



**Bill Bradley, Principal
Bottom Line Communications**

As another year winds down, I want to thank my clients, business acquaintances, personal friends and family for a successful and rewarding 2007.

I can count many gratifying experiences this year...which thankfully outnumber the "wanna get away?" moments. I feel quite fortunate in many ways, and for that I am truly grateful to many of you for your input, advice, assistance, confidence, patience and, most of all, friendship.

So we move boldly forward to 2008. Who isn't setting expectations even higher for next year? In business and in our personal lives, the thought of a new year is like spring training in baseball. A fresh start. This will be the year when **everything** comes together. We won't just hit what we're aiming at...we'll nail it and take things to the next level. That's the kind of year I'm looking forward to, and I hope you feel the same way.

In reality, this invigorating sense of empowerment should be a daily commitment. Everyday we can learn from our mistakes as well our successes, and learn from others to become more effective in our work and better people in all areas of life.

My business tagline is "what you want the world to know." As you make your business resolutions for 2008, why not turn the tagline into a question and write down your answers? That's actually a good way to build a communications plan.

I look forward to working with you to refine and implement that plan to make 2008 your best year ever.

Best wishes for the Holidays and New Year!

Where are you on the road to market leadership? (part 2)

Last month I introduced my Market Positioning Pyramid, with the promise to focus on each layer in following issues.

The pyramid is hardly groundbreaking in its insight, yet it provides a pathway to go from virtual anonymity to market leadership. Sound interesting?

The entry point of the Market Positioning Pyramid is the Awareness phase. This typically is the business plan for any entity's first year. After all, it's hard to operate a business profitably if no one knows who you are, what you sell or why they need it.

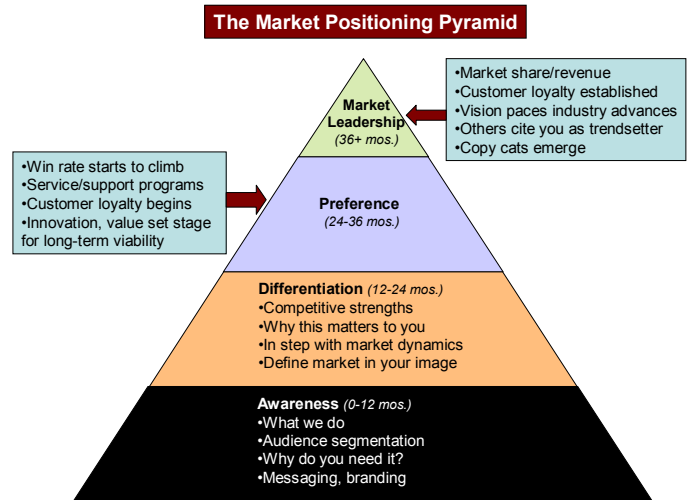
Read from the top down, building awareness is a function of the following exercises:

- **What we do.** Know what business you're in. Sounds obvious, but young companies are tempted to "branch out" and can lose sight of their mission statement. At this early stage, do one thing and do it really well. Keep your eye on the ball.
- **Audience segmentation.** Clearly, you must know what types of people will want your product or service. But within those groups you need to reach decision makers and actual end users, and they

Survey reinforces vital role of PR in news coverage

Journalists continue to rely heavily on PR contacts and the Internet for finding sources and re-searching stories, according to findings from the 2007 Arketi Web Watch Survey: Inside B-to-B Media Usage of Web 2.0.

Ninety percent of journalists say



Property of Bottom Line Communications. All rights reserved.

don't speak the same language. Do the research to identify and communicate with each group.

- **Why do you need it?** Stop admiring your "feeds and speeds" and find the things that keep your customers and prospects up at night — their pain points. While "solutions" is an overused word, it at least stresses ROI and the importance of selling benefits, not just features of your product/service.
- **Messaging/branding.** Now you're ready to develop your messaging and unique sales

proposition: why what you do, and how you do it, delivers measurable value for your target audiences.

Developing a message hierarchy is a delicate process, but vital to building brand identity and equity. To me, branding means defining the marketplace in your own image (more on that next month). Your messaging and brand (company/product names and associated attributes) become inseparable in PR strategy and tactics.

Next month we'll cover Differentiation, the second layer in the Market Positioning Pyramid.

ideas on newswires, 74 percent use the Web, 72 percent use other media outlets and 54 percent credit blogs.

When seeking information online, 77 percent of respond-

[see "Survey" continued]



Since 1984, the Omega Management Group Corp. has been a recognized expert in developing and implementing customer and employee satisfaction and loyalty management programs that lead to increased revenue and profits.

The loyalty management strategy services include customer and employee surveys, employee incentive programs, key account retention strategies, win-back strategies, competitive benchmark studies, and the marketing of customer satisfaction results to employees, customers and the marketplace. For more information, visit www.omegascoreboard.com.

Client Spotlight

In October, Omega launched an online community called View from The Top (VFT) Research Panel 500. VFT is composed of only VP-level executives in customer service, support, sales/marketing and other customer-facing positions.

The new program – by invitation only – is devoted to the continuous improvement of the customer service industry.

VFT uses web-based survey techniques to allow members to respond to questions and provide opinions that reveal valuable information, knowledge, trends and best practices in customer satisfaction and loy-

alty. The data is analyzed and correlated to form the basis of confidential reports that are shared only with VFT panelists on a quarterly basis.

BLC helped Omega get the word out about the new program in the fastest way possible: via a news release that was picked up by leading websites serving customer service professionals.

These sites included Customer Interaction Solutions Magazine (www.cismag.com); CRM2Day.com, CRMxchange.com, ContactCenterWorld.com and TheWiseMarketer.com. Scores of service industry executives

have already responded.

BLC also manages content for Omega's websites. A VFT page provides full information, and has links to a registration page, so those invited to join the VFT online community can do so.

The VFT Research Panel 500 will focus on vital areas of service business operations, such as customer relationship management (CRM) best practices and technologies, loyalty management strategies that drive revenue and profits, and linking employee compensation to customer satisfaction.

How Can I Help You?

Here are two special offers worthy of a year-end extravaganza!

This month only, I'm offering a complete **Communications Audit** for just \$2,475, and a detailed review and critique of **any marketing or PR document** (up to 3 pages) for just \$99 each. **That's a savings of more than 40% on both services!**

BLC's Communications Audit is a new service that provides a comprehensive analysis of how your company – or a competitor – communicates with the marketplace, and how it is covered by the media.

Special offer for newsletter recipients!

The audit reveals not only how successful a company is in getting its messages picked up by the media, but how closely the resulting coverage reflects the company's intended messages.

The audit examines a host of areas, such as:

- News release frequency, subject matter and timing
- Executives quoted most often
- "Quality" of resulting coverage by print and online media
- The extent to which key messages in the releases are

picked up in news reports, including competitive mix

- Independent assessments (e.g., product reviews, analyst reports, etc.) and how favorable they are.

How effective are your data sheets, news releases, advertisements, marketing collateral and case histories?

I'll review any of your documents, up to three pages in length, and provide edits, comments and suggestions on how to improve them.

Contact me for pricing to review

longer documents, like white papers, PowerPoint presentations and end user manuals.

Remember, mention this newsletter to get your special \$2,475 Communications Audit and \$99 review of any single marketing or PR piece.

Here's how to contact me.

- Web: www.bottomlinecomm.biz
- Phone: 978/692-7422
- Fax :978/692-4654
- Email: bill@bottomlinecomm.biz



Survey (cont.)

ents said PR professionals were credible sources of information. Corporate websites also scored highly, with 85 percent finding them credible as well as influential in terms of how they view an organization.

According to journalists, the most useful information on a corporate Web site is contact information (97 percent), followed by search capabilities (95

percent), press room/press kits (92 percent), company back-grounders (89 percent) and publication-quality graphics or photos (66 percent).

Almost all journalists (98 percent) say they prefer to receive news releases via email, whether from a company they already know or from a company they do not know but are in industries they cover.

I would summarize by saying: 1) be sure contact information is easy to find on your website; 2) have a "News Room" section for journalists to find what they need; and what you want them to see; and 3) don't assume your emails reach overwhelmed journalists. I follow-up with key contacts by phone, but always add value so I don't waste their valuable time.