The Circular Advantage
A Practical Framework for Marketing and Sales Transformation

[CLARASYS]   University of Exeter

Introduction

The next generation of market-leading brands will have one thing in common: they won't just sell products; they will **manage value**. They will build businesses on a foundation of lifetime customer relationships, intelligent asset recovery, and radical resource efficiency. This is the promise of the circular economy.

The vision is clear, but the path is not. The greatest challenge is translating this powerful idea into a go-to-market reality—a challenge that falls heavily on the shoulders of marketing and sales leaders.

This toolkit is the bridge from vision to value.

It is a strategic guide to creating customer-centric circular offers and the commercial engines to power them. It builds from sustainability goals to focus on the drivers of brand preference, customer loyalty, and long-term profitable growth.

This toolkit will enable you to:

- **Identify** the highest-value commercial opportunities in your market.

- **Design** an irresistible offer customers prefer over the linear alternative.

- **Build** a go-to-market engine that aligns your sales and marketing to a circular model.

- **Prove** the financial case and scale your impact profitably.

> *For too long, circularity has been a conversation for the sustainability team. This toolkit puts it where it belongs: at the heart of your commercial strategy. It's less of a report and more of a 'get-started' kit—a set of shortcuts to bypass the theory and get your marketing and sales teams building a more profitable customer relationship, today.*

Loic Le Fouest
Clarasys' Circular Economy Practice Lead

> *The future of business is no longer about unidirectional sales and linear transactions. Instead, it's about the development of more meaningful, deeper and longer-lasting customer relationships based on multiple forms of value. This new paradigm demands that we rethink everything, from how we design products and services to how we interact with our customers throughout the entire product lifecycle. Future leaders in this new era will embrace this transformation and lead their teams beyond the conventional sales funnel, toward a model of enduring value creation and responsible growth.*

Professor Fiona Charnley
Co-Director of the Exeter Centre for the Circular Economy

About us

Clarasys

At Clarasys, our mission is to help organisations navigate their most complex transformations. We believe the shift to a circular economy is the next frontier for creating exceptional customer experiences and resilient commercial growth.

Our role is to provide a clear blueprint for this transition. We help marketing and sales leaders break down the complexity of circularity into achievable, high-impact steps that deliver tangible results. We do this by blending deep expertise in customer experience with the practical realities of go-to-market execution, ensuring every circular initiative creates value for your customers, your business, and the planet.

As The Experience Consultancy, we've designed this toolkit to empower you to lead that change.

The Exeter Centre for Circular Economy

The Exeter Centre for the Circular Economy (ECCE) was formally launched in 2018 by Dame Ellen MacArthur. Since then, ECCE has become a globally recognised and pioneering centre of excellence for circular economy research, education, and practice. Its strengths lie not only in its early leadership and interdisciplinary foundations, but also in its ability to translate research into real-world solutions, foster global partnerships, and deliver innovative education.

Our vision is 'to be the leading UK Centre for Circular Economy, engaging in innovative research, knowledge transfer and executive education. We generate the transdisciplinary evidence and galvanise diverse partnerships to empower and lead the transition towards an inclusive Circular Economy.

For more information or to speak with our team please contact us at sustainability@clarasys.com

Toolkit Overview

This toolkit is designed for action. It's structured into four sections that guide you from initial strategy to scalable execution.

Every section provides you with three things: a concise **overview** of the core concept, expert **practitioner tips** for effective application, and a powerful, hands-on **template** to use with your team.

Section 1: Identify Your Circular Opportunity. This is your strategic filter. Here, you'll move from broad ideas to a specific, high-potential starting point by mapping your market and prioritising the right commercial opportunities.

Section 2: Position for Circular Advantage. This is the creative core. You'll learn how to design an irresistible circular offer that wins against the linear alternative by focusing on superior customer value and experience.

Section 3: Co-ordinate the Circular Marketing & Sales Mix. This is your execution engine. You'll find the new operating manual to align your marketing, sales, and channel strategies to the unique demands of a circular business model.

Section 4: Measure & Scale Your Impact. This is your growth cockpit. These tools will help you measure what matters, prove the superior financial case for circularity, and make data-driven decisions to scale profitably.

Section 5: Deep Dive Case Studies. To bring these concepts to life, we will draw on insights from our deep-dive case studies, referencing real-world examples from circular leaders in the technology and retail sectors to show how these principles drive real results.
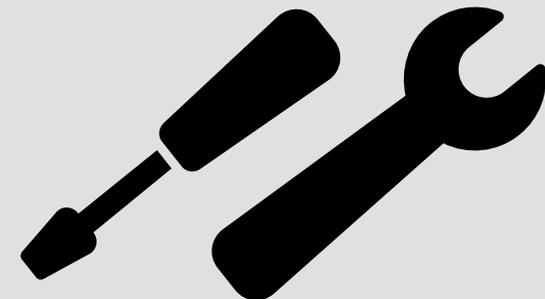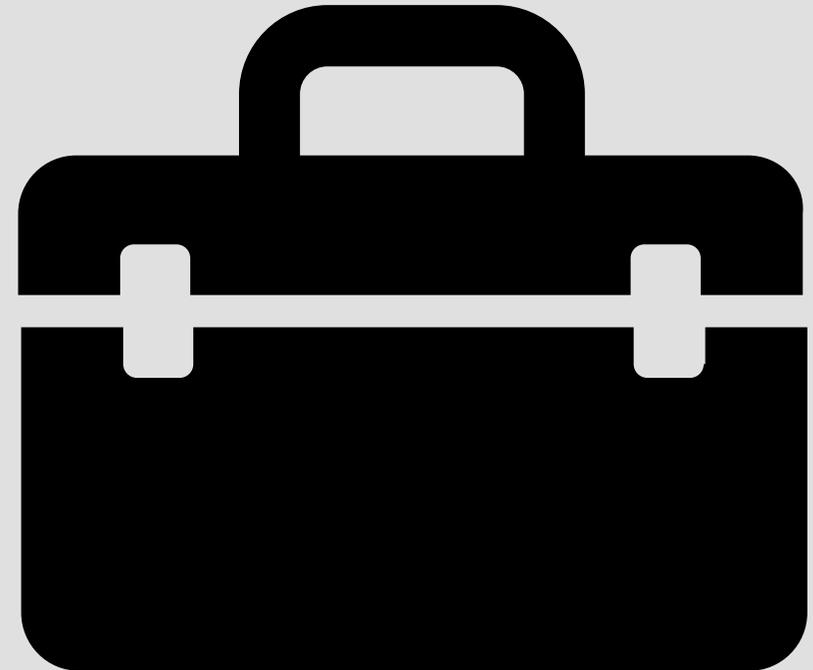
Section 1
Identifying Your Circular Opportunity

The biggest mistake brands make is asking, "What circular product can we make?" The right question is**, "Where is the most valuable problem we can solve?"** The landscape is noisy with opportunities, from new regulations and supply chain risks to shifting customer desires. Chasing the wrong opportunity is a fast track to a costly pilot that goes nowhere.

This first section is your strategic filter. It's designed to help you scan the horizon, understand the systemic forces at play, and pinpoint the one or two opportunities that have the greatest potential for both commercial upside and genuine customer value. We will move you from a broad, abstract idea of "circularity" to a specific, prioritised, and defensible starting point for your business.

Using these tools, you will build a clear and compelling case for **where to play and how you will win**.

- **Circular Value Radar:** Pinpoint the market, as well as competitive and regulatory forces creating immediate threats and growth opportunities.
- **Circular System Vision:** Creatively blueprint an ambitious, unconstrained circular future for your organisation to break out of today's constraints and identify transformative ideas.
- **Circular Journey Mapping:** Map the end-to-end customer experience to identify key moments of effort and delight, creating a prioritised action plan of interventions.
- **Circular Growth Activation:** Create a powerful strategic blueprint that articulates the shift from a linear to a circular growth engine, defining the key marketing and sales initiatives required.
- **Circular Growth Portfolio Prioritisation:** Prioritise your opportunities like a venture capitalist, focusing on initiatives with true scaling potential.

Tool 1.1: Circular Value Radar

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A dynamic map of the commercial landscape, identifying immediate threats to your linear model and the most potent opportunities for circular growth.	This radar prompts you to scan five key domains for signals of change.	1. Plot key risks and opportunities as points on the radar.	Don't just list factors; frame everything as either a **'Linear Liability'** (a future weakness in your current model) or a **'Circular Asset'** (a future strength you can build). This forces a commercial mindset.

Context (continued):

1. **Market Drivers (Customer Pull):** What are the macro-level societal shifts and stories about consumption and success? What are the emerging customer needs, frustrations with ownership, and desires for sustainability that create a pull for circular offers? Where is the unmet demand?

2. **Industry Pressures (Competitive Push):** What are competitors, start-ups, or adjacent industries doing in the circular space? Where are they creating new benchmarks for value and convenience?

3. **Value Chain:** Where are the biggest risks of resource scarcity and price volatility in our current supply chain? What opportunities exist for new supplier partnerships, reverse logistics capabilities, and localised material loops to improve resilience and efficiency?

4. **Technology:** What digital platforms (e.g., resale-as-a-service, asset management software) and tracking technologies (e.g., RFID, Digital Product Passports) could enable our business model? What material innovations could improve product durability, recyclability, or value?

5. **Regulatory & Risk:** What impending legislation (e.g., Digital Product Passports, Extended Producer Responsibility fees) is creating a "burning platform" for change? What are the brand risks of inaction?

Instructions (continued):

2. Position points closer to the center if they are more urgent or have a higher velocity.

3. Connect the dots: How does a technological trend enable you to meet a new customer driver? How does a competitor move amplify a regulatory risk?

4. Identify your top 3 **"Circular Focus Zones"**—the areas with the richest convergence of opportunity and business resilience.

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Tool 1.1: Circular Value Radar

Threats

Opportunities

Focus zones

Value Chain

Industry Pressures (Competitive Push)

Technology

Market Drivers (Customer Pull)

Regulatory & Risk

Now/High Urgency

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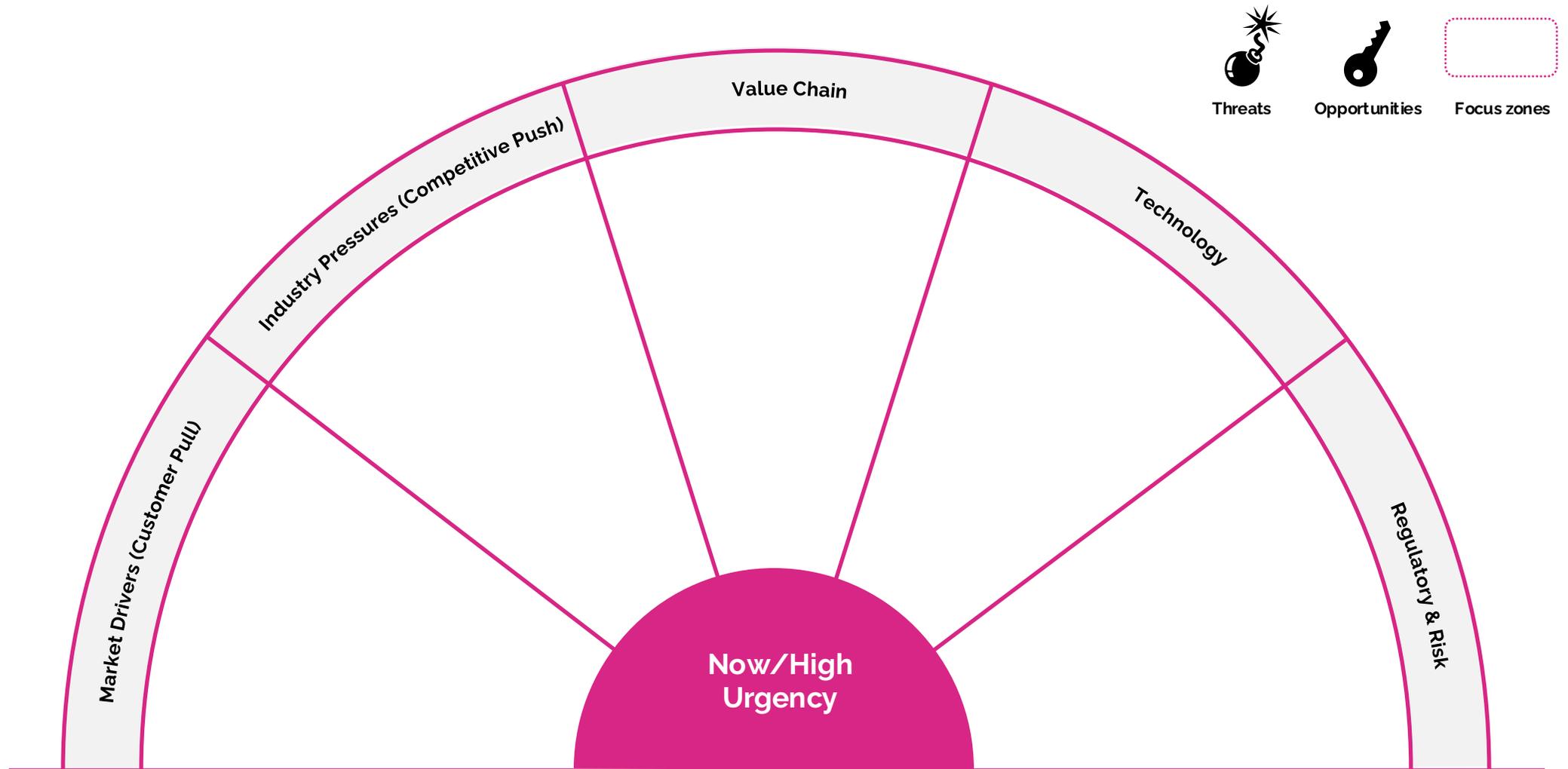
Tool 1.2: Circular System Vision

Outcome

A portfolio of ambitious, unconstrained circular concepts for your business, and a shared, tangible vision of what an ideal circular future could look like.

Context

Fixing a linear system results in a slightly less-bad linear system. True circularity isn't about incremental fixes; it's about reimagining the entire value equation. This tool is designed to break your team out of today's constraints and creatively blueprint a desirable, ambitious, and transformative circular future for your organisation—moving from what is to what could be.

The tool is divided into four key domains of your business system. For each domain, you will brainstorm a radical new approach, define the value it could unlock, and honestly assess its risks.

- **Customer Offer & Relationship:** How customers access value and interact with our brand.

- **Product & Material:** How we design, source, and make our products.

- **Value Recovery & Logistics:** How we get assets back and regenerate their value.

- **Revenue & Commercials:** How we capture value and structure our business model.

Instructions

- Run as a joint exercise: Bring together a cross-section of colleagues who will influence, design, or deliver the circular model.

- Briefly review 2-3 examples of circular innovators. Ask the group: *What is the most interesting thing they did? What could we learn from them?*

- For each of the four domains, brainstorm "what if" scenarios in the **"Radical Idea"** column. Defer judgment and think big. Ask: *If a disruptive start-up were to enter our market today, what would they do?*

- For your top 1-2 ideas in each domain, move to the **"Value Unlocked"** column. Articulate the value created. How does it benefit the **customer**? How does it benefit the **business** commercially? How does it connect to the opportunities you found in the **Value Radar** (Tool 1.1)?

- Now, play devil's advocate in the **"Risks & Trade-offs"** column. What are the biggest hurdles, costs, or unintended consequences? Be brutally honest.

- Review the completed canvas. Circle the 1-3 concepts that generate the most excitement and create the most compelling value. These are the seeds of your future vision.

Top Practitioner Tips

- **Borrow brilliance:** Ask, "How would a company like Netflix, IKEA, or Patagonia solve this problem in our industry?" This helps break conventional thinking.

- **Think in headlines:** For each radical idea, imagine the press release headline in five years. Does it sound compelling and market-leading?

- **Embrace creative tension:** During the "Ideate" phase, ban the phrase "we can't because...". During the "Assess Risks" phase, it's the most important phrase to use.

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Tool 1.2: Circular System Vision
The Circular Future Blueprint

	Radical Ideas	Value Unlocked	Risks & Trade-offs
Customer Offer & Relationship	e.g. The Forever Membership	For Customer: Lifetime warranty, access to upgrades & repairs. For Business: Recurring revenue (high Customer Lifetime Value), predictable asset returns for refurbishment.	Risks: Accurately pricing for lifetime service, managing complex reverse logistics, potential for customer abuse of the service.
Product & Materials			
Value Recovery & Logistics			
Revenue & Commercials			

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Tool 1.3: Circular Journey Mapping

Outcome

A detailed map of the circular customer experience that pinpoints critical touchpoints, and a prioritised action plan of marketing and sales interventions designed to eliminate friction and build trust.

Context

An enhanced journey map with commercially-focused swim lanes.

1. **Journey Phases:** Awareness > Evaluation > Acquisition & Onboarding > Use & Reuse > Service & Support > Return & Renew

2. **Customer Actions & Experience:** What is the customer doing, thinking, and feeling? Then plot the emotional and effort curves for the circular journey.

3. **Business Actions & Touchpoints:** What are our marketing, sales, and service teams doing at each phase?

4. **Critical Moments & Metrics:** Icons to flag:

   🛡️ **Moment of Trust**: Where the customer must trust us with a deposit, a subscription, or the value of their returned item. *Metric: Conversion Rate.*

   ∞ **Moment of Circularity**: The critical step the customer must take to close the loop (e.g., schedule a pickup). *Metric: Return Rate / Participation Rate..*

   ⭐ **Moment of Value**: The payoff for the customer (e.g., getting credit, an upgrade, a seamless repair). *Metric: NPS / Customer Satisfaction.*

   ⚠️ **Moment of Friction**: Where the process is difficult or confusing. *Metric: Support Tickets / Drop-off Rate.*

Instructions

1. **Map the Journey:** As a team, fill out the swim lanes of the Journey Map to visualise the current state of the circular customer experience.

2. **Identify Critical Moments:** Place the icons along the map to flag the most important touchpoints. Be honest, especially about the moments of friction.

3. **Create the Action Log:** For each Moment of Friction and Moment of Trust you identified, create a new row in the Action Log.

4. **Detail the Pain Point:** Articulate precisely what makes that moment difficult or risky for the customer.

5. **Frame the Opportunity:** Brainstorm "How might we..." statements for each pain point to open up creative solutions.

6. **Define the Intervention:** For each opportunity, brainstorm specific, actionable interventions. Prioritise ideas that are both high-impact for the customer and feasible for the business.

Top Practitioner Tips

The ROI of a brilliant circular model is destroyed by a poor reverse logistics experience. Treat the "Return & Renew" phase with the same level of marketing investment as the "Acquisition" phase.

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Tool 1.3a: Circular Journey Mapping

Phases	Awareness	Evaluation	Acquisition & Onboarding	Use & Reuse	Service & Support	Return & Renew
Customer "Linear" Actions	*What is the customer doing, thinking, and feeling at each stage?*					
Customer "Circular" Actions	*What is the customer doing, thinking, and feeling at each stage?*					
Customer Experience	Map the emotional journey					
Customer Effort	Map the customer effort					
Business Actions	*What are our marketing, sales and service team doing at each stage?*					

Customer Experience scale: +2 +1 0 -1 -2

Customer Effort scale: +2 +1 0 -1 -2

Key: ⬢ Moment of Trust ∞ Moment of Circularity ★ Moment of Value ⚠ Moment of Friction

Tool 1.3b: Action Log

Phases	Critical Moment	Pain point	Opportunity	Intervention
	The specific touchpoint from the map (e.g., "Packaging the product for return").	*The specific customer frustration, in their own words (e.g., "I don't have a box or a printer for the label").*	*The "How might we..." statement that reframes the pain point into a creative challenge (e.g., "How might we make returns packaging-free and effortless?").*	*The concrete marketing, sales, or service idea that solves the problem (e.g., "Offer a label-free QR code return option at partner drop-off points.").*

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Tool 1.4: Circular Growth Activation

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A strategic blueprint that articulates the shift from a linear to a circular model, creating a clear case for change, aligning the team on the commercial prize, and defining the specific role of marketing and sales in leading the transformation.	This "From-To" framework helps you map your transition across key commercial levers. The "Bridge" column identifies the critical initiatives needed to make the shift, while the fourth column ensures that the marketing and sales teams have a clear mandate for each of those initiatives: 1. **Customer Relationships:** From *Transactional Sale* > To *Long-term Partnership* (subscriptions, trade-ins, service). 2. **Growth Engine:** From *Product Volume* (selling more units) > To *Customer Value* (increasing lifetime value and engagement). 3. **Value Proposition:** From *Features & Newness* > To *Performance, Access & Durability*. 4. **Marketing Narrative:** From *"Buy This Now"* > To *"Invest in Quality, Participate in a System"*. 5. **Sales Incentive:** From *Unit-based Commission* > To *Recurring Revenue & Asset Return Bonuses*. 6. **Brand Promise:** From *Provider of Goods* > To *Partner in Smart Living*.	1. In the "From" column, honestly assess your current state for each lever. 2. In the "To" column, define the ambitious future state. 3. In **"The Bridge"** column, identify the single most important **marketing or sales initiative** required to cross from "From" to "To" for each lever. (e.g., To shift the Growth Engine, "The Bridge" might be 'Launch a pilot subscription service'). 4. In the column "The Role of M&S", for each initiative on "The Bridge," briefly describe the primary responsibility of your marketing and sales teams. Are they driving awareness, creating new value propositions, enabling partners, or retraining the sales force?	This isn't just a vision board; it's a strategic plan. The "Bridge" column is the most critical part. It translates the vision into an actionable portfolio of marketing and sales projects for the next 12-18 months with clear accountability.

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Tool 1.4: Circular Growth Activation

	From	The Bridge	To	The Role of M&S
Customer relationships	*Transactional sale*		*Long-term Partnership (subscriptions, trade-ins, service).*	
Growth Engine	Product volume (selling more units)		Customer value (increasing lifetime value and engagement)	
Value proposition	Features & newness		Performance, access & durability.	
Marketing narrative	"Buy this now"		"Invest in quality, participate in a system".	
Sales incentive	Unit-based commission		Recurring revenue & asset return bonuses	
Brand promise	Provider of goods		Partner in smart living	

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Tool 1.5: Circular Growth Portfolio Prioritisation

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A strategic portfolio of circular initiatives, prioritised not just by ease and impact, but by their potential to scale and fundamentally transform the business.	A 2x2 matrix with a third, visual dimension. 1. **Y-Axis: Commercial & Brand Upside:** Potential for revenue, margin improvement, brand differentiation, and customer loyalty. (Low to High). 2. **X-Axis: Go-to-Market Simplicity:** Ease of implementation using current marketing channels, sales teams, and tech stacks. (Low to High). 3. **Bubble Size: Scalability & Systemic Impact (S/M/L) :** The potential of this initiative to grow to a significant size and create a powerful competitive advantage. 4. **The Four Quadrants:** ■ **Launch & Learn (High Simplicity, Low Upside):** Small bubbles here are tactical pilots. Use them to build capability and gather data. ■ **Game Changers (High Simplicity, High Upside):** Large bubbles here are your top priority. They are your scalable growth drivers. ■ **Future Platforms (Low Simplicity, High Upside):** Large bubbles here are your strategic, long-term bets. They require foundational investment in new capabilities. ■ **Re-evaluate (Low/Low):** Avoid.	1. Brainstorm initiatives and write each on a sticky note. 2. Place each initiative on the matrix based on its axes. 3. Debate and assign a relative bubble size (S, M, L) to each initiative based on its ultimate scaling potential. 4. Develop your portfolio: Aim for a healthy mix. A few "Game Changers" to drive short-term growth, one or two "Future Platforms" to build long-term advantage, and a pipeline of "Launch & Learn" pilots.	Don't let your portfolio be dominated by small "Launch & Learn" bubbles. Use this tool to force a conversation with leadership about making fewer, bigger bets on scalable "Future Platforms.".

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Tool 1.5: Circular Growth Portfolio Prioritisation

High

Future Platforms

Game Changers

Commercial & Brand Upside

Low ◄———————— **Go-to-Market Simplicity** ————————► High

Re-evaluate

Launch and Learn

Low

Initiatives: S   M   L

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Section 2
Positioning for Circular Advantage

A circular business model doesn't sell itself. It competes against the most powerful force in commerce: **inertia**. The linear option is familiar, easy, and everywhere. To win, your circular offer can't just be *greener*; it has to be better. It must be more convenient, more valuable, and deliver a superior experience that makes the old way of doing things feel obsolete.

This section is about crafting that irresistible offer. It's the creative core of the circular transition, moving from a strategic opportunity to a value proposition that resonates with real customers. We will focus relentlessly on the customer's perspective, building a deep understanding of their motivations and barriers to create an offer that is not just accepted, but actively chosen and celebrated.

Here, you will design the **compelling, customer-centric offer that will become the heart of your growth engine**.

- **The Ecosystem Activation Canvas:** Define your primary commercial goal and create tailored positioning statements to activate your entire ecosystem
- **The Circular Value Exchange Canvas:** Blueprint the value exchange with customers and partners, and charter the new capabilities your commercial teams must build.
- **Circular Persona Spectrum:** Go beyond simplistic "green" segmentation to understand the pragmatic triggers that drive mainstream adoption.
- **The Circular Behavior Canvas:** Diagnose the customer 'say-do gap' and design targeted marketing and sales interventions to drive a specific circular behaviour.

Tool 2.1: The Ecosystem Activation Canvas

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A clear market strategy that identifies your primary commercial goal (**Deepen, Migrate, Acquire,** or **Scale**) and creates tailored positioning statements to activate the **entire ecosystem**—End-Users, Partners, and Influencers—required for success.	The traditional Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning (STP) framework is too narrow for circular models. A take-back program doesn't just involve a customer; it involves logistics partners, retail staff, and repair technicians. This canvas forces you to move beyond a single customer view to create a holistic activation strategy for every stakeholder you depend on.	■ **Segment:** In Part A, list the specific groups within each of the three categories.	Your partners need a value proposition too. Before you ask them to do anything, you must have a crystal clear and compelling answer to their question: "What's in it for me?".

The canvas is divided into three parts that build on each other.

■ **Part A: System Segmentation (Who is in our world?)** Map all the actors crucial to your success.

    − End-Users
    − Enablers & Partners
    − Influencers & Validators

■ **Part B: Strategic Targeting (What is our goal & who is essential?)** First, select your primary commercial goal. Then, for that goal, identify the single most critical actor in each segment.

    1. Primary Strategy: Select your main commercial goal:

    − Deepen: Increase loyalty with existing customers by adding circular services to products they already own.
    − Migrate: Move existing customers from a linear purchase to your new circular offer.
    − Acquire: Use your circular offer to win entirely new customer segments.
    − Scale: Expand a proven circular offer into new markets.

    2. Ecosystem Activation Targets: For your chosen strategy, who is the most critical?

    − End-User segment to win?
    − Enabler or Partner to secure?
    − Influencer or Validator to convince?

■ **Part C: Multi-Stakeholder Positioning (What is our core message for each?)** For each critical actor you identified in Part B, you need a tailored positioning statement. You are not just selling to a customer; you are recruiting an entire value chain.

Instructions (continued):

■ **Target:** In Part B, first select your single primary strategy. Then, based on that choice, identify the one End-User, one Partner, and one Influencer whose participation is absolutely essential for success.

■ **Position:** In Part C, complete all three positioning statements. This forces you to articulate a clear and compelling "what's in it for them?" for each critical stakeholder.

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Tool 2.1: The Ecosystem Activation Canvas

System segmentation

End-Users

The ultimate BCB and B2C customer

Enablers & Partners

The organisations you rely on to make the model work (e.g., reverse logistics providers, repair shops, technology partners).

Influencers & Validators

The groups that shape opinions and build trust (e.g., industry analysts, media, regulators, advocates).

Strategic Targeting

	Deepen	Migrate	Acquire	Scale
Critical end user(s)				
Critical Partner(s)				
Critical Influencer(s)				

Multi-Stakeholder Positioning

For **[Your Target End-User]**, our **[Circular Offer]** is the only **[Category/Service]** that delivers **[Key Customer Benefit]** because we **[Key Circular Differentiator]**.

To **[Your Key Partner]**, our partnership on **[Circular Offer]** provides **[Key Partner Benefit, e.g., new revenue, operational efficiency]** because we **[Your Unique Support/Differentiator for them]**.

For **[Your Key Influencer]**, our **[Circular Offer]** is the most compelling proof of **[Shared Value, e.g., industry innovation]** because it **[Verifiable Claim or Impact]**.

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Tool 2.2: The Circular Value Exchange Canvas

Outcome

A strategic blueprint that defines the value exchange between your business, your customers, and your key partners, and creates a clear charter for the new capabilities your marketing and sales teams must build to succeed.

Context

Positioning for circular advantage requires more than a compelling customer offer, it demands a new operating model for your commercial teams. While frameworks like the Business Model Canvas are useful for a holistic view, this canvas focuses specifically on the **value exchange** and the **commercial capabilities** needed to deliver it. It answers two questions: "What value are we creating and for whom?" and "How must Marketing & Sales evolve to deliver it?"

Content: The canvas is divided into three interconnected domains..

1, **The Value Proposition Core (What is our irresistible offer?)**

   - **Customer Value:** What is the primary functional, financial, and emotional value we deliver to our end-users? (Input from Tool 2.1)
   - **Partner Value:** What is the clear commercial "What's In It For Them?" that we provide to our most critical enabler/partner? (Input from Tool 2.1)

2. **The Value Exchange Engine (How does it work?)**

   - **Give (Customer & Partner):** What must our customers and partners give to the system for it to work? (e.g., Return a product, share data, provide a service, invest in new capability).
   - **Get (Customer & Partner):** What do they get in return at that specific moment of exchange? (e.g., Store credit, convenience, new revenue stream, customer data).

3. **The Marketing & Sales (M&S) Capability Shift (How must we evolve to deliver this?)**

   - **From (Old M&S Capability):** What is the traditional linear skill this model replaces? (e.g., Transactional selling, product-feature marketing).
   - **To (New M&S Capability):** What is the new, critical circular capability we must build? (e.g., Relationship management, reverse logistics marketing, partner co-creation, data analytics).
   - **Key M&S Actions:** What is the single most important action(s) our team needs to take to build this new capability? (e.g., "Retrain sales on consultative selling," "Hire a partnership marketing manager").

Instructions

- **Define the Value Core:** Start by summarising the core value propositions for your primary customer and key partner, drawing directly from your work in the previous tools.

- **Map the Exchange:** For your circular model to function, you need customers and partners to take specific actions. In the "Give/Get" section, map out the most critical exchanges. This makes the quid pro quo of your ecosystem explicit.

- **Charter the M&S Shift:** This is the most critical step. For each value exchange you've mapped, reflect on what it demands from your commercial teams. Use the "From/To/Action" framework to define the evolution of your team's skills, focus, and responsibilities. This becomes your team's delivery roadmap.

Top Practitioner Tips

- Your circular model is only as strong as the weakest value exchange. If the "Get" is not compelling enough for the "Give," your system will fail. Be brutally honest about the balance of value for your partners.

- The "Capability Shift" should include your talent and training plan. Use this section to have a direct conversation with your leadership and HR teams about the new skills and roles you need to invest in to make your circular strategy a reality.

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Tool 2.2: The Circular Value Exchange Canvas

The Circular Value Proposition	The Value Exchange	The Marketing & Sales capability shift		
Customer Value: What is the primary functional, financial, and emotional value we deliver to our target persona?	*Give (Customer & Partner): What must our customers and partners give to the system for it to work?*	*From (Old M&S Capability): What is the traditional linear skill this model replaces?*	*To (New M&S Capability): What is the new, critical circular capability we must build?*	*Key Actions: What is the single most important action our Marketing & Sales team needs to take to build this new capability?*
Partner Value: What is the clear commercial "What's In It For Them?" that we provide to our most critical enabler/partner?	*Get (Customer & Partner): What do they get in return at that specific moment of exchange?*			

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Tool 2.3: Circular Persona Spectrum

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips

A nuanced understanding of your customer segments and their key motivational triggers, enabling highly targeted value propositions and messaging.	A persona template that maps segments across a spectrum of motivation.
	
	1. **Core Job-to-be-Done:** What fundamental need are they trying to meet?
	
	2. **Primary Motivator Spectrum:**
	  ■ **The Conscious Pragmatist:** "I want to do the right thing, as long as it's easy and offers good value." Trigger: Convenience & quality assurance.
	  ■ **The Value Maximiser:** "I want the best performance and lowest total cost of ownership, regardless of the model." Trigger: Financial savings & hassle-free maintenance.
	  ■ **The Lifestyle Adopter:** "I want access to the latest styles/tech and to be seen as smart and innovative." Trigger: Novelty, status, and community.
	  ■ **The Committed Advocate:** "I will actively choose the most sustainable option, even if it requires more effort." Trigger: Transparency & impact metrics.
	
	3. **Barriers & Hooks:** For each persona, what's their biggest barrier to adopting your circular offer, and what's the single most compelling hook to overcome it?
		1. Instead of creating personas from scratch, map your existing customer data against this spectrum. Where do your customers cluster?
		
		2. For your priority segment, dive deep into their "Barriers & Hooks."
		
		3. Craft your core marketing messages to directly address the hooks for your target persona.
			Your largest addressable market is likely the "Conscious Pragmatist" and the "Value Maximiser." Do not build your entire marketing strategy around the "Committed Advocate"—they are a valuable niche, but not a growth engine for most businesses. .".

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Tool 2.3: Circular Persona Spectrum

The Conscious Pragmatist

The Value Maximiser

The Lifestyle Adopter

The Committed Advocate

Triggers				

Barriers				

Hooks				

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Tool 2.4: The Circular Behavior Canvas

Outcome

A prioritised action plan of marketing and sales interventions designed to close the 'say-do gap' and drive one specific target circular behaviour.

Context

Many customers say they want sustainable options, but their actions don't follow. This gap between intent and action is the single biggest challenge in circular marketing. To change behaviour, we need to address three key areas: does the customer have the **Capability** (the skill and knowledge), the **Opportunity** (the right external context), and the **Motivation** (the belief it's worth it)? This canvas uses that powerful logic to help you design interventions that work. The canvas is a step-by-step guide to diagnose a behavioural challenge and brainstorm solutions.

1. **Target Persona & The Say-Do Gap:**

   - **What they SAY**: e.g., *"I want to be more sustainable and waste less."*
   - **What they DO (Linear Behaviour):** e.g., *"They put old electronics in a drawer and eventually throw them away."*
   - **The TARGET BEHAVIOUR (Circular):** e.g., *"They trade-in their old phone for credit when they upgrade."*

2. **The COM-B Analysis:**

   - **Motivation:** What will make them want to do it? What are the emotional or rational drivers and barriers?
   - **Capability:** What skills, knowledge, or physical abilities do they need to perform the target behaviour?
   - **Opportunity:** What external factors or environmental changes are required to make the behaviour easy and obvious?

3. **Marketing & Sales Interventions:** Based on your analysis, what are the specific actions marketing and sales can take to build Capability, create Opportunity, and boost Motivation?

Instructions

1. **Define the Problem (Part 1):** Start by selecting your target persona (from Tool 2.2). Clearly articulate their stated belief ("Says"), their current linear action ("Does"), and the single, specific circular behaviour you want to encourage ("Target Behaviour").

2. **Diagnose the Barriers (Part 2):** As a team, brainstorm the blockers for each of the three drivers. Is the main problem that customers don't know how (Capability), the process is too difficult (Opportunity), or they just don't care enough (Motivation)?

3. **Brainstorm Interventions (Part 3):** Based on your diagnosis, generate a list of marketing and sales interventions. If the barrier is Capability, your interventions will be educational. If it's Opportunity, they will be process-based. If it's Motivation, they will be communications-led.

Top Practitioner Tips

While making a circular action easy (Opportunity) is important, the most powerful lever for change is often **Motivation**. Identify the single "key moment of circularity" from your Journey Map (Tool 1.2). Focus your creative energy on designing an intervention for that specific moment that makes the customer want to act. A timely financial reward, a feeling of smart ownership, or seeing a powerful impact metric can provide the critical nudge that closes the loop.

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Tool 2.4: The Circular Behavior Canvas

Target Persona:		

The Say Do Gap:	What they SAY	What they DO	Target Behaviour

Behavioral Change Analysis using COM B model	Motivation	Capabilities	Opportunities

Marketing & Sales interventions			

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Section 3
Co-ordinating the Circular Marketing & Sales Mix

Even the world's best offer will fail if your go-to-market engine is still running on a linear operating system. You cannot launch a subscription service if your sales team is only incentivised on one-off unit sales. You cannot build a seamless take-back program if your marketing channels only talk one-way. This is where circular strategies most often break down: at the point of execution.

This section provides the new operating manual for your commercial teams. It's a set of tools to audit, redesign, and align your marketing mix, sales incentives, and channel strategy with the realities of a circular model. We will tackle the tough, practical questions of how to change behaviour—both externally with customers and, crucially, internally with your own teams—to drive adoption and make your circular model work in the real world.

These tools will ensure your **execution engine is as innovative as your business model.**

- **CE Marketing Mix audit:** Systematically diagnose the gaps between your current marketing mix and what's required to win.
- **The Adoption-First Framework:** Align sales incentives and marketing tactics to de-risk the decision for both your customers and your frontline teams.
- **The Circular Go-to-Market Canvas:** Build a single, integrated launch plan that connects your core narrative directly to your forward and reverse channels.

Tool 3.1: CE Marketing Mix audit

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A rigorous, diagnostic audit of your marketing mix against **8 core circular principles**, creating a clear and prioritised action plan for transformation..	This audit helps you systematically compare your current marketing activities (often linear by default) against the principles of a successful circular model. For each of the 8Ps, ask the **Key Diagnostic Question** to assess your maturity and identify your biggest blockers and opportunities.	1. For each of the **8Ps**, discuss the **Key Diagnostic Question** with your team. 2. On a scale of 1 (Purely Linear) to 5 (Fully Circular), honestly score your organisation's current **maturity**. 3. For each P, identify the single biggest **Blocker** (the main obstacle holding you back) and the single biggest **Accelerator** (your best opportunity for improvement). 4. Review your scores. Choose the one "P" that, if improved, would unlock the most progress across the board. This becomes your strategic focus point.	For most companies launching a circular model, the biggest blockers are **Place** (reverse logistics) and **Process** (seamless returns). The biggest accelerators are often **Price** (creating an unbeatable value case) and **Partnerships** (scaling faster than you could alone).

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Tool 3.1: CE Marketing Mix audit

The 'P'	Circular Principle	Key Diagnostic Question	Score	Key Blocker	Key Accelerator
Product	Products are designed as durable, repairable, and valuable assets intended for recovery and reuse.	Is our product designed as a valuable asset to be recovered, or a disposable item to be replaced?			
Promotion	The brand narrative celebrates the value of smartness, durability, and participation over 'newness' and builds trust through radical transparency.	Is our brand story centered on consumption and 'newness,' or on smart ownership, durability, and transparently sharing our progress and challenges?			
Price	Pricing models reward and incentivise customer participation in the circular system.	Does our pricing model incentivise circular behaviours (e.g., subscriptions, trade-in value) over one-off linear sales?			
Place	Distribution networks are multi-directional, making it as easy to get a product back as it is to sell it.	How easy and convenient is it for a customer to get a product back to us at the end of its use?			
People	Sales and service teams are skilled and incentivised to build long-term relationships that support circular models.	Are our teams trained and incentivised to manage long-term relationships, or to maximise short-term sales volume?			
Process	The customer experience of all circular loops (returns, repairs, trade-ins) is seamless, intuitive, and rewarding.	How seamless and frictionless are our circular processes for the customer? Do they create value or feel like a chore?			
Physical Evidence	Tangible brand elements provide clear and trustworthy proof of your commitment to circularity.	Do our packaging, certifications, digital tools, and in-store experiences provide tangible proof of our circular promise?			
Partnerships	A robust ecosystem of partners is in place to deliver the circular offer at scale.	Have we built the necessary ecosystem of partners to make our circular model scalable and convenient?			

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Tool 3.2: The Adoption-First Framework

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A focused action plan to drive internal and external adoption of your new circular offer by aligning sales incentives with customer value.	A framework with four core "Plays."	1. Assess your current launch plan against these three plays. Where are you weak?	Your sales team's compensation plan is your most powerful marketing tool. If it rewards linear sales, your circular offer will fail. Align incentives first.

Play 1: Make the decision easy (For the Customer):

- **Example Goal:** Make it a no-brainer for the customer to try the new model.
- **Tactics:** Free trials, satisfaction guarantees, clear and simple pricing, case studies of successful early adopters, transparent return policies.

Play 2: Enable your people (For all business teams):

- **Example Goal:** Make the circular offer the easiest, most motivating, and most rewarding thing for your internal teams (sales, service, marketing) to support.
- **Tactics:** Simple commission plans that reward recurring revenue and asset returns; cheat sheets for handling common objections; clear training on the "why"; celebrating internal champions and success stories.

Play 3: Activate Your Value Chain (For Ecosystem Stakeholders):

- **Example Goal**: Make participation in your circular model a clear strategic and commercial win for the external stakeholders your success depends on.
- **Tactics:** Develop a clear "What's In It For Them?" (WIIFT) for each key stakeholder. Enable their success by co-developing marketing plans and providing them with the exclusive data and stories they need to become powerful advocates. Foster shared ownership by involving them directly in the creative process.

Play 4: Amplify the Narrative (For the Broader Market):

- **Example Goal**: Build a powerful and consistent brand narrative that makes your circular offer desirable and understood by the public.
- **Tactics:** Share compelling customer testimonials; communicate clear and tangible impact metrics; launch brand campaigns that celebrate durability and smart ownership over 'newness'; secure positive media coverage.

Instructions (continued):

2. For your weakest play, brainstorm 3-5 new tactics you can implement immediately.

3. Assign an owner to each play to ensure accountability.

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Tool 3.2: The Adoption-First Framework

Plays	Goals	Tactics
Play 1: Make the decision easy (For the Customer):		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
Play 2: Enable your people (For all business teams):		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
Play 3: Activate Your Value Chain (For Ecosystem Stakeholders):		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
Play 4: Amplify the Narrative (For the Broader Market):		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic
		■ Tactic ■ Tactic ■ Tactic

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Tool 3.3: The Circular Go-to-Market Canvas

Outcome

A single, integrated Go-to-Market plan that aligns your campaign narrative, customer journey, and channel strategy for a successful launch.

Context

A canvas that merges campaign planning with channel execution.

1. **The Narrative**

   - **Target Persona:** Who are we winning over?
   - **Circular Model:** What is the journey we want customers to engage in?
   - **Key Messages & Proof Points:** What do we want customers to understand? What data can we use to back up our story? What is the overarching story (e.g., Value, Convenience, Sustainability)?
   - **Core Story:** What is the overarching story?

2. **The Journey**

   - **Target Behaviour:** What do we need customers to do?
   - **Acquire:** What channels and Calls To Action (CTA) will drive initial trials?
   - **Engage:** How will we onboard customers and ensure they see the value? What are the critical moments of circularity that customers need to engage in?

3. **The Channels & Enablers**

   - **Forward Channels (Owned/Partner):** Where will we reach our customers? Our website, key retailers, etc.
   - **Reverse Channels (Owned/Partner):** Where will we reach our customers? In-store drop-off, logistics partners, etc.
   - **Business Capabilities:** What business capabilities need to be put in place to support our go to market efforts?

4. **Actions**

   - **Launch Strategy:** What is our launch strategy? Do you plan to launch to the entire market "big bang" or will you have a staged release? Beta? Pilot?
   - **Campaign Interventions**: what will be the elements of our campaign?
   - **Campaign Resources:** what resource and budget do we need for the campaign?
   - **Campaign KPIs:** What does success look like and what will it cost?

Instructions

1. Start with The Narrative: Define your Target Persona and the core Circular Model you are promoting. Based on this, craft your Core Story and the Key Messages & Proof Points that will bring it to life .

2. Next, map The Journey: Be crystal clear on the single most important Target Behaviour you need to drive. Then, detail the tactics you'll use to Acquire new users and Engage them in the circular model .

3. Then, define The Channels & Enablers: Map out both your Forward Channels to the customer and, crucially, your Reverse Channels for getting products back. List the key Business Capabilities required to support these flows .

4. Finally, detail the Actions: Outline your Launch Strategy , list the specific Campaign Interventions , estimate the Campaign Resources needed, and set clear Campaign KPIs to measure success

Top Practitioner Tips

Your launch budget should have a dedicated line item for "Reverse Channel Activation." This could include in-store signage for returns, incentives for retail staff, or co-marketing with a logistics partner. If you don't market the return journey, it won't happen at scale.

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Tool 3.3: The Circular Go-to-Market Canvas

1

The Narrative

Target Persona	Circular Model

Key Messages & Proof Points

Core Story

2

The Journey

Target Behaviour(s)

Acquire

Engage

3

The Channels & Enablers

Forward Channels

Reverse Channels

Business Capabilities

Go To Market Actions

4

Launch Strategy

Campaign Interventions

Campaign Resources

Campaign KPIs

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In a linear world, we measure success with simple, lagging indicators: units sold, quarterly revenue. In a circular world, these metrics don't just fail to tell the whole story; they can be dangerously misleading. Success is no longer about volume; it's about value retention, asset efficiency, and the long-term profitability of a customer relationship. You need a new cockpit with new instruments.

This final section is about building that growth cockpit. It's designed to help you measure what truly matters and to change the conversation with your leadership and your CFO. We will move beyond vanity metrics to focus on the key commercial and operational drivers of a scalable circular business. These tools will allow you to prove the financial viability of your model, identify the key levers for profitable growth, and make the data-driven case for scaling your impact.

This is how you **prove the value of your circular business and build the case for leading the future**.

- **The Circular KPI Dashboard:** Track the holistic health of your model across four key pillars: Customer, Financial, Operational, and Impact.
- **The Circular Funnel Scorecard:** Diagnose the performance of your marketing and sales funnel at each stage of the customer journey to identify and fix weak points.
- **The Circular Value Case Template:** Build a robust, multi-layered business case to secure investment by articulating the full financial, strategic, and brand value of your initiative.

Tool 4.1: The Circular KPI Dashboard

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A strategic dashboard that provides a clear, real-time view of the commercial health and scaling potential of your circular business model across four key performance areas: **Customer, Financial, Operational, and Impact**.	A successful circular model requires a balanced view of performance. This dashboard is organized around four essential pillars and uses a mix of leading indicators and lagging indicators to give you a complete picture. Use it to track progress, make data-driven decisions, and communicate the holistic value of your initiative to leadership.	1. **Select Your Core KPIs:** You don't need to track everything at once. Start with the initial list in the template and any other key performance indicators that are important to your business. 2. **Establish a Baseline:** Measure your current performance for your selected KPIs to create a starting point. 3. **Set Targets:** For each KPI, define a clear target and a "health" threshold (e.g., Red, Amber, Green). 4. **Review Holistically:** Use this dashboard as the agenda for your performance meetings. Look for the relationships between the quadrants. For example, does an increase in Customer satisfaction lead to a higher Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)? Does a poor Operational return rate put your Impact goals at risk?	The dashboard is a system, not just a set of numbers. Look for the cause-and-effect chain. For example, a drop in your Operational "Time to Recirculate" might cause a drop in Commercial "Resale Revenue," which could then damage Customer "CSAT" when products are out of stock. Use the dashboard to find the root cause of a problem, not just its symptom.

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Tool 4.1: The Circular KPI Dashboard

Customer

Lead indicators

| **Campaign engagement** (How many people are engaging with our campaign) | **Campaign sentiment** (What has been the reaction of individuals to our campaign) |

Lag indicators

| **Behaviours** (How many customers are engaged in critical behaviours) | **CSAT** (How satisfied our customers with the model) |

| **NPS** (how many customers would recommend to another customer) | **Adoption** (How many customers have used the model) |

Financial

Lead indicators

Set-up costs	**Set-up costs**
Cost of linear model sale	**Cost of circular model lifecycle**
One sale revenue potential	**Lifecycle revenue potential**

Lag indicators

One-off sales revenue realised	**Lifecycle revenue realised**
One-off costs incurred	**Lifecycle costs incurred**
Margin realised	**Margin realised**

Operational

Lead indicators

| **Capacity** |
| **Model compliance** |

Lag indicators

| **Lifecycle stage SLA's** |
| **Return rate** |
| **Reuse rate** |

Impact

Material per product	**Materials used**	**Materials saved**
Waste per product	**Waste created**	**Waste saved**
Water per product	**Water used**	**Water saved**
Emissions per product	**Emissions expended**	**Emission saved**
Pollution per product	**Pollution emitted**	**Pollution saved**

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Tool 4.2: The Circular Funnel Scorecard

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A clear, data-driven assessment of your circular marketing and sales funnel, culminating in a prioritised action plan to improve performance at its weakest points.	This is not a passive checklist; it's a diagnostic tool. Its purpose is to move beyond simply tracking metrics to diagnosing the health of your customer journey. By focusing on a curated set of critical KPIs at each of the six stages, you can pinpoint your biggest opportunities for growth and create a focused plan to take action.	1. **Select Your KPIs:** Review the list of KPIs for each stage and make sure you have at least 1-2 at each stage. 2. **Define & Set Targets (Column 3):** For your selected KPIs, agree on a precise definition and set a realistic, ambitious Target for the next quarter. 3. **Assess Performance (Column 4):** Based on your current data, honestly assess your performance. Mark it as Red (significantly below target), Amber (nearing target), or Green (meeting or exceeding target). 4. **Generate Actions (Column 5 & 6):** For every Red or Amber KPI, discuss the story behind the data. What is the Key Insight? Based on that insight, what is the single most impactful Improvement Action your team can take?	Your biggest opportunity for growth lies in improving the conversion rate between the two stages with the largest performance gap.

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Tool 4.2: The Circular Funnel Scorecard

Journey Stage	Key KPI	Target	Performance (RAG)	Key Insight	Improvement Action
1. Awareness *Are they finding us?*	Circular Offer Traffic	Target:...	🔴 / 🟡 / 🟢	Insight:...	Action ...
	Content Engagement Rate				
2. Evaluation *Is our offer compelling?*	Lead/Trial Conversion Rate				
	Funnel Drop-off Rate				
	Trade-in Quote Acceptance Rate				
3. Acquisition *Are they choosing circular?*	Circular Adoption Rate				
	Customer Acquisition Cost (CAC)				
4. Onboarding & Use *Are they getting value?*	Active Use / Asset Utilisation Rate				
	Onboarding CSAT				
	First-Period Churn Rate				
5. Service & Support *Are we helping effectively?*	Service Request Rate				
	Resolution CSAT				
	Average Service Turnaround Time				
6. Return & Renew *Are we closing the loop?*	Asset Return Rate				
	Time to Recirculate				
	Renewal / Repeat Use Rate				
	Customer Lifetime Value (CLV)				

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Tool 4.3: The Circular Value Case Template

Outcome	Context	Instructions	Top Practitioner Tips
A comprehensive, one-page business case that articulates the full commercial and strategic value of your circular initiative, enabling you to secure investment and build internal alignment.	A traditional P&L model often fails to capture the full spectrum of value a circular model creates. It misses the strategic benefits of stronger customer relationships, reduced risk, and enhanced brand equity. This template is designed for marketing and sales leaders to build a robust, multi-layered business case that speaks to the CFO's need for numbers, the CMO's focus on brand, and the CEO's mandate for resilient, long-term growth. The value case template is a 2x2 matrix that helps you articulate value across four critical business dimensions.	1. **Start with the Financials (Top Row):** Begin by quantifying the direct financial impacts in Quadrants 1 and 2. Use robust financial forecasts to populate these sections with hard numbers where possible (e.g., "Projected £5M in resale revenue by Year 3," "£1.2M in avoided material costs"). 2. **Build the Strategic Case (Bottom Row):** Move to Quadrants 3 and 4 to articulate the less tangible, but equally critical, strategic benefits. Frame these as clear, compelling statements (e.g., "Reduces our dependency on volatile polymers by 40%," "Increases customer retention by 15%, boosting CLV"). 3. **Craft the Narrative:** Use the completed template to build a powerful story. Start with the compelling financial opportunity ("This model can unlock £X in new revenue") and then reinforce it with the strategic advantages ("...and at the same time, it makes our supply chain more resilient and deepens our customer relationships, creating a powerful competitive moat.").	■ The 'Cost of Inaction' is your most powerful argument. Use Quadrant 3 to paint a clear picture of the risks of not adopting a circular model. Frame it as a choice between investing in a resilient future or remaining exposed to the increasing volatility of the linear economy. ■ Monetise the Intangibles: Work with your marketing and HR teams to put credible numbers on the strategic benefits. What is a 1% increase in customer retention worth? What is the cost of replacing a talented employee who leaves for a more purpose-driven competitor? Quantifying these "soft" benefits makes your case exponentially stronger.

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Tool 4.3: The Circular Value Case Template

Cost Reduction & Risk Mitigation

Direct Financial Value

1. Operational Savings:

- *How does this model reduce our direct costs?*
- *Material Costs: Value of recovered materials, reduced reliance on virgin resources.*
- *Energy Costs: Savings from more efficient processes.*
- *Compliance Costs: Avoidance of future carbon taxes, EPR fees, or waste penalties.*

Strategic & Brand Value

3. De-risking the Business:

- *How does this model make our business more resilient and future-proof?*
- *Supply Chain Risk: Reduced exposure to price volatility and scarcity.*
- *Brand & Reputational Risk: Mitigation of "greenwashing" accusations; enhanced social license to operate.*
- *Talent Risk: Increased ability to attract and retain top talent who value purpose.*

Revenue Growth & Market Position

2. New & Resilient Revenue:

- *How does this model create new, high-quality revenue streams?*
- *Recurring Revenue: Predictable income from subscriptions/services.*
- *Resale Revenue: High-margin sales of refurbished goods.*
- *Increased Share of Wallet: Additional revenue from services like repair, upgrades, etc.*

4. Strengthening the Brand & Customer:

- *How does this model build our most valuable intangible assets?*
- *Customer Lifetime Value (CLV): Increased loyalty, retention, and repeat purchases.*
- *Competitive Moat: Creation of a hard-to-copy, service-based competitive advantage.*
- *Brand Goodwill & Pricing Power: Enhanced brand reputation that supports premium pricing.*

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The frameworks and tools presented in this report are most powerfully understood through their application in the real world. This section provides detailed analyses of pioneering companies in both B2B and B2C sectors that have successfully integrated circular principles into their marketing and sales strategies. Each case is examined through the lens of the four-stage transformation journey— Identification, Positioning, Coordination, and Measurement—providing practical blueprints for success.

A note on case studies and sources
The companies featured in this section are included as illustrative examples based on our research of publicly available information. Their inclusion does not imply any partnership with, or endorsement by, these organisations. All information is provided for educational purposes to demonstrate the principles of the toolkit in action. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy at the time of publication, all data is subject to change. All trademarks and brand names mentioned are the property of their respective owners.

5.1: B2B Technology & Electronics Sector

The technology and electronics sector faces immense pressure from e-waste regulations and resource scarcity, making it a fertile ground for circular innovation.

Philips Lighting (Signify)
The Product-as-a-Service Pioneer

- **Opportunity Identification:** Signify (formerly Philips Lighting) recognised that for many commercial customers, the goal isn't to own light bulbs; it's to have well-lit spaces. The high upfront capital expenditure for efficient LED lighting systems was a major barrier to adoption. This created an opportunity to shift from selling a product (a luminaire) to selling an outcome (light).

- **Strategic Positioning:** Signify pioneered the **"Light as a Service" (LaaS)** model, positioning itself as a long-term strategic partner rather than a transactional vendor. The value proposition is a "worry-free" lighting solution that guarantees performance, efficiency, and uptime for a monthly fee, turning a capital expense (CapEx) into an operational expense (OpEx) for the customer.

- **Tactical Coordination:**
  - **Product:** The "product" is a service contract. Signify retains ownership of the lighting hardware, which is designed for durability, serviceability, and upgradability. This incentivises them to create the most efficient and long-lasting products possible to minimise their own service costs.
  - **Place:** The service is delivered directly to B2B clients' premises (offices, warehouses, municipalities). The reverse logistics are built-in; Signify is responsible for all maintenance, upgrades, and end-of-service material recovery and recycling.
  - **Promotion:** Marketing focuses on the **Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)** benefits: reduced energy consumption, zero maintenance costs, and guaranteed performance levels. The message is about operational efficiency and sustainability, not just watts and lumens..

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** The LaaS model has proven to be a significant driver of their circular economy strategy. In its 2023 Annual Report, Signify reported that **31% of its global revenues** came from circular products, systems, and services [1], demonstrating that service-based models can be both profitable and scalable.

Sources: [1] Signify. (2024). Annual Report 2023.

Lenovo
Monetising Asset Recovery

- **Opportunity Identification:** Businesses face a significant challenge managing end-of-life IT equipment. E-waste is a growing environmental problem, data security during disposal is a major risk, and valuable materials are lost. Lenovo saw an opportunity to turn this client pain point into a revenue-generating service that also fuels its own circular supply chain.

- **Strategic Positioning:** Lenovo positions its **Asset Recovery Services (ARS)** as a secure, sustainable, and financially smart solution for corporate IT departments. The value proposition is a single, trusted partner to manage the entire end-of-life process, mitigating risk while maximising the recovery of financial value from used assets.

- **Tactical Coordination:**
  - **Product:** The service includes secure logistics, certified data destruction, and evaluation of assets for refurbishment and resale or responsible recycling. A portion of the value recovered from reselling the equipment is returned to the client.
  - **Place:** ARS is a global B2B service. Lenovo coordinates the secure pickup of assets directly from client locations, managing the entire reverse supply chain.
  - **Promotion:** Marketing is targeted at IT and finance leaders, emphasising data security, environmental compliance (e.g., WEEE directives), and the ability to turn a disposal cost into a **revenue stream**. They sell it as a "value recovery" service, not a "waste" service.

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** The scale of the program demonstrates its success. Lenovo stated it processed **over 1 million devices** through its ARS program [1]. This not only generates a service revenue stream but also provides a crucial source of components for its own repair and manufacturing operations.

Sources: [1] Lenovo Story Hub. (2025). Reimagine end-of-life IT with Lenovo Asset Recovery Services to drive sustainability and value.

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Interface
Weaving Circularity into the Brand DNA

- **Opportunity Identification:** Interface's founder, Ray Anderson, had an epiphany in 1994, identifying the linear "take-make-waste" model of the carpet industry as fundamentally unsustainable. The company saw an opportunity to lead the industry by eliminating its negative environmental impact entirely, a mission it called "Mission Zero".

- **Strategic Positioning:** For decades, Interface has positioned itself as the design and sustainability leader in commercial flooring. Its value proposition is that customers can specify beautiful, high-performance flooring without compromising on their environmental values. This is core to the brand's identity.

- **Tactical Coordination:** The marketing and sales mix was completely re-engineered.

  - **Product:** Interface pioneered modular carpet tiles and products with high levels of recycled and bio-based content, including the world's first cradle-to-gate carbon-negative carpet tiles.
  - **Place:** The "ReEntry" program is their take-back and recycling initiative, providing the reverse logistics channel to close the loop.
  - **Promotion:** Marketing consistently highlights their sustainability journey and product transparency.

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** According to its 2024 Impact Report, 67% of all materials in its products were from recycled or bio-based sources[1]. The company's long-term investment in circularity has built significant brand loyalty and competitive advantage.

Sources: [1] Interface, Inc. (2024). *2024 IMPACT REPORT.*

Virgin Media O2 (VMO2)
Driving Device Circulation with Social Purpose

Opportunity Identification: Beyond the environmental issue of e-waste and the commercial opportunity in used devices, VMO2 identified a critical social challenge: the **digital divide**. A key barrier to digital inclusion is the lack of a suitable device, which prevents people from accessing essential services, education, and employment opportunities. This created a powerful opportunity to connect their circular device model directly to a pressing social need.

Strategic Positioning: VMO2 positions itself as a provider that is not only smart and sustainable but also socially conscious. By adding a social purpose lens to their circularity, the value proposition extends beyond a simple transaction. They offer customers a chance to participate in a programme that simultaneously prevents waste, provides financial value, and directly contributes to tackling **data poverty** in UK communities.

- **Tactical Coordination:** The marketing and sales mix was completely re-engineered.

  - **Product:** The core circular programmes are **O2 Recycle** and the sale of **"Like New"** phones. Crucially, a portion of the devices recovered are channelled into social programmes like **"Community Calling."** In partnership with the charity Hubbub, this initiative refurbishes donated smartphones and redistributes them to people in need, bundled with free mobile data from the National Databank.
  - **Place:** The omnichannel collection system (online and in-store) remains the same, but it now serves as the critical sourcing channel for both commercial resale and social redistribution.
  - **Promotion:** The marketing message is elevated from a purely financial incentive ("get cash for your phone") to one of purpose and community impact. Campaigns can now highlight how a customer's old phone can become a lifeline for someone facing digital exclusion, adding a powerful layer of emotional resonance and brand purpose.

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** The impact of this model is twofold. Since the service relaunched in 2023, O2 Recycle for Business saved **450,000 devices** from landfill through its recycling and refurbishment schemes [1]. Simultaneously, their ambition to tackle data poverty includes rehoming thousands of devices with vulnerable people through their charity partners, directly linking their circular operations to a measurable social outcome and demonstrating a holistic approach to value creation.

Sources: [1] Virgin Media O2. Press Release (2025). *Companies can clear out their old tech and cash in with O2 Recycle for Business.*

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5.2: B2C Fashion & Retail Sector

The fashion and retail sector, particularly "fast fashion," is under intense scrutiny for its environmental and social impacts, creating a powerful incentive for brands to adopt circular models like resale, rental, and repair.

IKEA
Scaling Circularity for the Masses

- **Opportunity Identification:** IKEA's business model, built on affordable, self-assembly furniture, has been criticised for fueling a "fast furniture" culture. With its immense global scale, IKEA saw a critical business need and a massive opportunity: to pivot its entire value chain towards circularity and make sustainable living accessible and affordable for millions of people.

- **Strategic Positioning:** IKEA positions circularity as a simple, smart, and mainstream choice. Its value proposition is to empower customers to acquire, care for, and pass on products in circular ways. They are moving from simply selling products to providing **integrated, circular solutions for the home**.

- **Tactical Coordination:**
  - **Product:** The "Buy Back & Resell" service is a cornerstone initiative, allowing customers to sell their used IKEA furniture back to the store. This is complemented by an increasing focus on designing products made from renewable and recycled materials that can be easily disassembled and repurposed.
  - **Place:** The "Buy Back" service is integrated into the physical store experience. Customers return items to a dedicated point and receive store credit, which encourages a circular flow of both goods and customer traffic. Resold items are available in a dedicated "Circular Hub" (formerly As-Is) section of the store.
  - **Promotion:** Marketing frames the service with practical, positive messaging like "Give your furniture a second life" and "Your furniture could be worth more than you think." It's positioned as a smart financial and environmental decision.

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** IKEA's scale allows for significant impact. In its FY24 Sustainability Report, the company reported that around 260,400 customers across 28 countries used their Buyback service to give over 495,000 items a next life [1].

Sources: [1] Inter IKEA Group. (2025). *IKEA Sustainability Report FY23*.

Selfridges
Curating the Circular Customer Experience

- **Opportunity Identification:** The luxury retail market has traditionally been defined by newness, exclusivity, and consumption. Selfridges identified an opportunity to redefine modern luxury for a new generation of consumers who value sustainability, authenticity, and experience over mere ownership. The goal was to make circularity aspirational.

- **Strategic Positioning:** Selfridges positions itself as the **curator of the future of shopping**. Under its "Project Earth" strategy, it frames circular models like resale, rental, and repair not as down-market alternatives, but as an integral part of the luxury experience. The value proposition is "conscious consumption" without sacrificing style or quality.

- **Tactical Coordination:**
  - **Product:** The **"Reselfridges"** banner unites all circular services under one brand. This includes curated luxury resale (pre-owned bags, watches), high-end fashion rental (in partnership with platforms like HURR), and a "Repairs Concierge" for everything from denim to leather goods.
  - **Place:** Crucially, these services are not hidden in a basement. They are seamlessly integrated into the main shopping experience, both online and in prime locations within their flagship physical stores. This normalises circularity and positions it as co-equal with new products.
  - **Promotion:** Marketing uses high-end editorial content, exclusive events, and designer collaborations to make circular shopping desirable. "Project Earth" is promoted as a store-wide movement, giving customers a clear and compelling banner to rally behind.

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** Selfridges has set ambitious, publicly-stated goals to drive this transformation. As part of its Project Earth commitments, the company has set a target for **45% of transactions to come from circular products and services** by 2030 [1], signaling a fundamental strategic shift in its business model.

Sources: [1] Selfridges & Co. (2023). *Project Earth Report 2023*.

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Decathlon
Making Circularity Accessible to All

- **Opportunity Identification:** Decathlon's mission is to make sports accessible. They identified that the high cost of new equipment, especially for seasonal sports or growing children, can be a significant barrier. This presented a clear opportunity to create circular business models—like rental and resale—that would not only reduce waste but also lower the barrier to entry, perfectly aligning their sustainability goals with their core business mission.

- **Strategic Positioning:** Decathlon positions its circular services as a smart, practical, and value-driven choice for its customers. The value proposition is not about niche eco-luxury, but about enhancing accessibility. Whether it's through renting skis for a week or buying a refurbished "Second Life" bicycle, the message is about enabling more people to enjoy sports affordably and sustainably.

- **Tactical Coordination:** The Worn Wear initiative is a fully integrated marketing and sales ecosystem:

  - **Product:** Decathlon has a multi-pronged circular offering:
    - Buy-Back: Allows customers to sell used equipment back to Decathlon for store credit.
    - Second Life: A dedicated in-store and online offering of refurbished, ex-display, and used products sold at a significant discount.
    - Rental: Provides short-term access to items like kayaks, bikes, skis, and camping gear.
    - Repair: In-store workshops ("Atelier") offer extensive repair services to prolong the life of products.
  - **Place:** These services are deeply integrated into Decathlon's large-format physical stores. The repair workshops and "Second Life" sections are highly visible, normalising these activities and driving customer foot traffic for both circular and new product sales..
  - **Promotion:** Marketing focuses on the practical benefits for the customer: cost savings, trying new sports with low commitment, and decluttering their homes. The messaging is simple and direct, such as "Rent from £10 a day" or "Give your gear a second life."

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** Decathlon's circular models have become a significant part of its business. In its 2023 Performance Report, the company reported that its circular business models generated **€420 million in turnover** [1]. This demonstrates a successful integration of circularity at scale, proving that sustainable options can be both profitable and popular with a mainstream audience.
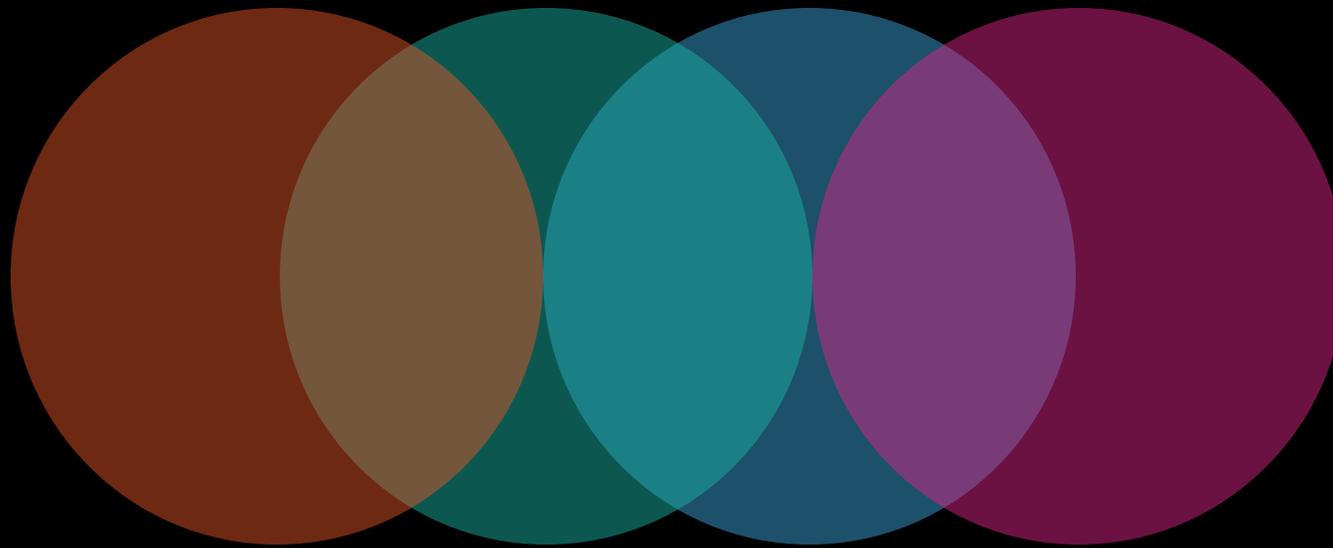
Sources: [1] Decathlon. (2024). *Performance Report 2023*.

H&M Group
An Incumbent's Transformation Challenge

- **Opportunity Identification:** As one of the world's largest fashion retailers, H&M Group has been at the centre of the "fast fashion" debate. Facing intense pressure from consumers, regulators, and investors, the company identified an existential need to transform its linear model. The opportunity is to leverage its massive scale to drive circular solutions like collection and recycling, and to invest in innovations that could decouple revenue from virgin resource use.

- **Strategic Positioning:** H&M Group is positioning itself as an industry leader actively working to solve the sustainability puzzle. The value proposition is one of conscious choice and progress. They aim to provide customers with access to fashion that is increasingly circular and sustainable, acknowledging the journey is complex and long-term.

- **Tactical Coordination:**

  - **Product:** The global **Garment Collecting program** is their most visible initiative. The company is also investing heavily in material innovations (e.g., Looop, a machine that recycles old clothes into new ones) and exploring new business models like rental and resale (e.g., through its stake in Sellpy).
  - **Place:** Garment collection bins are prominently placed in thousands of H&M stores worldwide, making it one of the most accessible take-back schemes in the fashion industry.
  - **Promotion:** Marketing campaigns heavily feature the collection program and highlight products made from recycled materials. However, they face a constant marketing challenge to balance promoting these initiatives with accusations of "greenwashing" while their core business model remains largely linear.

- **Impact Measurement & Scaling:** The scale of their collection program is significant. In its 2024 Sustainability Report, H&M Group stated it had collected **17,100 tonnes of textiles** for reuse and recycling [1]. While a fraction of its total output, it demonstrates a scaled operational capability for reverse logistics that is critical for future circular models.

Sources: [1] H&M Group. (2054). *Sustainability Report 2024*.

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The Circular Advantage
A Practical Framework for Marketing
and Sales Transformation

[CLARASYS] University of Exeter