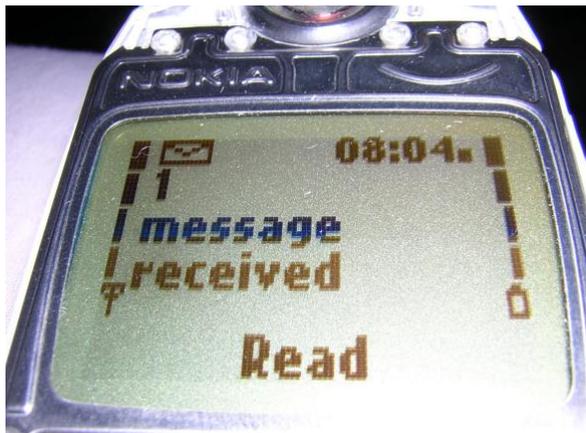


Marketing Matters

By Richard D. Czerniawski

MAKE YOUR MESSAGE “MEANINGFUL” TO GET RESULTS



We need to make our brand messaging meaningful if we expect to generate favorable results. What is a meaningful message? Well, first and foremost, it depends upon your chosen *target customer*. What’s meaningful to one person may not be meaningful to another. So, you must be strategically astute and select your target customer carefully. (Your target customer cannot be “everyone!”)

What’s *meaningful* to your target customer? Something *relevant* to them and *differentiated* from all the other offerings that can substitute for your brand.

What does it mean to be *relevant*? It’s important to and desired by your target customer. Relevance is about alleviating a dissatisfaction or better satisfying their need than your competition or tapping into a customer insight. When our message is relevant, we connect with our target customer.

Additionally, our messaging must be *relevant* to our brand. This means that our message needs to reflect the Brand Idea and, importantly, trigger a relevant target customer *behavior*. The target customer behavior is essential to achieving our business objectives of sales, market share, and profit.

Here’s a simple illustration. Recently I met with a group of educators and businesspeople for breakfast to discuss the state of marketing and marketing education. One of them is overweight. Yet, he is healthy in all other aspects. His blood pressure, cholesterol, and A1C (3-month average blood sugar level) are those of a college-aged male.

His doctor counseled and encouraged him to lose weight for years. However, he was caught up in “hyperbolic discounting.” Namely, he sought the pleasure of food, downplaying the potential adverse impact of overeating and eating the wrong kinds of foods on his long-term health. His positive cardiovascular measures gave him confidence that he could avoid any significant problems.

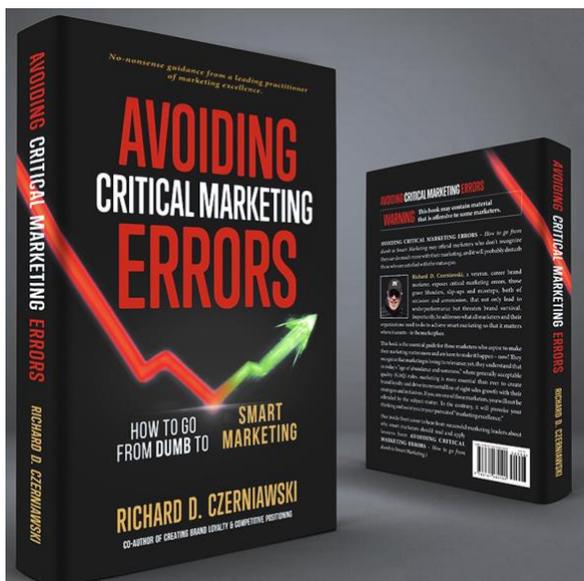
However, he suffers from “bad” knees and has for many years. His son, a doctor, told him that he would reduce four pounds of impact on those knees for every pound he lost. When the man heard this, a light went off in his head. The message connected. He questioned why his physician had never informed him of this benefit.

Taking impact off his knees, alleviating his pain, and enabling him to move more comfortably, triggered his dieting. *All it took was a meaningful message—relevant and differentiated.* He fasted that morning, only consuming black coffee through our two-hour meeting—while I enjoyed a three-egg cheese, onion, and tomato omelet with a side of sausage links.

Check to ensure your message is meaningful to your chosen target customer—relevant and differentiated from your competition.

“NINETY-NINE PERCENT OF ADVERTISING DOESN’T SELL MUCH OF ANYTHING.” David Ogilvy

Is your advertising among the ninety-nine percent? Read Chapter 9, Brand Communications that Suck, in **AVOIDING CRITICAL MARKETING ERRORS: How to Go from Dumb to Smart Marketing.** It will identify those critical errors and, importantly, point the way to developing advertising in the Top 1%. Learn more here: <http://bdn-intl.com/avoiding-critical-marketing-errors>



Peace and best wishes,

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