

The Anatomy of a Successful Brand Slogan: Lessons from the "One Pound Fish" Man

Last month, PSY's "Gangnam Style" became the most viewed YouTube video of all time, and now, another video wonder is making it to the top of the site's charts. This time, it's the unsuspecting "One Pound Fish Man," a fish stall seller named Muhammad Shahid Nazir, who works at Queen's Market in East London's Upton Park. In its first week since the video was posted, it accumulated over five million hits.

From a fish monger to an overnight sensation, Mr. Nazir has now been profiled on CBS in the U.S. and Australia, and on BBC World News in the U.K. Parodies have been created of his video, remixes of his song featuring President Obama are hitting the airwaves, and people from all over the world are visiting Queen's Market to seek out Muhammad and get his autograph. He now has more than 30,000 followers on Twitter.

What could top that? How about a recording contract with Warner Music label, and Nazir's first single of the song which was released on December 9th! Word is that he could end up having the number one Christmas single of the year.

Now, it's easy to write this video off as just funny and quirky, and it's true that Nazir could prove to be a one-hit wonder, a flash in the proverbial (frying) pan. But none of that matters if you look at the "One Pound Fish Man" video from a marketer's perspective. We may not be used to learning important marketing lessons from a fish vendor, but you don't need an MBA to glean six powerful brand slogan tips that Nazir's video offers:

Keep your slogan or tagline simple. "One Pound Fish" couldn't be a clearer message. It's simple, and it has a staccato rhythm. Both of those elements make the slogan stick.

State your key benefits in your phrase. "One pound fish, very very good, one pound fish, very very cheap." That pretty much sums it up, doesn't it? You know exactly what you're getting, and when you want to buy fish, well, let's face it - those are the key benefits you're after.

Make it catchy and memorable. Turning his tagline into a tune that resonates and sticks in the customer's head is what has made the "One Pound Fish" slogan so easy to remember. In fact, after you hear it once, it's hard to get out of your head!

Repeat, repeat, repeat. Say it again and again and again. And again. Repetition may sound boring, but it's what helps customers remember your brand. And this is exactly what Nazir does. In fact, an X Factor television show host in England, after hearing the song sung by Nazir for the first time, cheekily said, "So, let me guess... the name of the song is 'One Pound Fish,' right?" This phrase is repeated so many times in the song that no listener can possibly forget it.

Be genuine. What makes "One Pound Fish" such a memorable video is that Nazir is such a likable guy. He comes across as humble, honest, not full of himself, and someone who's having a good time. He just wants to earn an honest day's living selling something he believes in. (Of course, now, he probably wouldn't mind a number one single, too! But, hey - there's still a very authentic air about him.)

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Include a call to action. I'm sure Nazir didn't think to himself, "I should include a call to action in my song," but intuitively he must have known that he needed to encourage his customers to buy. "Come on, Ladies. Come on, Ladies. Have-a have-a look," is a clear call to action, and it has one intention: Get customers to his stall, wallet in hand.

So, how can you apply these lessons to marketing your own brand? Think about your current tagline and test it against each of these attributes:

- Is it simple?
- Does it clearly state the main benefits your brand offers?
- Is it catchy and memorable?
- Is it repeatable?
- Is it genuine?
- Does it include a straightforward and powerful call to action?

If you follow these tips from an unsuspecting, now-famous fish monger, you just might create a slogan/tagline that goes viral in your customer's world.

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With an MBA from Harvard Business School, Brenda's career has spanned more than two decades and has included developing mega brands for Procter & Gamble and Bristol-Myers Squibb across four continents and 50 countries. Now, as President of Brand Development Associates (BDA) International, she travels the world speaking, training, and coaching individuals and companies to greater success through creative, yet practical, corporate and personal brand development.

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