WBA

WORKSHOP TOOLS – CLAIM, VALUE, PROOF

In a workshop setting, we usually allow an hour or two for the exercise we call Claim, Value, Proof. But, that said, we’ve worked with clients where we’ve used this one tool for most of the day.

Quite simply, the more you do it, the more you get out of it.

The premise is simple.

Most Brands have many claims they can make. Hundreds of them. And, if these claims attest to achievements or attributes of which the Brand is proud, is tempting to think that they are claims worth making.

But as we shall see, this is often not the case.

And what might be impressive isn’t necessarily motivating.

The challenge is to only make claims that your audience will find useful, relevant and engaging.

So how do we do that? How do we ensure that our claims are meaningful?

Well, we make sure each Claim leads directly to a Value, a specific value, that is important and motivating to your audience.

And this is where it gets interesting.

Because there are only six values!!! And if we always bear them in mind, they act as very useful filters to the claims we’d like to make.

Here’s how it works.

When looking for value, your client or customer will ask:

1. Will it help me make money

2. Will it help me save money

3. Will it help me save time

Three very left-brain questions and then,

4. Will it make me feel good

5. Will it make me look good

6. Will it make me feel secure

Three very left-brain questions.

And that’s it!!

If your claim cannot satisfy one of these six values, then it’s not worth making.

Fortunately, most but not all interesting claims can be attached to a value. But as the relationship between the claim and the value may not be immediately obvious, it’s up to you to reveal that relationship and make the connection.

The last part of this equation is ‘Proof’. If you are going to make a claim, any claim, it has to be self-evidently or demonstrably true. All claims require support and evidence to ensure unchallenged credibility.

So, let’s look at an example of this in practice.

This slide shows just some of the many CVPs we developed for a company that specialises in Employee Assistance Programs.

(Insert matrix of AccessEAP’s CVPs)

As you can see, there are six Claims on this page and all of them have been attached to a Value and substantiated with a Proof.

Let’s quickly at a couple of them.

The first one, ‘We support your people to be their best at work’ actually can be attached to four values – productive employees will save you money by reducing churn and recruitment costs, they’ll make you money by doing a good job, job satisfaction will make them feel good, and it will make both them and the person who ran the program look good.

One claim, values or benefits if you prefer that word.

And the proof is undisputable – case studies, surveys, advocacy rates.

Or the bottom one, ‘We’re a founding member of the Employee Assistance Program category’. This sounds like something worth bragging about. Essentially, we’re saying we created this line of work.

But if you don’t attach to a value, it could be considered irrelevant. After all, people care about what you offer now, not what you were doing twenty years ago. And maybe you’ve become old and stale. So, we need to make sure this claim has contemporary relevance.

In this instance, we’ve attached it to three values – feeling safe and secure in the hands of a company that knows this business inside out, looking good because you’ve employed a company that commands respect and saving time because their experience will bring efficiencies of process and understanding.

Proof comes from the documentation and media coverage that the company has collected over the years.

Once again, these connections between Claim and Value are not immediately obvious and need to be made so that you can then use them as part of your communication strategy.

Let’s look at one more example.

(Insert matrix of CVPs for Kilfinan)

These are some of the CVPs from a company that provides mentors to CEOs. In fact the mentors are CEOs as well as the mentee.

One is patently obvious, ‘We don’t charge for our services’ and connects immediately to the value of saving money. But perhaps we could have put a feel good factor in there as mentoring can be extremely costly at this level.

But the claim, ‘We expand CEO experience’ generates four values – feel good, save time, save money, look good. All claims that are substantiated by testimonials.

Which brings us to the question of ‘What constitutes proof?’

Usually it comes in one of three forms – testimonial from a reputable source, product or service demonstration, or some form of statistical analysis. Whatever it is, it needs to carry the weight of objectivity.

Lastly, it’s worth mentioning that this process can be accelerated by looking for Values as well as Claims.

If participants in the group run out of Claims, ask them to focus on Values and ask, ‘How do you save clients’ money?’ or ‘How do you make clients feel safe and secure?’

Working backwards, they’ll usually find more claims to make.

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