



Simplify Or Die Keynote

Welcome to "Simplify Or Die."

Before we get into and start showing you how to simplify your marketing, let's answer some very basic questions you might all be asking yourself...

- Who the heck are you guys?
- And why should I be listening to you?

Those are both great questions. Because we don't expect to have your full trust and confidence just because we're up front here and you're in the chairs.

To address your first question: who are you?

We are Simplify and we are marketing consultants from Salem, Oregon.

Brock and I had been working at another company in marketing together for about 8 years. During that time, we were always desperately searching for that marketing magic bullet, the one tactic, the one method, the one software, the one solution that would work for everything we were doing.

And, for the most part, that was what we were being sold...they had THE SOLUTION. We were frustrated because we kept being promised these incredible results and instead kept getting cookie cutter strategies that never delivered.



Two years ago, we decided there had to be a better way and so we started Simplify. Since we started, we have been developing a framework through which we build all marketing campaigns and projects, for us and our clients.

This framework allows us to put in unique information and gives us custom solutions and strategies.

Our framework has four sections.

First, your strategy, listening and deciding where you want to go and what you want your marketing to accomplish.

Then, we use that strategy to create your message. Your message is how your brand communicates with your customers.

Next, we develop a plan to execute and create the media needed to get your message out and execute your strategy.

Lastly, we refine, making small adjustments as we see how your audience reacts.

So, the second question you're probably asking is why should you pay attention to us?

At this point you are probably saying, prove it. Because, anyone can stand up here and talk, selling their ideas.

First, we have to say that this isn't just our ideas. The framework we use to create great marketing for our clients is the culmination of a hundred years of marketing wisdom, psychological truths, and learning from our failures and successes in 10 years of marketing.



We get it. You want to make sure what you're going to spend your time listening is valuable and we've programed the talk to do that.

Very quickly, we have three examples that show our framework is effective.

Courthouse Club Fitness is a group of five full-service gyms in Salem. They focus on community-driven exercise through small-group training and large classes.

About a year ago, they simply allowed us to help decide on a clear message that would quickly connect with customers.

And they stayed consistent. So, in an industry that sees a lot of seasonal ups and downs--high traffic around New Years, slow membership growth in the summer) they have experienced positive membership growth for ten straight months. That's addition of 1200 new members.

Again, we kept most of our attention on their message.

As you can see in their old mission statement, they did not speak clearly about what they did. This mission statement could be for any business. Is it a gym? Or is it an outdoor equipment business? What do they do?

So, we changed their mission statement to this. As you can see, it is much more clear what they do and how they help their customers succeed. Easy to understand. Easy to remember. Easy to say. Plus, they were able to use it as a filter for everything they did. Is it simple, is it fun? Does it make people look and feel great?

We changed nothing but their message. Again, 10 months of positive membership growth.

Another example. Team Canales is a small team of mortgage lenders, also in Salem. A year ago, Katy was spending 40 hours a month and about \$3000 a month on her marketing. She



was sending out postcards, going to networking groups, paying lead-generating services. But she wasn't able to track anything, so she had no idea what was working or wasn't.

She was throwing spaghetti against the wall and still not knowing what was sticking.

So, we helped her developed a strategy that made the most sense for her business model, her area, and her budget.

This year, she spends virtually no time on her own marketing, slashed \$12,000 from her yearly marketing budget, and is set to produce close to \$10.7 million more in loans compared to last year.

Last example. Furbish. Furbish sells salvaged, reclaimed, and rebuilt furniture and home goods.

As we were helping launch of her store, it became very clear very quickly that their store was going to be incredibly unique to Salem, but would be easily recognizable to those who would go to similar stores in Portland.

So, the strategy we built for them was simply to spread a unique, engaging message through their instagram account to those who already appreciate unique furniture and home goods, but didn't want to go to Portland anymore. No ads. No specials. No sales.

In less than a year of opening, they have expanded to two new locations and take in almost \$80k a month in sales.

Oh yeah, and they are only open four days a week.

Hopefully, you're saying now, "go ahead, young men, I'm listening. Hit me with some knowledge"



Okay, let's get this going.

Here's what I want you to know. Like we said, in our framework, there are essentially four sections: strategy, message, execution, and refinement. Today, we are going to focus heavily on what we believe is the most crucial element of good marketing. Plus, it is the element that, if you can understand today, it will add the most immediate value to you and your business.

But, sadly, it is the part that most marketers either ignore or neglect: your message.

Thinking about your marketing is like thinking about a car.

Your strategy is like deciding what road you want to travel on...where are you going and how are you going to get there.

Often, when people build their car, they go straight to thinking about the color of the paint, the size of the spoiler, the shine of the rims. In marketing those things would be the execution...the videos, the websites, the email campaigns. They are those things that grabs attention, that gets heads to turn. It is fun to think about, but it doesn't actually make the car go.

What do you need to move your car in the direction you want to go? The engine! Your message is your engine.

That is why we are going to spend the majority of our time together focusing on your message. It is the engine that will move your brand from where it is today to where you want it to go.

So, here's what's going to happen during our time together. We're going to tell you the three things that make a message great. That'll take another 20 minutes. If, after that, you got



enough out of our time together, take off, run into the ocean, drink a beer, down a bowl of clam chowder.

Or, if after that time you want to ask us how to implement the ideas and principles we talk about into your company's message and marketing, you'll be able to ask us anything during a as-long-as-we-want Q+A.

Okay. Let's go.

Before we say what makes the best message, we should define clarify what we mean when we say "message."

A message is the words you choose to make your brand's identity known.

- The words you choose to say to your customers
- The words you choose to say with your staff
- The words you choose to say on your website
- The words you choose to say in your sales process
- The words you choose to say on your social media accounts

How do we make the words we say as effective as possible?

The best message is a clear message.

Write this down.



The most important reason people choose to pass on a product or service is not because they don't want it or don't need it. It's because they don't quickly understand what it is. They don't know what you're offering or how it will help them solve a problem their experiencing.

This is a psychological truth...the human mind is constantly looking for things that will help it either survive or thrive. It is hoping to find good things or avoid bad things.

Two mode: survive or thrive.

If your brain is in "survive" mode, you are just thinking about your very immediate needs. Like if you're hungry, that is going to all you can think about. If you skipped lunch today, we know you aren't paying attention. You're thinking about food, because your brain is only thinking about what it needs to survive.

If those needs are taken care of, if you did get a good lunch, you are in "thrive" mode. You can think long-term about all of the things that are going to make your life better, that will make you more money, more friends. If you're in "thrive" mode right now, you'll able to listen for and get the information to look great in front of your coworkers, to get that corner office, that new parking spot.

Knowing and using this information is not tricking your customer. It is just understanding where they are and meeting them there.

Your message has to make sense to a mind that is on the hunt for solutions, a mind that wants to expend as little effort and energy as possible. Because if what you're saying doesn't make immediate sense, and if they have to use up too much energy to figure it out, they will move on to a product or service that doesn't waste their time.

We know that on average a person will stay on a website for a little less than 15 seconds. Seems like not a lot of time, huh? You're right, that's not very much time at all.



That fifteen seconds might be just enough time to read your copy. Maybe.

And, if that copy is good, if the images are engaging, if it flows and makes sense, it could possibly be just enough time for them to make a buying decision. To buy now. Or, for everyone here, to make a reservation, to book a room. Maybe.

Think of your customer as a driver who stops you on the street and asks you for directions. They have a problem and you have the solution. They have found the right person to help them get where they want to go.

If you knew exactly where they should go, how it would make that person feel if you gave vague, confusing, and complicated directions?

For instance, let's say that person wanted to get to the beach. They ask for directions. You say to them, "Uhhhh, just go west until and you see some sand and hear some water. There you go, beach."

What would you think of that person?

Incompetent at best. Rude, inconsiderate at worst. Either way, that person is not asking you for directions ever again! Now think about all of the people who have a negative impression of your product or service before they even do business with you! Just because you gave less-than-clear directions.

What impression are you leaving on your audience when you give them bad direction, when they go to your website and see something like this?

Let's go back to Courthouse Club Fitness in Salem as a real-life example of the importance of clarity.



Courthouse had a great service and they were well-known in the area. But they were not giving good directions to the beach.

Again, their message used to talk about adventurous living, facilitation through exciting programming and living a new lifestyle. Not very clear directions.

Instead, we focused their message on making active living simple and fun and making it easier and more enjoyable to come to the gym so that every member could look and feel great.

Then we hammered those very simple points home over the last year. They gave clear directions. And more people followed.

Here is the second thing that makes a message great.

The best message is a customer-focused message.

Now, I'm going to say something in fairly harsh terms. Don't worry, I'll soften it up after and explain it more.

No one cares about you.

Your customers don't care about you. They care about themselves. So, when they are looking for a place to stay or somewhere to eat or a brand new experience in a new town, they want information that communicates directly to them, that addresses and solves their problem.



As business owners, it is really easy to fall into the trap of believing people have even a shred of the passion and interest in your company as you do. Sorry. They don't. Customers aren't interested in when your hotel was built or how you, the owner, have three beautiful children who all play the clarinet and consistently ace their spelling tests.

They want basic information that addresses their most immediate problems.

Does your hotel have comfortable beds? What does one night cost? Is it close to the parts of town I'm interested in? Can I park for free? When does breakfast start and are there towels down at the pool?

When does happy hour start? What does Happy Hour even mean? Do I need to get a reservation? Should I put on a tie?

It's easy to miss and not communicate the things our customers care about most. In psychological terms, this is the Curse of Knowledge...it is the inability for our minds to imagine what is like to NOT to know something.

Because we understand our businesses at a 10, way over there. That means we know everything about what it means to run a restaurant or a hotel.

Guess what? Your customers knows close to nothing! They know your business at a 1, maybe just the fact that you exist.

Your job is to give them enough information so they understand food and hotels at a 2 or 3. That's it!

That should give you hope that you don't have to explain everything about your business. You just have to explain the stuff that matters to them.



So, when you are crafting your message, you have to get into the mind of your customers.

There are a few ways to do this.

- Take surveys of your past customers.
- Talk to people who might be your potential customers BEFORE you launch something new.
- Be a useful idiot and ask useful idiot questions. Put yourself in your customer's shoes...try to ask the questions they would ask.

One of our favorite examples of a customer-focused message is Holiday Inn Express.

Let's watch this commercial really quick.

[Commercial Plays]

We love this commercial because they are not saying that staying at the Holiday Inn Express is a smart decision. They are saying that you're smart for making the decision to stay at a Holiday Inn Express. Then, at the end, they quickly define what's smart about that decision...free breakfast and free local calls.

You don't see the hotel or the beds or the free breakfast. It's just thirty seconds of calling your customer a smart person and solving two of their immediate or important problems...finding a good place for a free, quick breakfast and not seeing strange charges on their bill for making a couple of phone calls.





Lastly, the best message is a consistent message.

These are the other major traps business owners fall into when they think about their marketing...

1. That their customers heard them the first time so they don't repeat themselves
2. That customers quickly get bored of hearing the same thing over and over again so you feel you have to start fresh all the time.

Here's the truth.

Conventional marketing wisdom says people need your brand and what it is trying to communicate at least seven times before they will engage with it or even understand it...that's seven times seeing your brand on FB posts, ads, emails, billboards.

We promise, you'll get bored of your message well before your customer ever will. By the time you're bored, your customers are just now engaging with it.

Do you want to know how many times we say the word, "Simplify" and "clarity" in a day? So many times! Of course, we're always tempted to change up our language and do try to do something that feels more fresh and exciting to us.

But, we know our cravings for something new won't help our customers.

People love repetition and patterns. Again, it's a psychological fact. They don't mind seeing the same thing over and over again.



Think about it. Why are there so many sequels, prequels, and reboots playing at the movie theaters? Just Regurgitations of movies people have already seen.

Look at this. Let's show you how many of the sequels, prequels, and reboots are coming out THIS YEAR.

Dozens and dozens of stories people have already seen! Why is this happening?

Because people love seeing something they recognize! Your mind will gravitate towards something familiar and will get anxious when it sees new, unfamiliar information. Give the brain what it wants...consistency and patterns.

Music is another great example.

Why are all pop songs two-and-a-half minutes long, have two or three verses, one bridge, and a chorus that repeats for eternity?

Because people love hearing something they recognize!

We're going to play seven seconds of a song and we'll see who can guess it first. Put your hands up once you know it.

["Sweet Home Alabama" plays]

Okay, most of you raised your hand in about three seconds of hearing the first few notes.

Will you ever get bored of hearing this song? Of course not!

And how did this song make you feel? We can see all of your heads start to nod and a few start to smile. Why?



Because your brain, like your customer's brain, loves structure. It craves patterns. It yearns for consistency.

Your company's message must be consistent!

Again, like we talked about in the section about clarity, you shouldn't make your customers do any unnecessary work.

Let's say you open restaurant and you serve a menu of American-style burgers and fries...you've been hyping the "best burger in town" for weeks.

All the sudden, you get a dip in sales. So, you decide to change up drop burgers entirely and switch your whole menu to rustic Italian.

That doesn't work, so you go back to Americana and do hand-dipped corndogs.

Can you imagine the confusion and frustration people would have in your restaurant?

Stick to the burger! Do what it takes to make it better! Communicate more clearly about what makes it your burger so great and why everyone will love it.

Again, we understand the temptation to change things up. As someone who runs a business, you always have fresh and exciting new ideas. That's what makes you successful. But in order for your brand to be a great communicator, you have to stay disciplined and learn how to get creative within a well-structured message that helps execute your strategy.

Stay consistent with your message.

Make music for your customers...a song they'll love to listen to over and over and over again.



To wrap up, let's look at a negative example of what happens when your message isn't clear, when you break from consistency, and you speak in ways that don't focus on your customer.

How many of you remember what happened to Uber 2 years ago...an incident with their CEO?

Well, he had a heated argument in the back of an Uber and it got filmed and posted. It made a little news, but nothing so big that most of this room even remember it.

Well, they reacted to a little controversy can putting out this ad.

What did you know about Uber before? They had cheap, convenient rides you could hail from your phone. This ad alludes to a bunch of vague issues no one was thinking about. Then, we meet this random new CEO we've never seen before nor will ever see again.

Plus, this ad focuses heavily on Uber's problems, not the customer's. What's my problem...not being able to find a cab quickly. What problem do I not have? Uber having some bad PR.

So, that's Uber's reaction. Instead of making a better burger, they switched up their whole menu.

And what happened. Since they put out that ad, their stock has done this.



Uber should have stayed clear, stayed consistent, and stayed focused entirely on their customer.

So, as you think about your own company's marketing, ask yourself these foundational questions.

- Is your message clear?
- Is your message focused on your customer?
- Are you staying consistent?

If you feel confident about answering "yes" to each of these questions, your marketing is on the right path. Stay on it! Keep going!

If you said "no" to any of these, then you have some work to do. Because all three of these principles need to work together all at once.

Your message must be clear.

It must be customer-focused.

It must be consistent.



CLOSING STATEMENT

Thank you again for coming to our talk. We hope we gave you valuable information you can use right away.

We always begin with a free 30-minute consultation. During your consultation, we will listen and understand your unique obstacles and opportunities. Then, we will offer a few custom solutions and see if your company and Simplify would be a good fit.

Go to simplifyordie.co to schedule your free 30-minute consultation.