



Blake Mycoskie

AUTHOR · BUSINESS LEADER

Purpose-driven business is now a crowded marketing category, and most of it rings hollow. Customers and employees can tell when a giving programme is bolted onto an unchanged commercial model. The harder question is whether giving can be the engine itself, and what happens to the founder when the model is tested at scale.

Blake Mycoskie founded TOMS Shoes and pioneered the One for One model, giving away more than 100 million pairs of shoes and showing leaders what it takes to put purpose at the commercial core of a consumer brand.

Blake Mycoskie's 2026 Biography

Why organisations work with Blake Mycoskie

- He built a consumer brand that sold 50% to Bain Capital at a \$625 million valuation in 2014. When he talks about purpose-led growth, he is talking from the operator seat.
- His 2016 Harvard Business Review piece, “The Founder of TOMS on Reimagining the Company’s Mission,” is one of the few founder accounts of what breaks when purpose meets scale and how to rebuild a mission after its original story stops working.
- TOMS famously ran on almost no traditional advertising, relying on customers as marketers and the Argentina origin story as the brand’s centre of gravity. For CMOs and brand leaders working on authentic purpose positioning, that is a working case from the person who ran the experiment.
- He speaks openly about the founder arc after the exit: loss of purpose and the long work of rebuilding. For senior leadership audiences where executive mental health has moved from taboo to agenda item, he is genuinely useful.
- He is currently building ENOUGH, a nonprofit-owned mental health brand launched in 2026, alongside his \$100 million psychedelic research philanthropy anchored at Johns Hopkins. His material stays live.

Biography highlights

- Founder of TOMS Shoes; creator of the One for One business model
- Sold 50% of TOMS to Bain Capital in 2014 at a reported \$625 million valuation
- Author of the New York Times bestseller “Start Something That Matters” (Spiegel & Grau, 2011)
- Harvard Business Review contributor: “The Founder of TOMS on

AVAILABLE FOR

- After Dinner Engagement
- Panel Participation
- Speaking

BLAKE'S SPEAKING THEMES

- Business Model Innovation
- Entrepreneurship
- Marketing & Branding
- Mental Health in the Workplace
- Purpose-Driven Leadership
- Storytelling & Business Communication

LANGUAGES: English

Reimagining the Company's Mission" (January/February 2016 issue)

- Recipient of the Secretary of State's 2009 Award of Corporate Excellence from Hillary Clinton; invited by Richard Branson to join The B Team alongside Paul Polman and Muhammad Yunus
- Anchor donor to the Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research; founder of ENOUGH (2026), a nonprofit-owned consumer brand supporting NAMI, Active Minds and other mental health partners

Biography

TOMS was one of the first consumer brands to make giving the centre of its commercial engine. For every pair of shoes sold, a pair was given away. The model scaled globally on the back of customer advocacy and almost no advertising spend, and TOMS gave more than 100 million pairs over its first decade.

Blake Mycoskie built that company from a trip to Argentina in 2006. By 2014, Bain Capital had bought 50% of it at a \$625 million valuation. What started as one founder's shoe business had become a reference case for purpose-driven commerce, studied at Harvard Business School and written up across the business press.

He has since been unusually open about what broke. In the January/February 2016 issue of Harvard Business Review, he wrote "The Founder of TOMS on Reimagining the Company's Mission." It remains among the most candid founder accounts of what happens when a purpose-led business scales past its origin story. Operations become routine and the brand loses touch with its why. The whole thing has to be rebuilt from the inside, which is not a familiar subject for founders at that scale to publish on.

The arc has pushed further since. After leaving TOMS in 2019, Mycoskie went through a serious depression, which he now discusses openly, and has pivoted his philanthropy and new ventures toward mental health. He is an anchor donor to the Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research and a member of Richard Branson's B Team. His newest venture is ENOUGH, a 2026 nonprofit-owned consumer brand that directs 100% of profit to mental health partners including NAMI and Active Minds. For audiences working on purpose-led brand building, or on the long arc of founder leadership, he offers what most case studies stop before: what happens after the exit.

Key speaking topics

- Social entrepreneurship and purpose-driven business
- One for One and buy-one-give-one business models
- Conscious capitalism and stakeholder value
- Purpose-led brand building and customer advocacy
- Founder journeys from startup to exit and beyond
- Mental health for senior leaders
- Catalytic philanthropy and mission investing

Ideal for

- C-suite and founder audiences in consumer and brand-led B2C businesses thinking about purpose as commercial strategy
- CMO and brand leadership teams working on authentic purpose positioning and customer advocacy

- Business schools, executive education programmes, and founder/CEO cohorts working on venture creation and scale
- Leadership offsites where executive mental health and founder identity are on the agenda

Audience outcomes

- An inside view of how One for One worked commercially: the role of customer advocacy in place of advertising spend, and the mechanics of scaling a purpose-led consumer brand
- An honest assessment of where the model hit its limits, including what Mycoskie published in Harvard Business Review about rebuilding TOMS' mission after the original story lost its energy
- Language for talking about executive mental health and founder identity, drawn from a CEO who has put both on record publicly
- A reference case for putting giving at the commercial core of a consumer brand, from someone who built the category-defining example

Blake Mycoskie's 2026 talks & topics

The Power of Ideas

A personal journey talk on how specific ideas became the businesses and causes that defined Mycoskie's career, from the One for One model at TOMS to his current work in mental health and consciousness research.

Key takeaways:

- How a simple commercial idea can become the foundation of a global consumer brand
- What happens to founders after the exit and the external markers of success arrive
- Why continued personal transformation matters more than any single business idea

The Power of Giving: Conscious Capitalism and the Future of Business

A business case for integrating giving into the commercial model itself, drawing on TOMS as the worked example of how customer advocacy can replace traditional advertising spend.

Key takeaways:

- Why giving can function as a competitive advantage in consumer markets
 - The commercial mechanics behind TOMS' decision to spend almost nothing on traditional advertising
 - How purpose can sit at the core of a brand's growth engine
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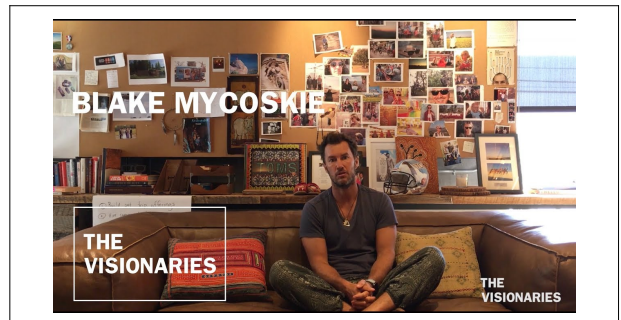
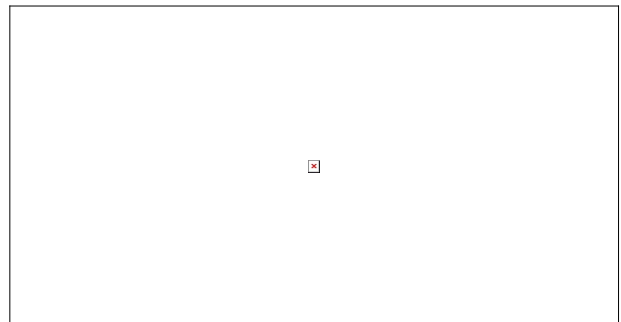
The New Social Entrepreneurism

A founder-to-founder talk on how to turn ideas into businesses that customers actively talk about, drawn from Mycoskie's pre-TOMS ventures (EZ Laundry, Mycoskie Media, DriversEd Direct) and the company he built after.

Key takeaways:

- The common thread connecting successful ventures across very different industries
- Practical tactics for building businesses with built-in customer advocacy
- How to balance commercial ambition with social impact in early-stage companies

Blake Mycoskie's Videos



What Blake Mycoskie's clients say

Blake is the perfect speaker for your next meeting. He was insightful, funny, and had a fantastic rapport with the crowd. He connected with the audience with an open, conversational style that kept everyone engaged. Whether you want to hear about Tom's, entrepreneurship, or doing good - he's the guy you need.

Andy Sernovitz

CEO, SocialMedia.org

Having Blake at our executive retreat was a great decision. His passion for doing something that matters was inspiring and engaging. No matter how seasoned an executive you are, Blake's entrepreneurial approach to business is a true example for all of us.

Chairman, NBC Entertainment

Blake was wonderful! He established an immediate and warm connection with our students, provided a genuine, heartfelt life story connected to business principles. An absolute cannot miss speaker. The best part? His message has been sustained and we continue to prosper from his visit!

Dr. John Jasinski

President, Northwest Missouri State University

One of the most interesting entrepreneurs [I've] ever met.

President Bill Clinton