

Letter from the Editor:

What is Business as Mission?

Business as mission, simply put, is the seamless integration of excellent business with intentional mission. It is doing business for God's glory, the gospel, and the common good.

Business is a God-given vocation and institution in society, with the potential to bring multiple benefits to people, communities and nations. Business as mission intentionally leverages this intrinsic power of business to address spiritual needs, hand in hand with social, economic and environmental needs. Business as mission is strategic today because it is often best placed to meet a wide range of needs in communities around the world.

Let's start with business

Dallas Willard once said, "Business is a primary moving force of the love of God in human history." Business, done well, is glorifying to God. Period. We see in the Bible and throughout history that business is able to create dignified jobs, multiply resources, provide for families and communities, push forward innovation, and, in short, do good in society. A company does not need a business as mission strategy to justify its purpose or to somehow make it more 'holy'. Business professionals following Jesus in the marketplace already have a sacred vocation. Business is a good idea that comes from God.

Yet, God has called us, His Church, to partner with him in the work of mission. To love our neighbour as ourselves, to care for the poor and vulnerable, and to share the gospel and make disciples in every part of the world. And business people, along with their skills and experiences, are some of the most needed in the work of global mission today. Alongside more traditional forms of mission, the world is crying out for for-profit, business solutions to some of its most pressing issues. These issues include job scarcity, human trafficking, economic exploitation, corruption, environmental degradation, dire poverty, and the challenge of sharing the love of God and His good news with those who haven't yet heard it.

Business as Mission

In the global marketplace today, we have an opportunity to harness the God-given power of business to address these pressing spiritual, social, environmental, and economic issues. Business as mission is a movement of business professionals, mission leaders, church leaders and academics who are doing just that. They are taking the instrument of business, with its innate, God-given ability and power, and intentionally using that power in the work of mission. They are using their professional know-how and the gifts of entrepreneurship and good management to bring creative and long-term, sustainable solutions to local and global challenges. They are making a positive impact through for-profit business, along the 'four bottom lines': social, environmental, financial and spiritual. We sometimes refer to these as the 4Ps: people, planet, profit, and eternal purpose.

Defining BAM

There is no one universally agreed definition of business as mission, but there are some key common denominators in the global BAM movement. And while there is growing consensus around the concept, many other terms are also used for the same, or similar, idea. Many prefer terms such as: missional entrepreneurship, transformational business, missional business or business for transformation (B4T), among others. Business as mission, or 'BAM', is just one widely used term in the English language, other terms have developed in other languages.

This is the working definition of business as mission used by [BAM Global](#):

Business as Mission is:

- Profitable and sustainable businesses;
- Intentional about Kingdom of God purpose and impact on people and nations;
- Focused on holistic transformation and the multiple bottom lines of economic, social, environmental and spiritual outcomes;
- Concerned about the world's poorest and least evangelized peoples.

Intentional and Integrated

Business as mission is not a new idea! Business and mission have been combined in different ways, at different times throughout Church history. However, the contemporary business as mission movement represents a growing intentionality in the global Church to fully integrate business goals with the call to the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world. It is an answer to the prayer, 'May Your Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven', as people and communities are positively transformed through for-profit business activities. BAM is the intentional integration of business and mission.

The idea of integration is important. This is not 'ministry' tacked onto business for convenience or business tacked onto ministry. Instead the mission is worked out in and through the business, through its activities, through the products and services and through relationships built in daily business life—with employees, customers, suppliers, officials, business networks, and the wider community.

As already stated, business is designed by God to provide livelihoods, multiply resources, and enable communities to flourish through a combination of creativity, hard work and risk. A profitable and sustainable business is able to create new jobs, drive innovation, provide needed goods and services, and help societies develop. Through business as mission we can intentionally tackle poverty, bring positive social and environmental change, and carry with us the message of eternal life.

Business as mission is a concept that can and should be applied everywhere, but the business as mission movement has a special concern for people and places where there are dire economic, social, environmental and spiritual needs – Mats Tunehag

We invite you to be inspired and equipped by the stories and resources that we've created and curated on this Business as Mission Resource website.

Jo Plummer

Co-Founder of BAM Global