

Copy Bible

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What Is A Copy Bible?

A copy bible's a document created for a company that outlines the kinds of words, phrases and emotions we want to convey in our marketing and advertising. It's similar to a company's visual style guide, but Miles & Company also includes a few stories about *why* words matter.

This guide is designed for a member of your company's marketing team or a vendor to digest and understand what our messaging should be, how we write, and why we make the choices that we make.

What Is A Brand?

Harley Davidson, Apple, The Green Bay Packers... even if, at this point, you're not sure exactly what a brand is, you're pretty sure all three of those are brands, right?

And you're also pretty sure brands are everywhere, aren't you? You're right, of course, but I'm not sure you know just how right you are.

Your grandma.

When you read those words silently to yourself, what mental images come to mind?

The way she looks? The sound of her voice? Maybe a smell of her perfume or her cooking? What about her laugh and the feelings you had of going to grandma's house?

Your grandma's a brand.

A brand is the collection of feelings, sights, smells, tastes, emotions, and sounds that we recall when we think about a person, place, thing, or company.

You don't even need to have met... or done business with that brand... to have an opinion of her, him, or it.

Have you ever met Santa Claus personally? And yet, I'm certain you have very powerful memories and feelings and associations that come with those two simple words I typed.

The same is true for any and all words - though some will have more powerful associations with you than others... and other people will have more powerful associations with other words, thoughts, actions, and ideas.

The question is... and what we hope to help you do throughout the course of this book... is how can you grow your powers to harness this magical energy of words and emotions and brands?

Building Your Brand Diamond

Now that you've got your three or four values, what's the best way to begin to practically apply them to your company?

Let's turn to Hollywood. After all, who does a better job of creating characters that guide us, move us, and make us believe them?

Screenwriting instructor, David Freeman, introduced me to the concept of a Character Diamond - the values that shape the way a character thinks, acts, and sees the world.

Give a character less than three values, and she's a wooden caricature not worthy of sustained interest.

Give a character more than five values, and she's all over the map. She's unpredictable to the point of distraction and disinterest.

Great characters consistently manifest three to five values that magnetically attract us to them - particular if we share those values. We see ourselves in them, and it makes us want to follow where they lead.

The "best characters" have one value that's... off. Freeman calls this characteristic a "skewed opposite." A skewed opposite refers to an unusually incongruent-but-still-relevant value that gives the character its secret sauce...

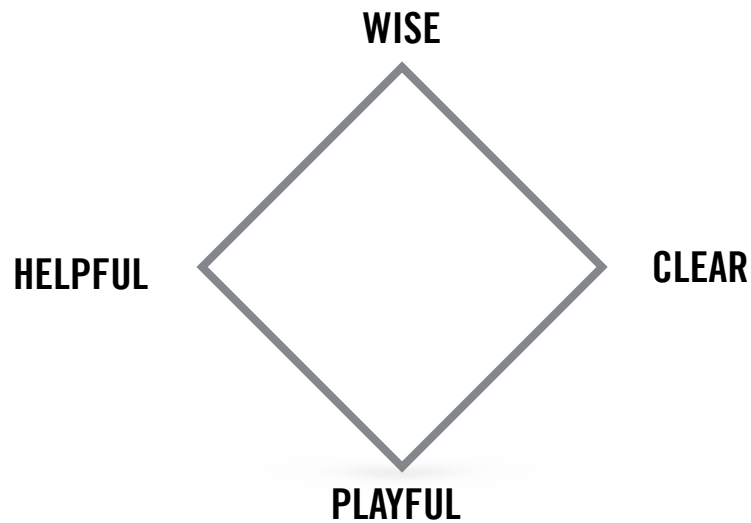
Consider Sherlock Holmes - a brilliant, puzzle-solving, antisocial man. Those three values align with one another - giving Holmes a depth we can recognize and find interesting.

But he's also a degenerate drug abuser. He has demons. He has a dark side. This little something that doesn't quite fit the rest of his archetype - and his conflict with it - makes him one of history's great fictional characters.

Your company - your brand - is a character, too. Consumers look at the way your company thinks, acts, and sees the world.

The best way to ensure consistency, and to begin to build a strong brand, is to build your company in your own image, and find that one great thing about you that doesn't quite fit.

For our company, Miles & Co., our brand diamond looks something like this:



Helpful, Clear, Wise... all three are in the same pew at church, aren't they? These are three things that help make us easy to understand, but it's our fourth - playful - that lends a bit of cayenne pepper to the chocolate.

We don't take ourselves too seriously, and we want to attract companies who feel the same way... and we want to repel companies that do.

Notice it's a carefully chosen skewed opposite that often determines the level of attraction or repulsion.

Choose wisely.

Your Company'S Brand Diamond

For your company, the brand diamond looks like what?

Shouldn't Our Values Be Private?

We're drowning in noise. You've heard of the information age? Welcome to the distraction age. Like that current hurtling sea creatures to New South Wales in Finding Nemo, it's almost all we can do to hang on for dear life.

Yet, the paradox of this interconnected world is that we've never longed more for a tribe of like-minds and hearts. It helps calm the background noise and help us rise up above the din.

Combine this with a powerful swing of the social pendulum toward individuals coming together to make the world a better place, and you're at an epoch of world history where:

Society wants to come together, and it's never been easier for society to come together.

For what will people come together? Shared values, and as we began to illustrate in the last chapter, are (or at least can and should be) inherent in every brand, including yours.

We buy what we buy because our choices reminds—and tell the world around us—who we are.

Building a strong brand is easy. All you have to do is mirror the values most people don't even know they have.

What do you stand for?

What do you stand against?

Attune your systems, policies, and procedures, along with your customer experience to those values, and be willing to pay the price for the fact that not everyone is going to like you.

Are you willing to repel two people to gain one for life? Are you willing to be closed on Sundays like Hobby Lobby or Chick-fil-A? Are you willing to avoid producing electric guitars like Martin & Co.?

Or would you prefer not to rock the boat and consider everyone your customer? Rather than being something powerful to some smaller section of the population, would you rather try and please everyone?

There's never been a worse time in history for that strategy. It will surely sink you.

The Why - Your Company'S Core Message

Watch Simon Sinek's brief TEDx talk called How Great Leaders Inspire Action

Two Kinds Of Customers

This section was written by our business partner, Roy H. Williams. It is reprinted here with permission.

Every person has a transactional mode and a relational mode of shopping. And "the right thing to say" can be determined only when you know which mode the shopper is in:

Transactional shoppers are focused only on today's transaction and give little thought to the possibility of future purchases.

Their only fear is of paying more than they had to pay. Transactional shoppers are looking for price and value.

They enjoy the process of comparing and negotiating and will likely shop at several stores before making their decision to purchase.

Transactional shoppers do their own research so they won't need the help of an expert. Consumer Reports are published primarily for the transactional shopper.

Because they enjoy the process, transactional shoppers don't consider their time spent shopping to be part of the purchase price.

Anxious to share the "good deal" they've found, transactional shoppers are excellent sources of word-of-mouth advertising.

Relational shoppers consider today's transaction to be one in a long series of many future purchases. They are looking less for a product than for a store in which to buy it.

Their only fear is of making a poor choice. Relational shoppers will purchase as soon as they have confidence. Will your store and your staff give them this confidence they seek?

They don't enjoy the process of shopping and negotiating.

Relational shoppers are looking principally for an expert they can trust.

They consider their time to be part of the purchase price.

Confident that they have found "the right place to buy," relational shoppers are very likely to become repeat customers.

As was stated earlier, every person has a transactional mode and a relational mode of shopping, so don't be surprised when you see yourself in both descriptions. You, like all other shoppers, are extremely transactional in certain product and service categories and wholly relational in others. At any given time and in any given category, about one half of all shoppers will be in transactional mode and the other half will be in relational mode. I can't fully prove this assertion, but I'm sure that someday it will be.

Due to the fact that shoppers in transactional mode will shop all over town and love to negotiate, merchants often wrongfully conclude that most shoppers stay in transactional mode. But in truth, more purchases are quietly made by customers in relational mode.

Here's a simple illustration: Two transactional shoppers go to 5 stores each before making their decisions to purchase. At each of these 5 stores they ask a lot of questions, then leave. But each transactional shopper will return to only one store to make a purchase. This means that a total of 12 store visits will be made by the transactional duo, and 8 different salespeople will be frustrated by them. Meanwhile, 3 relational customers visit their favorite stores, make their purchases and return home, accounting for a total of 3 store visits, 3 purchases, and zero frustrated salespeople. The 2 transactional shoppers account for 80% of all store visits, but only 40% of sales. Conversely, the 3 relational shoppers account for just 20% of total store traffic, but contribute a whopping 60% of the sales volume.

Bottom line: There is no "perfect ad." The right thing to say to a relational shopper is the wrong thing to say to a transactional one. The secret to attracting and keeping happy customers is to communicate the truth about who and what you really are. Remember, you're not a 100 dollar bill. Not everyone is going to

like you.

Is your company transactional or relational? Changing your ads so that they speak to a different shopper is easy. But changing the essence of your customer's experience (selection, prices, sales staff) is not.

A Brief Glimpse Into Pendulum Theory

This theory was first introduced to me by Williams in 2004, and I've watched it help my clients grow and grow and grow.

As he and co-author Michael Drew note in their book, *Pendulum*, western society has followed a predictable shift in alternate world views for as long as we have records of history.

It's a complex, fascinating study, and I highly recommend their book and its terrific companion website, PendulumInAction.com, but the essential thesis is this:

There's an 80-year continuum in society, and it's divided into two 40-year cycles.

The first cycle, a "Me" cycle, is inwardly-focused, self-centered social pattern whose defining characteristics include a respect and admiration of attractive, individually confident alphas. A "Me" generation's about big dreams and freedom of personal expression. People want to achieve a better life for themselves through personal liberty.

The other cycle, a "We" pattern, takes the opposite set of values. In a "We" pattern, it's not about big dreams. It's about small actions. We don't cheer putting a man on the moon. We cheer walking across the street to give a hungry man something to eat. The goal is not to stand out; rather, it's about coming together to make the world a better place, consider all of society's problems, and leverage small actions to build a better society.

What does this mean for your business?

As Rick Levine, Christopher Locke, Doc Searls, and Dave Weinberger presciently predicted about the 21st century of communication in *The Cluetrain Manifesto*, communication in this generation requires "big values, a little humility, straight talk, and a genuine point of view."

We want the truth... even if it's ugly. Conversations are "open, honest, uncontrived," they continued.

And what about that traditional voice of your marketing and advertising?

“That homogenized ‘voice of business?’ That sound of mission statements and brochures? It will soon sounds as contrived as the language of the 18th century French court,” wrote the Cluetrain authors.

And we’ve seen it to be true time and again with our clients and their professional communication.

Today, we buy what we buy to remind ourselves - and tell the world around us - who we are. *Decisions to purchase today are largely the result of shared values with a company we respect and who mirrors our deeply felt convictions of the world.*

We are drawn to them more—and easier—than ever before. Consumers are watching to see what you do, and in this interconnected world, so are their friends - all eager to use posts, likes, tweets, videos, texts, and blogs to tell their friends on your behalf... or against your best wishes.

The time for arrogance and for shining the spotlight on yourself is over. The loudest, most creative, shiniest, expensive ad campaigns mean nothing if consumers are telling people you’re fake.

But if you prefer loud, flashy, arrogant, and selfish, I have some good news for you. Your way of thinking will slowly start coming back into fashion before you now it.

Just set your watch for 2040 or so.

In the meantime, give us who you really are. As Carl Rogers said, “what you are is good enough. Be it openly.”

The 13 Ways Of The We

So, based on the information in the last chapter about the pendulum’s recent swing from a “Me” cycle to a “We” cycle, what can you take away and do differently?

Having spoken on the subject roughly 100 times, I suppose I’m as qualified as anyone to give you a few principles to remember.

Today, The new trend in decisions-to-purchase is based on shared values and an alignment of perspectives between buyer and seller.

The new goal is to say something powerful instead of saying it powerfully. Do you see the distinction?

Today, people are not simply waiting to hear what you say. They're watching to see what you do.

Today, it's easier than ever to learn. Leverage new technologies and learn! "I'm not organized," or "I don't know how" are no longer excuses.

Today, the most rapidly shrinking currency is time. How can you ensure you don't waste someone else's or your own?

Today, it's easier than ever to spread your message, but do you have a message worth spreading?

Today, the best way to trigger social media buzz and word of mouth is to deliver an experience worth talking about.

Today, the best way to get is to give.

Today, the best way to be heard is to listen.

Today, people aren't just buying what you sell. They're buying who you are. Let them see you real.

Today, people wake up skeptical. Anticipate objections and specifically overcome them. Look for loopholes.

Today, when it's easier than ever to shoot off a quick email, it's more powerful than ever to handwrite a note or personally deliver a greeting or thank-you.

Today, specifics are far more believable than generalities. If you give me a statistic you better darn well cite your source. We know for a fact that 71% of facts on the Internet are made up because Abraham Lincoln told us.

"NONE OF THIS IS ROCKET SCIENCE. WORK HARD. KEEP AT IT. LIVE SIMPLY AND QUIETLY. REMAIN HUMBLE. STAY POSITIVE. CREATE YOUR OWN LUCK. BE NICE. BE POLITE." ~HUGH MACLEOD

Better Business Reality

In 1959, Theodore Levitt introduced the idea of a better business reality at Harvard Business School. Levitt said essentially that, for example, a mattress store wasn't in the mattress business, but rather the better reality was that they

were in the business of providing customers a better night's sleep and more energy during the day. Thus, a tire store didn't sell tires. They sold safety.

Remember the Michelin ad with baby surrounded by the tire? That's a perfect example of what Leavitt understood.

So, what does Your Company sell?

Words And Phrases You Will Always Use. Maybe Not In Every Ad But In The Overall Campaign.

Words And Phrases You Will Never Use.

Voices

Characters - What Words And Phrases Do They Specifically Use. What Would They Never Say.

Sound Effects

Music

Tag Line

Ad Length

Previous Ads In The Campaign