

# Global Strategy Meets Local Resonance | Insights from Illy's CMO Evangelos Touras & branding expert Matteo Rinaldi

*Industry leaders Evangelos Touras and Matteo Rinaldi reveal how brands can blend global consistency with local nuance to drive market success.*

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Crafting a brand that thrives globally while remaining authentic locally is the defining challenge for marketers today. In a collaborative thought piece, [Illy](#) CMO Evangelos Touras and Matteo Rinaldi, adjunct professor at [Luiss Business School](#) and co-owner of London-based boutique branding agency [Human Centric Group](#), share valuable insights into how brands can strike the perfect balance between global consistency and local relevance.



Illy's Freddo Espresso: A perfect blend of Italian heritage and Greek café culture, crafted to refresh and delight.

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Cultural agility isn't about control—it's about creating flexibility that works”

*Matteo Rinaldi*

Titled From Global Vision to Local Connection, the article dives deep into the duality that brands face—how globalization flattens trends, yet local cultures retain their power to shape consumption. With Touras bringing real-world examples from Illy's success in culturally diverse markets and Rinaldi's human-centric branding expertise, the piece sheds light on how to master this balancing act.

Touras and Rinaldi introduce the concept of “cultural agility,” emphasizing the importance of defining hard points—core brand elements that should remain fixed globally—and soft points, which allow for local adaptation. The article highlights Illy's triumph in Greece with the development of the Freddo Espresso, a culturally tailored product that emerged from Illy's understanding of local coffee consumption habits.

“The Freddo Espresso wasn’t just a new product—it was a symbol of Illy’s respect for local culture,” Touras explained. “It was about adapting while staying true to our DNA. That’s where brands succeed—when they innovate around local needs without losing their essence.”

Rinaldi emphasizes that success in global branding requires a collaborative approach between global and local teams:

“Brands must empower local teams to adapt while ensuring they work within a clear strategic framework. It’s not about control, but about creating elasticity that works,” Rinaldi said.

The article also discusses practical strategies, such as involving local creative partners, leveraging culturally relevant influencers, and tailoring marketing tactics to regional preferences. The importance of “listening before acting” emerges as a key takeaway—brands that pause to understand local contexts are better equipped to innovate in meaningful ways.

#### Illy’s Approach: A Blueprint for Success

When entering the Greek market, Illy recognized the need to rethink its product offering. In a country where coffee culture centers around long, relaxed café visits, a traditional Italian espresso wouldn’t resonate. Illy’s solution was the Freddo Espresso—a cold, long-lasting coffee tailored to local consumption habits, without compromising on Illy’s high-quality espresso standards.

This example highlights the balance between hard and soft points:



Evangelos Touras, Global Chief Marketing Officer of illycaffè



Matteo Rinaldi, co-founder of Human Centric Group, adjunct-professor at Luiss Business School and author of two marketing best-seller

Hard Points: Illy's brand promise of premium, authentic espresso.

Soft Points: A product innovation specific to Greek culture, demonstrating flexibility in execution.

The article argues that brands that will dominate the next decade will be those capable of harnessing this cultural fluidity—knowing when to stick to their global standards and when to adapt.

#### About Evangelos Touras:

Evangelos Touras is Global Chief Marketing Officer of illycaffè. With an MBA in finance, he spent most of his career at Procter & Gamble, where he played a key role in developing brand and category strategies for sustainable growth while managing full P&L responsibility for various business portfolios across multiple regions. He is a highly results-oriented manager with a strong passion for brand building and business development. Throughout his career, Evangelos has been driven by three key passions: building and developing high-performing teams, solving consumer and customer challenges through innovative solutions, and creating strong brands that deliver lasting value to both consumers and businesses.

#### About Matteo Rinaldi:

Matteo Rinaldi is a Senior Marketing Strategy Consultant and Co-Founder of Human Centric Group, with global experience driving double-digit growth for brands like Danone, Carlsberg, Revlon, PepsiCo, and Visa. Having worked across multiple continents, he specializes in leveraging cultural insights for impactful brand strategies. A passionate educator, Matteo teaches marketing worldwide, shaping future industry leaders. Previously, he worked with L'Oréal and Coca-Cola HBC. He is also a best-selling author in marketing.

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