

Getting into the mind of your customer is key to successful marketing

The phrase “Build it and they will come” is a total myth. To attract customers and scale your startup, you need great marketing – and great marketing boils down to creating a message that resonates with your audience.

Temps de lecture : minute

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Products have 3 levels of messaging - *Upwork.com* example:

Benefit: *Build your business with top freelancers*

Capability: *Post a job for free and connect with independent talent today*

Feature: *Project Catalog by Upwork.*

The same feature and capability can deliver very different customer benefits. These benefits are rarely functional, they are emotional and social. As Harvard Business School Professor Theodore Levitt famously said: “People don't want to buy a quarter-inch drill. They want a quarter-inch hole!”. He was making the point that people are buying a solution (the hole or capability) not a product (the drill, or feature). But what is the ultimate benefit here? The true desired outcome?

Here's an example for a house proud parent:

You do not buy a drill

But a hole in the wall

To safely hang a heavy mirror

So it doesn't fall and injure the kids running around

(emotional benefit or desired outcome)

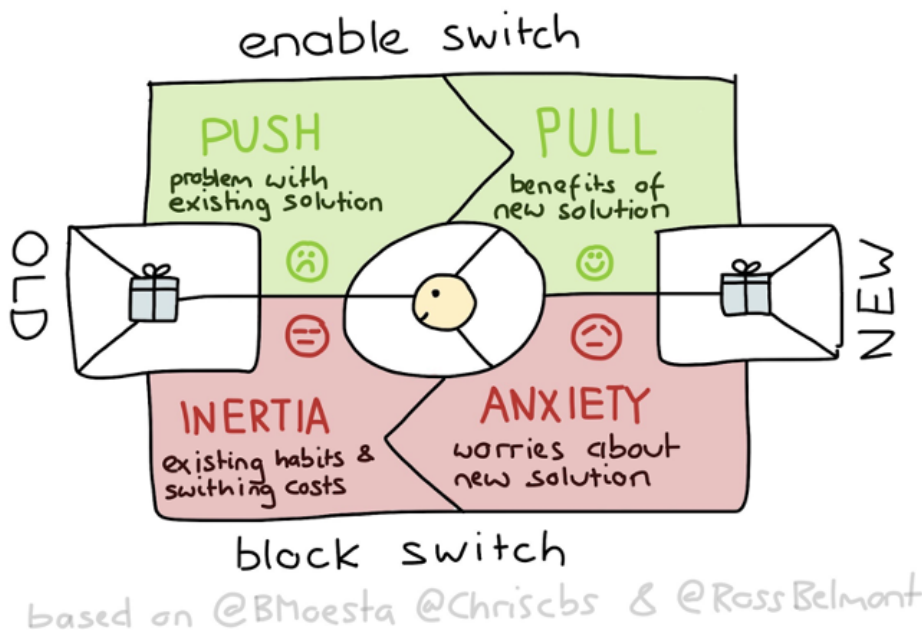
So how do you get to that level of understanding and customer centricity?

There are 2 steps:

1. Interview your customers to uncover the four forces at play for them
2. Articulate a messaging house that resonates with your audience

Customer interviews: understanding what is going on in the customer's mind

Bob Moesta et al highlights that there are always four factors at play - Push, Pull, Inertia and Anxiety*.



We need to understand what is pushing customers away from their current solution and what will pull them towards a new solution. You also need to consider what might prevent them from making the change - which is known as inertia - and what anxieties or concerns they have about switching solutions.

Understanding this psychology will guide you in your choice of messaging, so that what you say pulls your audience towards your proposition and minimises any anxieties they might have. As you can already tell, this is not something that one can uncover with a product validation or feedback interview. This is a mindset interview.

To bring this to life, here's an example featuring a nurse who is considering a transition to agency work from her full-time NHS role. These are the forces at work for her:

Context	The push: Pain points	The pull: Desired outcomes	Concerns	Inertia
What was happening at the time you first considered this change?	What was no longer working for you?	What were you looking to accomplish?	Did you have any concerns about this new solution?	Was anything making it difficult to change the way you were doing things?
<i>I was considering taking on a course to advance my qualification in psychology.</i>	<i>My job as an NHS nurse was not giving me any flexibility on how I work and I require full time employment to pay for my expenses making it impossible to make time for studying.</i>	<i>I wanted to find time and money to graduate from a further degree to advance my career and job satisfaction without losing too much of my salary.</i>	<i>I was worried I would not find enough shifts working with a placement agency and would have 'dry spells' with work which would impact my living standards and ability to pay for my studies.</i>	<i>It is quite a hassle to choose an agency, or several, go through the vetting process and organise all the requirements documentation. I have been dragging my feet as it is so time consuming and boring.</i>

Using the *The Jobs To Be Done (JTBD) framework* built by Clayton Christensen, we can summarise our findings in a single statement - the job your customer is hiring your product to do.

When I am considering taking a course and require more flexibility with my work patterns (context)

But the NHS employment does not accommodate this, and other employment options seem unreliable or aren't local to me (pain points)

Help me find:

Flexible shift work that works around my calendar

Enough shifts so that I am not left without income (goal)

So I can pursue further education to fulfil my lifelong dream of becoming a counsellor (outcome)

Messaging house: messages that will resonate with your customer's mindset

A messaging house talks to the jobs that your target customer is trying to accomplish. It's the foundation on which your marketing and communications are built.

By starting with your JTBD statements, you can design a messaging "bible" for your entire organisation to use. Getting this right will help you pull new customers in whilst minimising any concerns they may have.

Here's an example of a messaging house for a Marketplace for Nurses Jobs

	Marketplace for Nurses Jobs	Fill in one for each job statement you identify
Product Benefit <i>What is no longer working for you?</i>	<p>Now you can work on your own terms.</p>	<i>A benefit led statement, this is not about the features.</i>
Pain points <i>What is no longer working for you?</i>	<p>I have no time to study for the psychology degree.</p> <p>I do not have control over my work patterns & shifts.</p> <p>I am struggling to work around my family responsibilities.</p>	<i>I had enough of... I am struggling with....</i>
Desired outcomes <i>What is their desired arrival point?</i>	<p>I want to be able to organise my work schedule so I can study for my psychology degree and fulfil a life long dream.</p> <p>I want to have the flexibility to stop working during the summer and be with my kids.</p>	<i>I want... I wish I could...</i>
Concerns <i>What is making the change difficult? Concerns about this new solution?</i>	<p>Will I be able to decide what type of wards I work on?</p> <p>Will they be able to find me enough shifts to sustain my income?</p> <p>Are they accredited by the NHS as a supplier?</p>	<i>Questions they want answered before taking a decision. Concerns they need reassurance for.</i>
Key messages & proof points <i>How does your product help the desired outcome? Or minimise concerns?</i>	<p>Work on your own terms and find the time to pursue other interests.</p> <p>Control where and when you work with your personalised profiles that will match you to the type of shifts and time slots that you have requested.</p> <p>Over 95% of the nurses on our platform are fully booked with shifts matching their requirements.</p> <p>We are a member of the NHS XXXX which gives us access to the national database for open nurses' shifts.</p>	<i>Proof points show your product is the right fit.</i>
Social proof <i>Show you are trustworthy & credible</i>	<p>We have Trustpilot rating of 5 * with 10,000 nurses reviews.</p> <p>"Since I signed up with this platform I have been so much more satisfied with my income and when and where I work, making it such a more fulfilling career"</p>	<i>Social proof & Customer quotes that focus on the identified desired outcomes or initial concerns</i>

Can I launch a campaign?

The Messaging House is foundational to any site copy or campaign briefs. Lift the relevant core messages from the messaging house, and then apply the best practices of each channel, funnel stage and customer lifecycle for your campaign. This will help you craft messages that go beyond product features, and address why you are the best solution to solving their problem.

The world is in essence a global village, so you have to be really special to stand out in an ocean of competitors vying for your ideal customers' attention. By creating messaging that makes audiences feel heard and understood and marketing a product that addresses a real-world problem in their lives, you'll be well on your way to marketing success by attracting more customers.

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