



Use the SDGs to  
bring value to your  
***marketing and sales  
communication***

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# Introduction

**The Sustainable Development Goals**, developed by UN in 2015, represent the internationally shared agenda for global sustainability. The 2030 Agenda calls on everyone, including the private sector, in order to take a proactive role through all their business departments. Companies now must include and promote their social impact. The SDGs offer a roadmap for companies to engage with stakeholders, to create new sustainable strategies and innovations.

storytelling is the right way to have an impact into your customer base. When communicating your sustainable practices, your ideas and your thoughts, **storytelling** is what can change people's perception and inspire action (2). The Goals may appear broad and ambitious, complicated, and interconnected. We are therefore believers of the importance of simplifying them into compelling and trustworthy stories. Moreover, it is crucial to focus on their specific targets, and narrow



*Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015*

But why could that be relevant for the communication department of a company? Simply put, it is going to **attract customers**, if you know how to **tell the right story**.

First of all, marketing is what really differentiates you from your competitors. That's because out there, a lot of companies in the same industry are providing similar products. That's where you can make the difference with your marketing and communication strategy. In our specific case, **including the 2030 Agenda** can be the real differentiator. As a matter of fact, a global research by PwC (1) found that 78% of citizens are now more likely to buy from companies that signed up to the SDGs agenda.

“ **Global research by PwC found that 78% of citizens are now more likely to buy from companies that signed up to the SDGs agenda.** ”

Secondly, it is also important how to communicate the SDGs. We believe that

down every single fact into stories. The deeper you go, the more authentic and true your story will be.

Storytelling is what will make people understand your values and thoughts according to the Global Goals. Data and analysis serve to persuade, but **compelling stories** are what will increase people's trust towards your brand.

“*Millennials are more receptive towards brand storytelling, rather than straightforward traditional ads, as they prefer feeling a human and personal connection.*”

Millennials tend to trust more those brands that emotionally communicate something to them. Different studies have found that millennials are more receptive towards brand storytelling, rather than straightforward traditional ads,

as they prefer feeling a human and personal connection (3, 4).

Another crucial advantage of communication and storytelling, is the possibility to express your compliance with any of the 17 SDGs. **Being an active promoter of the Goals** is what will differentiate you from your competitors, and the best part is that you can be a promoter of all of them by taking a stance and communicating it in the right way. As people are now increasingly more interested in the Global 2030 Agenda, through intriguing stories you can express your thoughts and being a promoter of all of the SDGs and targets.

In order to illustrate **how these stories can be beneficial to your company**, we have selected several SDGs below. You will also find explanation and examples for specific targets, as well as why you should implement them in your communication strategy.

# About 2030 Builders



2030 Builders is helping companies design an SDG impact plan, and is enabling them to innovate and build a sustainable strategy which includes the Sustainable Development Goals, that will both create long lasting impact and tap into economic opportunities.

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## Gender equality

Sustainable Development Goal 5, and more specifically, Target 5.1 concerns **gender equality** and aims at “*end[ing] all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere*”. We are convinced that being a supporter of this fight would help your communication department.

Investing in gender equality is not only the right thing to do, but it can also be something that differentiates you from your competitors. Working specifically on Target 5.1 and implementing its promotion within your communication strategy and storytelling activities, would bring value to your company either in terms of **reputation** as well as **trust**.

A 2017 study (5) revealed that Millennials care about gender equality in the workplace much more than older generations and perceive it of fundamental importance. Since that generation constitutes your present and, even more so, your future key stakeholder group, it is crucial to include your gender equality practices and thoughts in your marketing and communication strategy. In this way, you will **enhance your reputation** as a company and promote positive stories.

“*Millennials care about gender equality in the workplace much more than older generations and perceive it of fundamental importance.*”



# Affordable and clean energy

Sustainable Development Goal 7 aims at “ensuring affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”. **Energy** is now close to every major challenge, as well as opportunity the world is facing today. But why would that be relevant for the communication and marketing department of a company? Let’s take as an example two of the targets within SDG 7.

Target 7.2 aims at “[...] increas[ing]

substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix”. It is currently widely known that, when compared to fossil fuels, **renewable energy** brings many benefits to society and the environment: it is cleaner, less costly in the long-run and fosters the world’s green-transition.

In addition, promoting Target 7.2 can be beneficial to every business with increasing number of customers caring about the worldwide use of such green sources of energy. As a matter of fact, a study (6) revealed that more than 80% of the interviewed people do care about the use of renewable energy and associate its use with



environmental benefits. This means that, a company actively promoting and supporting the use of renewable energy over fossil fuels, will be seen by its potential customers as **extremely positive**.

As for Target [7.2](#), also Target [7.3](#) can be used as a focus to promote your sustainable practices and attitudes. Specifically, Target [7.3](#) is about energy efficiency and points “By 2030, [at] doubl[ing] [its] global rate of improvement”.

A study on European small and medium enterprises (7) demonstrated their **positive attitude** towards energy efficiency and renewable energy practices. Therefore, mostly for companies working in a B2B setting, being a supporter of energy efficiency practices as well as promoting such enthusiasm, would signify an increase in positive **reputation**. reasons, the implementation of Target 7.3 is key in the communication strategy of each company, whatever type it may be.

“*Being a supporter of energy efficiency practices as well as promoting such enthusiasm, would signify an increase in positive reputation.*”





## *Decent work and economic growth*

SDG 8 concerns inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. Specifically, Target 8.8 aims at “Protect[ing] labour rights and promot[ing] safe and secure working environments for all workers”. Why would that be relevant for your communication and marketing purposes?

According to PwC (8), customers increasingly care about companies which meet basic **human** and **labor rights**. Indeed, businesses that promote job creation and economic growth through their value chain with an effective communication, face a lower risk for reputational damage.

What this study tells us, is that taking a stance on these practices is enough to make a positive impact on your customers, as they will **trust you more**. These **positive stories** will, in turn, boost the trust and perceptions that your customers have towards your company and brand.



“Customers increasingly care about companies which meet basic human and labor rights (8).”

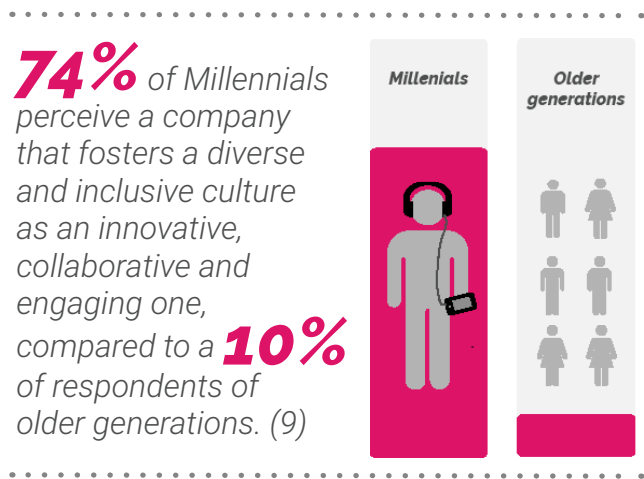


# Reduced inequalities



Sustainable Development Goal 10 aims at **“reducing all inequalities within and across countries”**. Among its targets, one of the most relevant for businesses and more specifically for their communication departments is Target 10.2. It aims at **“empower[ing] and promot[ing] the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status”**.

A recent Deloitte report (9) about the **perception** that millennials have towards diversity and inclusion in the workspace uncovered a stark contrast among new generations and the old ones. According to the study (9), 74% of Millennials do perceive a company which fosters a diverse and inclusive culture as an innovative, collaborative and engaging one, compared to a contrasting 10% of respondents of older generations. They intend such concepts in terms of cognitive diversity, which comes from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, how and where people are born and raised as well as their cultures and perspectives. Millennials also believe inclusion is a critical



tool to empower business competitiveness and growth (9). Including Target 10.2 in your storytelling and communication strategy, will help **improve your reputation** as a company, as this new generation is now part of your business audience. It is therefore clear how diversity and inclusion are a key marketplace **differentiator** through which communications will expand your organization’s **brand**.



# Responsible consumption and production



SDG 12 points at ensuring responsible and **sustainable consumption and production**. This goal is one of the broadest among the 17 SDGs. Therefore, we will go into the specifics of it to understand how businesses can benefit by the promotion of this SDG through their communication practices.

For example, what Target 12.3 states is: “by 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses”. As **food waste** is becoming an increasingly bigger issue and its consequences are now widespread, it is now especially important to be an active promoter of the fight against it. A 2018 survey drafted among Danish consumers (10) disclosed widespread awareness about the problem. Indeed, 85% of respondents declared to have heard or seen something about food waste only in the past year, and perceive the **need to find a solution** as soon as possible. What can be retrieved from such empirical data is that there is an urgency of working towards a solution, but also the opportunity for businesses to become **active supporters**

of this fight. As now people are aware of the issue, including the compliance with Target 12.3 into your storytelling, would then be helping your **branding activities** and increase **trust**.

“ *It is crucial for companies to boost a positive attitude towards innovative waste solutions, for example a good recycling system in the workplace.* ”

Target 12.5 aims at “[...] substantially reduc[ing] waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse”. This target concerns the total recycling rate on national basis. How could this target benefit the communication department of a company? **Recycling** must be implemented in the workplace, and a positive attitude towards it must also be promoted.

A study (11) shed light on millennials’ stance on recycling behaviour in the workplace. 80% of respondents believe their employers have the obligation to ensure an efficient recycling system at work, as well as encouraging a responsible use of the latter in the office. This reveals that it is crucial for companies to boost a positive attitude towards **innovative waste solutions**, for example a good recycling system in the workplace. If transformed into a compelling story will, in turn, enhance the **trust** and **reputation** of your brand.



*Millennials’ stance on recycling in workplace*

**80%** of respondents believe their employers have the obligation to ensure an efficient recycling system at work as well as encouraging a responsible use of the latter in the office. (11)

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# Appendix:

## ***Sustainable Development Goals & their targets***

*“Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the sustainable development goals, SDGs, are a call for action by all countries - poor, rich and middle-income - to promote prosperity while protecting the environment.” (United Nations: SDGs, knowledge platform)*

*In this chapter, the goals used in this eBook are listed along with their targets. [Click here](#) to read about all the 17 Goals on UN’s website.*



### **Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**

- 5.1. End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- 5.3. Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 5.4. Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
- 5.5. Ensure women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- 5.6. Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
- 5.A. Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and

control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws

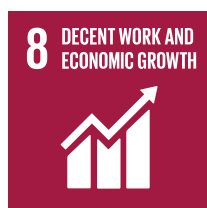
- 5.B. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- 5.C. Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels



### **Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**

- 7.1. By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services
- 7.2. By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix
- 7.3. By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency
- 7.A. By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology
- 7.B. By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology

for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, and small island developing States



## Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

- 8.1. Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries
- 8.2. Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labour-intensive sectors
- 8.3. Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
- 8.4. Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead
- 8.5. By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- 8.6. By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- 8.7. Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms
- 8.8. Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
- 8.9. By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products
- 8.10. Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all
- 8.A. Increase Aid for Trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries

8.B. By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization



## Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

- 10.1. By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 per cent of the population at a rate higher than the national average
- 10.2. By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
- 10.3. Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard
- 10.4. Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
- 10.5. Improve the regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen the implementation of such regulations
- 10.6. Ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions
- 10.7. Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies
- 10.A. Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements
- 10.B. Encourage official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes
- 10.C. By 2030, reduce to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5 per cent



## Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

- 12.1. Implement the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, all countries

taking action, with developed countries taking the lead, taking into account the development and capabilities of developing countries

12.2. By 2030, achieve the sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources

12.3. By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses

12.4. By 2020, achieve the environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle, in accordance with agreed international frameworks, and significantly reduce their release to air, water and soil in order to minimize their adverse impacts on human health and the environment

12.5. By 2030, substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse

12.6. Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle

12.7. Promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and Priorities

12.8. By 2030, ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature

12.A. Support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacity to move towards more sustainable patterns of consumption and production

12.B. Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products

12.C. Rationalize inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption by removing market distortions, in accordance with national circumstances, including by restructuring taxation and phasing out those harmful subsidies, where they exist, to reflect their environmental impacts, taking fully into account the specific needs and conditions of developing countries and minimizing the possible adverse impacts on their development in a manner that protects the poor and the affected communities



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