

Curing Content Chaos

In marketing messaging, you must live by the rant “repetition, repetition, repetition.” If you say the same thing, the same way, over and over again, eventually your audience will be able to repeat your message in the exact way you want it told. And then they’ll tell two friends, and so on.

So, here’s how you can create repetition and cure content chaos with a Content Specification:

Audit your materials.

Gather and review all of your company’s marketing materials (direct mail, brochures, web site, press releases, media kit, etc.) and perform an audit. Make note of what content is used, the inconsistencies you find, and the gaps of content that may simply be missing or inaccurate in each piece.

Identify repurposeable content.

Once you have completed your audit, you should now be able to identify or create the content that will be repurposed across all vehicles into a Content Specification. I recommend you document your specification in Word, as it is easy to copy and paste from it into all types of design applications. At minimum, your Content Specification should include your company and product or service positioning (in 25-, 50-, and 100-word versions), brand story (your background of how you came to be), brand identity (logo, taglines, etc.), and contact information. These elements should be present in every marketing communication piece. Be sure to store the Content Specification somewhere where anyone tasked with content creation can locate and use it.

Roll in your content.

The final step is to take the content from your Content Specification and roll it into each of your existing marketing pieces, taking great care to make sure that any edits you make in the process get reflected in the master specification.

Now that you have a structure for your marketing content, you can quickly pull copy together for new pieces and ensure that your marketing pieces work more powerfully together as a system.

During this process, you may discover that your company’s messaging is no longer relevant and needs to be refreshed before moving forward. If this is the case, you may want to hire an outside resource to help you develop the consistency you need. A third party brings an outside perspective and an objectivity that is essential to creating clear and compelling messaging for all types of audiences.

Business communication expert

LaShaunn Tappler is the principal and creative director of LT ComDesign, LLC, a firm that helps entrepreneurs, businesses and faith-based organizations build their businesses through high-impact marketing materials and improved business communications materials. These materials help them look more professional, attract attention, persuade others, and ultimately be more successful. To learn more about how we’ve helped people just like you grow their business, and to sign up for FREE marketing how-to tips, ideas and resources, visit us online at <http://www.LTComDesign.com>.

This article may be reprinted freely online, as long as the entire article and this resource box are included, and you send me a copy or link to your reprint at LaShaunn@LTComDesign.com.

Thanks!

© 2010 LaShaunn S. Tappler. All rights reserved.