



## RIDERS & ELEPHANTS

A strategic story constantly generates value | It is made with the customer, building around a central need

*"Riders&elephants is an ambitious, purposeful business that's been globally focused from day one. Without Colin's support and the Man on Fire team we would not have grown as fast & sustainably as we have to date: they've helped us find the path throughout our (often messy) early-stage evolution with strategic advice, brand & story development, and deeply human leadership experience. Because Man on Fire shares our core values they get what we're about, our vision, and where we want to go. Working with Colin has been a true partnership."*

- **Jeremy Dean** | Founder of riders&elephants, creator of the Emotional Culture Deck



Riders&elephants, led by Jeremy Dean, exists to create successful, empathy-driven organisations and leaders. The company's card-based Emotional Culture Deck tool is used by over 5,000 leaders worldwide in 25 countries, at organisations including Xero, Westpac, Air New Zealand, InfusionSoft, Panasonic, Daimler, and New Zealand Rugby.

When shaping strategic stories, we place enormous positive pressure on a simple core need. For riders&elephants that need is to have human conversations that matter. The knot of conflict around this runs deep: organisational cultures often lack empathy, communication around feelings is difficult yet necessary for high performance, while a cold focus on short-term metrics creates hidden costs as people burn out, underperform, and ultimately leave.

A powerful core need + a key customer drives product development, go-to-market strategies, and messaging frameworks, as in any business; but for riders&elephants, the positive pressure also shapes community and an entire ecosystem approach.

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Great stories are purposeful and human. They spark positive change.  
That's exactly what you can expect from working with us.



## EVOLUTION THROUGH RELENTLESS CUSTOMER FOCUS

Riders&elephants was originally conceived as a services agency. The Emotional Culture Deck would be a way to bring in the main business of consulting engagements. But it soon became clear more was possible. Over a three year period, with Man on Fire onboard as advisers, riders&elephants' offering evolved from services to product to community to an ecosystem supporting consultants and performance coaches as the key customer. This change came through constant focus on shared value creation: bringing people into the centre of conversations about organisational change, and using their needs to drive innovation.

### This evolution has included:

- building structured communities of accredited emotional culture practitioners
- constant interaction with those communities, offering value through free content while testing and iterating ideas
- using crowdfunding to validate and fund new products
- moving fully to digital (which was accelerated by COVID-19) to increase leverage and remove the supply chain cap on physical products
- understanding what consultants and performance coaches need to thrive as key drivers of organisational change but also as business owners in their own right

## ENGAGEMENT AND DIGITAL TOOLS CAN DRIVE OUTSIZE VALUE CREATION

Serving the needs of a hungry ecosystem is challenging, especially around content. Consultants and performance coaches have a constant need for fresh material, new ideas, and interesting tools that will keep their clients engaged. This is not the place for delicate, well-mapped out release strategies.

For riders&elephants, creating an environment of collaboration and using tech tools to capture conversations allows for 'using every part of the buffalo'. For example, a brainstorming session over zoom can be recorded and transformed into a wealth of content for different channels like:

- A longer form conversational Youtube video
- Short clips of key messages for use on social and Slack channels
- A podcast episode
- A blog post transcribed from the audio

A similar approach applies to content created for workshops, case studies, digital whiteboards, and other offerings. The key is to constantly provide value in as many forms as possible, as easily as possible, while sparking others to make more content in response.

### GENERATING RESULTS AT PACE

The result for riders&elephants has been a huge amount of useful authentic material, produced at speed with simple tools, establishing a rhythm that serves as both a product development lab and a competitive moat. If you're a consultant or performance coach with access to hundreds of workshops, frameworks, activities, research and professional connections via riders&elephants, your needs are being met here and not elsewhere. This in turn opens up further business evolutions such as subscription models.

This leverage is a central advantage of becoming a story-driven and digitally capable organisation. Starting from a powerful core need, then working with customers to spark a constant stream of value creation and content can make you the home for the needs of an entire ecosystem.



### MAN ON FIRE + RIDERS&ELEPHANTS STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (2017 TO NOW):

- Initial messaging framework and strategy for the Emotional Culture Deck
- Successful kickstarter to test and validate a new product - the Customer Experience Deck
- Development and rollout of certification & partner schemes
- Ongoing evolution from service -> product -> community -> ecosystem
- Content strategy to shape community engagement
- Creative direction across all go-to-market 'hero' pieces (key videos, messaging, ad campaigns, etc)
- Full shift to digital (accelerated by COVID-19) to increase leverage and remove the supply chain cap on physical products, including:
  - Digital versions of tools and workshops
  - Emotional Culture Deck Online masterclass via Thinkific & Kajabi platforms
  - Development and rollout of Emotional Culture Club subscription service