

Terms, Definitions & Disclaimers

Contributed by Zester Hatfield
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Excerpt from the Lausanne Research Report Summary (Feb 2006)

The term Business as Mission is relatively new, but the concept and various applications are not. There are many historical examples of Christians doing business in such a way that people and societies have been transformed and God glorified. BAM & societal transformation

Let's briefly mention one example, from Norway 200 years ago. Hans Nielsen Hauge was born in the late 1700's in a poor, underdeveloped agricultural society. There was no democracy and limited religious freedom. When Hauge was 25 years old he had an encounter with God. Hauge's life motto became: Love God and fellow men. He travelled extensively throughout Norway and did - what we in modern day terminology would call - church planting and business as mission.

He started 30 businesses, including fishing industries, brickyard, spinning mills, shipping yards, salt & mineral mines, paper mills, and printing plants. He was an entrepreneur and a catalyst. Many others were inspired to read the Bible, to meet with other believers for prayer and fellowship, and various businesses were started and developed.

Even secular historians today acknowledge Hauge's legacy and contribution to the development of modern Norway. He is sometimes called "the Father of democracy in Norway". He facilitated equality between men & women, his work led to a spiritual awakening and an entrepreneurship movement. Hauge's legacy is thus one of spiritual, economical and social transformation. He did not use the term business as mission, but his life and work illustrates some of the BAM goals, principles and outcomes.

Other expressions often used in the BAM movement today include 'transformational business, 'great commission companies' and 'kingdom business'. BAN or BAM?

BAM is real business, not Christian charity in a business disguise. But it is more than just business. One may use BAN and BAM as two acronyms to highlight a difference:

- BUSINESS AS NORMAL (BAN) - The business of business is business
- BUSINESS AS MISSION (BAM) - The business of Business as Mission is also business, BUT with a kingdom of God, purpose and perspective.

See also appendix A - Business as Mission Graphs - that contains two illustrations on how BAM is business, but more than a mere moneymaking machine, and also has additional dimensions to Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR. Business as a calling with transformational impact

God calls and equips people to do business. Business is a ministry in its own right. So if God has called you to business don't lower yourself to become a pastor - or vice versa. BAM is to do business with excellence, professionalism and integrity. BAM is manifesting the Kingdom of God in the Market Place. BAM is people being transformed spiritually, economically and socially. The business of Business as Mission is to reveal Christ through business. When this is done effectively, the outcome is transformational. BAM is not "tentmaking

The term tentmaking is linked to the apostle Paul who made tents - had a "secular" job and thus supported himself and at the same time worked in "the ministry". (The terms, their use and implications, often reinforce the sacred - secular divide that is contrary to the Biblical holistic concept). In mission circles tentmaking often means someone taking up a job with a company in a foreign country, and that gives opportunities to share Christ with colleagues and others. It is a good and valid concept but is not to be confused with BAM, albeit some overlap exists and they may be complimentary.

BAM focuses on:

- Job makers
- Entrepreneurs; owners & operators of businesses
- Business development
- Personal & societal transformation through business

Tentmaking focuses on:

- Job takers
- All kinds of workers & professionals
- Work in general
- To witness and be a testimony at work and through work Business as Mission is not Business for Mission

We mustn't look at business people as cash cows. BAM is not a fundraising strategy. It is not an alternative and new way to financially support traditional Christian ministries. We are all called to give and be generous, regardless of profession or level of income. But we are not teachers, surgeons, housewives, CEO's or farmers, just in order to be able to give

money to a charitable cause. None of us would like to be operated on by a surgeon whose only ambition is to make money to give to the church! Instead we expect he has the right skills and drive to operate with excellence, doing his job with full professional integrity. We have all been given gifts and talents, we are all to be good stewards of these gifts, acting responsibly and care for others, whether family members, friends, employees, customers, poor and needy in other countries.

A Christian businessman has obligations not only to family and church, but also to shareholders, government (taxes), clients, environment, employees, and others. If a profit is made - which is a must if the business is to be viable and sustainable - the profit is not for the church to claim. The business owner / operator has a web of accountability, not just to the church. Business as Mission does not condone...NON-BUSINESSES AND NON-MISSIONS

Two approaches to business that do not come within the scope of 'business as mission' by any definition are: (1) Fake businesses that are not actually functioning businesses, but exist solely to provide visas for missionaries to enter countries otherwise closed to them. (2) Businesses that purport to have Christian motivations but which operate only for private economic advantage and not for the kingdom of God. Neither do we mean businesses run by Christians with no clear and defined kingdom strategy in place. Business as Mission pursues...PROFIT

Business must be financially sustainable, producing goods or services that people are willing to pay for. Sustainability implies that the activity is profitable. Profits are an essential element of all businesses, in all cultures. Without profit the business cannot survive and fulfill its purpose. Accordingly, Business as Mission - businesses are real business that genuinely exist to generate wealth and profits. Business as mission does not view profits as inherently evil, bad or unbiblical. Quite the contrary, profits are good, desired and beneficial to God and His purposes, as long as they are not oppressive, or derived from gouging customers or selling products and service that do no honor Christ and His gospel. Business as Mission is not about...JOBS AND MONEY - PER SE

The Russian Mafia also creates jobs and gives people a chance to earn money. Creating jobs and earning money is not an end in itself. Work and business are ordained by God. Work is a human and divine activity providing a means to support our families and to contribute to the positive development of our communities and countries. However, business as mission is not a Christianized job creation scheme. The goal is not simply about making people materially better off. Business as mission is actively praying and incarnating Jesus' prayer: "May your kingdom come, may your will be done" even in the marketplace. Definition of Business as Mission

Business as Mission is about real, viable, sustainable and profitable businesses; with a Kingdom of God purpose, perspective and impact; leading to transformation of people and societies spiritually, economically and socially - to the greater glory of God. Summary report by Mats Tunehag.

These paragraphs are excerpts from the Lausanne paper on BAM. Bottom line

The ultimate bottom line of Business as Mission is
 AMDG—ad maiorem Dei gloriam—
 For the greater glory of God

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