



## The Agency at Think Like A Bride

### Who Are You?

Do you know what your catch phrase is? Is it well worded enough that it defines your business in only a sentence or two. Does every single employee know it by heart and believe it to be the golden rule? Can half of your customers recognize it and associate it with you? Or are you not even sure you could describe what your brand stands for in a page and a half of ramblings?

I often talk about how to differentiate your business, but the secret may be how well and how consistently you communicate that message. It is important that your message be distilled down to its core so that it can be easily remembered and repeated often.

You can have one of a million graphic designers or ad firms come in and create a nifty logo and design your letterhead, business cards and website to match but if the logo doesn't stand for anything it might as well be a shapeless amoeba. That's not what branding is. It is the message that the logo represents that matters. If you haven't defined that, how can you sell it?

You can start by writing down your mission statement. Just what is it that your business represents? WHY does your business exist and how do you implement that? Refine that down to a couple of well worded sentences. Bounce it around a bit, see if you are living up to those words in practice. See if they ring true. Maybe start over.

Once you have your mission statement tweaked, pare it down to the bare essence. Turn it into a 30 second elevator speech. Tune that and tweak it so that every time you give that speech the person receiving it "gets" it. Do the words still ring true? Are they still an honest representation of your business and your philosophy? Good.

Now, refine it down into a single sentence or phrase. I know if I keep going like this it will eventually be the *size* of an amoeba, but I do actually have a point. If you can get the essence of your business pared down to a single phrase you can repeat it infinitely, you can engrain it in your employees so that they can breathe it in their sleep, your customers will find that one phrase synonymous with your name. That phrase is what the world will think when they see that logo. Ahhhhhh branding as it was meant to be.

Once you have your phrase, use it everywhere: put it on signs, have your employees memorize it, heck print it on their paychecks. Use it in ads and on any promotional material. Have it on your voice mail, use it when you answer the phone, never say the name of your company without it. Do these things for two reasons. First you do it to spread the word, second and more importantly you do it to remind yourself and your staff of what you must live up to.

One of the best examples ever: 7up, the uncola. That pretty much sums it up now doesn't it? In two words, they said everything that you ever needed to know about their product.