

CREATING EFFECTIVE
MESSAGING TO BRAND
YOUR

LOVELY FACE

JARED LATIGO



It's long been taught that we need to persuade people to our way of thinking if we're going to sell them on anything. And, yes, there is a definite difference in persuading and convincing. Seth Godin says

“It's much easier to persuade someone if they're already convinced, if they already know the facts. But it's impossible to change someone's mind merely by convincing them of your point.”

And we all know he's persuaded each of us a time or two.

As prominent as that seems today, I still find that people can't quite articulate it into their personal brands. For a speaker, consultant, coach or generally anyone off blazing their own trail, it's imperative that we communicate exactly what we want to say to exactly who we want to say it.

This is called, finding your niche.

You may have the best expertise in your niche, be the most dynamic speaker or have the greatest idea since sliced bread, but if you aren't talking to the right people in the right way, you'll likely get nowhere.

In order to create an effective message, we have got to find out a few things first.

- Why are we doing this?
- Who is our niche market?

- What do they want?
- How do they talk?
- Where do they hangout?

There are also a few things that are important to keep in mind when creating messaging that will be effective.

- Regardless of your trade, your first business is marketing
- Address a major need
- Be concise
- Only use your niche industry's jargon
- Be remarkable

With those in mind, let's explore them a bit more in detail!

FINDING YOUR WHY

This is vital. It's imperative. It's highly super-duper important for your entire life!

And I'm not kidding...at all.

I found my why through much soul-searching after I didn't land my (then) dream job at Dave Ramsey's headquarters. I had gone through their grueling, yet very worth it, hiring process and had the opportunity to fly up there and meet with several people for interviews.

It had been about 3 full months of phone interviews and I was sure I would land the in-person ones. Little did I know that when I left Tennessee that day, I wouldn't be coming back.

The call came in just a few days after Thanksgiving and, to be honest, I was heartbroken.

After several months soul-searching, reading, listening, praying, praying and praying, I came across why I didn't land that job.

And to my shock, it was just as they had told me. I wasn't the exact right person for that exact position on their team. Something finally clicked in me that day and I discovered that I had not communicated WHY I wanted to work there.

I had said all the right things, I think. Acted the right way, I suppose. But I hadn't done the core of what I was trying to do the entire time. My messaging, my branding, was not effective for who I was trying to talk to.

Which is how I can now help you to understand the importance of clearly communicating that. You either effectively persuade your target, or you fail. Those are the only two options.

They were already convinced that I was the right person or they wouldn't have flown me up there. All my "paperwork" and past work had shown them that I could physically do what they needed. Where I failed wasn't in convincing, but rather, persuading.

This can very easily translate into personal branding in the sense that you must persuade your prospect that you are who they need or that you have what they need. We do that by defining our why.

Why you do what you do is the only way to effectively communicate. So now you get to answer a few questions for yourself.

- Why do you do what you do?
- Why do you care about it so much?
- Why should anyone listen to you?

Take some time on these. Really think them through. Write them down somewhere and jot notes around them for a few days. It's important!

TALKING TO YOUR NICHE MARKET

In order to find your niche market, you've got to figure out who they are. Finding out and narrowing down exactly who we are talking to will allow us to "speak their language" and effectively communicate.

Case in point. You likely noticed that I used a story in the section above as a personal experience. It probably connected with you on an emotional level because that's how you communicate. You are my target niche so it made sense to talk how you talk. Get it?

When determining our niche market, we need to drill down as far as we can to who we need to be talking to. This will allow us to hone our message and become incredibly effective.

Here's a little exercise to do.

Describe the person you are talking to. What do they look like? What's their physique like? Are they the average person, high-end executive, or something in-between? Consider their speech and level of vocabulary.

Write down all the things you can about them. I'll wait...go ahead.

Seriously. Write.

...pick up the pen...do it!

Okay, now. I'm trusting you did that. Should have taken about 5 minutes or so...maybe less.

Read over the list and get a good picture of that person in your mind. Give them a name.

Are you talking to Suzie? Xavier? Samuel? Or someone else?

Think it through.

GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT

It's fair to say that we all want what we want. And we're mostly no strangers to getting what we want. So much so that if I can't find what I'm looking for on your website in about 5 seconds, I'm gone, never to return.

Why is that?

There are plenty of factors but one of the main ones is the messaging. If you're not sending the right message to me, I don't have to listen. Allow me to let you in on a little secret...you are entitled to no one's attention.

So we just have to earn it.

Thankfully, for those of us that put in some effort, it's not impossible to stand out as the clear winner of a particular niche. It's not easy, but it's very possible. There is some debate as to how much room there are in some niches, but as time goes on, the older authorities will move on and new ones will take their place. So my thought is that there will always be room for you.

Maybe your time is right now? Maybe you're sick of scraping together gigs or just enough cash to pay the bills? Then I believe your time for proper branding is upon us! The thing is, you're branding whether you like it or not. The question is, are you saying the right things to the right people?

In order to do that, you've got to look to your niche and figure out what they want. You have to ask them. Don't assume, we all know what that does to us both!

3 THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Be yourself
- Be the expert
- Over give

In order to be an authority on any level, you've got to have integrity. People have to respect you for who you really are and with social media today, they will find out one way or another. Being yourself means that your online persona is just an extension of your 3D self.

When someone is an authority, they make the rules. They call the shots. This seems conflicting since I just said you have to give them what they want. But it's not and here's why.

Oftentimes, the client doesn't know what they want. They know they have a problem, but it's not always as clear to them as it is to the experts. As the authority you have to stand your ground on why, how and what needs to be done. But you also have to respect what your niche wants or you end up with a product with no market. I know, it's a fine line.

The last thing to remember is to over give. Give away so much stuff they'll think you're made of content. What will this do? It will show that you are

the expert and that you're not in it for the money. (Which, by the way, never works longterm.)

It will show your niche that you care about their success, their growth, their company or anything else they are a part of.

If you're a speaker, speak for free...but negotiate so it's a win-win for everyone.

If you're a writer, give away copies of your books or articles. The more the merrier so that ideas can spread.

You get the point. Share. Social media has a way of rewarding those people that give almost to a fault.

BUT WAIT, HOW DO I KNOW WHAT THEY WANT?

Ask. Poll them. Email them if you have a list. Attend events and ask. Ask the leaders of the market if they know of problem.

I ran a survey on my blog and got a decent response. At least enough to where I could determine what my market wanted...or the general direction of it.

The interesting part about it was that I never expected the results I got. I thought that area was covered, but apparently not. Like I said, there's room, sometimes you just gotta think skinny.

So. Who can you ask? Have you determined your niche market yet? (I hope you did, I waited on you to do that)

Do some research on the industry leaders and figure out where you can fit in. It might take some time, but you'll find it. Just don't give up. You're getting so close to it I can feel it!

USE THEIR LINGO

I can't tell you how many websites I've gotten to build over the past few years simply because I was the easiest to talk to. I didn't talk over their head and the times that I mentioned something in "code" terms, I made sure to clarify. Most of the time, my pricing was 2-3 times what the other candidates were but I landed it anyways because I was easy to communicate with. (That and I clearly showed my expertise.)

If I could point to one thing I've done 100% right, it would be clarification. And my clients will tell you that without being prompted.

Don't use fluff, people don't want that anymore. I don't they ever did actually, companies just thought they did.

The more you can say with fewer words, the better. Just because a book is 300 pages long on the subject of petting your dog, doesn't mean it couldn't have been done in 50 pages. In fact, it probably should have been!

That said, judging from my blog comments, some of my longest posts have had the most activity. That's one reason I don't limit my blog posts. You'll find me all over the place in terms of wording. Some of my really short ones have gotten good feedback...but the longer seem to provoke more thought. It would be fair to say that my audience likes longer posts than 500 words. So, I have to give them what they want when I can and speak their language.

This can also mean using terminology that your target niche understands. If I'm talking to you about web design, it wouldn't make sense for me to throw out things like PHP, MySQL or even CSS...even though you may sort of know what I'm talking about.

But, if I'm talking to a group of developers, they better know what those are or get out of the room. Different target, different lingo.

Here are a few questions you may want to consider combing over before going any further with your messaging.

- What industry lingo am I taking for granted that is confusing my target niche?
- Is there lingo I can learn to help my niche understand that I do "get" them?
- Where can I fit this into my messaging without sounding like I'm trying too hard?
- Am I trying too hard? Maybe this niche isn't where I want/need to be?
- Am I talking too much on my materials?

These are just a few thought-provoking questions that can help you get in the right mindset. There are likely more you can think of. Don't get discouraged. You're on the right track. Continue working through this and you'll come out the other end with a much more targeted message.

LOCATING YOUR NICHE

We now know who you're looking for, how they talk and why they should listen to you. Or at least we have a much better idea. Now comes the time to find them. It's a crazy busy world so this can be a challenge.

I remember when I first started as a freelance web designer how difficult it was to find people that I wanted to connect with. Granted, these were not my niche market, but rather other designers I wanted to connect with. I was looking for Christian designers who shared by beliefs and were in it for the right reasons. Not to say others weren't, they just weren't who I was looking for.

It seemed like I looked at every site on the internet. I would go to blog after blog in search of them. Finally, I found one. Then another...then about 25. Turns out, people who are alike hangout together.

I was able to connect with several of them that I still chat with occasionally today via Twitter and even have lunch with a few from time to time.

What it taught me was the power of niches. They had all found each other on the web even though they were spread out across the entire US. That power is in your niche too. Thus the very reason it's so important that you get into a niche market. It will allow you to spread much quicker because people who have the same needs are hanging out together.

So where can you look?

- How about local events? Many people there are focused on the local community. Are they your target niche?
- What blogs do they read? Maybe you could guest post there.
- What social media platform do they use? Facebook isn't the end-all...neither is Twitter. Your niche may be on 1 or multiple platforms. They may even be on MySpace...weird I know, but they might be.
- Are there any closed communities you can get in? Think about the 48days.net community. It requires submission and acceptance but the people in there are VERY respectful and have a common thread of living and working with purpose and passion.
- Do you have any personal relationships that can get you in with your niche? I have a friend that is very well connected in the education industry in my area. If that was my niche, there could be an opportunity there.

Think about these things. Your niche hangs out somewhere and chances are, when you find a couple, you'll hit it bit time. Not that you will automatically be the authority and the money will come screaming in...but you'll at least find where the people you need are at. Then you can slowly start making your move in with your new found messaging.

TO WRAP IT UP

I hope you get my point about how important finding your niche audience can be. I'm not suggesting you'll fail if you don't, but it will make your life significantly easier. I've had to deal with business the hard way, by not finding a niche. Now I've learned my lesson and I hope you learn it even sooner than I did.

Also, don't think this of this as the end-all most comprehensive list or way to do things. This is just my method. That doesn't mean there's no other way or that these are the only questions you'll ever need to answer.

They aren't.

That's the beauty of this new economy and the new way of doing business.

That's the beauty of being an entrepreneur.

We get to forge our own path, see what works for us and then share it with others.

So, that said, I truly hope this has been helpful and will help you in the future.

ONE LAST THING

If you found this useful, you will find my coaching program even more so. I will work with you one on one as well as in group calls to formulate your message and get you on the path to securing yourself as the authority in your niche market. For more information, [go here](#).

Other than that, share this. Just direct people to JaredLatigo.com or feel free to email this to them directly. Thanks for reading...now APPLY IT!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jared Latigo is a designer, writer, speaker, Christ-follower and a plethora of other things. His big passion is following your dreams and he likes to help people do that by showing them how to properly brand themselves.



He lives with his wife, son and cat in Texas.

Find more information at:

JaredLatigo.com

He also tweets a lot... [@jaredlatigo](https://twitter.com/jaredlatigo)