

Use Taglines as A Marketing Tool To Make Your Message Consistent And Memorable

By Liz Goodgold

Entrepreneurs today are missing a critical element in their communications mix: the correct and consistent use of a strong tagline. In an environment fighting sensory overload, shrinking mass market opportunities, and thousands of “me too” products and services, taglines are an opportunity to seize your positioning in your prospect’s mind.

What is a Tagline?

Yet, what is a tagline? A tagline is a unique phrase that follows your brand name. It explains your unique selling proposition and is such a natural outgrowth of the brand positioning that the two are inextricably linked. Remember “N-E-S-T-L-E-S: Nestle makes the very best chocolate?” Or Quizno’s “Toasted Tastes Better?” Both of these are memorable taglines that differentiate themselves from their competitors.

Avoiding Generic Flu

Many entrepreneurs fall victim to the rampant generic tagline flu. They erroneously believe talking about quality, service, or value alone will separate them from the sea of similarity. During the dot comb/dot bomb phase, thousands of companies employed an “e-business solution” including IBM, Network World, and even Microsoft! “We mean business” is so generic and overused that the double entendre becomes tired and meaningless.

Taglines Vs. Slogans

Are taglines and slogans different names for the same thing? No! A slogan is dependent upon a specific campaign and changes frequently. “Where’s the beef?” was an often repeated refrain (much to my chagrin) in the 1980s as was “What’s up?” thanks to Budweiser’s airing during the Super Bowl in the new millennium

Retiring a Line Before It’s Time

Often, marketers get tired of a tagline before customers ever do. Consider GE: “We **Bring Good Things To Light**” or Lowe’s “**Improving Home Improvement**” or even El Pollo Loco’s “**When You’re Crazy for Chicken.**” All of these taglines reached the pinnacle of marketing with astronomical *unaided* recall, yet were changed prematurely.

Building a Tagline Legacy

Creating a tagline today should also work for you tomorrow. These companies recognize the value in creating a tagline as a legacy:

- The New York Times: “All the News That’s Fit to Print” (established in 1896)
- BMW: “The Ultimate Driving Machine (established in 1975)
- Nike: “Just Do It” (established in 1988)
- DeBeers: “A Diamond is Forever” (established in 1948)

Look for a Unique Word or Word Twist

In creating your own tagline, consider using a unique word. Altoid’s “curiously strong mint” works hard because of its curious (so to speak) word. “Think outside the bun” is a great play for Taco Bell on the ubiquitous “think outside the box,” and Arrid’s “wetless protection program” always puts a smile on my face.

Taglines as an Opening or Closing

Incorporating your tagline into your infomercial makes tremendous sense or even using it at the end of all of your communication, including letters. Since taglines are often at the end of your marketing message, they act as your PS: the last best hope to propel your message. Employed properly, prospects and customers will understand your brand and its unique point of difference.

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