

CSR is dead ... Long live CSR

By Wayne Visser

For those who didn't already see this on the new CSR International website, here is the press release about last week's launch event. Note: You can now also follow the blog on www.csrinternational.org:

On Wednesday (4 March), a funeral service was held in London to commemorate the life of 'Old CSR' (known to many as Corporate Social Responsibility or CSR 1.0), who passed away peacefully in his sleep, another unfortunate victim of the global financial crisis.

After the coffin was respectfully laid down at The Hub Kings Cross, Dr Wayne Visser, Founder and CEO of CSR International, paid tribute to "a life well lived" and "a pioneer in his time":

"Old CSR was a good person at heart, always willing to give to those in need. Some will remember him for his outlandish dress style – how he always loved to dress in green and show off – but that was part of his charm. We will miss him dearly, not least because he touched the lives of so many around the world. He leaves behind baby daughter."

Visser's eulogy was followed by touching tributes from friends and colleagues, who each lit a candle in his memory. In the respectful hush that followed, an unexpected baby's cry was heard, which seemed to be coming from the coffin. Tentatively, the cloth draped over the coffin was removed, only to reveal a tiny crib with a new-born baby.

As the lights went up, flowers were handed out by Ms Clemence Viel and minstrel Mr Lenny Charles launched into a festive tune on the berimbau, Visser conducted a spontaneous naming and blessing ceremony:

"Some of you may be wondering who this innocent child is. Well, I just happen to know that it is none other than Old CSR's daughter, who with his dying breaths, he named CSR 2.0. She brings hope to our troubled world, for as the 'new CSR' of 'Corporate Sustainability & Responsibility', her life will be inspired by new world the principles of Connectivity, Scaleability and Responsiveness."

After bestowing his blessing, a few friends came forward, each holding a bright flower, and spoke of their hopes and wishes for CSR 2.0.

Tributes also poured in from those around the world who could not be there in person, but who attended the live web broadcast of event or sent their good wishes ahead. Among these was John Elkington, Founder Director of SustainAbility and Volans and a good friend of *Old CSR* over the years:

“The theme of Death and Rebirth is timely. We have just completed some work that begins to map out what we call the ‘Phoenix Economy’, a new order that is struggling to rise from the rubble and ashes of the old. CSR 2.0 will be a necessary condition for success. We wish CSR International every success.”

As guests left the CSR International launch event, many were smiling – some bemused, some amused, but most hopeful, having just witnessed the birth of a new era of Corporate Sustainability & Responsibility. CSR is dead ... long live CSR!

Source:

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