



Dear ,

*Welcome to the Marketing Minute, our email newsletter. Our firm, LevinsonBlock LLC, helps entrepreneurial companies and non-profits grow through effective branding and marketing. If you have marketing questions or a topic you would like us to address in a future issue, [email us here!](#)*

## **Similar missions, competing organizations: defining your difference**

Many of our clients both compete and collaborate with other organizations with similar missions. You may understand the uniqueness of your mission -- but do your donors? If you sound, look and feel like other groups who share your sector, you may have a problem.

For example, one of our favorite clients is a disease research foundation that organizes fundraising walks. The challenge is that many other disease research foundations do the same kind of event!

Another example: we work with a number of organizations that help disconnected youth. Each one has a wonderful mission and effective programs -- but a potential donor may have a difficult time telling them apart.

### **Here are some actions you can take to define your difference:**

#### **Understand your competitive environment**

- Search with Google using key words (search terms or phrases) associated with your mission and study the results. This will show what organizations compete in your sector -- you'll want to research them. In addition, if your organization had low rankings in the search results, you can consider whether search engine optimization (SEO) is warranted for your website. (SEO involves creating a list of key words that are likely to be used in searching online for your organization, and then integrating the key words into your website)
- Study your competitors: visit their websites, note how they look and feel. Note their key messages: how they talk about their mission, how they describe their programs, their "tone of voice". Determine what is effective and what is not. Understand how you differ from them.
- Study your own communications. Lay all your marketing communications out on a table, and write out the phrases you use to describe your organization. Compare it to your competitors. This process is called a communications audit.

#### **Define your difference**

- Zig where they zag. You want to look, feel and sound different from other organizations, even if your mission overlaps.
- Be consistent with branding. Develop an effective elevator speech (a brief and intriguing description of your organization for a specific audience), and key messages for your key audiences. Implement them in a disciplined way -- it takes a lot of repetition for branding to work.
- The key here is trying to view your organization from a donor's perspective - that's what effective branding is about.

By the way, we offer these services! It's called brand analysis. In fact, if your organization is in Manhattan or Brooklyn, we offer an informal communications audit (described above) at no charge. If you are outside the area, contact us anyway -- we can probably work something out.

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#### **FACT OF THE MONTH**

The ZIP in the post office's Zip-code stands for "Zoning Improvement Plan."

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#### **LevinsonBlock News**



*Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow logo and tagline*

The tag line we created for Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow was a finalist in the Getting Attention Non Profit Tag Line competition! For a copy of the *Getting Attention Tag Line Report* that includes other great tag lines, go to [this link](#). We also recommend the Getting Attention e-newsletter.

*For more information about website or print design, key messaging or branding, call or email me:*

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*Fact of the Month courtesy Paul Michael Neuman; [www.froggyumpkin.com](http://www.froggyumpkin.com)*

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