How to Avoid Creating a Terrible Tagline

By Tom Trush

Let's play a quick game of tagline trivia ...

Read the following taglines and match each one with the correct business:

1. We want to help you.
2. The lowest prices around.
3. The best quality and service.

a. 1st Choice Bail Bonds
b. Livery Distribution
c. Big Al's

I collected these taglines this morning while driving my son to school. You probably see similar marketing messages in your neighborhood.

The problem most taglines share is they lack meaning. Besides a release from behind bars, do you understand what the above businesses offer?

I don't. In fact, I'd argue the three taglines could apply to just about any business.

Like any weapon in your marketing arsenal, taglines must deliver a beneficial message to your patients. If you use a tagline and it doesn't state in a handful of words the solution you deliver, you're wasting valuable space on your marketing materials.

Your prospective patients don't have the time or interest to figure out what you can do for them. They have pressing problems that require immediate solutions.
Sure, you see well-known companies use vague taglines all the time. Coke ... McDonalds ... Nike ... Apple ... Chevrolet ... Prudential ...

But these are deep-pocketed corporations that can repeatedly force-feed you marketing messages through many other media until your mind can't resist them anymore. You don't have this financial luxury!

See how your tagline matches up against this checklist:

> Can your text stand alone? If you remove the name of your practice and other surrounding words, is your message still effective?

> Does your text only apply to your practice -- not your competitors? Do you have a distinctive message?

> Is the outcome clear? Can everyone understand what they get by doing business with you?

> Does your text avoid worn-out clichés? Haven't you seen enough "outside-the-box" promises with words such as "quality," "value," "best," "satisfaction," "leading," and "maximize"?

> Would your words attract you as a patient? Does your message focus on your target audience, instead of your business?