

**FORUM PROMARCA**  
**NOTES FOR THE TRANSLATION TEAM**  
**GEOFF BURCH'S PRESENTATION**

Geoff plans to start his talk by mentioning his recent TV series on BBC2 about retailers, and will discuss that trying to point out the faults in somebody's beloved business is like trying to tell a proud mother that she has an ugly baby! Your friends, family, or colleagues will not want to offend you by telling you the truth – and it is the same with your company or organization. In order to know where you really are you do have to get the truth. Geoff will try and do this even if it means his presentation is a bit provocative.

He will look at some famous brand marketing campaigns and will ask for the reasons behind marketing and illustrate the problems that can be caused using the story of two completely different Volkswagen adverts – both prizewinners but one which Geoff feels is very dangerous for the VW brand because of the promises it makes to the consumer, creating expectations that the frontline staff do not even understand, let alone have knowledge of, or are capable of delivering. The point is that marketing should not conduct themselves unrestrained until they understand the brand promise or its implications. It is important in the current environment that every single department talks to each other and understands what the other is doing. The bunker mentality must end. Geoff will use his experience of U.S. companies, including Fritto and Disney to show how, by empowering the frontline people and helping them to understand the brand promise, they can deliver brand values that are outside the remit of the product itself.

Another story is about delivery drivers who are too busy delivering to see that they are damaging the company's reputation. He will mention the restaurant that is so heavily branded, it warned its staff that the menu was part of the brand – and the result was that they lost a huge group of customers. Even when a company tries to control a customer's behaviour with on-line shopping, the customers will contrive to get information from the first person they meet. If that person isn't an ambassador of that company it is likely that they are an assassin of the brand.

Geoff tells the story of when he was managing a project things went horribly wrong because the work was being managed but the values were being ignored. No one who worked there actually understood the big picture of what the project was all about, whilst the management simply valued the employees that had a micro-understanding of their job – and that was what was being measured. He goes on to illustrate how measurement can be a disaster if we measure the wrong things, ask the wrong questions, and take the wrong actions with the results. In this he examines customer satisfaction, staff appraisals, and key performance indicators. He will mention how Britain's biggest retailer contributed to its own bankruptcy by failing to understand the value of its branded suppliers, how a major American manufacturer got absolutely everything right about its product which then failed, and how a European motor manufacturer listened to its computers and built thousands of the wrong sort of car.

The important point is that companies with valuable brands become so protective that they fear change. Geoff will talk about change – he shows how habits are too easy to form and will challenge the audience to make a simple change for themselves just to see how difficult it can be.

Note to the Translation Team! Geoff is a very popular British speaker and uses a great deal of humour and surprises in his presentation. Because of this he will be at the event early and would greatly value a cup of coffee and a chat with the Translation Team so that they can understand his style of delivery and we can then make it enjoyable for the audience.