



MARKETING STRATEGY

MESSAGES THAT MOVE:

a proven strategy to attract and
motivate SaaS prospects



WHAT ACTUALLY MOTIVATES PROSPECTS TO TAKE ACTION?

You've heard that you need a unique value proposition (UVP) that clearly communicates how your product or service is different from your competitors. This holy grail of marketing will supposedly give you the ability to own your market.

But in a survey sponsored by Think with Google, only 14% of buyers perceived enough meaningful difference between the value of competing B2B brands to be willing to pay extra for that difference. Too often, **companies end up competing on price for this reason** — in spite of having UVPs that articulate the business value of their product or service.

What's the solution? It's not that a UVP that communicates business value doesn't matter. B2B buyers demand ROI. You have to communicate the numbers that show how your solution will boost your prospects' revenue, help them compete more effectively, make their operations more efficient, etc. You have to demonstrate your value.

But a UVP focused on business value isn't enough. **You need something more.** You need a Message that Moves, a message that:

- connects with a strong fear or anger about the status quo
- inspires your prospects
- makes prospects excited about your company because of what you stand for and against
- motivates prospects to take action

Fight for something, fight against something

During my decade of experience working as a marketing consultant with B2B SaaS companies, I realized that the companies that were most successful had something in common. They had more than a UVP that focused on business value. They were all fighting for something. Not just fighting for something, but aligning themselves with their customers and prospects to fight for something together. They had messages that actually moved prospects to action.

Then I heard Katie Martell give a talk on storytelling that emphasized the role the antagonist plays in engaging stories. It clicked with me: fighting a shared enemy draws people to your company, sets you apart from your competitors in a truly unique way, and motivates prospects to take action.


Since that time, I've been using a framework that I call the Shared Enemy Messaging Framework to craft messages that make my clients stand out and move prospects to become long-term customers.

I'll take you through the method I use to help my clients uncover their messages that move, so you can stand out and start moving your prospects too.

What enemy are you fighting?

When you identify an enemy that your customers are driven to overcome and position your company as an ally, you automatically stand out from competitors. At the same time, you create a galvanizing wave of emotion and motivation to win the fight.

Think Nike with their fight against mediocrity and inertia. Think HubSpot with their new campaign against soul-less growth. When you fight a shared enemy with your prospects and customers, you not only motivate them to choose your company, you create a movement that spreads.



Gather your team and brainstorm answers to the following questions for ten minutes.

What are you fighting against as a brand — not competitors, but what about the status quo?

What makes you mad about the way your industry operates?

What are your customers fighting against? What challenges do they face?

What are you fighting for?

A good story isn't just about fighting an enemy, however. The reason the protagonists in a story are so motivated to overcome the enemy is because they envision a brighter future. They're fighting for something just as much as they're fighting against something.

Your prospects and customers are no different. They want to see change. They want to live a better life.

Now take another ten minutes to brainstorm answers to each of these questions

What change do you want to make as a company?

What's your vision for a better future? (Be specific!)

How will this change impact your prospects and customers?

What are your customers saying?

No matter how well you think you know your customers, don't skip this step. You need to find out how your customers define the enemy. This is especially important in the world of SaaS. Listen to the dialogue of your customers to learn how they describe what they're fighting against and fighting for. If you make the mistake of speaking your own language and not theirs, your message will fall flat.

Devote the next week to scheduling interviews with several of your best customers and find out the answers to the following questions.

What words do your customers use when describing their own pain points, challenges, and frustrations?

How do they describe their goals and aspirations?

What do they say is holding them back from reaching their goals?

Types of Messages that Move

Not all Messages that Move look the same. Some are short phrases, some are a series of messages that work together to tell a story and paint a picture. Others are somewhere in between. You may even want to create several of the messaging types and use them in different ways.

The Rallying Cry Message

Nike's ubiquitous "Just Do It" serves as a rallying cry. You may have a single galvanizing tagline that comes to life in different ways, through different stories in your marketing. Will any of us ever forget the Colin Kaepernick ad or the Dream Crazier ad with Serena Williams?

The Change Message

A message that describes the change your company creates can be a powerful motivator. Tim Ferriss's *The 4 Hour Workweek* is a great example. Regardless of what you think of his methodology, you can't deny that his message has motivated a whole lot of people to buy into his ideas and brand.

Pain Point and Aspirational Messages

HubSpot has an evolving series of messages that appear in their marketing, and more obviously, at their yearly INBOUND conference. The messages are worded differently, but no one ever has to wonder where HubSpot stands or what they're fighting for. And HubSpot's fans love them for it. A messaging system like HubSpot uses is made up of multiple messages that work together. These messages focus on the pain points your prospects are experiencing and, on the flip side, their goals or what they aspire to.

How to create your Messages that Move

Before you start writing, take some time to let your mind wander. Chris Bailey has documented the power of mind-wandering in his book *Hyperfocus* (which I highly recommend!). Science shows that allowing your mind to wander while engaging in activities like walking or bird-watching will help you generate new ideas.

So give yourself some unfocused creative time and then come back to this workbook.


Now, to land on your Messages that Move, look back through your answers to the above questions for inspiration. Then go through the following exercise.



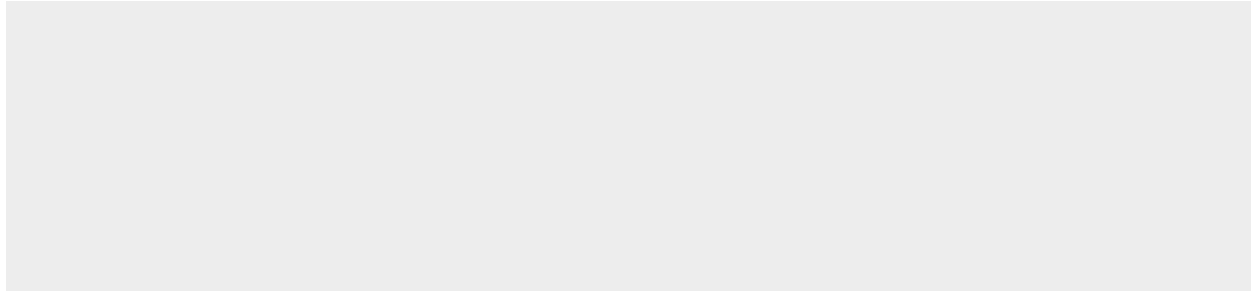
Circle all the action verbs that particularly resonate with you. What verbs ring true? Which verbs create energy?

Circle all the nouns that catch your attention. Which nouns stir emotion? Which ones create a picture in your mind?

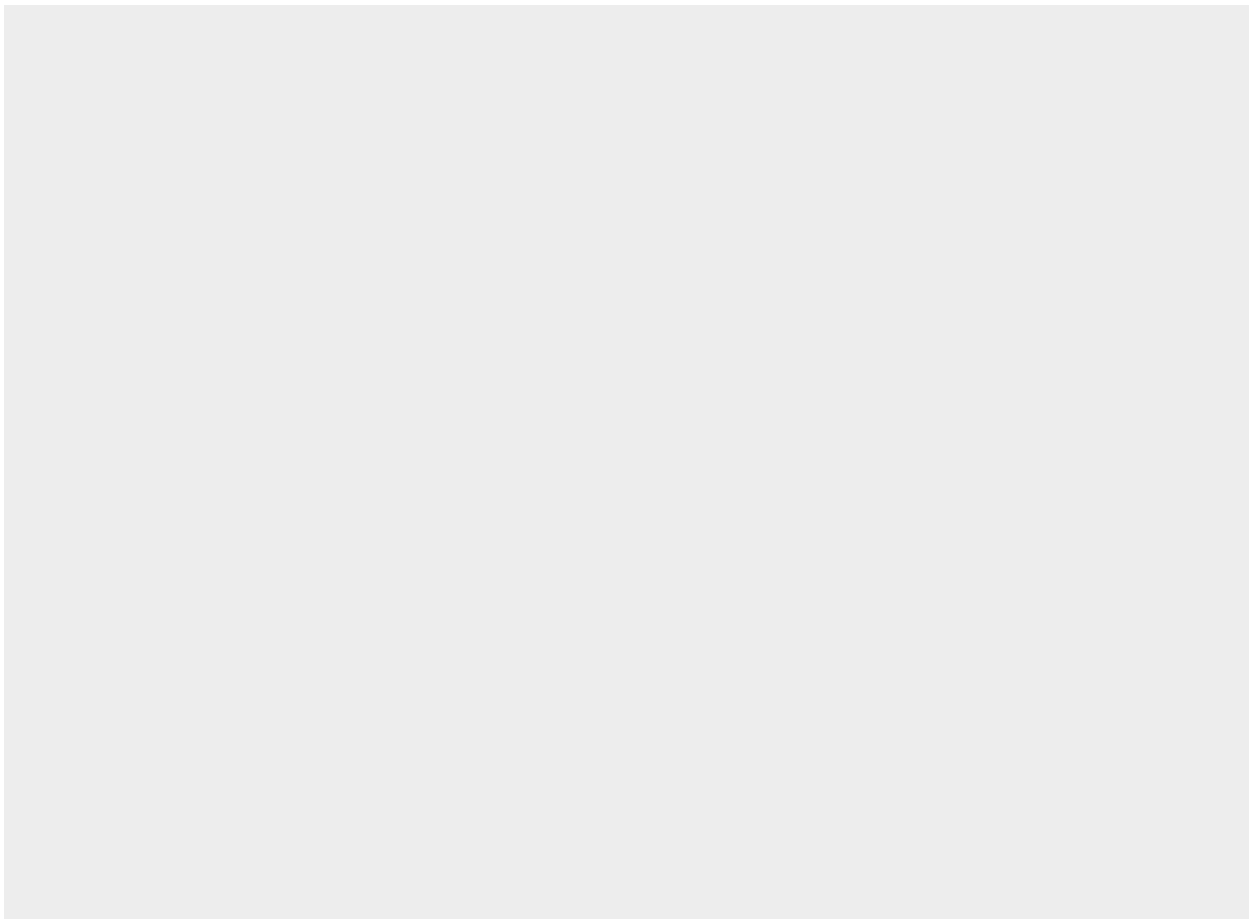
Have one of your team members read the words and phrases you circled aloud. Listen for what strikes you. Which words or phrases create sparks in your mind?



To start, focus on messages with five words or less. After you've created your main message, you can create supporting messages that go into more detail.



Start mixing and matching, combining words and phrases into possible messages in the space below.

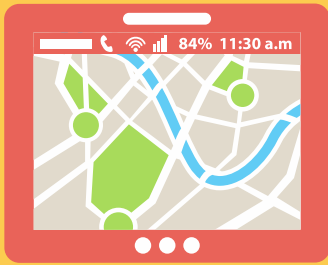


How to create your Messages that Move

Once you've identified your Messages that Move, it's time to start spreading them. Consider these ideas.

- Get everyone in the company familiar with your messages. Everyone from your marketing team to your sales team to your customer service team should know and understand your Messages that Move. You want to communicate them from every area of the company.
- Share your messages on your website, on your social media pages, and in your marketing materials. Everything you say should reflect your messages so prospects will recognize and remember them.
- Create stories around your messages. Tell your origin story, your customers' challenge stories, and the story of your vision for a better future.
- Share your messages and your stories in your content, advertising, and at events. Your messages and the stories around them will serve as the foundation of your marketing strategy.

Start thinking of your Messages that Move as more than just marketing. Recognize that you're fighting together with your customers for a better world, starting a movement and inviting others to join in!



NEED HELP GETTING STARTED?

It's sometimes challenging to uncover your Messages that Move. You're so close to your company's UVP and products that it's difficult to see from a different perspective. And you may need help gathering those essential insights that your customers have to share.

Get help with your messaging!

I've served as the guide for dozens of B2B SaaS companies as they've searched for and identified their Messages that Move, and I'd love to help your company too.



EXPERIENCE A WORKSHOP

Ask about my custom workshops! Hosted or virtual, online workshops allow your team to boost your ability to execute more effectively.

[Get in touch](#)



GET HELP EXECUTING

Messaging that resonates isn't easy to create. Schedule a call to chat about your needs and get information on my messaging platform services.

[Schedule a call](#)



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

About Laura MacPherson

Laura MacPherson is a brand strategist and copywriter for B2B SaaS companies. She helps her clients blast past marketing plateaus to attract and convert more ideal customers.

She's fascinated by human behavior and has spent two decades studying how cognitive, behavioral, and social psychology all impact sales and marketing. With a degree in creative writing and lifelong love of narrative, she uses storytelling techniques to engage audiences and draw them to action.

Laura has worked with dozens of B2B SaaS companies, including Passport, Network for Good, Front, Floqast, and others.

If you need fresh ideas based on a proven framework and methodology to empower your brand and get better results from your marketing, [get in touch!](#)

