

# KEY THEMES AND MESSAGES

*DISRUPTOR'S HANDBOOK #3*

# INTRODUCTION

**DH3: Key Themes and Messages** will help you to create the key themes and messages for your business. It ensures you establish a 'through line' for your messaging that can act as a baseline for your story telling, positioning, and advocacy/campaigns.

This handbook works in conjunction with:

- **DH2: Disruptors Canvas** - Ensure the messaging you create is consistent with what you have in your canvas
- **DH4: Universal Pitch Deck** - It becomes less 'universal' as you build out your messaging and approach.

## **This handbook includes:**

- An Introduction to Key Themes and Messages
- Mission and Vision
- Validation of Messaging

# KEY THEMES AND MESSAGES

Key themes and messages help you explain why you/your offering is the best solution to the problem. It includes:

## **VISION**

This is the biggest of the big picture statements. What are you trying to change? How will this make the world better? And yes, we mean 'world'.

## **MESSAGES**

You build your messaging from customer needs out. This simple framework keeps you in alignment.

## **MISSION**

In line with your 'vision', how will you activate your mission? This is about creating the change that your vision speaks to.

## **THEMES**

Themes and the focus periods help you align your messaging with campaigns, events, launches and so on. They provide a consistency of narrative over time.

**Key themes and messages provide a structured way to talk about your business, project, or offering.**

**They are constructed in a way that allows you to cascade your stories from grand vision (for solving a big problem) to explaining how well you understand your customers and their needs.**



## THE IMPORTANCE OF BREVITY

Every time you tell the story of your brand, product or service, you have to capture the attention of audience immediately. The challenge is knowing how long you have before their attention drifts elsewhere.

Developing a 30 second, one minute, and two minute is essential. By using key themes and messages, you can build from the 30 second pitch into the one minute story and then to the two minute narrative.

Once you move beyond that, the opportunity is to present a demonstration or product walkthrough. Be sure, by this stage, to collect contact details.

## DOESN'T THIS LOCK DOWN THE MESSAGE?

When you are first working on a concept, it can be difficult to explain to others. We often use words that describe the solution rather than the problem that we are solving.

Also we tend to speak in terms of features rather than benefits (IT companies are particularly at fault here).

At all stages of your product lifecycle, your challenge is to grow your user base. And you do this by helping people find a 'a ha' moment - where they recognise that the solution you're developing solves the problem that they have.

By documenting your messaging, you can measure and test its effectiveness.



# VISION/PROPOSITION

What is your vision statement?  
Keep it brief, 10-12 words.



# MISSION

How are you going to activate your vision?  
Again, keep it brief.



# MESSAGING



<b>BUSINESS NAME:</b>	
<b>MESSAGE</b>	
<b>NEED</b>	
<b>A PARTNER WHO...</b>	
<b>WHY YOU?</b>	



# THEMES

Themes are connected series of messages that help your customers progress from one stage of the customer journey to the next. Use themes to provide a consistent narrative across a series of communications.

## **FOR EXAMPLE:**

- **Your problem is my problem** - Connecting with potential customers often involves educating them about a problem they have but cannot articulate. This theme is about aligning and acknowledging your customers' problems.
- **From unknown to known** - What communications do you need to create to convince a potential customer to share their name/contact details? This first theme focuses on providing enough value to ensure this conversion point.

These are simply examples, but provide a framework for multiple styles of communication and media. By measuring the effectiveness of individual communications in each theme, you'll be able to determine which are most effective.



# VALIDATING YOUR MESSAGING

Just as we do with the various Lean Canvases, the next step is to validate your messaging. There are however, a number of approaches that you can take to get feedback at scale.

First, incorporate this messaging into your Lean Canvas itself. Get feedback on the words chosen, the need states and so on. You are looking also for something less tangible. You are looking and listening for emotional feedback, excitement, enthusiasm.

As you begin to refine your messaging, you will need to turn your attention to themes. You will also need to test messaging at scale. We recommend a variety of tools to do this, including short run Google AdWords campaigns, Facebook advertising, Twitter polls, newsletters and so on.



# TAKING IT FURTHER

Key themes and messages are an essential strategic tool to ensure consistency of messaging and storytelling. Ensure that all members of your team are across the agreed messaging standards, timing and so on...

Our handbooks can help you progress, accelerate, and scale your business. There are a number of ways to do so:

- **Read and follow:** Download *DH4: Universal Pitch Deck* and continue your journey
- **Learn and lead:** Enrol in our eLearning courses to deepen your understanding of the process
- **Engage to accelerate:** Work with our expert team to accelerate your innovation efforts.

## GET IN TOUCH

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