

The Message-Market Fit System

You do not have a product problem. You have a messaging problem. You are speaking engineering and your buyers speak business outcomes.

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The vendor language trap

You say something that sounds impressive. The customer thinks: what does that even mean? You lose the deal and never find out why.

THE TEST

If your customer cannot repeat back what you do, in their own words, after reading your homepage, your messaging is broken. Not your product.

Four steps out of it

1

Interview five recent customers

Thirty minutes each. Record them. You are collecting language, not validation.

2

Extract their exact phrases

Transcribe, then highlight every phrase they used that you would not have written yourself.

3

Build the translation table

Your language on the left, their language on the right, and where each one gets used.

4

Audit everything

Homepage, LinkedIn bio, pitch deck, sales emails, case studies. Replace vendor language with customer language.

STEP 1

The five questions, asked exactly like this

1. What problem were you trying to solve when you found us?
2. How did you describe that problem to your own team?
3. What were you doing before us?
4. Why did you choose us specifically?
5. How would you describe us to a peer?

Question two is the one people skip and it is the most valuable. How they described the problem internally is the language that has to appear in your outbound, because that is the language that got budget approved.

What comes back

Real answers sound like this. **They knew our world inside out. These people have done this at scale before. The team understood our constraints immediately.** None of those are features. All of them are reasons someone bought.

DO NOT SKIP THE RECORDING

You will not remember the phrasing, and the phrasing is the entire point. Paraphrasing a customer turns their language back into yours.

STEP 3

The translation table

Three columns. What you currently say, what the customer actually says, and where the customer version belongs.

Your language	Customer language	Where to use it
Holistic platform	One supplier instead of three	Pitch deck
Modular architecture	You can start small and add later	Website
Continuous monitoring	You find out before it becomes a problem	Sales calls
Enterprise-grade	It will not fall over when you grow	Objection handling

The words that sound impressive and mean nothing

Holistic. Comprehensive. End-to-end. Turnkey. Seamless. Robust. Each one is a placeholder where a specific claim should be.

THE FIX IS BRUTAL SPECIFICITY

Before. We provide holistic solutions.

After. When you buy us you stop paying three separate suppliers to do one job.

Before. A comprehensive compliance solution.

After. We handle the three regulations your buyers get audited on, so you are not the reason a shipment gets held.



Five levels, five different messages

You cannot use the same message for someone who has never heard of your category and someone comparing you to two competitors.

Level	What they know	What to say	The ask
1. Unaware	Do not know they have the problem	Educate on the problem itself	Take the checklist
2. Problem aware	Feel it, do not know solutions exist	Introduce the category	See how others solved it
3. Solution aware	Researching options	Why your approach is different	Book a demo
4. Product aware	Comparing alternatives	Specific differentiation and proof	See pricing
5. Most aware	Ready, needs a reason to act now	Urgency and risk reversal	Start

The content mapping exercise

Audit what you have already published against the five levels. The healthy split is roughly **40% at levels 1 and 2, 30% at level 3, 20% at level 4 and 10% at level 5.**

Almost everyone produces only levels 3 and 4. That is why the top of the funnel is empty and the bottom never closes itself.



Two checks you can run today

CHECK ONE

Read your homepage to someone outside your industry. If they cannot repeat what you do in one sentence, it is too complex.

CHECK TWO

Read your LinkedIn headline to a twelve-year-old. If they ask what that means, it is too jargony.

Six weeks, start to measured

Week	What happens
1	Interview five customers, record and transcribe
2	Extract phrases, build the translation table
3	Audit every marketing asset against it
4	Rewrite homepage, LinkedIn and pitch deck
5	Test the new messaging in ten outbound messages
6	Measure response rate before against after



WHAT CHANGES

In the words of the customer beats in the words of the vendor, every time.



	Before	After
Outbound reply rate	5 to 10%	20 to 30%
What sales calls open with	Tell me more about what you do	This is exactly what we need
Close rate	15 to 20%	40 to 50%

Those are the ranges we see when the language changes and nothing else does. Same product, same list, same sender.

Stop trying to sound impressive. Start trying to be understood.



We build the system, then hand you the keys.

Forte is a marketing build team. Positioning, the content engine, outbound infrastructure, CRM, automations and the sales process. You own all of it.

Message-market fit is the part founders most often try to fix last, after the tooling and the list. It is almost always the thing that was wrong first.

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