

Workshop Outline, for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on the Common Good

*Marketing, the Beautiful, and the Common Good:  
Can “Beauty Save the World”?*

*Institutions and Practices to Promote an Authentic Vision of Beauty in the Marketplace*

Paul Radich, Brandon Vaidyanathan, and Mary Sheehan Warren  
The Catholic University of America

Fyodor Dostoevsky famously suggested that ‘beauty can save the world.’ What might be the role of the humble marketer in helping to foster that process? If helpful, we can conduct some brain-sailing and design-thinking exercises during the workshop, to try to generate ideas for creative ways to foster Beauty through Marketing. This workshop can explore the following themes, among others:

- a) What kinds of institutions can Marketers envision, for cultivating Beauty and supporting the Common Good? In what ways can the fashion or entertainment industries help foster a vision of authentic human beauty?
- b) What kind of an award might we develop, to recognize, cultivate, and encourage Beauty in the practices of Marketing on a global scale?
- c) What insights from the Theology of the Body can help to inform the practice of Marketing, especially regarding the portrayal of the human person?
- d) If the Transcendentals are convertible, that is, if Beauty and Goodness and Truth are intimately related, how can Marketers ensure that Beauty in Marketing is both Good and True?
- e) How might “truth in advertising” apply here? It is one thing to wear make-up, but to stretch, cut, color, and alter photographs almost beyond recognition – is this a form of lying? Cicero talks about how important it is in commerce to avoid *vanitate* – misrepresentation: what impact does this have on the viewer, on the model, and on the person creating the advertisement?
- f) What is the role of wonder and awe in the life of the marketer, especially in a contemporary technocracy? What are the implications for the marketer and for the target audience?
- g) If Beauty is the most immediate of the Transcendentals, the most apparent and the most difficult to deny, how might Marketing be able to participate in what Pope Francis calls the *Via Pulchritudinis*, the ‘Way of Beauty,’ as part of building up the culture in the wider view of the New Evangelization?
- h) If Marketing is both the voice of the customer - to the rest of the firm, as well as the face of the firm - to the customer, how can Marketing involve Beauty in both external and internal communications?
- i) If the Arts traditionally include painting, sculpture, poetry, music, and drama, in what ways can video in Marketing be a combination of all of those arts? In what sense can Marketing itself be considered a ‘performing art’? And how can photography and social media combine to foster beauty?