

Ogilvy Healthworld

The Art and Science of Healthcare Communications

We recently fell upon a website that listed 17 different ways to tie shoelaces. Among them were such classic knots as the “Freedom” knot, the “Better Bow” knot and the “Surgeon’s” knot. The site also contained sections on knot comparisons, knot ratings and knot violations. The sheer variety of knots is a testament to the ingenuity of people throughout the ages in their quest to prevent shoelaces from coming undone.

The obvious question is, with such a variety of options, why do most of us tie our shoelaces the exact same way, everyday? Have you experimented with your shoelaces lately? Why not? It might be the risk involved—What if I tried a new knot and it slipped? It might be the fear of public

scrutiny—What is he/she trying to prove with his/her fancy knots? But more than likely, the reason you don’t experiment with shoelace tying techniques is because you’re quite happy with your current knot. It’s easy. It’s automatic. You probably haven’t tripped on your shoelaces in a while. What would it take, then, to convince you to change your shoelace-tying habits?

This is the challenge you encounter as a marketer everyday. Physician familiarity with a current product is the biggest barrier to the adoption and success of your own.

You know that even the best products do not sell themselves. You have learned that the key is not only to communicate the features of your



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product, but more importantly, how this feature translates into benefits for the intended user. The problem you face is that not every member of your target audience will perceive your particular offering to be relevant or appealing enough to change their current habits. Even those who do will need to be reminded on a regular basis in order for new habits to be created. This is where your most important decision will arise. Is it more feasible for you to change the values and beliefs of the greater portion of your target audience, or should you target those that are possibly already seeking what you have to offer?

For instance, you may have a knot offering an 85% reduction in the risk of lace-related accidents. However, market research has revealed that most people do not feel that their safety is currently at risk. On the other hand, company-

acquired data reveals that 16% of the population is currently sporting double knots. Do you invest your funds in trying to convince the masses that they are at greater risk than they believe, or do you specifically target those people already sporting double-knots for whom safety is obviously of concern?

The answer will of course depend on a number of variables including your short-term and long-term goals, but it will also depend on your willingness to change your own habits and to consider the big picture.

Target segmentation and focused messaging is a marketing strategy that is not employed nearly enough due to the perceived risk. Most feared is the threat of “niching” a product. Obviously, being positioned as an alternative to the double-knot will not be enough to meet your long-term



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business objectives. However, this can be avoided with the development of a messaging strategy that spans the lifecycle of the brand. The right message, at the right time, to the right audience, can lead to immediate rewards as well as ensure the continued growth of your brand. This approach will not only allow you to develop a single-minded message that will be easier to implement in the field, it will enable you to concentrate your investments on those specific initiatives and programs that can yield the greatest immediate returns.

At Ogilvy Healthworld we have developed proprietary tools that allow us to orchestrate the effective impact of your brand messages on the stakeholders that touch the brand throughout each phase of its lifecycle. From pre-launch market disruption to the launch of a new indication, our For the Life of the Brand™ services connect distinctive insights and ideas to create brands that deliver their commercial potential.

The long-term partnerships we have developed are a testament to our ability to help clients reach the milestones of product and personal success.

Our partners don't ask us for ads... they ask us for solutions. They tell us what keeps them awake at night (and it's not the pantone colour of their journal ad or the font size of their detail aid). They know that creative is not just the design of a dose card or the copy on a mailer. They know that we can help them solve business problems and that this is where we can make the most difference. What we provide is true "creative thinking"—a combination of great creative and smart strategic thinking.

From strategy to design, from research to creative execution, from launches to reinvigoration of mature products, we provide unparalleled service and award-winning executions that help sell your brand. At Ogilvy Healthworld, we tie a better knot.

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