Your Message Matters – The Mechanics of Developing a Powerful Brand and Awareness Strategy

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About Christopher Ryan

- CEO of Fusion Marketing Partners - a strategic B2B outsource marketing and sales consultancy.

- Prior to founding FMP, Chris had 25 years of senior marketing experience for companies like Stellent, Optika, SpringCM, PeopleSoft, Sybase and Group 1 Software

- Voted as Top 100 U.S. Marketer by Target Marketing Magazine and frequent writer and speaker on marketing and technology topics

- Author of *How to Create an Unstoppable Marketing and Sales Machine* and three other books on B2B marketing
1. Why your brand promise and messaging are so important
2. Characteristics of a strong brand promise
3. Branding mistakes to avoid
4. Examples of strong and weak brands
5. Strategies to grow your brand awareness quickly
What really happened to the Dinosaurs
How Important is Your Brand?

Answer: Your brand is extremely important
To put it another way, your brand is crucial
To put it another way, your brand is critical
To put it another way, your brand is invaluable

Get the message?
What is Your Brand?

- **Brand Position**: the place your company occupies in a prospect’s or customer’s mind when he or she thinks about you.

- **Brand Promise**: what you promise to deliver to your customers when they do business with you.

*Key point: You want your brand position to equal your brand promise*

*Next:* Ideas to build your brand awareness.
Businesses often express the desire (desperation!) for more leads and more revenue. But marketing and sales is a continuum, and it starts with awareness. For example:

- Business decision-makers are much more likely to buy from a familiar company.
- Prospects who are already aware of you are much more likely to buy quickly and with less price sensitivity than those who are unaware.
What Does a Good “Brand Promise” Do?

- Explains what you do?
- Articulates the “primary” customer benefit
- Establishes credibility
- Creates an emotional connection
- Invokes curiosity
- Motivates action
- Guarantees your place in heaven (just kidding on this one)
Your Brand is Impacted By...

- The messages you convey
- The grapevine
- Your customer service department
- Your press coverage
- Social media
- User experience
- Your employees
Important Question 1: What Is Your Brand Challenge?

1. Create from a blank slate
2. An evolution of an existing brand
3. A total re-branding

Note: Each of these challenges requires a different strategy

Essential Point: Do not put off a branding program. It only gets harder and more expensive over time.
Important Question 2: What is the Scope:

Are you branding a:
- Company
- Division
- Product Family
- Product Name
- Individual

Essential Point: The fewer levels of branding abstraction, the better.
Your Branding Tool Chest

This is what you will have to work with:

- What you sell or do
- Your existing reputation
- Your website
- The competition
- Your industry
- Your creativity
- Your people
Five Crucial Branding Principles

1. Your brand must differentiate you.
2. Your brand must offer a clear and compelling benefit.
3. Your brand should be as specific as possible.
4. Your brand should be easily understood.
5. Your brand must be congruent.
Branding Mistakes to Avoid

- Being a Me-Too Brand
- Branding too many things at once
- Making it about your ego, not the customer
- Failure to be honest about your strengths and weaknesses
- Boxing yourself into a “branding corner”
- Settling for a mediocre brand out of fear or resignation
Keep it simple: don’t try to brand too many things: e.g. company, division, product family, product name.

Build your brand from the inside out

Everyone must be able to articulate the brand in 3 ways:

- A very short tagline
- A ten second shout out ("drive by")
- A 30-second elevator pitch

The Branding Statement is used to create a Messaging Platform
Tagline: Creating Unstoppable Marketing and Sales Machines

Shout Out: Fusion Marketing Partners uses proven effective strategies to help B2B companies generate more awareness, qualified leads and revenue.
Increased revenue is the bottom-line priority for business. B2B organizations need to differentiate themselves in a crowded market and they need to bridge the gap between marketing and sales to optimize their performance. (statement of the business need)

Fusion Marketing Partners offers deep strategic and tactical expertise in B2B marketing and sales. We deliver systematic and measurable improvements in marketing and sales performance to achieve strong, consistent revenue growth. (how you fulfill the need)

FMP clients achieve an unstoppable marketing and sales machine that delivers large increases in brand awareness, qualified leads and accelerated sales. (how the customer benefits)
"Success isn't about being perceived as the best at what you do, it's about being perceived as the only one who does what you do."

– Jerry Garcia
Examples: Weak Brand Promise

- Lockheed Martin: We never forget who we are working for.
- UPS: What can Brown do for you?
- Ernst & Young: Quality in everything we do.
- Microsoft: Life without walls
- Exxon: We’re Exxon (really!)
- FileMaker Software: What’s Your Problem?

Essential point: Big companies can get away with lousy branding. Most of us cannot.
Examples: Strong Brand Promise

- Reebok: No matter what the situation, *Reebok* has the sneakers, apparel and gear to fit your needs.
- GE: We bring good things to life.
- Campbell’s Soup: Nourishing people’s lives everywhere, every day.
- FedEx: When it absolutely, positively has to be there overnight.
- Home Depot: You can do it, we can help
- O'Douls: What beer drinkers drink when they're not drinking beer.
- BMW: The ultimate driving machine
KFC had a great brand tagline: “Finger licking good.” However, when translated to Chinese this means: “Eat your fingers off”

"Come alive with the Pepsi generation" was translated for a Taiwanese billboard as "Pepsi brings your ancestors back from the dead."
Tips on Naming Your Company

❖ If possible, state what you do in the company name
❖ If you name the company after yourself, make sure it is for ego purposes
❖ Stay away from names that are hard-to-pronounce or “too cute”
❖ Make sure your name doesn’t limit your future
Pull Marketing Awareness Strategies

- Optimized press releases
- Newsletter & eZines
- Email to your prospect list
- Articles
- Podcasts and videocasts
- Social media: LinkedIn, Blogging, Twitter and FaceBook
How Much of Your Time Will Social Media Take?

- LinkedIn: 30-60 minutes per week
- Blogging: 90 minutes weekly
- Twitter: 15-20 minutes daily
- FaceBook: 15-20 minutes daily
- Background research: 1-5 hours per week
1. Craft a compelling and differentiated brand promise that is based on reality.

2. Build your brand promise around a Big Idea.

3. Build a brand promise that is specific and offer-based.

4. Promote your brand consistently and relentlessly.
Thank You

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