



# HOW TO RIGHT SIZE YOUR MESSAGING APPROACH

Whether a company is going to market with a new service or launching a demand generation program for a legacy solution, campaign success always begins with a clear, succinct, defensible message that separates a company and its products and services from the competition.

While many B2B marketers understand the importance of creating “sticky” messaging that resonates with customers and prospects, they often feel there is little time to develop solid messaging because of a real or perceived need to rush going to market. Even with adequate time and budget, others struggle to activate messaging in a way that best suits their company’s need to communicate effectively and drive sales.

## THE RIGHT FORMULA VS. FORMULAIC

There is no “one-size fits all” approach to messaging. However, there are key steps an organization can take to pinpoint their specific messaging needs or strategy based on:

- a) Stage of the company's lifecycle.
- b) Effectiveness of existing messaging.
- c) Market stability.

Considering these three areas enables an organization to decide if they need an exhaustive, comprehensive messaging overhaul, whether it can be absorbed into another marketing project or if they should consider iterative messaging. Let's take a look at each approach.

### WHEN BIGGER IS BETTER

Size matters when it comes to messaging. Not all organizations need to execute a complete messaging process, which usually includes both quantitative and qualitative research. This extensive approach is often best used by organizations that acknowledge they are not positioned accurately or effectively.

For example, this approach is necessary when a message, for whatever reason, is not resonating with target audiences or hindering differentiation from competitive.

Major market shifts can also create a need for comprehensive messaging. This includes organizations looking to reach prospects within entirely new market segments or vertical markets they haven't pursued before.

In these instances, quantitative research uncovers what's important to their market and stakeholders and, most importantly, what factors incite their audiences to buy from over a competitor.

### MESSAGING MIDDLE GROUND

Established organizations with a proven message may need fine-tuning and refinement of their messaging. This need may arise when organizations target their existing customer base, but have expanded their offerings to include new products and services - particularly when there is little to no brand awareness. As such, they may

choose to refine their message as part of another project they are working on, such as a new website.

This middle-of-the-road approach to is particularly useful for organizations experiencing increased market competition by quickly differentiating them from the pack.

This level of messaging can often be done successfully as a component of a branding project or large marketing campaign. Compared to an in-depth two to three month process that includes significant research, this can typically be completed within a month. This approach also eases concerns about delaying market launches to complete a comprehensive overhaul.

### BABY STEPS AS A BEST PRACTICE

Finally, there are some instances when it is worthwhile to develop messaging that will not have a long shelf-life. In this case, you are simply testing the messaging as you go, perhaps on a campaign-by-campaign basis.

Such an iterative approach often makes sense for start-ups who are discovering their audiences and market position. In these situations, organizations are best served by getting their products and services to market quickly. This initial, “smaller scale” messaging will help them determine which messages work best even as their customer base evolves.

Once certain factors are crystallized, including their primary target audience, an organization can revisit the process and determine when long-term messaging is necessary. Each campaign or project serves to help further refine the message, as they learn whether the messaging resonated or worked in the campaign.

### THE BOTTOM LINE

While approaching a messaging engagement can appear daunting because of the time and budget commitment, executing the right size approach for your organization can remove some pain from the process. More importantly, it can deliver the sticky messaging necessary to best position your company for positive brand awareness and increased revenue.

Arketi Group is a public relations and digital marketing firm that helps business-to-business (B2B) technology organizations accelerate growth through intelligent strategy, messaging, public relations, digital marketing, branding, and lead generation and nurturing. Consistently recognized by Chief Marketer as one of the nation's top agencies, Arketi's core belief is that marketing generates revenue.

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