the annual flagship event and a redefining of the role of the 200+ people who dedicate their time and expertise to help make STEM accreditation possible for those who will help make our world a safer, more efficient, more comfortable and sustainable place.

*"The most transformative experience was identifying our SOI and core values, which we have systematically woven into every aspect of our operations to ensure we are in the best place as a business to help make the world a better place."*

Michael Milligan, CEO



Organisation  
**DataTorque**

Website  
**datatorque.com**

Sector  
**Technology**

Country  
**New Zealand**

Operations  
**Global**

Headcount  
**30**

SOI	<b>Collective Success</b>
Positioning statement	Our single-minded purpose is to help small, developing economies move forward. By combining our unique Kiwi ingenuity with our determination to succeed, we work together to create focused, practical and sustainable solutions that deliver fast returns.
Core values	<p><b>Ingenuity</b> Our can-do approach and drive to look at the world in a different way sets us apart. By constantly challenging and questioning what we see we continually seek to improve what we do and how we do it for the benefit of all.</p> <p><b>Determination</b> We try harder. We strive to always do our best and ensure that every effort we make is our best effort. We recognise that by going out of our way to respond to the needs of others we are rewarded with mutual success.</p> <p><b>Together</b> We value the contributions of each other, our partners and those we work with around the world. By listening, by being transparent and open minded we build genuine, long-lasting and valuable relationships based on truth, respect and understanding.</p> <p><b>Focus</b> We believe that excellence and quality are achieved through focusing on what is required - and what is not. By applying our expertise to pinpoint what is needed we create leading, fit for purpose solutions that consistently do what they are designed to do.</p>

There are thousands of examples of small, privately own businesses doing good in the world. DataTorque is one of them. DataTorque uses technology to help developing countries advance by transforming their public revenue systems. Specifically, it develops, implements and supports IT systems for tax, customs and transport authorities which ensures countries are able to collect and manage essential tax revenues.

It's a highly successful small business that has been making a difference in the world while turning a consist annual profit for over twenty years. Bill Chatwin, one of the two founding directors, put the success down to the single-minded pursuit of "doing one thing, and doing it really well". The challenge was while this was clearly a winning strategy nobody knew what 'the one thing' was, nor how, why and where it was implemented.

**Approach**

The identification of that 'one thing' that the business could rally around and deliver began with the drawing up of a straightforward project plan that explained the objective, process and expected outputs from each of the SOI tools employed. Interviews, workshops, benchmarking and research into the nature and likely future direction of the sector was carried out. Over a period of eight weeks, a complete picture of DataTorque and it's ecosystem was established out of which the key ingredients to DataTorque's success were identified and defined.

*“Our SOI has proven to be a powerful and effective tool that helps us come to decisions quickly and easily time and again.”*

Bill Chatwin, CEO, DataTorque

**Impact**

When people know about the positive impact of their work it empowers them. This is the case with DataTorque. While the pursuit of 'doing one thing and doing it well' was established the what, the why and the how were not. In two word's DataTorque's SOI 'Collective Success' brought into sharp focus what the firm was in the business of doing, why it was doing it and how. It's an SOI that's easy to explain, to feel a part of, and importantly, measure.

DataTorque's SOI is helping ensure the firm continues to thrive from it's core. Together with the values that support it, the SOI® is continually referenced to help drive new efficiencies, reduce costs, establish trust with stakeholders, explain new initiatives and drive up levels of service. Like all SOI's it wasn't made up — it was simply, and collectively, discovered and defined.



Organisation  
Euro Pool Group

Website  
europoolgroup.com

Sector  
Logistics

Country  
Netherlands

Operations  
International

Headcount  
700

SOI	<b>Maximising Circular Value</b>
Positioning statement	Our relentless pursuit of a better way drives efficiencies that benefit all. By continuously seeking to understand what matters most, we deliver sustainable solutions that can be depended upon to maximise value.
Core values	<p><b>Drive</b> Our can-do attitude drives us to perform at a level that exceeds expectation. By being determined in our approach and clear about our objectives we overcome challenges that stand in the way of progress.</p> <p><b>Shared success</b> We believe that when the concerns of others are put before our own we achieve more. By working together to achieve our goals the value of our success is shared.</p> <p><b>Curiosity</b> We advance by listening to and learning from the world around us. By constantly keeping our fingers on the pulse of change we manage our future, adapt our approach, improve our ideas and grow.</p> <p><b>Reliability</b> We are completely accountable for the actions and decisions we make. By being totally transparent in what we do and how we do it we build trust and underpin confidence in what we deliver.</p>

Euro Pool Group is the largest logistics service provider of reusable packing trays in the European fresh fruit and vegetable supply chain. It operates 73 service centres in 18 countries for clients in 27 countries. It's a large medium-sized business with a critical need to ensure it stays ahead when it comes to matters concerning sustainability.

But while there are practical reasons why Euro Pool System needs to have a sustainable SOI® at its core, there are also emotional ones too. The desire to do the right thing, to use business to push the boundaries of what can be achieved, and to ensure positive outcomes today and tomorrow, came from a CEO and senior team motivated to contribute positively to a future of shared success, both for the business and those that rely upon it.

**Approach**

A smart project plan, efficient use of resources, teamwork and engagement with key stakeholders using a variety of SOI® tools and approaches, helped to quickly identify Euro Pools' unique opportunity to put a difference making SOI at its core.

**Impact**

How to make that difference a reality was explained and experienced through a program of interactive, hands-on workshops where staff teams were introduced to the SOI and then given the opportunity to consider what they would recommend as a plan of action in their part of the business; quite literally what

*“Single Organizing Idea is a very powerful tool. It forces you to combine the business purpose and sustainability goal of your company and to take these into the heart of your business strategy.”*

Gerjo Scheringa, CEO, Euro Pool Group

initiatives they would start, keep or stop in order to ensure maximum circular value for the business — and its stakeholders. As in other businesses that have experienced the effect of an SOI, combined these initiatives demonstrate the potential of it to help identify what possibilities look like. Prioritised and acted upon it shows the power of an SOI® to make possibilities into realities.

‘Maximising Circular Value’ is a rallying call that has united a forward thinking business around a common cause. It’s a crystal clear statement of intent and it is used daily in every aspect and function of the business to ensure the decisions the business makes consistently result in positive outcomes that advance the business and the ecosystem of which it is a critical part.



**Organisation**  
**Global Alliance of**  
**National Human**  
**Rights Institutions**

**Website**  
**ganhri.org**

**Sector**  
**Human Rights**

**Country**  
**Switzerland**

**Operations**  
**Global**

SOI	<b>Protect and Promote</b>
Positioning statement	Our core purpose is to promote, strengthen and protect National Human Rights Institutions. By combining the reach of our unique network with our understanding and diplomacy, we work free from influence to advance human rights and help build a better world.
Core values	<p><b>Connected</b>                  Through our inclusive approach, diverse reach, and unique relationships we facilitate greater understanding, cooperation and participation. By reaching out and sharing our combined knowledge and promoting best practice, we advance our network and enhance its credibility.</p> <p><b>Measured</b>                  We are clear in our objective and balanced in our approach. By harnessing hard evidence with diplomacy we apply the collective intelligence of our network and the strength of our commitment.</p> <p><b>Independent</b>                  We exercise our objectivity to identify realistic solutions that deliver practical outcomes. Free from discrimination or influence, and without fear or favour, we actively engage with our partners to seek truth and mutual satisfaction.</p> <p><b>Success</b>                  By engaging across institutions and working together we focus our actions to foster better outcomes. Acting as a catalyst, we seek to facilitate cooperation by aligning our efforts to champion participation and contribution to help realise our collective success.</p>

The Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI), formerly known as the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions, sometimes shortened to the International Coordinating Committee (ICC), is a global network of national human rights institutions (NHRIs) – administrative bodies. It changed its name in 2018.

GANHRI coordinates the relationship between NHRIs and the United Nations human rights system. It is unique as the only non-UN body whose internal accreditation system, based on compliance with the 1993 Paris Principles, grants access to UN committees.

**Approach**

Behind the name change, reconfiguring the organisation had been a long and frustrating one. The objectives had been to:

- Strengthen the collective voice of the national human rights institutions
- Ensure the ICC’s organizational effectiveness
- Assure the on-going partnership with the UN

But without an agreed methodology that could bring all the members together, the ICC found itself in a protracted situation that constantly ran the risk of being derailed.

The practical, inclusive and collaborative nature of the SOI approach provided the breakthrough. Employing a variety of SOI tools, we were able to engage with a complex network of stakeholders spread across the globe in a program specifically designed to listen, collate and understand. Armed with the insights only an independent body could gather, we were able to present a logically robust hypothesis that concluded in an SOI Strategic Framework that helped navigate the organisation towards locking in its core purpose and defining the values necessary to ensure its consistent and sustained delivery.

**Impact**

The solution was the result of holistic buy-in, and with the outcome a came a sense of shared success . On the launch of GANHRI its very first Chairperson – Beate Rudolf — captured the spirit of the revived organisation and what had made it possible: “Launching GANHRI is about bringing across our particular strength as a connected and collaborative alliance: The strength of our knowledge of the human rights situation on the ground and of the challenges to implement human rights domestically. And the strength of our independent and measured advice on how to create sustainable solutions to human rights problems”.



**Organisation**  
**Global Communities**

**Website**  
**globalcommunities.org**

**Sector**  
**Development**

**Country**  
**USA**

**Operations**  
**Global**

**Headcount**  
**1600**

SOI	<b>Partners for Good</b>
Positioning statement	By cultivating enduring relationships with the people we serve, we catalyse long-lasting, sustainable change in low-income communities around the world.
Core values	<p><b>Committed</b> We do what we do because it is the right thing to do. We work with passion, enthusiasm, a belief in our mission and in our people; we are determined to ensure our work results in tangible, long-term good worldwide.</p> <p><b>Genuine</b> We work through relationships based on trust, respect and equity. We are diplomatic and sensitive to cultures. We work and employ locally. We believe that equality, shared responsibility and complementary strengths are at the core of our partnerships.</p> <p><b>Connected</b> We bring together communities, the private sector, governments, organizations and the full range and resources of our networks to improve dialogue, create prosperity, stability, peace and positive change. We learn from each other and we embrace technology as a means to better connect the world around us.</p> <p><b>Purposeful</b> We are a resolute, forward-looking organization that embraces change in the world and among ourselves to drive new ways to achieve our mission. We bring clarity to complex issues. We are smart and responsive, business-like, and determined to innovate and find ways to partner more effectively for the benefit of our community worldwide.</p>

Global Communities is an international development and humanitarian aid organization that operates in approximately 30 countries per year.

The challenge was to define an SOI to help articulate a purpose and positioning for an organization keen to have an even greater impact on the world. Established in 1952 as a US housing foundation, Global Communities evolved into a major international development NGO focused on improving the social and economic fortunes of the poor.

After years of success, it found itself in a sector that, post-2008 and the onset of austerity, faced major challenges. To compete for donor funding, the best people, and, critically important private sector partnerships, it needed to sharpen its focus and be crystal clear about the value it was delivering to the world.

**Approach**

Engaging with key stakeholders around the world from the start using a variety of SOI tools and approaches, helped identify and define a compelling SOI strategic framework that captured the truth of the organisation. With the SOI ‘Partners for Good’ at its core, explained through a straight forward positioning statement, and underpinned by a set of practical values, we created a simple framework that could be utilised by everyone working for and with Global Communities to achieve shared objectives.

*“Wherever we are in the world, our Single Organizing Idea is at the heart of what we do — guiding our decision making and inspiring us to be at our best.”*

David Weiss CEO, Global Communities

**Impact**

Global Communities’ SOI has been a success in large part because the stakeholders themselves were involved in the process from the very outset. Adoption of the SOI® and the commitments it demanded was relatively straightforward, despite the geographic spread of the organization.

The launch of SOI led directly to new, meaningful relationships being formed with players in the private and government sectors in countries where Global Communities operates. Staff engagement and recruitment policies are aligned with the SOI, as is the approach to the research and development of new ideas. It’s a work in progress, but the SOI has been embedded and is helping the organization to continually improve and achieve its objectives around the world.



Organisation  
**Hawkins**

Website  
**Hawkins.co.nz**

Sector  
**Construction**

Country  
**New Zealand**

Operations  
**National**

Headcount  
**700**

SOI	<b>Building Better Communities</b>
Positioning statement	We are totally committed to combining our progressive heritage with our tradition for working with others, to deliver superior results that challenge the status quo, and help communities thrive socially and economically.
Core values	<p><b>Passionate</b> Our strength lies in our staunch belief that the quality of our work and the way we go about it makes a long-term difference. Our dedication and determination ensures that we always deliver what we say we are going to deliver.</p> <p><b>Total team</b> We work together to earn the trust of others by actively partnering, respecting, engaging and integrating. By sharing our expertise, approaches and knowledge we help create energised partnerships that achieve more.</p> <p><b>Forward-thinking</b> We challenge the way things are done today and promote new and enterprising ideas that will propel our company, and our industry forward tomorrow. By being constantly vigilant and open minded we advance our knowledge, processes and thinking for the benefit of all.</p> <p><b>Success</b> We value and are driven by the positive impact of success. We understand that by constantly striving to achieve exceptional levels of quality in all that we do we contribute to the wealth of our company and society.</p>

Forward-thinking businesses understand that what matters most is a shared sense of purpose that not only results in fiscal success but contributes to a world that needs the power of business to help overcome its many challenges.

Changing a successful but fundamentally traditional business, to align with this new way of thinking and become an international business driven by a 21st-century core purpose was at the heart of the challenge faced by the incoming CEO of New Zealand’s second largest infrastructure and construction company, Hawkins.

**Approach**

Research together with buy-in is especially important when the aim is to persuade people to shift their position and change. People need to be convinced that the strategy that is being recommended

*“Outstanding success was achieved. The Core Playbook precisely describes the processes that Neil took me through with two companies. Quite simply — it works.”*

Geoff Hunt, CEO, Hawkins

is based on sound evidence. Our approach to identifying and defining an SOI for Hawkins mixed our proven tools and methodological process with the expertise of independent consultants with many years of experience probing, challenging and unearthing key insights. Understanding stakeholder agendas and the influences that shape opinion; considering future trends and the position of stakeholders in the ecosystem and asking the right people the right questions, were all key to understanding where Hawkins is positioned today and ideally how it could pivot and position itself as a modern business in the future.

**Impact**

The outcome of the research allowed the presentation of carefully explained options followed by a single positive recommendation. At the core of the recommendation was a powerful SOI - ‘Building Better Communities’.

Embedding an SOI and aligning everything and everyone with it takes time, effort and investment in new approaches and organisational development. But there are quick wins too — “Building Better Communities sums up in a single stroke what Hawkins is all about” said one employee on its launch. Hawkins’ SOI has since positioned it to win valuable projects, created grass-roots employee led initiatives, propelled the company and communities forward, and united its partners and clients.



Organisation  
**Orcon**

Website  
**orcon.net.nz**

Sector  
**Telecommunications**

Country  
**New Zealand**

Operations  
**National**

Headcount  
**150+**

SOI	<b>Think Different</b>
Positioning statement	Our belief in the future gives us the confidence to challenge the conventional. By consistently delivering extraordinary excellence through everything that we do, we will build value and enduring affinity with those that seek an alternative way.
Core values	<p><b>Trusted</b> We express ourselves and engage with others in a way that sets us apart. By sharing our knowledge and by using our intuitive humanity to listen, to learn and to probe we build respect and genuine relationships that last.</p> <p><b>Optimistic</b> We have confidence in what the future holds. Our forward looking attitude and our leadership generates belief which stimulates, reassures and encourages those around us.</p> <p><b>Premium</b> We operate at and believe in a higher level. We reject the average in favour of pursuing the unique. Our attention to detail, to the beauty of simplicity and to valuing how much things look as well as work creates desire and generates reward.</p> <p><b>Alternative</b> We pride ourselves and are excited by our natural ability to look at the world in a different way. By constantly challenging and reinventing ourselves we remain on the edge — fresh and relevant.</p>

In an industry dominated by blanket advertising and a reputation for poor service, Orcon found itself at a crossroads. While historically known for its technical expertise, innovation, and rebellious spirit, the company had expanded through acquisitions, diluting its brand identity. With customer loyalty waning and price competition intensifying, Orcon needed to redefine itself to stay relevant in an evolving market.

**Approach**

An extensive research phase engaged stakeholders across the business, uncovering critical insights about both the challenges and hidden opportunities. The process revealed that Orcon’s strength lay in its heritage—technical excellence, a culture of innovation, and a deep connection with its tech-savvy audience. The strategy focused on rekindling these values through a contemporary brand positioning that celebrated ‘cool geeks’ and their passion for digital life.

This approach led to tangible initiatives that reinforced Orcon’s credibility. The ‘Digital Life’ platform was introduced, offering customers curated content on technology, gaming, and software, directly contributed by Orcon’s staff. This not only showcased the company’s expertise but also fostered community engagement and trust.

Internally, Orcon embraced a customer-first service model. Every staff member was made directly accessible, complete with photos and contact details, and premium customers could receive in-person technical support. The company culture was also revitalised, with an open, creative work environment featuring gaming hubs, collaboration spaces, and an innovative internal communication system.

**Impact**

The shift from competing on price alone to positioning Orcon as a premium alternative brought substantial benefits. The company experienced an increase in customer loyalty, industry recognition, and employee satisfaction. Staff retention improved, customer numbers grew, and Orcon re-established itself as a leader in innovation and service excellence.

Aligning the brand with authentic values and a differentiated customer experience proved to be a winning strategy. Orcon’s transformation demonstrated that a clear identity, backed by meaningful action, can drive commercial success even in a highly competitive market.



Organisation  
**Housies**

Website  
**housies.co.nz/**

Sector  
**Housing**

Country  
**New Zealand**

Operations  
**National**

Headcount  
**7**

SOI	<b>Democratising Ownership</b>
Positioning statement	<p><b>We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to take ownership of their future.</b></p> <p>By enabling access to property investment and participation in home ownership — regardless of income or background — we unlock potential, build confidence and create the conditions for lasting personal and collective progress. Empowerment is central to how we design our platform, support our Guardians and deliver value across our ecosystem.</p>
Core values	<p><b>Empowerment</b> We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to take ownership of their future.</p> <p>By enabling access to property investment and participation in home ownership — regardless of income or background — we unlock potential, build confidence and create the conditions for lasting personal and collective progress. Empowerment is central to how we design our platform, support our Guardians and deliver value across our ecosystem.</p> <p><b>Equity</b> We believe fairness must be built into the system — not left to chance.</p> <p>By levelling the playing field and removing unnecessary barriers, we ensure that everyone — especially those priced out of traditional pathways — can take part and benefit. Equity drives every decision we make, from who we build for to how we govern, price and scale our offering.</p> <p><b>Collective Good</b> We believe that shared ownership creates shared value.</p> <p>By aligning the interests of Guardians, investors, developers and communities, we foster a model where everyone can contribute to — and benefit from — positive, long-term outcomes. We are building more than homes; we are building a culture of care, connection and mutual responsibility.</p> <p><b>Future Focus</b> We believe in building systems that stand the test of time.</p> <p>By thinking beyond the immediate and designing for intergenerational benefit, we ensure our impact lasts well beyond the first transaction. From sustainable home standards to long-term maintenance and governance, we take a future-first approach to everything we do.</p>

Housies is a bold and imaginative start-up addressing New Zealand’s urgent housing affordability crisis. By enabling fractional ownership of high-quality housing, it opens new pathways for people traditionally locked out of the market, creating stability and opportunity for individuals while delivering wider social impact.

**Approach**

NG&A worked with the Housies team to define a Single Organizing Idea (SOI®) that could align commercial goals with social purpose. Through a structured workshop, we identified the tangible and intangible drivers of value — from regulatory compliance and liquidity tools to empowerment, wellbeing, and

financial confidence — and built a framework to guide governance, culture and growth.

**Impact**

The SOI now acts as both a strategic foundation and a practical management tool. It informs decisions on partnerships, investment, and operations, ensuring commercial choices remain aligned with long-term social ambition. With this clarity, Housies is positioned not just as a new marketplace, but as a catalyst for generational change in housing.



**Organisation**  
Upside Youth Mentoring

**Website**  
upside.org.nz

**Sector**  
Youth wellbeing/social impact

**Country**  
New Zealand

**Operations**  
Auckland

**Headcount**  
Small team + volunteer network

SOI	Empowering Belief
Positioning statement	<p>We believe every young person deserves the chance to grow up with belief, belonging and hope.</p> <p>By providing consistent, high-quality mentoring we restore confidence, strengthen emotional resilience and build the foundations for lifelong wellbeing.</p> <p>Through forging enduring, meaningful relationships, we help everyone find reward in human connection — enabling them to discover what it means to belong, believe and contribute to a better future.</p>
Core values	<p><b>Commitment</b> We believe in the potential of people and the power of possibility — that commitment is the catalyst for progress and transformation. When we start with commitment, we unlock capability, trust and growth — enabling everyone involved with Upside to see what's possible and act with confidence.</p> <p><b>Belonging</b> We believe connection and inclusion are the foundations of wellbeing — everyone deserves to feel seen, valued and part of something greater. Belonging turns intention into community. It's how trust is built, difference is respected and collective strength takes root.</p> <p><b>Courage</b> We believe progress demands courage — to show up, to persist and to speak up for what matters. Courage is what transforms conviction into action. It gives us the resilience to stay true to our purpose, even when the path ahead is uncertain.</p> <p><b>Care</b> We believe care is strength — it's what turns empathy into action and good intentions into real change. Care shapes how we listen, respond and deliver. It keeps people at the centre of our decisions and ensures every outcome reflects humanity as well as quality.</p>

Upside Youth Mentoring is a high-performing, relationship-driven organisation supporting young people across Aotearoa to build confidence, resilience and hope.

Operating in one of the most challenging youth-wellbeing contexts in the developed world — where New Zealand ranks last for youth mental wellbeing and fourth lowest overall for child wellbeing — Upside delivers a proven early-intervention mentoring model that restores trust, connection and belonging for young people who need it most.

Despite being small and under-recognised, Upside consistently “punches above its weight”: high match retention, strong social-return-on-investment, and a mentoring approach that changes the trajectory of young lives through deep, consistent, human connection.

**Approach**

NG&A worked with Upside to identify and define a Single Organizing Idea (SOI®) that could unify its internal culture, elevate its external voice and strengthen its strategic direction. The process combined:

- Desk research into New Zealand’s youth-wellbeing crisis and the fragmented community-sector landscape

- A full-team SOI workshop, including objects, prompt-card and tangible/intangible qualities exercises
- Interviews with internal leaders, mentors and external stakeholders
- Qualitative synthesis to uncover Upside’s emotional core and strategic differentiators

Across every insight source, a consistent truth emerged: Upside’s power lies in its humanity — in showing up, believing in people and building relationships that create lasting emotional and social resilience. This foundation enabled NG&A to build a strategic framework centred on belief, belonging and the measurable impact created through long-term mentoring relationships.

**Impact**

Upside is positioned for sustainable growth, increased visibility and stronger partnerships while protecting the heart of what makes it special: the transformative power of human connection. Upside is now equipped not only to support more young people — but to shape the national conversation about how New Zealand can rebuild youth wellbeing through relationships, resilience and belief.

# Client list

For almost three decades, *Neil Gaught has been at the forefront of the development of brand and purpose thinking*, delivering creative and strategic solutions for often complex challenges faced by businesses, governments, and NGOs worldwide.

His work spans diverse industries and regions, *uniting purpose-driven thinking and innovation with practical execution* to drive growth and meaningful impact.

AA (UK) – *Automobile Association*  
Aalborg Portland (Denmark) – *Cement company*  
AACSB (USA) – *Accreditation agency*  
ABET (USA) – *Accreditation agency*  
AMI (NZ) – *Insurance company\**  
ABTA (UK) – *Travel association*  
Alliance for Financial Inclusion (Malaysia) – *Policy*  
Anglo American (UK) – *Mining*  
BBC – *Television broadcaster*  
Baobab Express (Benin) – *Bus company\**  
Barclays Bank (UK) – *Bank*  
BBC Technologies (UK) – *Blueberry technology*  
Best Western Hotels (UK) – *Hotel group*  
BG Group (UK) – *Energy provider*  
BP (UK) – *Oil and gas company\**  
British Tourist Authority (UK) – *National tourist board*  
BT (UK) – *Telecommunications company*  
BTC/CTB (Belgium) – *International development agency*  
Business Link (UK) – *National business advice network*  
Danone/Bledina (France) – *Food corporation\**  
Debswana (Botswana) – *Diamond mining company\**  
CARE (USA) – *INGO*  
Catholic Relief Services (USA) – *ING*  
Community Clothing (UK) – *Clothing retailer*  
Danish Human Rights Institute (Denmark) – *Human rights agency*  
DataTorque (NZ) – *Technology business*  
ELF Oil (France) – *Petroleum company*  
European Packaging Holdings (Netherlands) – *Packaging company*  
Euro Pool Group (Netherlands) – *Logistics company*  
Financial Times (UK) – *Newspaper publisher*  
GANHRI (Switzerland) – *Global human rights network*  
Gates Foundation (USA) – *Foundation*  
GiZ (Germany) – *National aid agency*  
Global Communities (USA) – *INGO*  
Grey Global Group (USA) – *Advertising agency*  
Hawkins (NZ) – *Construction company*  
Heidelberg (Germany) – *Printing press manufacturer*  
Housies (NZ) – *Social Housing*  
Kordia (NZ) – *Technology company*  
Labcraft (UK) – *Lighting manufacturer*  
Lacoste (France) – *Clothing retailer\**  
Landmark (UK) – *Housing Association*  
Lord Chancellor's Department (UK) – *Government department*  
McElroys (NZ) – *Law firm*  
Merrill Lynch Investment Managers (USA) – *Investment bank*  
Mobas (UK) – *Advertising agency*  
Ministry of Defence (UK) – *Government ministry*  
NatWest (UK) – *Bank*  
NCARB (USA) – *Accreditation agency*  
Nord Anglia (UK) – *Education services company*  
NZTE (NZ) – *Government ministry*  
NZ Human Rights Commission (NZ) – *Human rights agency*  
OECD (France) – *Intergovernmental agency*  
Orcon (NZ) – *Broadband provider*  
Parity (UK) – *Technology company*  
Pitman (UK) – *Training company*  
Racal Avionics (UK) – *Defence company*  
Reebok (UK) – *Footwear company*  
Scottish Power (UK) – *Energy provider\**  
Standard Chartered Bank (UK) – *Bank\**  
Tātaki Auckland Unlimited (NZ) – *Development agency*  
The Building Intelligence Group (NZ) – *Project management company*  
The World Bank (Multinational) – *International financial institution*  
UNDP (Multinational) – *Development aid agency*  
Unilever (UK) – *FMCG company*  
UNHCR (Multinational) – *Human rights agency*  
Upside Youth Mentoring (NZ) – *Youth wellbeing*  
Virgin interactive (UK) – *Video game publisher*  
Vitas (USA) – *Financial inclusion INGO*  
Wagon (UK) – *Automobile parts manufacturer*  
Wellcome Genome Campus (UK) – *Scientific research facility*  
Which? (UK) – *Consumers association*  
Zed (USA) – *Events company*

\*Indicates projects delivered with partner organisations



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