

Backstory

The Comprehensive Guide to the
Message Maker[®] Service from
Backstory Branding[®].

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Chapter 1: Message Maker® Service Overview

Our **Message Maker® service** guides you through the process of building a comprehensive messaging framework that defines your audiences and the benefits of your offerings for them.

First, we'll define the characteristics of your best customers at both a company and individual level. At the company level, we'll define the characteristics of your **ideal customer profiles (ICPs)**, including information about their industries, annual revenues, number of employees, and geographic locations.

We'll also help you define the characteristics of your **customer personas**, including your ideal buyers and the people who influence them within those organizations. We'll ask audience-defining questions such as who they are, what they want, and what's in their way. In addition to helping you identify the pain points, use cases, or jobs to be done for your audiences, we'll also help you clarify and articulate the features, advantages, and benefits of each of your offerings in addressing them.

In addition to writing **benefit statement headlines** or unique selling propositions, we'll help you write supporting paragraphs or “**blurbs**” that elaborate on these main benefits or marketing messages.

Chapter 2: Ideal Customer Profiles (ICPs) and Customer Personas

- **Ideal Customer Profiles (ICPs)**

An Ideal Customer Profile (ICP) is a detailed description of the type of company a B2B brand aims to target. It encompasses the firmographics of the target organization, such as company size, industry, product focus, number of employees, revenue, and sales channels. In addition, it includes characteristics of customer personas—key individuals or decision-makers who influence or make purchasing decisions within the company.

ICPs are exclusive to B2B brands, as they focus on businesses that sell to other businesses and are particularly important when dealing with larger companies where buying decisions involve multiple stakeholders.

The complexity and impact of a purchase often increase the number of participants in a buying committee, ranging from five to eight or more, depending on the situation.

ICP:

Message Market Fit™

WHO THEY ARE	DECISION-MAKERS	ECONOMIC BUYERS	INFLUENCERS
WHAT THEY WANT			
WHAT'S IN THEIR WAY			

- **Customer Personas**

A customer persona is a detailed profile of a specific type of customer or audience segment. It explains who the customer is, what they want, and what challenges they face. Instead of using catchy names like "Sally Soccer Mom," it's more helpful to use simple, descriptive names linked to real customers that your team knows well. This makes it easy for everyone—employees, freelancers, and agencies—to quickly understand who the persona represents. For B2C brands, personas should include those who buy the product, those who use it, and those who influence the buying decision. Each persona should

be clear, focused, and highlight the main problem they face and how your product helps solve it.

Name of Customer Persona			
	Buyer	Influencer	User
Who they are			
What they want			
What's in their way			
Persona examples			

- **Build Your Value Chain**

The next step is to clarify and articulate the value you provide each audience with your offerings in a logical sequence. List the name of the audience in the first column and build out one row of information at a time for each audience. The information should include the name of each audience (ICP and/or customer persona), a first-person pain point or problem statement for them, and a corresponding offering, feature or feature set, advantage, and benefit specific to the audience and problem.

Audience	Pain Point	Offering	Feature	Advantage	Benefit

Remember to be descriptive in naming your customer personas. The name of each customer persona should immediately communicate who belongs to the audience for everyone on your team, including full-time employees, freelancers, and agencies. Keep problem statements singular, focused, brief, and to the point. Remember, a product feature names a specific characteristic, attribute, or function. An advantage describes what a feature does or how it works.

A benefit articulates how a feature makes life better for a customer/consumer. It's important to distinguish between functional and emotional benefits. Functional benefits speak to the quality, functionality, or performance of a solution. Emotional benefits communicate the way using your products or services makes customers feel. A well-rounded messaging framework needs both functional and emotional benefits.

We refer to a complete row of information in a messaging framework as a value chain because it links all of the elements of a value proposition together for a specific audience and an unmet need. It's important to note that a single offering (product or service) may have multiple value chains and one feature may have more than one advantage and benefit. Even so, there should be just one benefit per

value chain in your messaging framework to keep your messages clear and organized.

Chapter 3: Benefit Statement Headlines and “Blurbs”

- **Benefit Statement Headlines or Unique Selling Propositions (USPs)**

A benefit statement is a short message that explains the value or advantage a customer gets from using a product or service. It highlights the problem being solved or the benefit offered, helping customers quickly see "what's in it for them."

Often used as marketing messages, value propositions, or unique selling points (USPs), benefit statements are usually written as commands to create urgency and confidence. However, they can also be softened using phrases like "Helping farms..." to sound more like a suggestion, especially for audiences who might not respond well to direct instructions.

A good benefit statement should be short and to the point, fitting within one line like a headline, so it grabs attention quickly in ads, on websites, or in social media posts.

- **Blurbs” or supporting paragraphs**

A blurb is a short, three- to four-line paragraph that explains and supports a benefit statement or headline in marketing content. It combines details about the product's features, advantages, and benefits to clearly show its value to a specific audience.

Blurbs act as supporting points that back up the main message and strengthen the brand story. They are designed to be clear and concise, making them effective for web pages, presentations, and ads. You can write blurbs manually for a unique brand tone or use AI tools to quickly create and edit them while keeping the quality high. Blurbs help create engaging and consistent marketing messages that set your brand apart from competitors.

Messaging Stack	
Messaging block	Benefit
	Blurb
Messaging block	Benefit
	Blurb
Messaging block	Benefit
	Blurb
Messaging block	Benefit
	Blurb

Chapter 4: Conclusion and How to Sign Up for the Message Maker® Workshop

The Comprehensive Guide to the Message Maker® Service from Backstory Branding® provides a step-by-step framework for building effective, audience-specific messaging that sets your brand apart. By exploring key concepts such as Ideal Customer Profiles (ICPs), customer personas, value chains, benefit statements, and blurbs, this guide equips you with the tools needed to clearly define and articulate your brand's unique value. The Message Maker® service helps brands create messaging that resonates deeply with their target audiences by focusing on specific needs and challenges.

If you're ready to refine your brand's messaging and connect more effectively with your audience, we invite you to sign up for our Message Maker® workshop to bring these strategies to life.

Sign up for our Message Maker® workshop and learn how to build your own messaging framework.

Produced by

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