




FIVE PRINCIPLES FOR
**DEVELOPING
& ACTIVATING
B2B
MESSAGING**

A hand holding a clear glass bottle with a rolled-up document inside, secured with a piece of twine. The background is a blurred beach scene with waves and a cloudy sky.

“How do we describe ourselves to customers and the marketplace? With one phrase? One sentence? One paragraph?” If you put these questions to your entire marketing team, would you get the same response? What if you asked Sales? Or Product? Or your leadership team in general?

Our experience tells us the answer is, typically, “no.” Even though most of us agree consistent messaging is vital to marketing (and business) success, too many technology companies struggle to rally their organization behind a singular, constant concept.

Arketi Group’s messaging process was refined throughout the course of more than 200 engagements working alongside B2B technology providers. We’ve put our methodology to the test for more than two decades, and we’ve built it around our **five principles for developing and activating powerful B2B messaging.**

BE RELENTLESS TO A PROCESS

B2B marketers have an almost never-ending list of competing priorities to contend with. We are often looked to as the consensus builders – bridging those priorities to ensure our company or enterprise is marching in the same direction.

The same is true for messaging. While there is no “one-size fits all” solution to message development, by sticking to a thorough, data-driven process marketers can drive their organization to uncover a message that compels audiences and generates demand.

REGARDLESS OF YOUR SPECIFIC APPROACH...

Develop your positioning first – at its core, the message is a snappy, quick, enticing distillation of your overall market position.

Avoid too many cooks in the kitchen – otherwise, you risk ending up with a message built on competing priorities that means nothing and says even less.

Get ready to be uncomfortable – strong messaging communicates strengths and benefits. To uncover those, you’ll also need to understand your gaps and weaknesses.

CASE IN POINT:

We utilize our **SCORE** criteria to gauge the strength of our messaging. A powerful message is:

SURPRISING

grabs attention, catchy,
provocative even

CONTEXTUAL

tells you what industry it’s about, unless
that’s clear from the company name

ORIGINAL

differentiated, unique, ownable

REAL

true, provable, authentic

ENDURING

lasting

DO ONE THING - AND DO IT WELL

There's a reason performance is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of BMW: the legendary automaker owns the ubiquitous tagline "The Ultimate Driving Machine." To message effectively, you have to find the chord you can strike that your competitors simply can't.

Most B2B technology companies are in the business of complex solutions and complicated services. It can be difficult to distill those into a singular message. You can't be everything to everyone, however. BMW could claim several concepts – safety, luxury, ecofriendly – but they stake their claim performance to truly differentiate themselves.

To effectively message, you must know your 'special sauce' and stick to the recipe.

YOU CAN DO THAT BY...

Living your differentiators – if you can visit your website, cover up the logo or company name, and what's left sounds like a competitor's, you haven't hit the mark.

Not over-messaging – whether its 100+ words on a tradeshow booth or spelling out every detail of your product in a fact sheet, sometimes too much is just too much.

Proving it – Without the proof points or necessary data to back up your messaging, all you have are empty claims.

CASE IN POINT:

Geospatial imaging was never a crowded field – that is, until technology opened the door for upstart challenger brands. Looking to reach a broader swathe of buyers, we helped ERDAS develop a new message and tagline that quickly shares its value proposition: ERDAS, The Earth to Business Company.



MAKE THE COMPLEX SIMPLE, AND THE SIMPLE COMPELLING

Whether launching a new product or amplifying mature portfolios, campaign success always begins with a clear, succinct, defensible message. We have already talked about the need to follow a process, but there is an equally important need for quality writing.

While many B2B marketers understand the importance of “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.

It’s our job as marketers to make “the complex simple and the simple compelling.”

WE RECOMMEND...

Taking your elevator pitch literally – we mean it! Get in the office elevator, embrace the weird looks from your co-workers, and see if you can deliver your pitch in the time it takes to go five levels. If not, it’s back to the drawing board.

Distinguishing audiences – are you trying to reach clients? Prospects? Partners? If your answer is “all of the above,” chances are you will miss nuances that ensure your messaging hits home.

Letting boilerplates breathe – leave those classic, stale boilerplates behind. Instead, use your company description to make a proper introduction of your brand and message.

Writing as you would speak – keep your messaging simple and concise. Lean into your brand’s personality and write as if you are face-to-face with a real, live audience. Nothing builds a better connection than genuine conversation.

CASE IN POINT:

Flo Healthcare’s technology simplifies care management and delivery for medical professionals, and its tagline needed to match. Improving connections. Improving care. demonstrates how Flo’s mobile workstations connect the dots to improve for users and patients.





THE BEST OFFENSE.

For banks and credit unions, the financial, operational and reputational costs of waiting to combat cyber-attacks until after they happen are too great. With its dynamic nature, cyber must be treated as a risk management issue, allowing you to stay ahead of threats. That's what DefenseStorm's built for banking solution delivers.

[LET US SHOW YOU](#)

"With our prior company, all they were monitoring was server traffic, and the firewall. DefenseStorm is monitoring the entire network."

That's what it means to be an ally.

Your Cyber Risk Readiness IQ
How do you measure up? Take this quick self-evaluation to determine your risk-related priorities.

2023 Cybersecurity Benchmarking Report
Protecting your institution requires a defensive and offensive approach to cyber risk

Our Upcoming Events
Let's connect at one of our upcoming events to discuss how you can get ahead of the storm of threats.

TRUST, BUT VERIFY

Message value is in the eye of the beholder – your customers. No matter how much you love or believe in your company's messaging, it is no good if it fails to engage buyers.

We believe strong messaging is grounded in research and a data-driven attitude. Market research, competitor analyses, customer surveys, message testing and focus groups are all tools to ensure your brand message is aligned with customer expectations and perceptions of your position in the market.

It's easy to dream up a message. It's exponentially harder to craft one that truly resonates with buyers.

THINK ABOUT IT THIS WAY...

Without research, you are just guessing – quantitative data is vital to aligning your message with how buyers perceive and utilize your solutions or technology.

Lost leads reveal more than you think – pressure testing your message beyond existing clientele provides stronger insights to tailor your message for the broader marketplace.

Boards and leadership are not buyers – who cares if the board likes your message when buyers do not? Testing your message with the market ensures you are hitting the mark with those who will sign a check.

CASE IN POINT:

You can't be unique or different if you don't understand client perspectives and industry trends. For DefenseStorm, we conducted a broad industry benchmarking survey to inform our message development. **The Best Offense** addressed prospects' and buyers' key pain points as they shift from reactive to offensive cybersecurity.



NEVER STOP ACTIVATING YOUR MESSAGE

Even with adequate time and budget, some marketers struggle to activate their B2B messaging in a way that brings it to life for stakeholders, internally or externally. Siloed departments, competing priorities and disarrayed communications all lead to ineffective messaging execution.

Considering the time and energy invested to craft your message, take the opportunity to capitalize on your work with a plethora of assets, tools and content that demonstrate and share your message. Handing out a messaging guide and telling others to spread the word is not the answer.

INSTEAD...

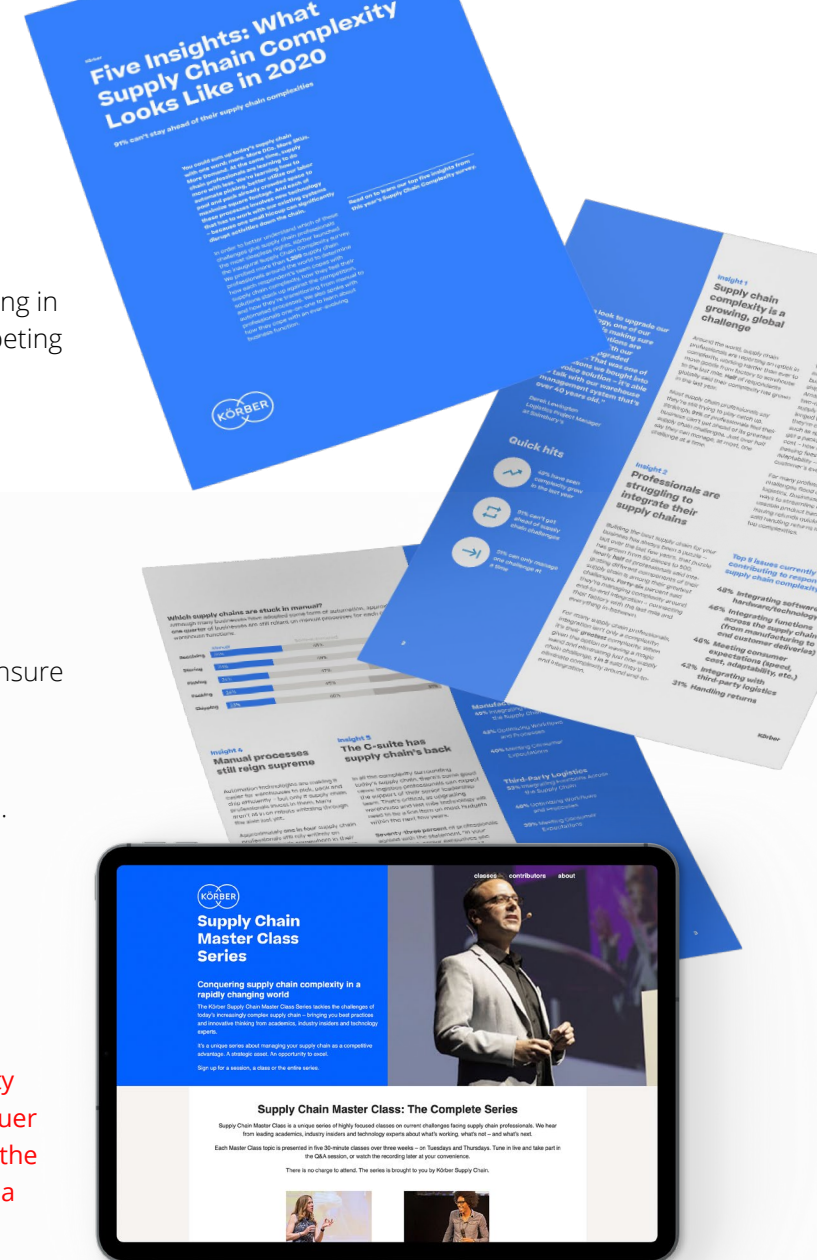
Appoint a message evangelist – or someone who will champion messaging internally to ensure it is spread and utilized throughout your organization.

Pay attention to your launch – and make it a celebration! Messaging is central to every outgoing sales call, newsletter, press release or communication. Demonstrate its importance.

Have conviction – by the time you hate your message, audiences are just catching on. Messaging builds brands, and that doesn't happen overnight. When a message works, keep driving it home.

CASE IN POINT:

We conducted an industry study for Körber Supply Chain that revealed five areas of complexity for logistics professionals. We used our research as inspiration for Körber's new tagline: **Conquer Supply Chain Complexity**. But we didn't stop there. They have since activated that message in the form of whitepapers, first strike presentations, a master class series, benchmarking tools and a consumer survey – all of which address or examine those original five fields.





AND LOOK GOOD DOING IT

A powerful message resonates. It is reflected across every facet of a brand from advertising and marketing to internal communications and investor relations. Repetition and consistency hammer home your message – and help you avoid disjointed perceptions among prospects, customers and stakeholders.

Messaging can also grow over time. From the top-level tagline to the lowest level supporting message, ongoing research and testing will ensure it continues to resonate. It's alright if your message needs a little polish every few years. Our market landscape is rapidly evolving, after all.

Need help building a powerful message that resonates and engages audiences? Let's talk. Reach out to Mike Neumeier at 404.451.7832 or mneumeier@arketi.com.

