How to write a brand manifesto—Top tips and examples

Category: Strategy
written by Stewart Hodgson | 4 November 2024

Learning how to write a brand manifesto is one of many crucial business development steps a lot of leaders overlook. More than just another document, your company manifesto identifies your brand purpose, vision statement, and mission, describing why your organization exists.

Essentially, a strong brand manifesto tells your target audience, employees, and other stakeholders why they should care about your business.

In a few well-chosen sentences, you outline exactly what your brand stands for, its core values, and the impact its going to have on people's lives. Employees look to this document to determine how they should represent your brand, and customers use it to understand your brand essence.

While designing brand manifestos *sounds* simple enough, it's often trickier than it seems. Distilling the core components of your brands into a powerful tool and guiding force for your community can be complicated. Fortunately, we're here to help.

Here's your complete guide to writing your brand's manifesto.

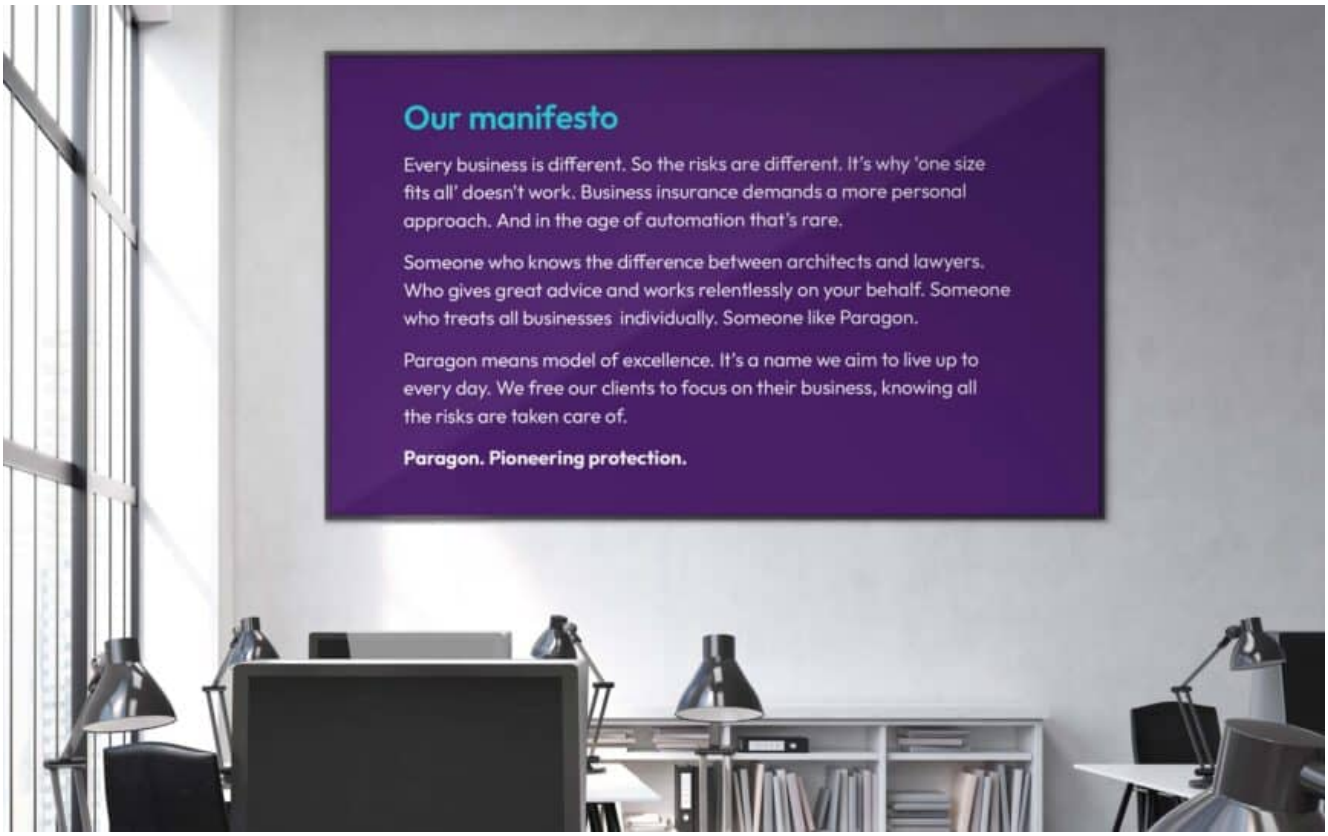
What is a brand manifesto?

A brand manifesto or corporate manifesto is a simple document that describes whyyour business exists. It highlights your brand's purpose, your values, and mission statement in a simple, concise manner, helping you build an emotional connection with the right people.

A company's brand manifesto acts as a North Star, creating an emotional story based on a company's vision statement, values, and mission statement.

Not only do great manifestos help you to capture the attention of potential customers, but they can help attract top talent to your organization, and inspire investors to support you.

As a quick example, Paragon's brand manifesto highlights the company's focus on freeing people to focus on growing their business, rather than responding to endless risks.



This compelling brand manifesto tells customers that the company doesn't just sell insurance, it sells peace of mind, business protection, and liberation. It also tells employees that their focus should be on putting the customer first, and making a positive impact in the industry.

Brand manifesto vs mission

statement

Notably, a mission statement forms a crucial part of your company's manifesto. Your mission statement explains what your company is, and why it exists. However, a full brand manifesto is more than just your mission statement.

A brand manifesto is an overarching declaration of your brand identity, combining various different statements and ideas that contribute to your company's essence. It integrates your mission statement, vision statement, values, guiding principles, and more.

Why are brand manifestos important?

The power of a manifesto can be difficult to understand at first. You may already have a document outlining your brand's mission, and your core company values. Learning how to write a brand manifesto might initially seem like a waste of time.

However, a brand manifesto helps to bring these crucial elements together, to refine and clarify your brand identity.

A compelling brand manifesto is a powerful tool to enhance your branding efforts. When your employees, stakeholders, and customers all understand your company's goals and aspirations, you can ensure brand consistency.

Your corporate manifesto gives your team a clear direction to follow when you're investing in new branding efforts, creating marketing campaigns, and producing new products.

At the same time, a brand manifesto helps to ensure you're building a brand and marketing materials that elicit an emotional response from customers, new business partners, and investors.

Remember, it's not just 82% of shoppers that want companies to

share their core values. Everyone who contributes to your brand, wants to know they have common ground with your organization. They want to see evidence that you share the same priorities and beliefs.

An authentic manifesto showcases the heart and soul of your company, building connections that deliver better results than any traditional marketing campaign.

How to write a brand manifesto: The step-by-step guide

So, how do you write a brand manifesto? If you already have a written statement outlining your company's mission and vision, you can use that as a starting point. But, if you're starting from scratch, either with a rebrand or a new company, there are a few key steps to take.

Step 1: Identify your company's "why"

The first step in learning how to write a brand manifesto is discovering your "why".

Your brand's purpose is the foundation of your entire corporate manifesto. If you don't have a clear purpose, then your prospective customers, employees, and stakeholders will assume you only care about one thing: making money.

Obviously, every business wants to make a profit, but great leaders know if they want to connect with people on an emotional level, they need to look beyond the dollar signs.

Imagine if Tesla had said its purpose was just to be the most profitablecompany in the automotive industry. Your audience wants to know why they should care about your organization.

Are you addressing a serious problem they're facing, like Tesla attempting to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, and

protect the planet? Are you helping them to achieve an important goal, like Slack, attempting to improve communication between teams?

The easiest way to uncover your "why" is to ask your founders why they started the business in the first place. What inspired them to create that specific product or deliver that particular service?

Why do they want to keep moving forward in the industry, and what challenges are they still trying to overcome? How do they know their purpose *matters* to their target audience?

Step 2: Research your target audience

Once you have your "why", you need to identify if it aligns with your target audience – their needs, pain points, goals, and expectations.

A great purpose is wonderful, but it won't achieve much if it doesn't matter to your customers, or if you're pursuing your goals in the wrong way. For example, North Face could just say it wants to help people "explore", which is an honorable mission in its own.

However, what makes North Face's brand manifesto so compelling is that it explains why it wants to help people explore, so they can learn more about themselves, unlock new levels of freedom, and lead more fulfilling lives.

So ask yourself, why does your mission matter to your audience, and how do you align your brand's values with the priorities of the people you want to serve?

After a little research, you might even discover your existing brand doesn't align with your target audience as well as you'd hoped. For instance, "Royal Blind" learned that its name and brand voice didn't resonate with its core mission and broad target audience.

The company wanted to help everyone dealing with vision issues, not just those defined as “blind”. Updating their brand manifesto, name, and brand image allowed them to reposition themselves, and capture the attention of a wider community.

Step 3: Write your brand story

Now you have your “why”, and you’re sure it aligns with your target audience, the next step is to create a narrative that appeals to the right people. This is the stage where you actually figure out how to *write* your brand manifesto.

At this point, your choice of language is crucial.



You’ll notice many of the best brand manifesto examples write this story in a specific way, pulling their customers into the narrative.

Great manifestos, like the one above from Fiat, use the words “we”, and “people” to connect with their audience on a human level. Similarly, using second or third-person language in

your story makes it more engaging and personal.

Don’t just write a document telling customers what you sell, or why you launched. Your customers, investors, and stakeholders don’t really care about what you want to achieve. They want to know what they’regoing to accomplish with your support.

Explain the impact you’re going to have on your community. Fiat tells us it’s committed to helping its customers live their life to the fullest, embrace their passions, and achieve their goals.

When writing your story, make your customers the hero, and remember the all important question: “What’s in it for them?”

Step 4: Don’t just write it, live it

After you’ve written your business manifesto, don’t make the mistake of thinking the work stops there. If you want to earn customer loyalty consistently, attract talent to your business, and make an impact on your industry, you need to “walk the walk.”

An inspiring brand manifesto is only effective when its authentic. Essentially, a brand manifesto is your statement of intent, used to tell your audience what you’re promising them as a company.

If you publish that statement, and then never actually deliver on your promise, customers will question your authenticity, and start to look elsewhere.

With that in mind, look at how you can prove to your customers that you’re living up to your manifesto. As an example, Under Armour’s manifesto talks about unlocking their customer’s potential, and helping them to push boundaries.



To back this up, Under Armour champions its customers in its marketing campaigns, celebrating their wins and achievements with them. It invests in social and environmental campaigns, to help make the world a better place, and overcome the concerns its customers have.

Everything you do as a brand should demonstrate your commitment to your core beliefs, your mission statement, and your overall brand manifesto.

Incredible brand manifesto examples

A brand manifesto might not seem like a huge deal at first, but it's the driving force that forges emotional connections with your target market, and your larger community. Learning how to write a brand manifesto is often easier when you have some examples to work with.

We've already covered a few examples of manifestos so far, but here's an insight into some of the other top manifesto examples you can use to inspire your own writing process.

The Mayhew brand manifesto

A great brand manifesto isn't just a valuable tool for for-profit organizations. It can act as a rallying cry, engaging supporters and volunteers for non-profit brands too.

Mayhew's brand manifesto showcases the group's love of animals, their desire to eliminate pain and suffering, and their focus on supporting pet parents and advocates around the world.



Our brand | Manifesto

Manifesto

mayhew
for dogs, cats and communities

Mayhew has been working with dogs, cats and the people who care for them since 1886. A lot has changed since then, of course, but a lot hasn't.

We still see the joy that living with a dog or cat can bring. The extraordinary loyalty and companionship that these animals give to humans.

But we still see the misery and pain that some people inflict on animals they live with.

And we have seen the steady increase in the numbers of cats and dogs living wild in the streets and the forgotten parts of our cities. First abandoned, then left to breed, unchecked, untamed, untreated.

Most animal suffering is brought about by human ignorance or incompetence. But because the problems are largely caused by humans, they can also be solved by humans.

By helping people understand how to live well with animals, we will reduce animal suffering in homes.

By providing care and low-cost and free access to vet services, we will make essential animal welfare more accessible to more people.

And by using our skills and experience to reduce the number of cats and dogs living wild in cities, we will reduce the problems they face - and create.

In this way, by working for the well-being of these animals and the people who live with them, in the UK and overseas, Mayhew will continue to make a positive and lasting difference. For dogs, cats and communities.

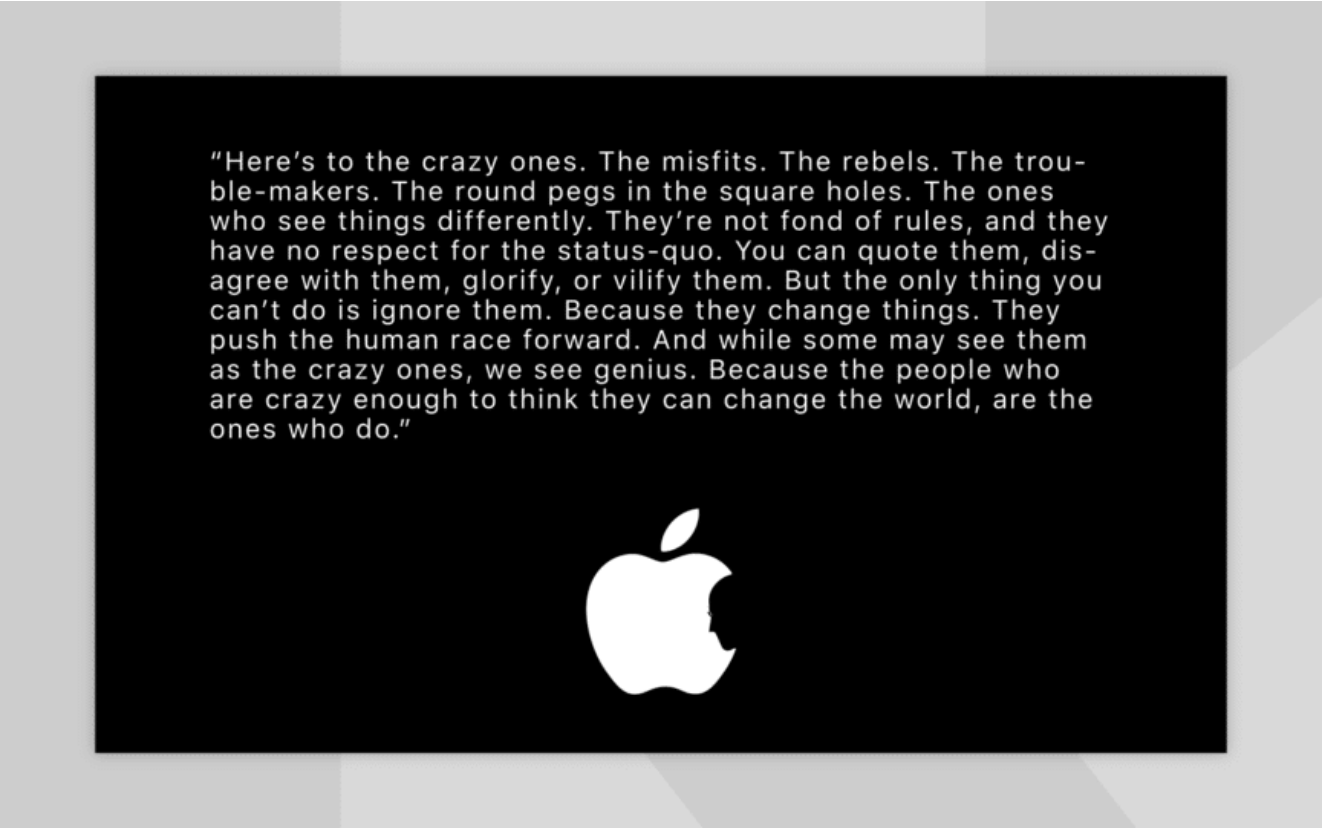
The manifesto tells a short, but engaging story about what inspired the initial launch of the charity, and the priorities that continue to drive them forward today. In an instant, Mayhew tells its community why they should care about their vision and mission.

Another thing that makes the Mayhew manifesto so compelling is how effectively it showcases the company's personality. The language is emotional, yet straightforward and inclusive.

The Apple brand manifesto

One of the most famous examples of manifestos created by major brands, comes from Apple. Unlike most technology companies, Apple doesn't just tell its customers its committed to innovating and creating cutting-edge products.

It positions itself as a champion of the "different", keen to shatter the status quo and support anyone who loves thinking outside of the box.

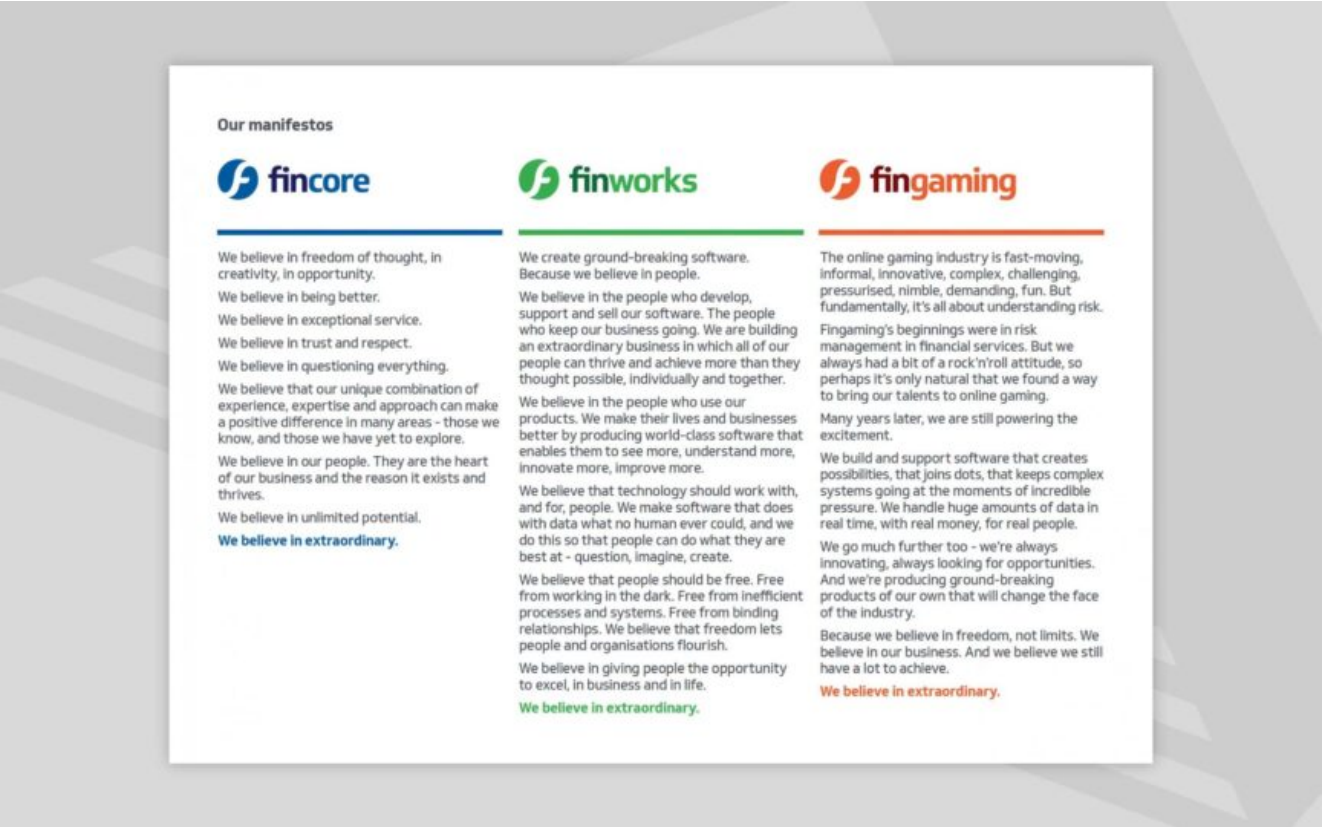


The well-written brand manifesto created by Apple, and Steve Jobs, is part of the reason why the company has gained such a dedicated following over the years.

Apple made itself into an icon for misfits, and turned overlooked consumers into heroes, geniuses and artists. Ultimately, Apple stands out as a company that's not just changing technology – it wants to change the world for the better.

The Fincore brand manifesto

Fincore, a software company, actually produced a series of manifestos for various branches of its organization. These manifestos use short sentences to explain the beliefs that drive the company on a broad level.



Although each of the manifestos are slightly different, focusing on a specific target audience, they all connect with the same consistent message: “we believe in extraordinary.”

It’s this ongoing message that makes Fincore’s brand so emotionally engaging. Focusing on “beliefs” rather than just making statements about what they do and what they sell gives the Fincore brand a deeply human personality.

Plus, Fincore frequently uses the words “we” and “people” to create a human connection, and points out how much it values the people both in, and outside of the company.

The Nike brand manifesto

Another well-known manifesto from one of the most famous companies in the world, Nike's corporate manifesto is an excellent insight into its brand spirit.

Though Nike is well-known for working with some of the biggest names in sports, it's not constantly bragging about its celebrity friends like LeBron James and Serena Williams. Instead, it draws attention to its belief that anyone can achieve greatness.



Nike's brand manifesto is truly inspirational and motivational. It aligns with the company's focus on helping anyone and everyone to achieve their goals.

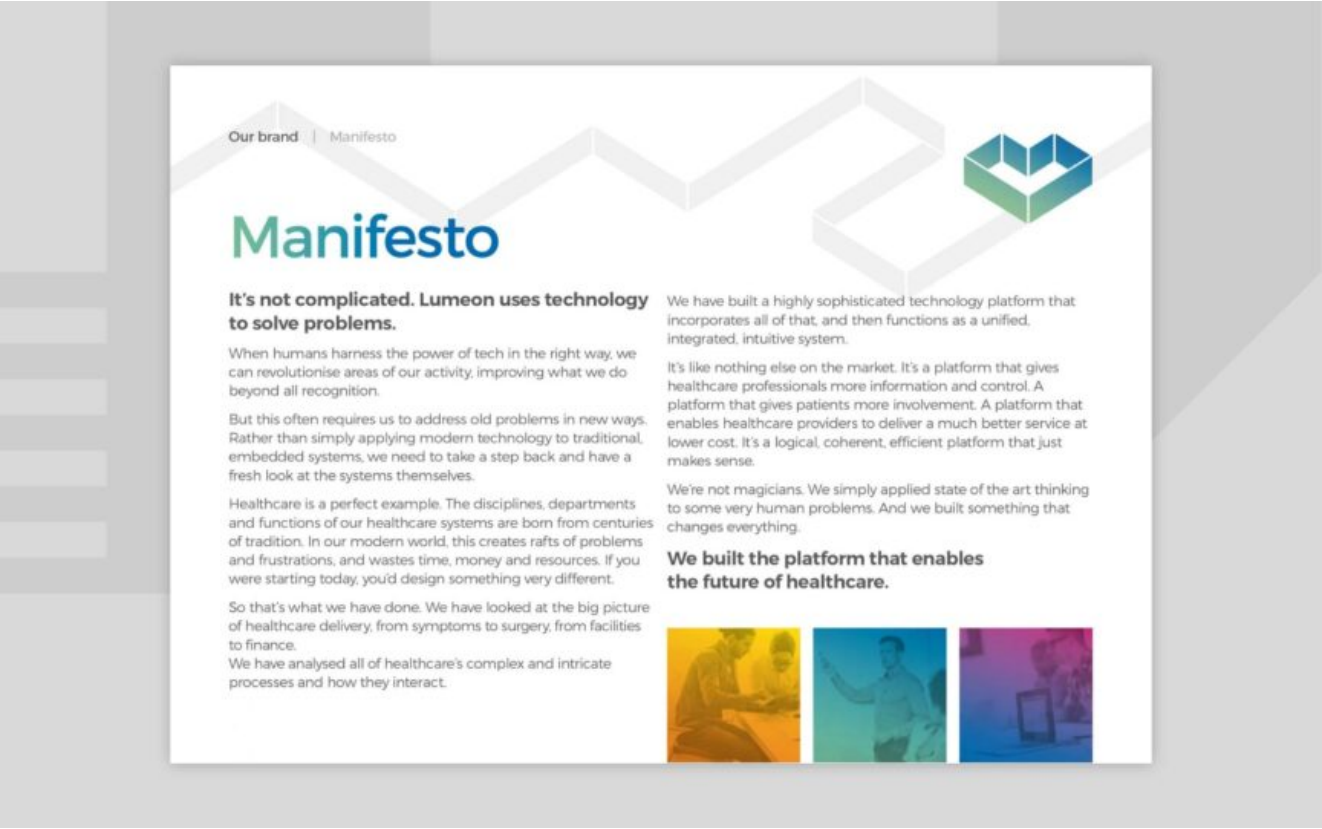
This manifesto explains the "why" behind Nike's brand perfectly (to empower every athlete). It's also made stronger by Nike's continued commitment to making the customers the hero of their story.

You've probably already seen countless advertisements from

Nike that feature real people, overcoming real challenges.

The Lumeon brand manifesto

Lumeon, a growing technology company, shows us that great brand manifestos don't have to be complicated to be impactful. The company gets straight to the point, telling customers and stakeholders that their focus is on creating technology to solve problems.



Lumeon doesn't try to make hyperbolic claims. It's authentic, humble, and inspirational with its language. The company reminds us that the team isn't made up of "magicians", but genuine people who believe in a brighter future.

The manifesto also focuses specifically on the target audience Lumeon wants to reach, introducing the benefits that its technology offers to the healthcare industry.

Lumeon's corporate manifesto positions the company as a straightforward, relatable, and honest company that businesses can trust. It's easy to see why the firm attracts so many

different consumers, employees, and investors.

The Patagonia brand manifesto

Patagonia's brand manifesto revolves mostly around its mission statement, in which it promises to build the best products, without causing unnecessary harm. This unique and environmentally-focused company makes its sustainable initiative the core of its personality, and brand positioning.



Dive a little deeper into Patagonia's brand strategy, and you'll see plenty of insights into their values, such as their commitment to learning from their mistakes and investing in continuous improvement.

Like many of the best brand manifesto examples, Patagonia's manifesto also keeps the customer involved in the story. The firm is constantly looking for ways to show its audience how they can get involved in making the world a better place.

The company even famously created a marketing campaign telling customers **not** to buy their new jacket, demonstrating a

commitment to protecting the environment, even when it meant losing out on extra profits.

How to write a brand manifesto with Fabrik

Learning how to write a brand manifesto effectively can be a powerful step for your organization. The right manifesto is more than just a document. It’s a crucial statement that aligns your team members, attracts talent and investors, and engages your target audience.

The best brand manifestos help you find and establish common ground with your community, based on shared values, and an ideal vision of the future.

However, creating a great manifesto can be complicated. Even if you have years of experience writing compelling content, it can be difficult to decide on the right message for a manifesto.

Fortunately, Fabrik can help. We work with companies from all industries to not only create amazing brands, but develop manifestos, brand guidelines and assets they can use to guide and unify their teams. We can work with you to put the ideal manifesto into words.

Plus, we can help you conduct the market research required to ensure your manifesto resonates with the right people.

Contact Fabrik today to learn more about how we can elevate and enhance your brand, or check out our amazing case studies, for insights into our previous work.

Fabrik: A branding agency for our times.