Marketing: A security vulnerability

We are not marketers — we are *connectors*:

We don't have a marketing department; we have a mission, and we don't have users; we have a community of owners.

Most tech companies use marketing to build walls—walls made of jargon, polished lies, and "engagement" traps designed to extract value from people. At Thunderbird, we do the opposite. We build bridges. We are **Connectors**.

Our job isn't to "sell" code; it's to connect a gift from thousands of contributors to the people who need it most. We are the bridge between a complex protocol and a human being who just wants their privacy back. We are the link between an engineer's late-night bug fix and a user's peace of mind.

If it feels like "marketing," it's probably manipulation. If it feels like "connecting," it's probably the truth.

Let's keep it salty, keep it geeky, and above all, keep it human.

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1. Kill the Fluff, Feed the Geek

The Principle: We respect the intelligence of our audience. We don't hide behind "seamless" and "integrated"—we talk about the math and the pipes.

- **Example:** Don't say "Experience ultimate security." Say, "We updated our PGP library to the latest standard because your data belongs on your machine, not our server."

2. Capabilities Over Features

The Principle: A feature is a bullet point on a sales sheet. A capability is a superpower we give to a person.

- **Example:** Instead of bragging about "Unified Inboxes," show a freelancer how they can finally stop switching tabs and reclaim 20 minutes of their life for a coffee break.

3. Stability is Our Love Language

The Principle: To a "Legacy Loyalist," a radical UI change isn't "innovative"—it's a broken promise. We market reliability as a radical alternative to "moving fast and breaking things."

- **Example:** Announce an update by leading with what *didn't* change: "We've improved the engine under the hood, but your favorite buttons are exactly where you left them."

4. Be a Salty Advocate

The Principle: We are the underdog. We are allowed to call out the absurdity of Big Tech's "data harvesting" while staying principled and focused on the solution.

- **Example:** "Your email provider shouldn't know you're buying a engagement ring before your partner does. We don't read your mail. We're too busy building tools that help you manage it."

5. The "Gift" Protocol

The Principle: Thunderbird is a gift from the community to the community. We are grateful stewards, not corporate owners.

- **Example:** When asking for donations, don't use a "buy now" vibe. Say, "Thousands of people built this so it could stay **Free Forever.** Help us keep the gift going."

6. Marketing is Documentation

The Principle: Every tweet, post, and email should be as useful as a well-written README. If it doesn't provide utility, it's just noise.

- **Example:** Instead of a "Happy Monday" post, share a 30-second "Power-User" tip on how to use Message Filters to automatically file receipts.

7. No Hidden Agendas

The Principle: Transparency is our default. We don't "spin" bad news; we document it with the same clarity as a security audit.

- **Example:** If a server goes down or a bug is found, we don't hide it. We post the tracking ticket and the fix timeline immediately.

The Connector's Checklist

Before you hit "publish," run your work through the Hopper-Cerf-Swartz Filter:

- **Is it Truthful?** (Would Aaron Swartz think this is honest or manipulative?)
- **Is it Elegant?** (Would Vint Cerf find this language stable and dignified?)
- **Is it Sharp?** (Would Grace Hopper find this a "nanosecond" of efficient insight?)

- **Is it a Gift?** (Does this serve the user or our own ego?)
- **Is it Salty?** (Does it challenge a Big Tech norm?)
- **Does it Geek Out?** (Did you celebrate the craft of the engineering?)

If it doesn't connect, it doesn't ship.