



Special Report

Key Message Copy Platforms

The B2B Marketer's Secret Weapon

To Raising ROI – Guaranteed!

Learn how to create comprehensive
Key Message Copy Platforms that
assure your B2B materials have
consistent and powerful benefit-driven
sales statements.

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The B2B Marketer's Secret Weapon To Raising ROI – Guaranteed

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It's a simple fact. When your customers are presented with unclear, inconsistent or muddled marketing messages, they instinctively say “no,” and move on. However, creating consistent selling statements throughout your B2B marcom materials can be difficult. Especially when you're under the gun to produce a sales letter by the end of the day and a brochure by the end of the week—not to mention a new landing page that's due ASAP.

Does this scenario sound familiar? Well, I have a secret weapon that will assure your B2B marcom materials have consistent and strategically sound marketing messages. The solution is a comprehensive **Key Message Copy Platform** that includes a series of strong, benefit-driven selling statements about your product.

It's been said that every battle is won before it's fought. This holds true in marketing as much as it does sports or any other competitive endeavor. What this point clearly speaks to is planning, because failing to plan is planning to fail.

This has never been truer than it is in today's highly-competitive B2B market. When all your marketing claims have to be accurate and substantiated with facts, having a Key Message Copy Platform from which to create your collateral materials is a must.

In fact, a Key Message Copy Platform should be the first marcom piece you write for your B2B products and services.

You can then use your completed platform as a springboard for writing a wide range of high-impact marcom materials that have a consistent tone and message throughout your traditional, digital and social media programs.

This is a much more effective strategy than writing marketing materials one at a time on a “make-it-up-as-you-go” basis.

Ready to put this secret weapon to work for you?

I'll teach you how, and include multiple examples and tips that will immediately help you jumpstart your own Key Message Copy Platform. So, let's get started!

What is a Key Message Copy Platform?

A Key Message Copy Platform is a comprehensive document that contains all relevant marketing and selling statements about your B2B product or service. Its purpose is to serve as the “master message document” from which you can spin off all your essential marketing pieces.

You can be very flexible with how your Key Message Copy Platform is organized. However, the ones I’ve written are typically divided into the following sections:

- Product tag line
- Description of your specific target market
- Explanation of the value provided by your product or service
- Description of how your product works
- A complete list of market research facts and figures
- Unique selling proposition statement
- Emotional selling proposition statement
- Product positioning statement
- Testimonials from product champions
- Complete list of product features and benefits
- Key message benefit statements
- Key message benefit statements designed to overcome anticipated product objections

Let’s take a more in-depth look at each of these sections.

Product tag line

A great way to kick-start your Key Message Copy Platform is to create a memorable tag line that customers immediately link to your product. The key to writing winning tag lines is to keep them short and simple while stating or implying a product benefit.

Here is a tag line I wrote for a product made by BioCare Systems called LumiWave. LumiWave uses the benefits of infrared light and heat to rejuvenate damaged cells and reduce body pain.

LumiWave™
Pain Relief. The Light Way.

Here’s a second example of a tag line I created for a product called, Axis, which was developed by Mentor Corporation. Axis is a human dermis product that has fibers running in multiple directions, making it stronger than competitive products.

Axis™
Strength In Every Direction

These tag lines succeed in their mission of creating a positive product image because they are short, simple, easy to remember and they communicate a benefit. Repetition builds reputation, so creating a

benefit-driven tag line is a great way to ensure your product name is always associated with a clear, concise selling message.

Description of your specific target market

Creating a thorough description of your target audiences is an essential element in building a Key Message Copy Platform. The reason is because your audience may not be as obvious as it appears to be.

For example, when writing marketing materials for medical devices, you might think the people making the buying decision are the physicians and surgeons who will use the device. In many cases this is true. However, depending on the device you are selling, those making the buying decision may be:

- Physicians or surgeons
- Nurses
- Office managers
- Group purchasing agents

If a company markets multiple medical devices, their research may determine that sales copy for one device should be targeted to surgeons, while sales copy for another device must appeal to group purchasing agents—even though surgeons will ultimately use the product.

If you are targeting urologists, for example, you'll need to know that a large majority of them are men. If you are targeting nephrologists, you'll want to consider that many of them are attracted to sales copy that showcase statistical proof, and less attracted to copy that centers on features and benefits.

The primary takeaway here is that when you write a description of your target audience, look beyond the obvious and dig deep to get a clear picture of who really influences or makes the buying decision. You will then want to write the rest of your Key Message Copy Platform accordingly.

The value provided by your product or service

When you really boil it down, every product exists to solve a problem or to meet a need of some kind.

Too often, B2B marketers make the mistake of thinking the problem their product solves is so obvious, they fail to mention it in their marketing materials. Don't let this happen. You know what problem your product solves because you live with it every day. Your customers don't.

So make sure your Key Message Copy Platform includes a clear, dynamic explanation of the specific problem your product solves because you will want to use it in your marcom materials.

Next, take this one step further and describe how your product or service adds value to the life of those who purchase it. Whether you are writing B2B sales copy or B2C sales copy, you are always writing business to people (B2P).

Think about your product or service and describe how it adds value to your prospects' lives. You can do this by answering the following questions:

How does my product or service:

- Help prospects complete tasks quicker and easier?
- Make prospects enjoy their work day more?
- Make my customers feel more fulfilled through their work?
- Give prospects one less thing to worry about at night?
- Address significant pain points common to my customers?
- Reduce the stress level of my prospects?

By addressing these questions, your sales copy will be more about your prospects, and a little less about you. In today's B2B market, you must demonstrate that you have a clear understanding of the pain points that keep your prospects up at night.

When you show some empathy and establish that you are in touch with the real-world problems your prospects face every day—you are in a much stronger position to tout your product or service as a solution to their problems.

How your product works

To avoid confusion, your Key Message Copy Platform must have a consistent explanation of how your product works. If your customers read your web site, e-blasts, brochure and social media posts and see four different descriptions of how your product works, you're in trouble.

So come up with one good explanation that's easy to follow, and use it throughout your campaign. Here's a "how-it-works" description I wrote for a fictitious medical device called, The WaterRich Excel System.

The WaterRich Excel System

Facilitates More Effective Water Therapy Treatments

Meet specific patient needs with a progressive system that offers a single solution for your various aqua therapies. The WaterRich Excel System gives you the flexibility needed to expand your possibilities for advanced water therapy programs.

Its open system allows you to implement any protocol required for prescribed treatments. Our industry-leading Water-K software enables you to create protocols that match individual patient requirements.

- *Provides easy-to-handle and effective therapy management*
- *Delivers precise, specific treatments for patients of all ages*
- *Enables the safe monitoring and treatment of children*

In addition, the WaterRich Excel System includes a highly-intuitive user interface and ergonomic handling for greater ease of use. Its well-balanced components make therapies easier to perform, which enhances patient safety.

You can format your product description differently to fit the marketing piece you are creating. However, the verbiage you use to describe how your product works should always be consistent.

Market research facts and figures

When writing marketing materials for B2B products and services, being able to substantiate your benefit claims with cold, hard facts can be very powerful.

Your Key Message Copy Platform is the ideal place to list all the key market stats, facts and figures you need to support all the great things you want to say about your product. Your list should include, at a minimum:

- Key statistics from any tests or trials
- Results from studies conducted by respected business organizations
- Patient satisfaction ratings
- Focus group conclusions and findings

In a nutshell, this section should include all the stats and background information that pertains to any product claims you'll want to make in your marketing materials. You'll always want to have this information at your fingertips, so you can produce marcom materials based on honest and accurate information.

Unique selling proposition (USP)

Now you can stretch out and begin to have a little fun with your Key Message Copy Platform. You've assembled some of the more straightforward information about your product, and now it's time to get a little creative and discover your unique selling proposition (USP).

A USP is the primary competitive benefit your product has that sets it apart from the competition. Here is an example using a product for which I wrote the market launch materials.

The product is MemoryLens® and it was the world's first prerolled intraocular lens for use in cataract surgery. Previously, surgeons had to go through the trouble of folding a lens in the operating room, which was often a time-consuming hassle.

Since MemoryLens® was prerolled, surgeons didn't have to worry about following any folding procedures during surgery. This saved them time and aggravation—and it also gave me an instant USP around which I was able to write an entire marketing campaign.

The key here is to identify your USP, so you can make it the “tent pole” benefit many of your key messages can be built around.

Emotional selling proposition (ESP)

The next section of your Key Message Copy Platform should summarize your emotional selling proposition (ESP). An ESP centers on the emotional satisfaction your product or service will provide end users.

Again, what B2B has in common with B2C is that you are providing a product or service to people, and people are emotional.

Make sure you write a strong statement or two about the emotional benefits your product provides. For example, as an independent copywriter, I write sales materials that help persuade prospects, generate leads and sell more products.

In terms of emotional benefits, I do so much more for my clients. I am also:

- Lightening their load and making their work day easier
- Giving them one less thing to worry about
- Providing them with assurance that their copy deadlines will be met
- Freeing up their time for other tasks they may enjoy more

Capture the emotional benefits of your product or service and put them into words. Every product or service has emotional benefits that are important to your prospects, so make sure they are never overlooked when creating your Key Message Copy Platform.

Product positioning statement

Product positioning centers on creating a perception in the minds of your customers about what your product represents. Before you write your marcom materials, describe in your Key Message Copy Platform how you want your target market to perceive your product—and then write your marketing copy using a style and tone that supports your objectives.

Do you want your audience to think of your product as the high-quality, low-cost alternative to the top brand in the market? Or, do you want them to think of it as the high-cost, premium product that has no peer? Making such a distinction will have a lot to do with the tone and style you choose to create for your marketing copy.

For example, if you are selling educational DVDs to private school systems, you may choose a copy tone that is nurturing, sophisticated and soothing. If you are selling discount parts and accessories to automotive garages, you may choose a tone that is straightforward, simple and blue collar in its word usage and messaging.

Testimonials

Testimonials can greatly increase a product's credibility when they come from respected industry experts. In the B2B industry, renowned consultants and market leaders making strong statements in favor of your product will do more to influence the opinion of their peers than statements made by your company.

As I discussed earlier, several years ago I wrote the marketing materials for an intraocular lens called, MemoryLens®. At a panel discussion about the product, I was able to interview Professor, Dr. med. Thomas Neuhann of Germany, who is highly regarded as an international cataract and refractive surgery pioneer.

During our discussion I collected some raw thoughts from him that captured his feelings about MemoryLens®. After giving his raw words some polish, he agreed to sign off on the following testimonial:

“MemoryLens is my lens of choice. I have implanted over 1,000 of them and the quickest way to say how I feel about MemoryLens is to say it is the lens I would have put in my own eye.”

—Prof. Dr. med. Thomas Neuhann

This quote, among others, from one of the most respected cataract surgeons in the world was pure gold for our marketing campaign. So you always want to have a section in your Key Message Copy Platform for peer-level testimonials from industry heavyweights.

Product features and benefits

The next step in developing a Key Message Copy Platform is making a detailed list of your product’s features and benefits. The key here is to focus on your product’s benefits. Benefits are the “yeah, so-what’s-in-it-for-me” aspect of a product, and it’s what your customers care about the most.

Here is a very brief example of a feature/benefit list from a Key Message Copy Platform I wrote for a product called Axis.[™] As I mentioned earlier, Axis is a solvent-dehydrated, preserved human dermis product that is used in sling procedures to correct female stress incontinence.

- The omni-directional fibers in Axis (**feature**) result in consistent high-tensile strength and quality (**benefit**) that surgeons can count on.
- Axis is a product of the proprietary Tutoplast® cleaning process (**feature**), which inactivates transmissible pathogens such as HIV, CJD and hepatitis (**benefit**).
- Axis hydrates up to 20 minutes faster than competitive products (**feature**), which reduces OR time and enables doctors to consider using different sizes without having to prep them all prior to surgery (**benefit**).

Key message statements

After all the strategic preparation I’ve outlined above, and after making a detailed list of your product’s features and benefits, you have finally come to my favorite part of developing a Key Message Copy Platform—the part where you actually get to write key message selling statements!

The following examples of key message benefit statements were written by me based on the features and benefits I listed for Axis dermis in the previous section.

Axis[™] Is Strong

Axis dermis has omnidirectional fibers that give it consistent high tensile strength and quality. Its dense network of collagen bundles interconnect in every direction—making it that much stronger. Every piece. Every time. Why leave strength to chance?

Axis[™] Is Clean

Axis benefits from our proprietary Tutoplast® cleaning process, which inactivates transmissible pathogens such as HIV, CJD and hepatitis. How? By thorough tissue cleaning, processing, dehydration and preservation. Dermis integrity is maintained. Collagen matrix is preserved, and all organic material is removed. What other tissue goes through such extensive cleaning?

Axis™ Hydrates Quickly

Axis dermis hydrates up to 20 minutes quicker than other implants. This saves you operating room time. And it gives you the flexibility to make intraoperative size decisions—without having to hydrate several implants before surgery. How long did it take your last implant to hydrate?

When I wrote these key messages, I took into consideration the facts, figures, and positioning statements I had developed earlier in my Key Message Copy Platform for this product. Ultimately, I was able to write about a dozen similar key message statements for Axis.

Also, take another look at the benefit statements in the examples I just gave you. In each I relate the product benefit to the product user. Even if you only do this in a subtle way, it communicates direct human value to those who use your product.

Here is another example of this technique. Both of the following statements communicate a product benefit, but the second is more effective because it also makes a personal value statement.

#1 Pretty good

Johnson's skin care lotion uses an innovative formula that soothes your skin and reduces age spots.

#2 Better, More Personalized

Johnson's skin care lotion uses an innovative formula that soothes your skin and reduces age spots, so you'll feel more vibrant and youthful.

Key message benefit statements that overcome anticipated product objections

Lastly, create a special section in your Key Message Copy Platform that addresses potential objections to your product.

In this section of your platform, you have to be very honest. Make a list of potential prospect objections to your product, and then create strategic key message statements that are designed to overcome these objections.

Most likely, these key messages will fall outside of the standard list of features and benefits you created for your product. The goal here is to anticipate what competitors and prospects will point to as weaknesses in your product or service. Be honest and proactive and create strong, compelling messages that clearly spell out the hidden benefits within these perceived weaknesses.

There you have it. The nuts and bolts of how to create a strong Key Message Copy Platform. Imagine the power you will have in your hands when you develop a thorough Key Message Copy Platform for all of your B2B products and services.

Suddenly, creating consistent selling statements throughout your B2B marketing materials will be much less difficult. And when you're under the gun to produce a sales letter by the end of the week and a brochure by the end of the month—not to mention a string of social media posts that are due ASAP—the task will be much less daunting.

Plus, you're now assured of having strong, consistent benefit selling statements about your product throughout your marketing campaign. This greatly increases the chances of making a positive impact on your target market—because *repetition builds reputation*.

Key Message Copy Platforms really are the secret weapon to:

- Developing strong, consistent selling statements
- Creating a memorable, positive image for your product
- Touching your target audience on an emotional level
- Increasing the selling power of your marketing materials
- Raising your ROI to levels that meet and exceed your expectations

There's no doubt about it. Working from a Key Message Copy Platform is a much more effective strategy than writing B2B marcom materials one at a time on a “make-it-up-as-you-go” basis. In fact, creating a strong Key Message Copy Platform is a strategy that has everything to do with winning the battle before it's fought.

So why not put this secret weapon to work for you?

Clearly, you can see how the advantages of developing a Key Message Copy Platform will benefit your marketing campaigns and increase your ROI dramatically – guaranteed!

About Casey Demchak

Casey Demchak is an author and an expert in writing high-impact B2B marketing communication materials. For the past 16 years, leading medical companies and organizations in other industries have come to rely on Casey's strategic copywriting skills to craft direct response letters, SEO web site copy, brochures, print ads, social media posts and more.

Casey is best known for his innovative approach to creating key message copy platforms that serve as the springboard for writing a full array of marketing communication materials for your products.

He is the author of the book, *Essential Sales Writing Secrets*, and the author of a chapter on persuasive sales writing techniques that is featured in the book, *Advice From The Top: The Expert Guide To B2B Marketing*.

Casey has published several special reports and trade journal articles in publications such as *Credit Union News*, *The Denver Business Journal*, *Advertising & Marketing Review* and *The BMA Marcom Mirror*.

Casey was also host of the VoiceAmerica™ Business Internet radio talk show, *Essential Marketing Secrets*, which took a fun, in-depth look at some of the hottest topics in marketing. His guests on the program included a dynamic range of thought leaders from the world of marketing communications.

Casey has been the copywriter on seven marketing communication projects that have won American Advertising Awards. He has been quoted in *Inside Direct Mail magazine* for his expertise in building corporate newsletter programs; and samples of his work are featured in Steve Slaunwhite's course workbook, *Secrets of Writing for the Business-to-Business Market*. Casey is also quoted in the book, *The Wealthy Freelancer*, written by Steve Slaunwhite, Pete Savage and Ed Gandia.

Before he became an independent copywriter, Casey held senior copywriting positions at two California-based medical companies, Mentor Corporation and Cost Care, Inc. He holds a BA in communications from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, where he twice won the Samuel Z. Arkoff award for screenwriting excellence.

Prior to his career as a copywriter, Casey worked in Hollywood as a story analyst at Ron Howard/Anson Williams Productions. His experience as a screenwriter and story analyst give him an added dimension as a copywriter: the ability to tell a product's story in a tone that directly touches your target audience on an emotional level.

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