

# Valiant.

# The outsider advantage.



Tina Keeble  
Strategy Director

John Hegarty recently said that the outsider marvels at what everyone else has stopped seeing. and that is the advantage.

Inside an organisation, brand decisions feel logical. Sensible. Inevitable. You know the history. The politics. The “way we do things round here”.

And that is exactly the problem. Familiarity dulls perception.

When we come into an organisation to work on positioning and differentiation, we are not carrying the same assumptions. We are not invested in legacy wording. We are not protecting sacred cows. We are not defending past decisions. We are asking, quite innocently:

Why? And sometimes, more interestingly, why not?

Here is what being the outsider really does.

## 1. We hear what people won't tell you

- Customers are more open.
- Employees are more honest.
- Stakeholders say the thing they have been thinking for years.

Not because we are clever. Because we are neutral.

An external voice creates psychological safety. And that is when the truth appears. The messy truth about what is not working. The gap between strategy and reality. The difference between what you say and what the market hears.

That honesty is gold.

## 2. We see what is staring you in the face

From the inside, everything feels complex. Competitive. Crowded. From the outside, patterns appear.

- We can see the white space in the market.
- We can see where you are accidentally blending in.
- We can see the opportunity you are underplaying.

Distance sharpens perspective. It prevents complacency. It stops “industry standard” becoming “strategically sound”.

### 3. We challenge, but we bring evidence

Provocation without proof is theatre.

Good brand strategy is not opinion. It is interrogation backed by....

- Data.
- Customer interviews.
- Internal insight.
- Competitive analysis.
- Market mapping.

When we push back, it is not to win an argument.  
It is to build a position you can defend.

### 4. We unlock the voice no one is listening to

There is often someone internally who knows what needs to change.

They can see it. They can feel it.

But they are too close. Too embedded. Too associated with the problem. An external partner can validate that instinct.  
Give it structure. Give it language. Give it weight.

Sometimes our job is not to invent the answer. It is to break down the door so the right answer can be heard.

## And here is the uncomfortable question.

As more organisations build internal brand teams, who is playing the outsider role?

- Who is shaking the thinking down?
- Who is checking you are not doing exactly what every other competitor is doing?
- Who is asking why you sound like everyone else?

Being an outsider is not a prerequisite for great thinking. Craft, talent and discipline still matter.

But distance helps.

Those who sit slightly to the side often see more clearly than those at the centre.

And that perspective might just be your most valuable advantage.

Valiant exists to bring that edge.

If you would like to find out more about how we can bring an outsider's perspective to your business, drop us a line or give us a call: [tina@wearevaliant.com](mailto:tina@wearevaliant.com) and [jess@wearevaliant.com](mailto:jess@wearevaliant.com) - we'd love to chat.

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