

Which Words are the RIGHT Words?

by Deborah Chaddock Brown

Do your customers know what you stand for? Can they articulate – correctly – why someone should do business with you?

In *Make a Name for Yourself*, author Robin Fisher Roffer, tells the story of being introduced at a party as the Sweepstakes Queen of Cable. Yes – she had worked sweepstakes, but that wasn't how she envisioned herself in the business world. If you don't correctly brand yourself – others will do it for you – and maybe not how you want to be known.

Think of these brand names – they have effectively communicated their unique competitive difference:

Maytag appliances: Service, trouble-free
Volvo – Safety
Disney – Family values

Author and internally-acclaimed small business marketer, John Jantsch of Duct Tape Marketing believes that customers should know you for ONE word. His word is “practical.” He offers practical ideas, advice, and tips to help small businesses market themselves.

What would your one word be? If you just said “quality” or “service,” STOP RIGHT THERE. Those are two of the most over used words in marketing today – customers EXPECT that you'll offer quality. As opposed to what? Crap? And service isn't something you can TELL a prospect – it is something they have to EXPERIENCE.

Edward Werz and Sally Germain have written a book entitled *Phrases that Sell* in which they offer alternative phrases to help effectively communicate your marketing message.

Instead of Quality, consider:

Award-winning
First-class
Dare to compare
Impeccable
Don't settle for less

Instead of Service, consider:

Just ask. We'll do the rest.
Ordering is easy.
No job too big or too small.
No-problem purchasing
Effort-free

What is your ONE WORD? Is it the right word to stand out from your competition and effectively communicate your competitive difference?

How do you know? Ask your customers? “What do you think I stand for?” “When you think of me, (my company, my department) what comes to mind?”

Then ask yourself – are you surprised? Did they get it right?

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Are You Linked In?

I am sure you've been invited – but have you accepted? Just what IS LinkedIn? LinkedIn is a social network for professionals. Think MySpace with class. You enter your resume information and then reach out to people you work with and those you used to work with.

Then picture a pebble hitting the water's surface – the expanding rings stretching out across the pond enable you to be connected with the networks of your peers until you reach from shore to shore.

As of today I have 26 connections in my network. Each of those connections know people that I don't, however, LinkedIn gives me the opportunity to search their connections for decision-makers, business leaders, and/or peers that I would like to meet.

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