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## Purpose-Driven Business Models Propel Faith-Based Efforts

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In the entrepreneurial world, a sense of [purpose](#) often stands out as an essential attribute to success. The [World Economic Forum](#) (WEF) suggests that businesses with a strong sense of purpose inspire trust and those with solid and effective purpose strategies often see great returns. In addition, the rise of [profits-for-purpose](#) business models has seen more companies embracing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) initiatives with expanded [corporate social responsibility](#) (CSR) programs.

Higher education, specifically divinity schools, are actively adding purpose-driven entrepreneurship course offerings to meet current market conditions for their respective students and the futures that await them post-graduation. “The inclusion of business courses into divinity education is a pragmatic response to a fraught reality,” says [Timothy Cahill](#), a graduate of Yale’s Divinity School.

Making a difference and moving business beyond mere personal interest is a growing trend that adds [ethical elements](#) to evolving business models. As a result, it should be of little surprise that those with strong faith-based personal beliefs are also melding their entrepreneurial pursuits with faith-driven principles at the helm.

Many entrepreneurs, such as [Dave Ramsey](#), and organizations like [Faith Driven Entrepreneur](#), have developed businesses that lean into shared personal and professional goals. To these individuals, there is a higher calling to their efforts that transcend the transactional elements common to certain businesses.

These faith-based entrepreneurs are thinking globally, working collaboratively with a moral compass as a guide. Through shared principles, a community is formed with business and faith as shared objectives.

Often hidden from view is the preponderance of churches internationally that are part of the equation. The [World Bank](#) describes faith-based organizations (FBOs) are entities dedicated to religious identities that include a social or moral component. They are widespread and find significance because, as the World Bank reports, 80% of the world’s population claims religious affiliation.

[Alph Lukau](#) is a noted bible scholar, international speaker, televangelist, entrepreneur, and [author](#) interested in connections that expand both ministry and business efforts. As a senior pastor and general overseer of [Alleluia Ministries International](#) (AMI), he has shaped and grown his South African-based operation founded in February 2002 in Johannesburg with hundreds of thousands of men and women involved in his ministry.

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Lukau describes himself as a modern-day bridge between spirituality, religious scholarship, and business success. To date, his [YouTube](#) channel has received over 350 million views with 1.4 million subscribers. To put that in perspective, the current population of the U.S. is approximately 334 million, even less than the viewership of his channel.

“It has been anything but easy, but I have a very strong conviction about what I do,” says Lukau.

Lukau’s ministry runs a 24-hour Christian television broadcasting channel, [AMI TV](#). The station broadcasts in Africa and Europe and has satellite offices in Germany.

In addition, the [AL Foundation](#), a South African Christian charity founded in 2011 by Lukau, was essential to finding a balance between the masses and giving back to those underserved. “The foundation allows me to give back and express my deep compassion and interest in social well-being. We work for the public interest and strive for noble causes,” says Lukau.

Like Lukau, faith-based entrepreneur [Tiphonie Montgomery](#), founder of Kingdom Entrepreneur University, teaches [entrepreneurs](#) how to build online businesses with a focus on abating the financial fears of being a business owner. Montgomery has supported more than 3,000 students from around the world.

In 2016 Montgomery created the Millions Conference. Each year, she’s hosted approximately 2,000 faith-based entrepreneurs over two days of dynamic speakers and education-based breakout sessions, teaching them to “impact millions as they make millions.”

[Seattle Pacific University](#) has furthered the link between entrepreneurship and divinity studies by creating dual degree programs for graduate students. The ability of students to graduate with an MBA and an MA in Theological Integration or a Master of Divinity signals a substantive shift in the role education plays in future career paths for graduates.

As more students and early-career professionals merge personal belief systems into behaviors and career choices, some in academia have examined the impact faith-based business approaches have on society.

[Michael Zigarelli, Ph.D.](#), author and a professor of Leadership and Strategy at Messiah University, completed research on 50 Christian-owned companies for his [book](#) *Christian-Owned Companies: What does it look like when a follower of Jesus runs a business?* The author of a [dozen books](#) has, like Lukau, also found an entrepreneurial congregation online with over 2 million views of his work in over 130 countries.

“My research suggests that many faith-based businesses are model workplaces and model corporate citizens, elevating lives and communities, helping people get right with God, and contributing to the common good of society,” says Zigarelli.

In a post-Covid world where [findings suggest](#) an increase in spiritual applications to one’s life, more focus turns to the intersection of personal and professional pursuits. As trends take root, higher education institutions often adopt the seeds of change in divinity school efforts and other programs, signaling a substantive belief in a societal application.

According to the [World Economic Forum](#) (WEF), \$437 billion is contributed to the U.S. economy annually from faith-based, faith-related, or faith-inspired businesses. Adding broader religious contributions to the mix, according to WEF, \$1.2 trillion of socio-economic value is obtained annually in the U.S. [Globally](#), the numbers are expected to grow and reach \$449.99 billion in 2026 at a CAGR of 6.4%.

The role faith plays in the design, development, and deployment of business has been debated for [decades](#). Lukau, Montgomery, and Zigarelli represent an

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international and diverse approach to faith-based businesses indicating a clear and substantial market subset to the global economy.

*Interviews have been edited and condensed for clarity.*



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