

5 SIGNS YOU NEED A

MESSAGING REFRESH

**Know when product messaging is
blocking growth, and how to fix it.**

A L L Y S O N L E T T E R I

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THE RIGHT MESSAGING FUELS GROWTH

Effective product messaging is more than just a catchy tagline—it's the foundation for building brand awareness, engaging prospects, and driving sales. The words customers see and hear have a major influence on their decision to purchase or pass.

The wrong messaging makes prospects tune out. Signs of a messaging problem include:

- Prospects rarely to respond to emails or click though on ads.
- Leads who attend events and webinars hesitate to book a sales conversation.
- Customers don't start using important new features.

The good news? Updating your product messaging can rapidly improve conversion.

This guide shares five signs that it's time to refresh your product messaging. You'll get practical tips on what to update so that messaging powers (not blocks) your startup's growth. Here are five challenges that you can overcome with the right messaging:

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES



ATTRACTING NEW LEADS



DRIVING LEADS TO SALES



CLOSING NEW CUSTOMERS



ENTERING NEW MARKETS



LAUNCHING NEW FEATURES

What's holding back your growth, and how can messaging help? Read on to find out.

CHALLENGE 1

ATTRACTING NEW LEADS

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

At the top of the funnel (TOFU), your messaging needs to break through the noise to attract new prospects. It must grab attention, spark curiosity, and drive engagement.

If your ideal customers don't notice your content or respond to your campaigns, you likely have a messaging issue. You need to capture the interest of your ideal customers so they find out about your product and feel motivated to learn more.

SYMPTOMS OF A MESSAGING PROBLEM

- Prospects don't understand how your product is relevant to their needs.
- Your brand and product don't seem differentiated in a crowded market.
- Engagement rates are low on social media or digital ads targeting new leads.

MESSAGING SHIFTS THAT INCREASE CONVERSION

- **Clarify the problem you solve:** Shift from product-focused to problem-solution-focused messaging that resonates emotionally.
- **Show customer empathy:** Show that you understand your audience's pain points and the outcomes they want from a solution.
- **Create a strong brand identity:** Use a compelling tone of voice and appealing brand personality to connect and build empathy.
- **Craft strong hooks:** Captivate attention with headlines that mention prospects' symptoms and desired results (so they can't resist clicking).

MARKETING TOUCHPOINTS TO UPDATE

- **Ad copy** and **organic social content** to capture new leads.
- **SEO content** and **blog articles** about symptoms, pain points, and outcomes.
- **Press, podcast, and earned media** topics and talking points.

CHALLENGE 2

DRIVING LEADS TO SALES

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

If you're attracting new leads, but they avoid sales conversations or hesitate to engage, your middle-of-funnel (MOFU) messaging may be the culprit.

This is the stage where prospects evaluate their options and consider a range of solutions. Your messaging needs to communicate your product's compelling benefits and it's strongest differentiators so prospects become open to meeting with sales.

SYMPTOMS OF A MESSAGING PROBLEM

- High bounce rates on landing pages or lack of clicks in email campaigns.
- Leads consuming content and expressing interest but avoiding sales.
- Prospects choosing competitors even when your product is the better fit.

MESSAGING SHIFTS THAT INCREASE CONVERSION

- **Focus on benefits:** Clearly outline the transformation your product delivers and how it addresses specific customer challenges.
- **Position as the best option:** Highlight what differentiates your product from competitors and why it's the best choice for your ideal customers.
- **Build trust:** Showcase proof points like testimonials, case studies, and data that demonstrate your product's effectiveness.
- **Speak the customer's language:** Tailor your messaging to resonate with specific customer segments and personas.

MARKETING TOUCHPOINTS TO UPDATE

- **Landing pages** and **email sequences** tailored to customer personas.
- **Webinars, social media,** and **blog content** showing your product's value.
- **Press, podcast,** and **earned media** topics and talking points.

CHALLENGE 3

CLOSING NEW CUSTOMERS

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

At the bottom of the funnel (BOFU), leads decide whether or not to buy. Often multiple stakeholders, with differing priorities, are involved in a B2B purchase decision. Both the sales team and marketing programs influence the buying decisions.

If leads aren't converting once they meet with sales, it could mean your messaging and content aren't addressing their key concerns. Plus, they may not feel urgency to buy.

SYMPTOMS OF A MESSAGING PROBLEM

- Deals stalling or going cold despite strong early interest.
- Customers asking repetitive questions about features, pricing, or ROI.
- Prospects delay purchase because they don't feel urgency to act now.

MESSAGING SHIFTS THAT INCREASE CONVERSION

- **Addresses key concerns:** Focus on specific features, usability, and outcomes that your prospect cares about most.
- **Tailor messaging by persona:** Adapt your content to address the unique priorities and questions of each key stakeholder.
- **Highlight ROI:** Use data-driven proof points and success metrics to build confidence that your product delivers results.
- **Create urgency:** Emphasize the hidden costs and missed opportunities of delaying purchase and missing out on improvements.

MARKETING TOUCHPOINTS TO UPDATE

- **Sales decks** and **sales aids** tailored to specific personas.
- **Pricing packages** and **promotions** to create urgency.
- **Product demos** and **guides** emphasizing high-value features.

CHALLENGE 4

ENTERING NEW MARKETS

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

When you're ready to sell to new customer segment or market, your existing messaging may not resonate with the new audience. Bad messaging holds back sales.

You need to update messaging to speak directly to the needs and desires of this new set of customers. Plus, you'll need to differentiate from a new set of competitors. You need messaging updates to break through and stand out.

SYMPTOMS OF A MESSAGING PROBLEM

- Limited traction with new customer segments despite efforts to expand.
- Difficulty explaining how your product is better than top competitors.
- Feedback that your product is unclear or doesn't interest prospects.

MESSAGING SHIFTS THAT INCREASE CONVERSION

- **Refine personas:** Understand the unique pain points, goals, and preferences of your new audience to include in your messaging.
- **Update positioning:** Align your product's value with the specific challenges of the new market.
- **Evolve brand identity:** Adapt your tone of voice and style to reflect the values and expectations of your new target customers.
- **Create a unified strategy:** Update your full funnel of marketing and sales materials to entice these new prospects.

MARKETING TOUCHPOINTS TO UPDATE

- **Websites, sales decks, and content** updated for this new segment.
- **Brand guidelines** with a tone of voice and style that appeal to the market.
- **All touchpoints** mentioned in the previous TOFU, MOFU, and BOFU sections.

CHALLENGE 5

LAUNCHING FEATURES

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

When you launch major new product features, you need messaging that sparks interest and drives adoption. Messaging needs to showcase the benefits of new functionality.

Outdated marketing and sales materials mean prospects and customers won't see the value of what you launch. New features make your product even more effective and desirable, so you need to evolve your messaging to reflect this, too.

SYMPTOMS OF A MESSAGING PROBLEM

- Customers don't find out about or start using new features.
- Product launches generate limited interest or new leads.
- Marketing materials reflect an old version of your product.

MESSAGING SHIFTS THAT INCREASE CONVERSION

- **Highlight new features:** Communicate how product updates benefit users and solve their challenges.
- **Enhance your positioning:** Showcase how new capabilities set your product (and results) apart from competitors.
- **Excite new leads:** Update messaging in ads, SEO, and social posts to draw attention and drive usage.
- **Drive adoption:** Create targeted content that encourages existing customers to engage with updates.

MARKETING TOUCHPOINTS TO UPDATE

- **Website, landing pages, and emails** showcasing new features.
- **Ad campaigns and social media content** promoting product updates.
- **Sales decks and enablement materials** for your team.

SIX CRITICAL MESSAGING FIXES

No matter what business challenge you're facing, better messaging can improve conversion. These six elements are the most important things to tweak so that your messaging entices and motivates your ideal customers. Focus on these improvements to get traction, fast.

01**EMPHASIZE TRANSFORMATION**

Your messaging needs to describe the desirable transformation that your product creates in a customer's life or business. Describe how your product addresses someone's top challenges and delivers desirable end results. Your product is a bridge from pain to gain for customers. Ensure your messaging emphasizes the impressive outcomes that your product delivers.

02**INCREASE CUSTOMER SPECIFICITY**

To maximize conversion, your messaging needs to speak to one specific persona. Successful landing pages, email series, and content pieces directly address a someone's pressing pain points. They also highlight results customers achieve and overcome objections. Take the steps to tailor your messaging. One-size-fits all messaging will fall flat or confuse prospects.

03**HIGHLIGHT BENEFITS**

Your messaging needs to consistently share your top three value propositions. These statements describe the most desirable benefits of using your product. To make your value propositions more powerful and benefit-oriented, start statements with an action verb (achieve, reduce, simplify) or a descriptor (least, most, fastest). Emphasize what differentiates your product, too.

04

BUILD CREDIBILITY

You need to give your ideal customers ample reasons to believe your product delivers results. Your features and functionality give your product credibility. But that's not enough. Showcase strong social proof, including customer success stories and case studies. Highlight third-party endorsements, including influencer mentions, press coverage, and award. Show data that quantifies the results of using your product. This info validates your product's effectiveness.

05

SHOW PERSONALITY

A compelling brand personality that's authentic and unique will differentiate your product too. A consistent personality creates an emotional connection with your audience. It makes your company more likable and trustworthy, giving you an edge when customers decide what solution to buy. Your brand personality needs to come through in your tone of voice, the words in your content, and the descriptions of your value props and proof points.

06

ADD INTRIGUE

Use captivating hooks throughout your messaging and website to motivate your audience to engage. These catch attention and spark curiosity to learn more.

A few techniques to hook interest include:

- **Open a loop:** Ask a question or hint at a secret that makes someone want to know more. This will encourage someone to keep reading to find out the answer. Ideas: "the secret to solving X" or "the best way to overcome Y."
- **Say the unexpected:** Highlight something about your ideal customer that they may be surprised you know. Or share a unique point of view and stir up a little controversy to capture interest. Ideas: "why the old way is broken" or "the warning sign you're missing."
- **Create contrast:** Make it clear how your product creates change and is better than alternatives. Share a "before and after" description of the changes your product has created in someone's life or business. Explain exactly what makes your product better (or the opposite of) top competitors.

NEXT STEPS

CREATE & LAUNCH EFFECTIVE MESSAGING

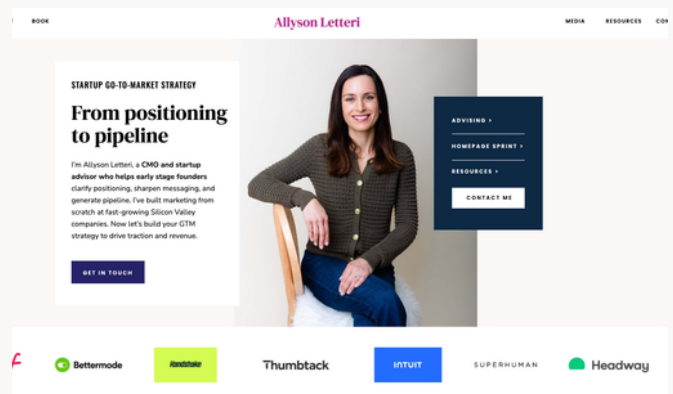
Now you have the tools to know when you have a messaging problem. You also have the techniques to overcome these messaging challenges, increasing conversion and growth.

There's huge value in learning how to create effective product messaging before you start to see the cracks. I've helped hundreds of tech startups **create and launch messaging** that serves as a wireframe for their website, sales deck, and content strategy. Don't hire an agency or create new collateral before clarifying your messaging. Here's how I can help:

STANDOUT STARTUP BOOK



ADVISING



ADVISING ON GTM STRATEGY



**ALLYSON
LETTERI**

Allyson is an **marketing executive, startup advisor, and author** who helps tech startups launch GTM strategies that drive growth. 🚀 Allyson has built and led marketing teams at fast-growing tech companies in Silicon Valley (Handshake, Thumbtack, Intuit).

She's also the **author of *Standout Startup***, a step-by-step guide for tech startup leaders to create powerful positioning, messaging, and content that fuel sales.