

# Message Requirements

Provided courtesy of [www.GrowthPanel.com](http://www.GrowthPanel.com)

**Note** – This is one from a sequence of exercises from the Messaging subject outlined in the Strategic Marketing Process eBook. Download the free e-book [www.growthpanel.com/marketing-tools/index.html](http://www.growthpanel.com/marketing-tools/index.html) and subscribe to this subject at [www.growthpanel.com/versions/get-started.html](http://www.growthpanel.com/versions/get-started.html) to download from Growth Panel’s Intelligent Marketing Platform.

*Some of the graphics in this PDF might not display properly.*

**“Messages” and verbal statements should quickly describe what you do and how you’re different.** They’re used throughout your interactions with your market:

- ▶ The “elevator pitch” – the 30-second response to “what do you do?”
- ▶ Sales and marketing materials – sales literature, websites, presentations and campaigns all use messages of various lengths
- ▶ The introductory statement in a phone call
- ▶ Press releases – the blurb at the bottom of the release that explains what the company does
- ▶ Slogans
- ▶ Your mission statement

Good messages take your competitive positioning and brand strategy to the next level. They hone in on what’s important to your market and communicate it consistently and effectively. [If you haven’t defined those strategies, Competitive Positioning and Brand Strategy can help.]

Before you create your own messages, it may help to look at the messages your competitors are using. Look at their websites; check the homepage, press releases in the “news” section, “about us” and downloadable sales materials. You’re looking for:

- ▶ A 25-word description that explains what they do
- ▶ A 50-word description that provides more detail
- ▶ A 100-word description (2-3 paragraphs) with even more detail
- ▶ A mission statement
- ▶ Taglines or slogans

**Enter any of the messages you find in this chart.**

COMPETITOR	MESSAGE(S)

COMPETITOR	MESSAGE(S)

**What do you like about any of these messages?**

**What do you dislike about any of these messages?**

**Which of these likes/dislikes will you incorporate into your own messages?**

## MESSAGE CONTENT

If you've completed 23 – Develop Your Brand Architecture, you'll have a grid of features, benefits and their importance to your customers. That grid will help you prioritize the content to include in each message. If you haven't completed 23, it can help you focus your messages on the right features and benefits.

You can also use the following chart to develop the key phrases to use in various messages.

KEY FOR CHART	MESSAGE
<b>A</b>	Elevator pitch
<b>B</b>	25-word positioning statement
<b>C</b>	50-word positioning statement
<b>D</b>	100-word positioning statement

KEY FOR CHART	MESSAGE
E	Press release summary
F	Mission statement
G	Tagline/slogan

Here is the basic content that each message should contain.

CONTENT	WRITE YOURS BELOW	Use this content in the following messages							
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
What's your company name?			X	X	X	X	X		
What do you do?		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
For whom? Describe your customers.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
How long have you been doing it?					X	X	X		
Where do you operate?					X	X			
What are the emotional benefits your customers gain?*		X	X	X	X	X		X	
What are the key functional benefits you provide?*				X	X				
What are the key features*					X				

[\*Brand Strategy can help you define your features and benefits]

Some brief pointers on writing your messages:

A good message is	Explanation	Notes for your messages
-------------------	-------------	-------------------------

A good message is	Explanation	Notes for your messages
<b>Simple</b>	The message should be easy to deliver and your market should immediately “get it.”	
<b>Concise</b>	Say it in as few words as possible – it aids comprehension.	
<b>Specific</b>	A message that’s too vague or broad won’t resonate or set you apart from your competitors.	
<b>Honest</b>	Don’t make claims you can’t back up.	
<b>Selective</b>	Focus on the benefits that are most important to your customers.	
<b>Natural</b>	Write your messages for the eye and ear; they should sound natural when spoken. Be sure to go easy on the technical jargon.	
<b>Consistent</b>	All your messages should be consistent or they’ll work against each other.	

## tone

Vocabulary and style help convey your attitude toward the reader. **What attitude (“tone”) do you want to convey?**

Your brand strategy should generally determine the appropriate tone for your communications with the market. [Brand Strategy can help]

<input type="checkbox"/> Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Engaging	<input type="checkbox"/> Warm
<input type="checkbox"/> Authoritative	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Funny
<input type="checkbox"/> Serious	<input type="checkbox"/> Intelligent	<input type="checkbox"/> Hip
<input type="checkbox"/> Technical/scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Insightful	<input type="checkbox"/> Other:

When you use contractions, you convey a less formal tone. **Will you use contractions?**

- Yes, use contractions where needed  
 No, do not use contractions

## terminology

List any company terminology or product/service names that need to be used consistently in your messages. For example, some names may need a trademark or service mark; others may need to be capitalized, hyphenated, all caps, bold, italic, etc.

TERM	USAGE

Don't capitalize words unless they're proper names. While some writers believe capitalization lends weight to the word, it's not grammatically correct and can appear unprofessional, egotistical and/or extremely formal.

**MESSAGE CHECKLIST**

Now that you have your foundation, the next step is to write your messages.

MESSAGE	EXERCISE	DUE DATE	STATUS
Elevator pitch	234		
25-word positioning statement	235		
50-word positioning statement	235		
100-word positioning statement	235		
Press release summary	236		
Mission statement	237		
Tagline or slogan	238		