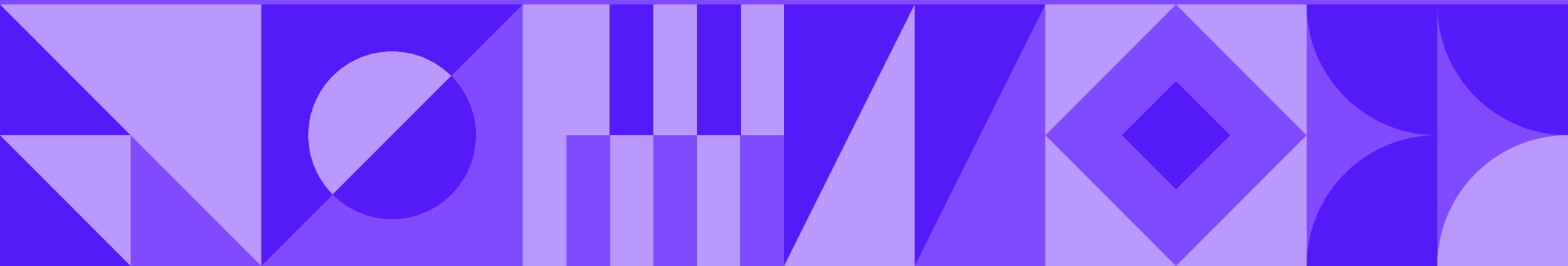# How to organize your company's messaging strategy

Why you need messaging hierarchy

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In tech, the only constant is change.

Updates happen fast. Product specs evolve. Customer expectations expand.

In an industry ruled by speed, clarity can help keep you on track.

Organizing the messages you employ to tell your story, sell effectively, and drive conversions ensures your communications align with your brand strategy and target your ideal customers.

The **Messaging Architecture** visualizes and organizes an organization's messaging hierarchy. Making it easy for anyone who communicates on behalf of the company to understand how key messages are prioritized.

From foundational brand stories to fluid campaign headlines. Operating with a clear view of every message lets you communicate the strongest story possible.

Messaging Architecture

Creating your messaging architecture

In this toolkit, we'll walk you through how to create your own messaging architecture—explaining the purpose of each layer from the top down.

You'll find a blank messaging architecture template on the last page of this document.

LAYER 1
Brand Story Messages

LAYER 2
Brand Pillar Messages

LAYER 3
Persona Messages

LAYER 4
Product or Platform Messages

LAYER 5
Campaign Messages

Messaging Architecture

Layer 1: Brand Story Messages

Your **big brand message** sits at the top of your hierarchy. It's the highest-level distillation of your brand, and the simplest expression of why your company is in business.

The big brand message is intended to serve as a positioning statement—to sum up the company's story and create internal alignment.

Big brand messages can work for both internal and external audiences, poetically telling a story while also conveying customer-facing value propositions. The big brand message often becomes the "hero" line on a company's homepage or at the top of marketing and sales materials.

Supporting copy helps further contextualize your big brand message and the value your company delivers. Include those messages in this top section of your architecture, too.

The messages at this topmost level of your messaging architecture are foundational and shouldn't change often. If your big brand message is truly an authentic and accurate representation of what your organization stands for, it should stand the test of time—think in years rather than months.

FRAMEWORK

Messaging Architecture

Layer 2: Brand Pillar Messages

Your **brand pillars** articulate your differentiators, or what sets you apart from your competitors.

As their name implies, your brand pillars hold up and reinforce your brand position, adding an additional layer of context to your big brand message.

For the purposes of the messaging architecture, create your brand pillars with headlines and web-friendly formats in mind—ready-to-consume content you could actually use on your site. If you had to distill your differentiators down into their simplest, two- to three-word summaries, what would they be? Then include a line or two of supporting copy to add more detail to each pillar.

Your brand pillar messages are another piece of foundational messaging that ideally shouldn't change frequently. They should express your core company differentiators—what was true to your organization on day one and will continue to be true long into the future.

FRAMEWORK

Messaging Architecture

Layer 3: Persona Messages

Persona messages target specific audience groups. Built from the foundation of your brand story and pillars, your persona messages take a more needs- or role-focused approach to persuade your ideal customers to care.

As you craft your persona messages, think about what jobs your target audiences are trying to get done. Consider what they would value most about working with an organization or using a solution like yours. And pay attention to what facets of your brand pillars will resonate with them most.

This section is not the place for an exhaustive list of every persona message imaginable. But it should be comprehensive enough to give your team a representative sample of the kinds of arguments and value propositions that will resonate with each key audience group.

FRAMEWORK

Messaging Architecture

Layer 4: Product or Platform Messages

Product or platform messages further hone in on the value your offerings deliver. They express the core differentiators of each of your products—or your platform—and how they address the needs of your target audiences.

Your product-level messaging will generally be more technical than the messaging you use at the brand, pillar, or persona level. So this is the place to incorporate your products' most compelling features.

In organizations with multiple business units or product lines, including this level of the messaging architecture can prove particularly useful. It helps your brand team better understand how product marketing managers articulate the value of their individual offerings. It also helps enforce brand standards by keeping product messages aligned to the overarching brand story.

Technology evolves continuously. So it's probably no surprise that your product and platform messages fall more into the fluid, rather than foundational, messaging category. Regularly revisit and update these messages as your products change—always with the goal of creating persuasive soundbites that speak to your target audiences.

FRAMEWORK

Messaging Architecture

Layer 5: Campaign Messages

Campaign messages typically have a predetermined shelf-life, often tied to specific metrics and KPIs outside your ongoing, evergreen marketing efforts.

In general, campaigns have a time-boxed duration. They could be seasonal. Or perhaps deployed in tandem with the launch of a new product. Or released with a specific monthly or quarterly goal in mind, like generating leads or driving conversions.

Campaigns are the most fluid aspect of your messaging hierarchy. Particularly across digital executions, which have the additional benefit of being easily adjustable, A/B testable, and quickly turned on and off.

While campaigns should still align with your brand foundation, they're a great place to be slightly more relaxed and take a little more risk with your messaging. Once you know what works, you can easily replicate it across other campaigns or in your overall messaging strategy.

It's likely all of your campaign messages won't fit into your messaging architecture—and that's okay. Again, think in terms of headlines, supporting copy, and bullet points. Anything to give your team a good representative sample of the campaign's purpose and tone.

Messaging Architecture

This template was made for an organization with three brand pillars, three persona groups, and four products. Adjust this template or create your own to reflect the right number of brand pillars, persona groups, and products for your organization.

BRAND STORY
SPEAKS TO ALL AUDIENCES

BIG BRAND MESSAGE

SUPPORTING COPY

BRAND PILLARS
SPEAK TO ALL AUDIENCES

BRAND PILLAR   BRAND PILLAR   BRAND PILLAR

SUPPORTING COPY   SUPPORTING COPY   SUPPORTING COPY

PERSONA MESSAGES
SPEAK TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

PERSONA GROUP   PERSONA GROUP   PERSONA GROUP

PERSONA MESSAGE   PERSONA MESSAGE   PERSONA MESSAGE   PERSONA MESSAGE   PERSONA MESSAGE   PERSONA MESSAGE

PRODUCT / PLATFORM MESSAGES
TAILORED TO SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

PRODUCT   PRODUCT   PRODUCT   PRODUCT

PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE   PRODUCT MESSAGE

CAMPAIGN MESSAGES
SPEAK TO ALL AUDIENCES

CAMPAIGN MESSAGES / HEADLINES
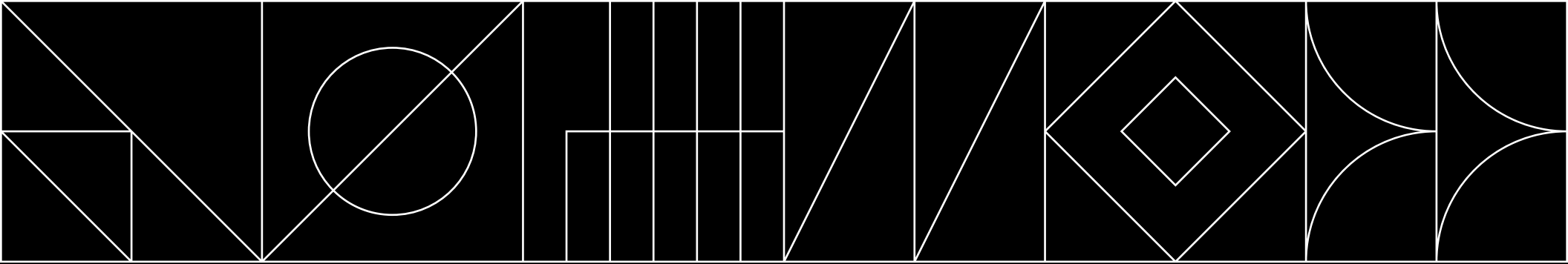
SUPPORTING HEADLINE   SUPPORTING HEADLINE   SUPPORTING HEADLINE

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