

Is Your Marketing Message Holding You Back?

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By Charlie Cook

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by: **Charlie Cook**

Your marketing message is like a key. If you've got the right one, it will help you unlock doors to new business and start the process of converting them to clients. If you've got one that is the wrong size or poorly crafted you'll be locked out in the cold, wondering why your business isn't growing faster.

Unfortunately too many independent professionals and small business owners market with messages that just don't work. They may be too long, too short, too common, too dull, or too self laudatory. The result is they don't open enough doors to new business.

Your marketing message, elevator speech, unique selling proposition, value positioning statement or whatever you call it needs to describe what you do and the problems you solve in one or two sentences. This may seem like a small part of your marketing effort, but in fact it is one of the most important elements and costs the least to fix.

If your marketing message helps prospects understand how you can help them, you are in business. If it doesn't then you'll never reach your revenue potential.

Too Long or Too Short

When asked what they do, most people either come up with a short label, or a long-winded description. You may tell people you are a lawyer, a therapist, in sales, a management consultant or a systems analyst. The problem with labels is that they don't really tell your prospects anything about what you do or how you can help them.

Regardless of your specific capabilities, when you use a label to describe yourself, people tend to assign a stereotype, based on opinions and assumptions. Say lawyer and people may shy away, say banker and people think boring, say therapist and people think of shrinks, say management consultant and people have no clue what you do.

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Your marketing message should help you distinguish yourself and your unique capabilities. Use a label and you'll be assigned to a category which may or may not be favorable to you, and won't help your prospects understand the value of your services.

Some people try to avoid using a label by launching into a monologue listing their services and credentials. One management consultant I met, when asked what he did, said he would be happy to explain, but he'd need at least a half hour. Get and keep people's attention, start a conversation with a marketing message that rolls quickly off your tongue or the page.

Most people, your prospects included, scan verbal and visual content searching for relevant information that will help them solve a problem or meet a need. If your marketing message is too general or takes too long to hear or read, you are history. Your prospects won't take the time to find out that you may really have the perfect product or service for their needs.

Take a look at your marketing materials or your web page. Are you doing the same thing as the management consultant above? Are you spending valuable time and space describing services and credentials when you could be leading with a succinct marketing message that actually explains the problems you solve? Or do you let yourself get stereotyped with a label?

USE A BRILLIANT MARKETING MESSAGE

Whether you are talking to someone in person or in your marketing materials, your objective is to engage them, to get them thinking about their needs and wants. Do this successfully and they'll soon be wondering how they can't live without your products or services.

Your marketing message should be the catalyst to conversation. When you use it a connection should be made between your services and your prospect's needs. If you had a brilliant marketing message that resonated with your prospects wants and needs you'd have more and more qualified prospects contacting you and more and more business.

Does your current marketing message: Tell people what you do? Start a conversation? Create a perception of need?

My marketing message is, "helping small business owners attract more clients and be more successful". When I use it I get one of two responses. If I'm talking to someone who isn't a small business owner, they usually want to know how I do what I do. If the person is a small business owner they want to learn how I can help them and I'm on my way to converting a prospect into a client.

If you want to attract more prospects and grow your business, the first step is to create a brilliant marketing message, one you can use in the elevator, on your business card, on your web site and in your voice mail message.

It is not easy to describe all you do in a sentence or two. Capture the essence of who you serve, the problems you solve and the solutions you provide and you'll have a brilliant marketing message.

Is Your Marketing Message Holding You Back?

Don't let your current marketing message hold you back. Make sure you have one that works as a key to attracting attention, engaging prospects and opening the door to new business.

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The author, Marketing Coach, Charlie Cook, helps independent professionals and small business owners attract more clients and increase their earnings with the 5 Principles of Highly Effective Marketing. Sign up to receive the Free Marketing Guide and the 'More Business' newsletter, full of practical tips you can use at

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Charlie Cook, is Chief Executive of Ideas and Inspiration at In Mind Communications in Old Greenwich, CT and can be contacted via www.charliecook.net, or by calling 203-637-1118. To get the Free Marketing Guide and the 'More Business' newsletter, full of practical marketing tips go to

Is Fear Holding You Back?

By Al Martinovic

Is Fear Holding You Back? by Al Martinovic

Is fear holding you back? As a kid I remember playing ball once with a group of other kids. One kid in particular got angry with me for reasons I can't recall. But I do remember very vividly what happened next!

Standing only five feet away from me, he took a tennis ball, reared back, and threw with all his might at my face!

I calmly put my hand up and caught the tennis ball with my right bare hand ... only inches from my face. The kid was in shock as to how I was able to catch that ball as were five other kids standing nearby. Heck... I even shocked myself!

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In amazement they asked how I was I able to catch that ball to which I replied: "I don't know!"

As I look back on it today, I now know the answer. I had No Fear! The slightest bit of panic and the ball would have surely hit me in the face. I had No Fear! That is why I caught the ball.

As you sit there reading this, ask yourself: Is fear holding me back in my internet business? Are there certain things I can do to make me more successful like participating in conference calls, calling prospects over the phone etc. but don't because of fear?

Fear is the biggest obstacle to your success! If you're new to internet marketing it is like that kid trying to throw a tennis ball at your face! Will you get hit? Or will you catch the ball? Hopefully you opted for the latter!

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