Edwords content

Tell a story copy is OK as is

Create a response

I cut my teeth in direct marketing, a medium generally reviled by brand-conscious marketers, because they (often rightly) think that tacky DR harms their brand (while still being effective and thus hard to kill.

At Hill Holliday, I was told to do direct “that didn’t suck.”I discovered that branding and DR are actually two sides of the same coin … that when the branding is emotionally rich, it generates response.

Still don’t love DR? Then think of it as “brand advertising that pays for itself.”

Define your brand (note change from “build your brand”)

The power of a brand is nearly incalculable. Every business, large or small, needs to define, articulate and promote their brand.

I work with clients to develop their brand, using a disciplined yet flexible plan revolving around differentiators and core messages. The result is a document that both supplies content for all consumer-facing materials, and serves as a measuring stick for the future.

It doesn’t make for a flashy show on a web page. But it does provide messages for ALL your audiences, in ALL your interactions that are powerful, differentiating and memorable.

Raise money

First two paragraphs are OK.

I have found that stories work best. The truth is, donors don’t care that much about your organization … they care about their money helping people.

Resume

Make computers one category with: Lotus, Kurzweil, Centra, Authentica, DEC, Data General

Education: add Olin College of Engineering, Asian University for Women

Add “Medical” – move Bayer (from Health Care) and also add: Biogen Idec, Brigham and Women’s Thoracic Surgery, Massachusetts General Hospital

Fundraising: add Habitat for Humanity, Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Make-A-Wish, Mass General

Client list: same as resume

Buying Cycle: delete first 3 paragraphs, and replace with (depending on layout)

Research shows that consumers follow a specific process when they make every purchase decision. Using this information helps us determine what messaging will work best to move them along the process. It looks like this:

Replace digital camera with “new phone”

Tender time paragraph – delete “Your product needs to be good, but how you treat the customer is important too” and just start the parenthetical with “someone

This is crucial paragraph: delete everything after “for example.”

New blurbs for new portfolio pieces

Olin DM

As a new school that takes a revolutionary approach to educating engineers, Olin turns the usual fundraising method on its head; rather than focusing on the appeal, they can succeed by reinforcing the mission. This “emergency” fundraiser, almost entirely mission-focused, still reached its goal within its first week.

MSC DM

A crucial issue for every non-profit is growing its donor file. The MS Society of Canada had a huge list of potential givers – participants in its signature MS Bike and MS Walk events. This mailing is the first ever to successfully convert those people into donors, at a cost 30% lower than their control prospecting mailing. The secret? Appeal to what we knew about them – they are athletes, competitors, possibly with no relationship to MS.

MSC email

(to come)

Morgan Stanley Advisor web site (let’s use this one: <http://www.morganstanleyfa.com/myhrehogangroup/index.htm>

I have developed dozens of web sites for Morgan Stanley advisors, as part of an overall branding campaign. Each is designed to differentiate the advisor or team, and focus on what’s important to their potential client.

Morgan Stanley GFIO micro site: <http://www.morganstanley.com/gfio/>

Morgan Stanley chose me to develop the branding, copy and creative strategy for its new Global Fixed Income Opportunity (GFIO) Fund. This innovative microsite positions the product and explains the opportunity in simple, accessible, logical language that is easy to understand and fast to absorb.

Outcome Referrals

This organization improves behavioral health care using a simple questionnaire that identifies and quantifies a full spectrum of problems to help therapists understand what they’re dealing with and know how to treat them. I wrote this web site, as well as the tag line and branding that accompany it.

Morgan Stanley placemat

As part of an initiative to help Morgan Stanley financial advisors differentiate themselves, I invented this format, which allows for maximum flexibility, tells a non-linear story and works for both presentation and mailing. For each advisor, I develop custom content based on their prospects and their business. The firm now uses the format across their network.

Branding (TBD, but maybe use some key words, like):

Value Proposition

What you will deliver to your customer? Consistency and customer-focus are crucial.

Unique Selling Proposition

What differentiates you? Think “Volvo=safety” What do you equal?

Tag Line

Label? Emotional Driver? Rallying Cry? I’ll show you how each might work.

Messages

Of all the things you COULD say, what SHOULD you say? How should you say it? We will develop the 5 key messages.

Message by audience

You have your topline message. How should it be flavored for different constituents?

Elevator pitch

Can you say it in 30 seconds? Do you say it the same way every time? Does everyone in the organization? An often overlooked branding opportunity.