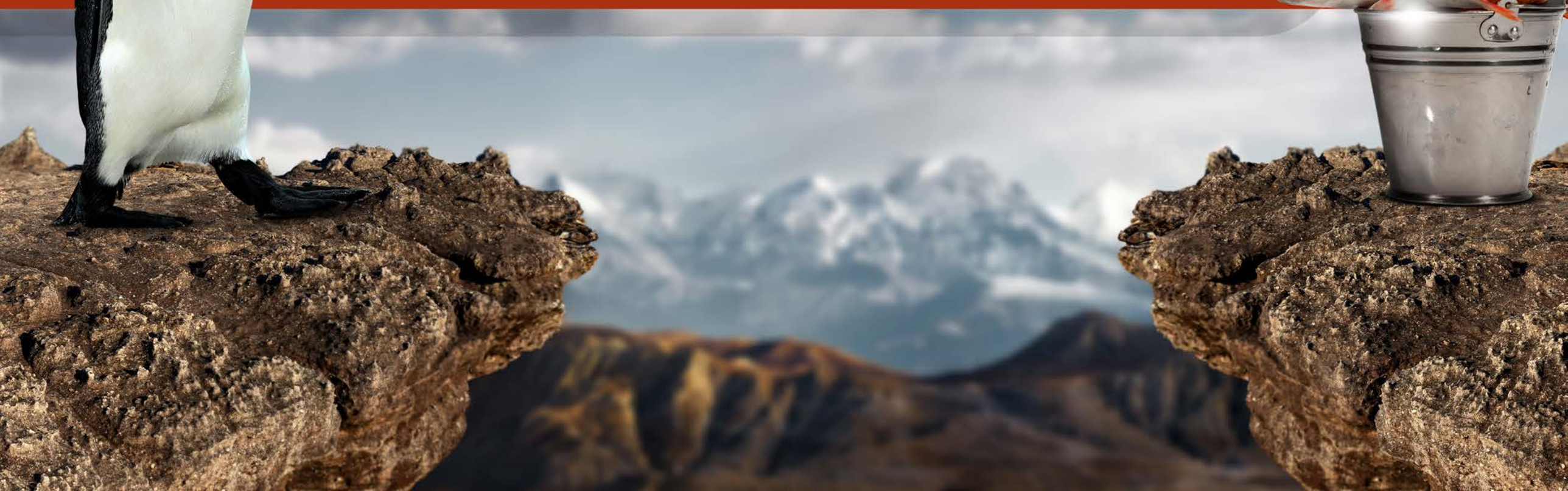
corporate visions
conversations that **win**®

marketing for buying *decisions*

four key skills for the memorable marketer





marketing is driving more *buying decisions*



Leslie A. Talbot
SVP Strategic Programs,
Corporate Visions

If you've been a marketer for even a short time, you know better than anyone that your job has changed in the last few years. Marketing used to be about building awareness and running campaigns at the top of the funnel. Those campaigns generated interest and then, at some point, there was always a handoff to Sales, who would ultimately guide the buyer toward a decision.

Those lines have blurred. Today, **80 percent of the sales cycle happens in digital or remote settings.**

And that has profound implications for your role.

Buyers aren't just talking to Sales to make decisions — they're using digital content to learn and shop at their own pace. Marketers are also more involved in keeping and growing business with existing customers. It's Marketing running the renewal cadences, leading upsell campaigns, creating the business review decks, and it's Marketing that's educating customers on additional purchase options.

As your role evolves, one thing is clear: It's no longer enough to drive awareness or interest — you are now in the business of influencing buying decisions.

Corporate Visions research shows that the primary factor that drives decisions is memory. Your buyer interacts with your marketing content in one moment, but they decide to act later on.

So, if you want to influence those decisions in your favor, it's only logical that your marketing should be memorable enough to stick in your buyer's mind as they move through their decision-making process.

In this e-book, you'll discover the four key skills you need to become a memorable marketer. Armed with these science-backed techniques, you'll be better positioned to make your marketing more memorable, influential, and persuasive.

most b2b marketing is *forgettable*

Marketing has the power to influence decisions directly. Unfortunately, most marketers don't believe their content is memorable or actionable.

In a recent Corporate Visions survey, 87 percent of B2B marketers told us that they're unsure or don't believe that their audience acts on their content.

And, even though the vast majority of marketers (91 percent) agree that it's important for their audiences to remember their content, only 26 percent feel confident that the marketing materials they produce are, in fact, memorable.

Why? What makes most marketing content so woefully forgettable?



26% of **B2B Marketers** marketing materials are **MEMORABLE**

Our research has identified four common problems that make B2B marketing forgettable.

- **MESSAGES LACK CONTEXT —** If your marketing message doesn't apply to your buyer's specific situation, your audience won't care to remember it.
- **CONTENT IS RANDOM AND UNFOCUSED —** If the resulting content lacks a clear focus and a crisp, well-articulated idea, your audience won't remember what you want them to remember.
- **VISUALS ARE CLICHÉ AND UNINSPIRING —** If you don't present your offers using appealing, well-designed visuals, your audience will forget to act on them.
- **STORIES GET LOST IN THE CROWD —** Without a compelling narrative that speaks to the decision-making part of the brain, your story (and your brand) get lost in the crowd.



87% of **B2B Marketers** **DON'T BELIEVE** that their audience acts on their content

The good news is, all four of these problems are fixable. Our research proves that you can change your messages, content, visuals, and stories to improve how your audience engages with and remembers your marketing.



You can’t predict when or where someone will learn about your solution. Buyers are doing their own research and forming opinions based on the content they consume. And when it comes time to make a purchase decision, they will make that decision based on what they remember.

Will they remember you?

become a

memorable marketer

When you improve your messages, content, visuals, and stories using Decision Science principles, you can make a strong enough impact to stick in your buyers’ minds and persuade them to choose you.

1. BUILD **SITUATIONAL MESSAGES**

2. CREATE **UNFORGETTABLE CONTENT**

3. USE **COMPELLING VISUALS**

4. TELL **REMARKABLE STORIES**





become a memorable marketer

1. build situational messages

are you sending

mixed messages?

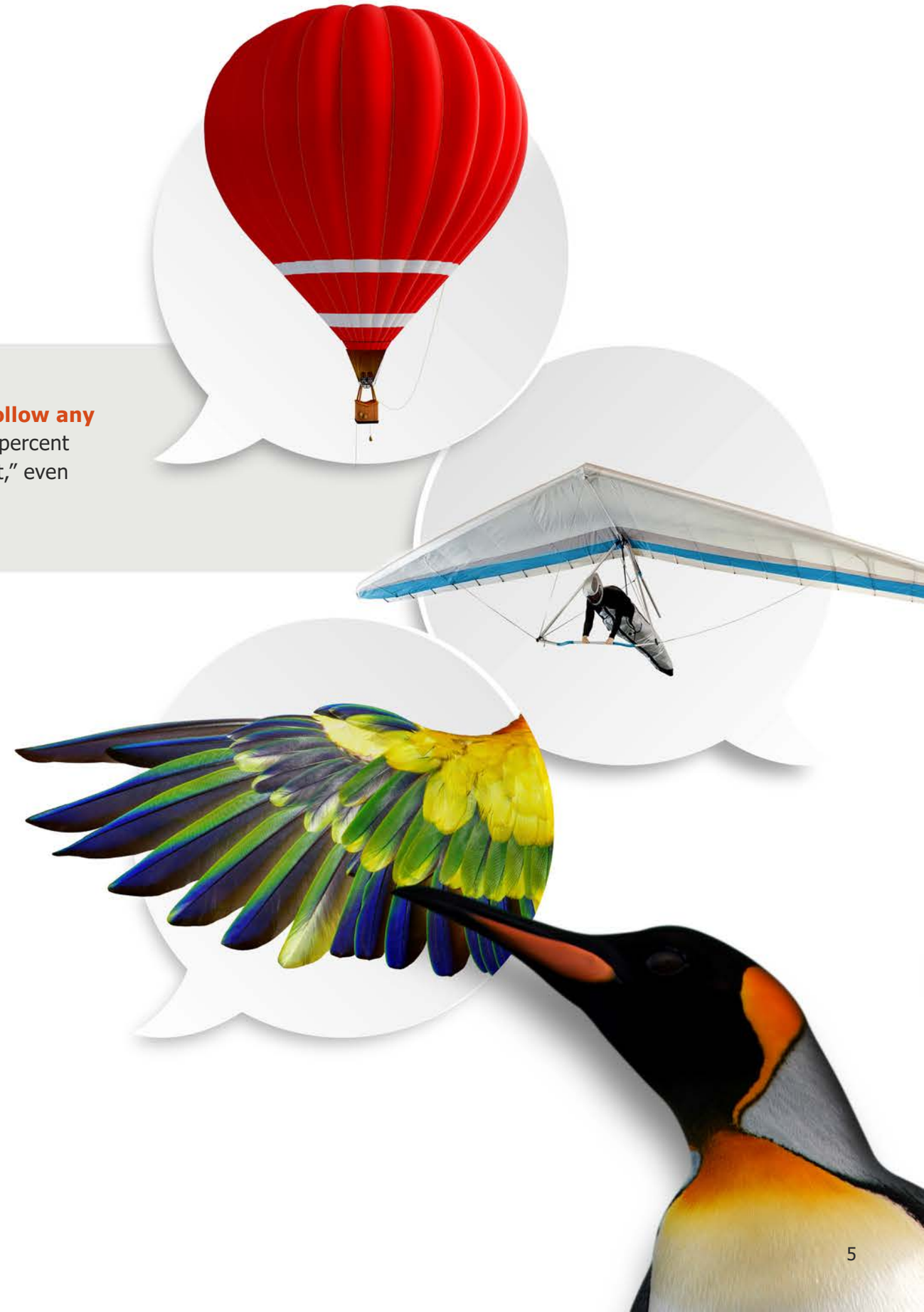
In our survey, **53 percent of B2B marketers told us they don't follow any formal methodology for developing messages.** Interestingly, 77 percent said that having a consistent process is "important" or "very important," even though more than half don't have one.

That's a problem, especially because messages are getting created all over your organization.

Even though Marketing is influencing more buying decisions, Sales and Customer Success are still having their own conversations with your prospects and customers. Each group has their own approach to their conversations with buyers. And, unfortunately, they're often telling different stories in different ways.

So, what happens? Marketing creates leads that never close, buyers get mixed messages all the way up to the point of decision, and they often end up abandoning the buying process entirely.

The confusion gets even worse when Marketing starts running demand gen campaigns to existing customers—sending disruptive, status-quo-busting messages at the exact time Sales and Customer Success are trying to renew business with that same customer.



understand your

buyer's situation

The real drivers behind decisions and behavior change are the challenges within your buyer's situation. Note that we're not talking about their "persona."

You won't convince your buyers to choose you just because of who they are, their demographics, or their job characteristics.

What buyers really want to know is whether their current situation is putting them at risk, and how they can make a smart choice that preserves their best interests.

When you're building messages for prospects or customers, consider the psychological drivers within their situation. Then, build your messages to respond to the pressures and demands they're dealing with in that moment.

Most marketers simply use the same one-size-fits-all message for every situation. As a result, most marketing messages don't resonate with buyers, and buyers don't have a compelling reason to care.

How should you tailor your messages for your buyer's situation?

Decision Science has the answer.



distinquish acquisition from expansion

Your customer acquisition conversations should be 180 degrees different from your customer expansion conversations. This is all because of a piece of science called Status Quo Bias.

Status Quo Bias is the idea that people are reluctant to change their minds. In fact, they will do everything possible to avoid change.



In your customer acquisition messages, you need to defeat Status Quo Bias by telling a compelling, disruptive story that inverts your prospect's perceptions about staying the course versus changing their situation. And you need a truly differentiated message that makes your solution the clear choice, versus the competition.

In your customer expansion conversations, you need to defend your position as your customer's status quo. Using a disruptive, challenging message will increase the likelihood of a customer switching by at least 10 percent relative to a message that reinforces your value in the existing relationship.

When you deliver a compelling message that's tailored to match your audience's motivations within the context of their situation, you have a better chance of motivating them to make a decision in your favor.

develop message frameworks for *every situation*

There are two major advantages to using message frameworks based on buyer psychology.

First, using consistent messages based on frameworks makes it much easier to create content in a systematic, repeatable way.

Second, when your messages are based on science, it doesn't matter whether you're a marketer, a seller, or a customer success manager—it's all about responding to the buyer's situation. As long as you're using the message framework to fit that situation, you're automatically speaking with one voice all across your organization.

CUSTOMER ACQUISITION MESSAGING



CUSTOMER EXPANSION MESSAGING



become a memorable marketer

2. create unforgettable content



what will they *remember?*

Of course, you don’t just create a great message to hang on your wall. You’re going to use your message to create content assets—presentations, e-books, executive briefs, videos, infographics, and more.

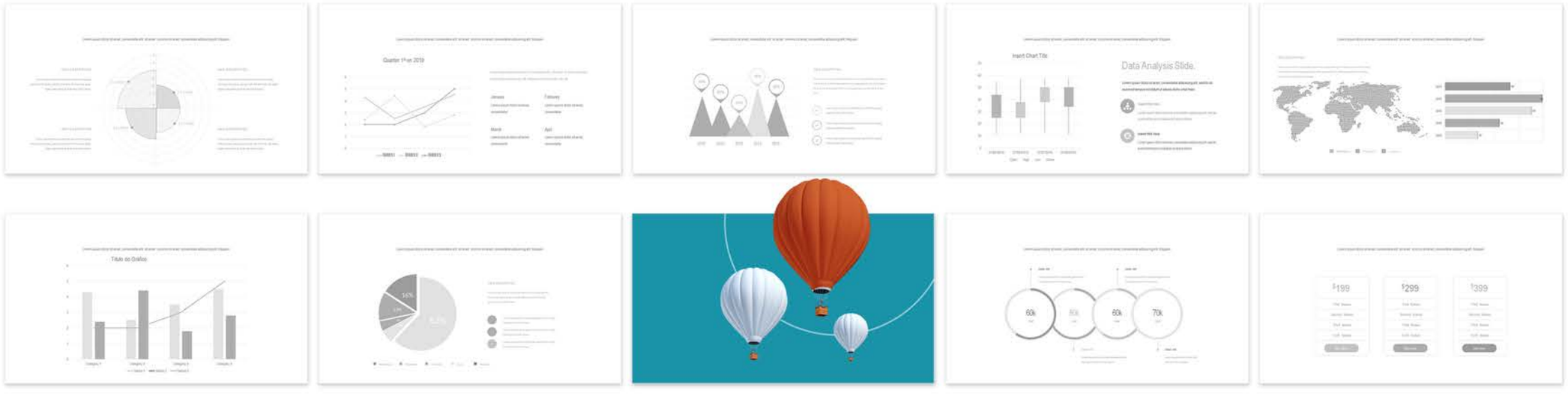
And, here again, marketers tend to struggle to make content memorable.

You always want to believe that the content you create will have an impact. But in our survey, 87 percent respondents told us they were unsure or did not believe their audience acts on their content.

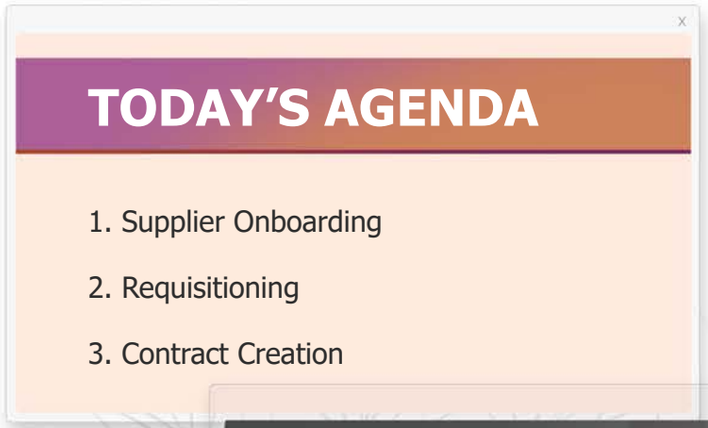
And they’re right to feel unsure.

People remember, on average, only 10 percent of the information they consume after 48 hours. Our research shows that this percentage varies—sometimes, they may remember three percent, sometimes 12 percent. But on average, it's a very small portion.

To make matters worse, the small amount of information that people do remember is completely random. So, if your content is too abstract, generic, or unfocused, your buyer might get the gist of your message, but their memory won’t be precise enough to influence their decisions later on.



BEFORE



AFTER



control your 10%

As a general measure, we refer to the small amount of information people remember as a metaphorical "10%." Thus, the most important message you want your buyers to remember from your content is called your "10% message."

You can't get people to remember much more than 10%. But you can **identify your 10%** message, **direct their attention** to it throughout your content, and **make sure it sticks** in their memory.

Your 10% message should be actionable and repeatable. It should also be presented in a way that's rewarding to your audience.

One simple way to make your message actionable, repeatable, and rewarding is to replace the typical table of contents or agenda slide with more concrete, action-oriented phrases.

Present your 10% message as an action the buyer should take to receive a reward, and include no more than three or four specific and supporting points.

When you win your audience's attention in this way, you also win a place in their memory.

repeat

responsibly

It's no secret that repetition improves memory. When you repeat your 10% message often enough, your buyer's brain starts recognizing a pattern. This pattern indicates that the information is important and should be retained for the future.

But how much repetition is enough? And is there such thing as too much?

In a recent study, we invited two groups of B2B participants to watch a five-minute business presentation. Participants were asked to imagine they were executives at a company that was looking for a digital transformation solution to serve their customers better.

Each group watched one of two presentations:

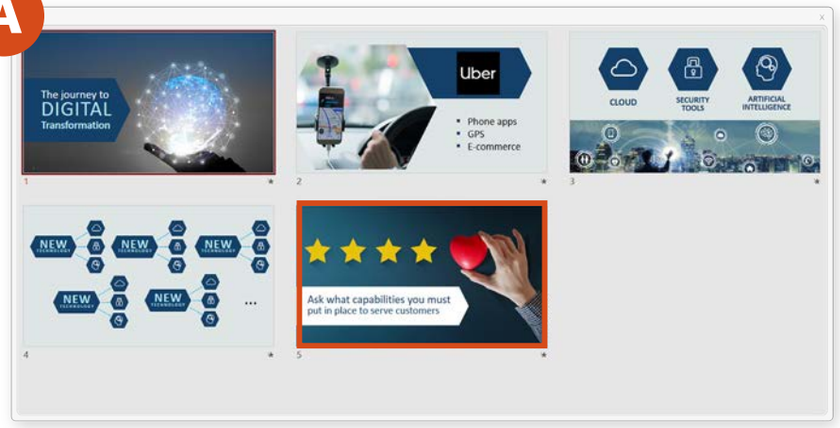
Presentation A: A typical, fuzzy business message was mentioned only once

Presentation B: A focused 10% message was mentioned six times

The results? **89 percent of people who watched Presentation B remembered the 10% message with precision** immediately after viewing the presentation. And, this percentage only dropped to 77 percent when we tested the participants' memories two days later, which is not a significant drop.

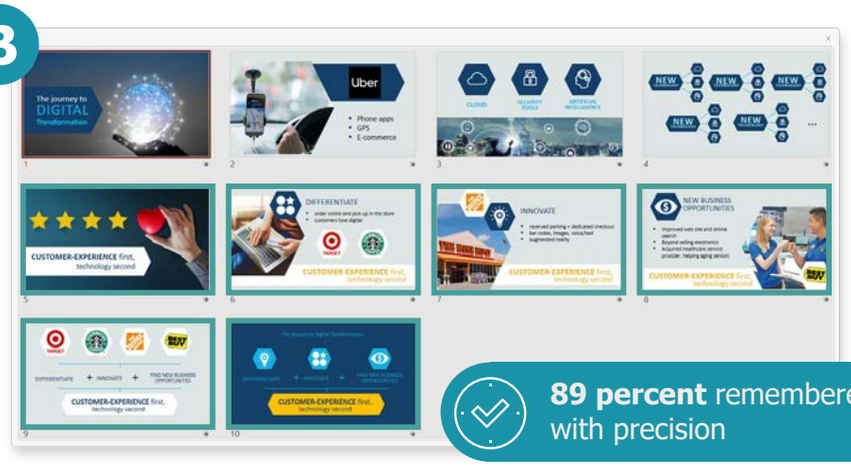
Clearly, using a focused 10% message and repeating that message throughout the content made the message more memorable.

A



The 10% message was mentioned **only once.**

B



89 percent remembered with precision

The 10% message was repeated **six times**.

establish a *pattern* to improve memory

Marketing is often tasked with explaining highly complex concepts in manageable ways. As a result, you often hear people say you need to "simplify complexity".

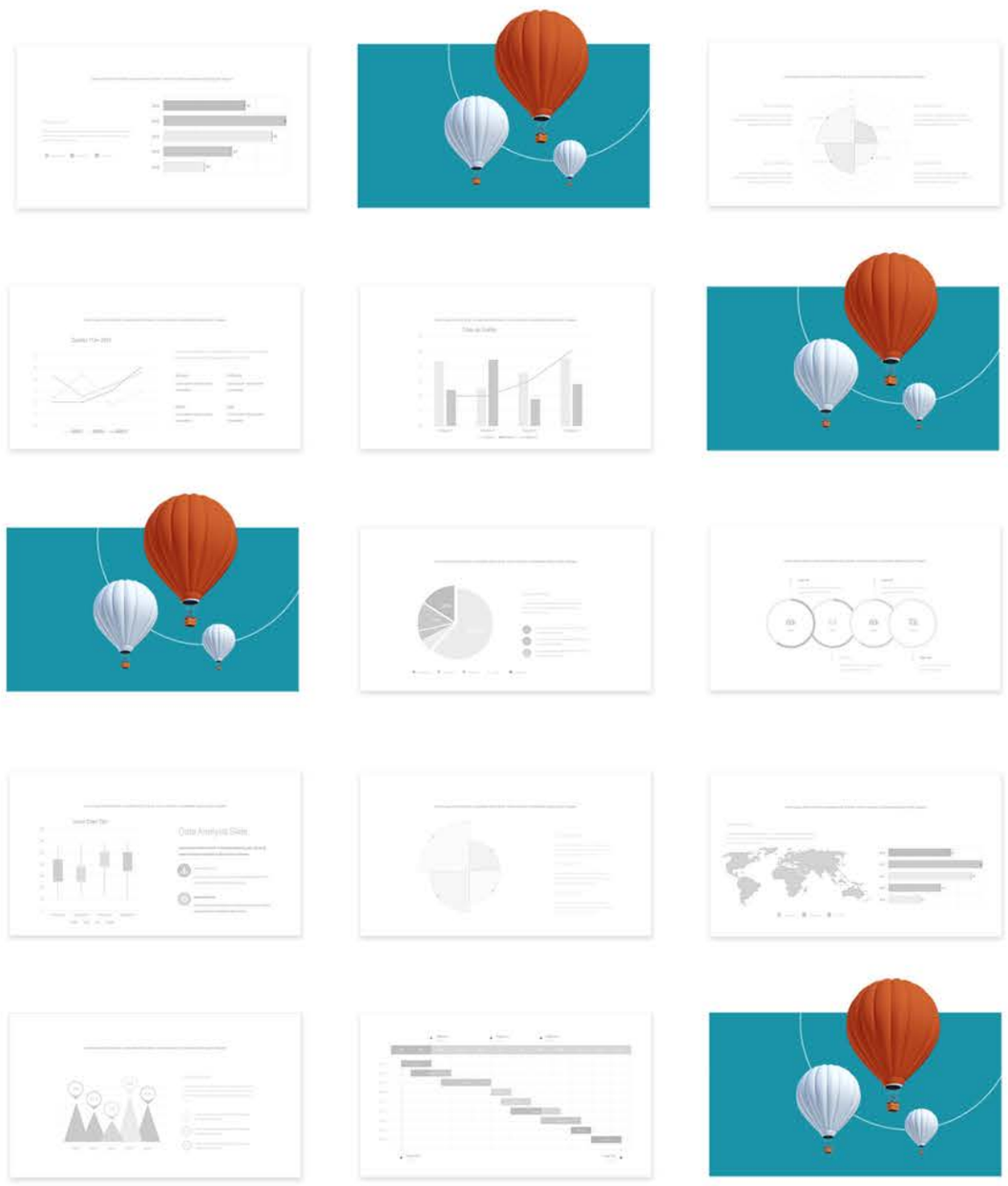
But less is not more. **The problem is not complexity; it's randomness.** Most business content is too random, too unfocused. Marketers aren't structuring content in a way that makes complex information easy to consume, digest, and remember.

Think about our research study on the previous page. Participants remembered a more complex presentation better than the simpler one. We made the presentation even more memorable and enjoyable by tripling the number of slides and using more complex visuals.

You don't need to simplify your content—you need to give your audience a recognizable set of rules to follow. The pattern created by those rules allows your audience to process and make sense of complex information more easily.

As you structure your content, use your 10% message as an anchor. Resist the urge to stray from that message because it will only add randomness.

As the story unfolds, you can introduce new information to your audience in a manageable way, always returning to the core 10% message that you want them to remember.



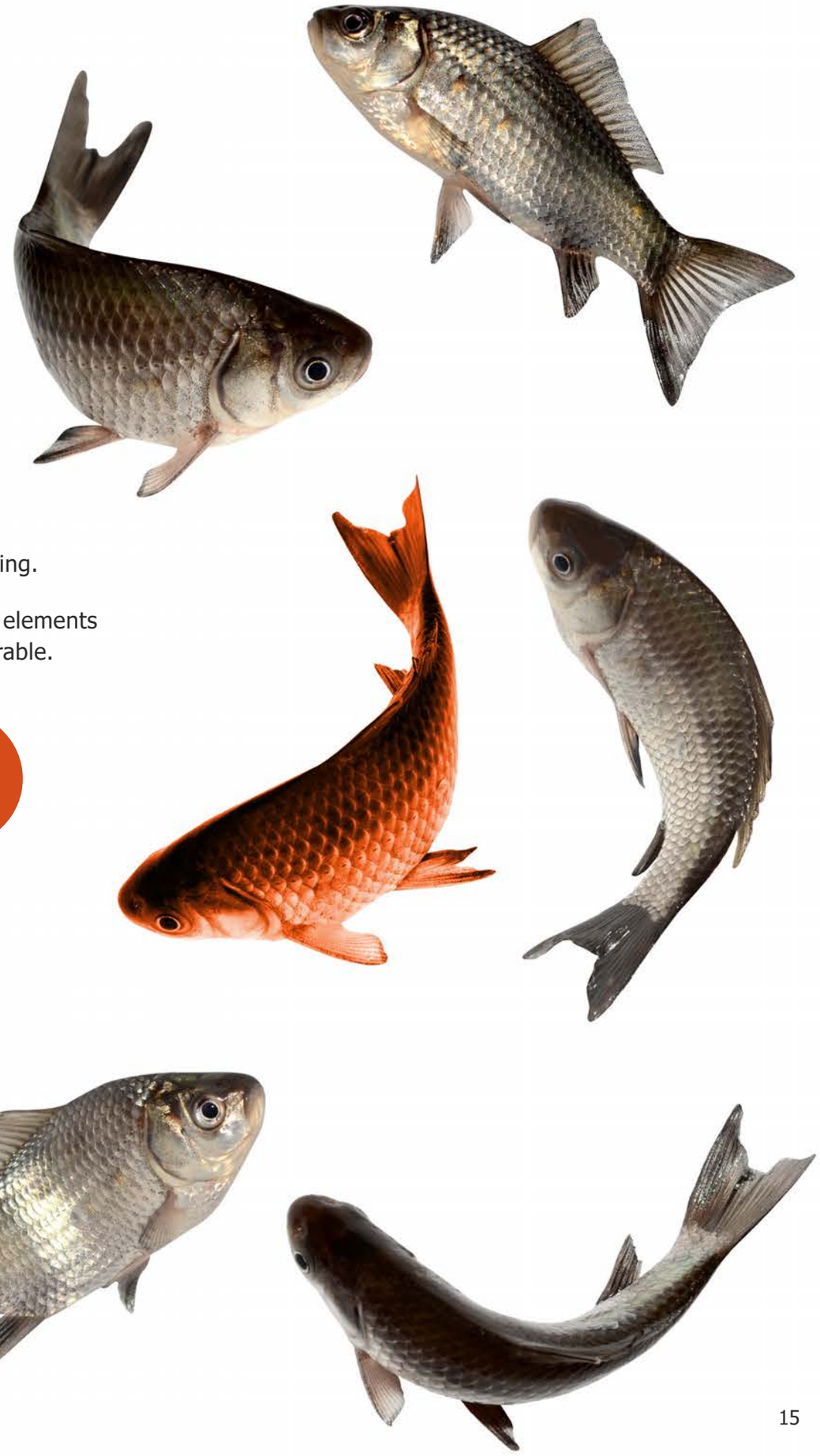


become a memorable marketer

3. use compelling

visuals

will your audience see the *difference?*



Most business content looks like…well, a lot of other business content. And that's not a good thing.

Bullet lists and boxes, stock photos of people in contrived poses, and overly simplistic SmartArt elements seem like safe, "businesslike" choices. But none of these engage the brain enough to be memorable.

It's no surprise, then, that only **12 percent of marketers told us that their marketing materials have the highest design quality.**

When your marketing visuals are attractive and high quality, your audience will process the information faster, more easily, and with more precision. Plus, they'll enjoy your content more, which makes them want to return to it, remember it, and tell others all about it.

How can you create visuals to make that kind of impact?

don’t just say it, *visualize it*

Using high-quality visuals to enhance your message not only makes your content more enjoyable, it makes it more memorable and persuasive, too.

Buying decisions are heavily influenced by emotions. Research in the field of Decision Science has shown that people make decisions based on intuition and emotion, and then justify those decisions using logic. Interestingly, the rational, logical part of the brain that justifies decisions is also where language processing happens.

So, if you’re only showing your audience written words and simple shapes, you might appeal to the rational part of the brain. But when you combine those words with powerful visuals that evoke a strong feeling, you appeal to the emotional part of the brain—and that’s the true decision-maker.



BEFORE

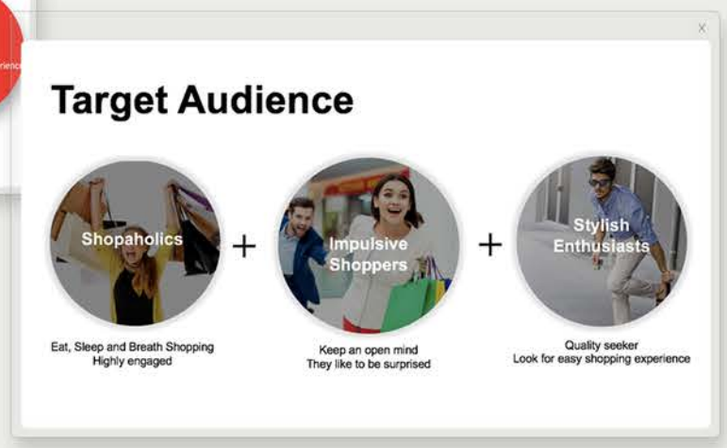
AFTER





BEFORE

AFTER



make your content *enjoyable*

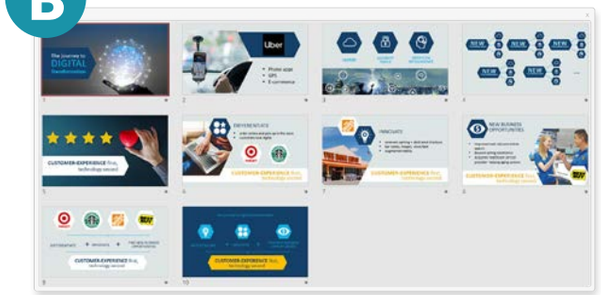
Using a lot of intense visual elements can make your content more memorable, but it doesn't necessarily make it more enjoyable.

In a recent study, we invited a group of participants to view two five-minute business presentations—one with simple visuals and one with intense visuals. Both presentations contained the same number of words and used the same script and voiceover.

Presentation C, with more intense visual elements, was 12 percent more memorable than Presentation B. But participants liked the two presentations almost the same. They didn't enjoy one presentation more than the other.

So, in a follow-up study, we compared Presentation B to a newly designed version of the same presentation that balanced both simple and intense visual elements. Participants in this study clearly had a preference. In fact, 85 percent of participants said they liked and preferred Presentation D over Presentation B.

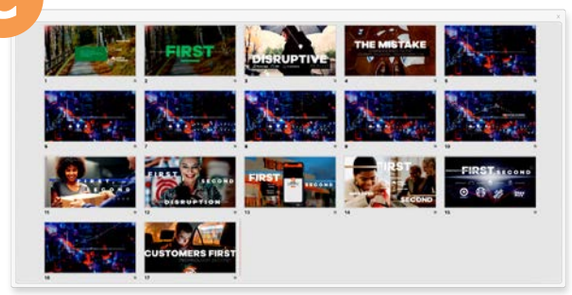
B



Simple Visuals

- 10 slides
- No animations
- Stock photos
- Few icons

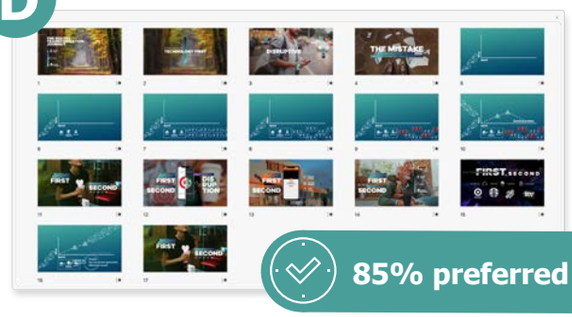
C



Intense Visuals

- 17 slides
- Average of 23 animations per slide
- Heavy use of Photoshop
- Full images on all slides

D



85% preferred

Balanced Visuals

- 17 slides
- Average of 16 animations per slide (more animations for complex content)
- No backgrounds on complex and familiar slides
- Extra effects for simple and familiar slides

balance your visuals





As our studies show, using the right balance of visual intensity can significantly impact how memorable and enjoyable your marketing is for your buyers. But how do you find the balance?

It all depends on the kind of information you're sharing and how familiar those concepts are to your audience.

When you share simple concepts that are familiar to your audience, more intense visuals work well. And your audience still needs to see some amount of complexity when sharing new and complex concepts. For example, you might use more animation and movement to display complex information gradually. But when concepts are complex and familiar to your audience, simple visuals are more effective.

Are you sharing **simple** or **complex** information? Is it **new** or **familiar** to your audience? Balancing visuals based on these four factors helps your audience engage with your content and remember the information that matters most.



become a memorable marketer

4. tell remarkable *stories*



do
your stories
put people to sleep?

Marketers love to talk about the value of storytelling in business. Unfortunately, most business stories don't appeal to audiences in a way to get them to make decisions.

That's because they're often dry, overly rational, and don't ignite the senses the way a good story should. Our survey results bear this out. **70 percent of B2B marketers agreed or strongly agreed that their stories are based primarily on facts.**



The problem is, when you rely too much on the rational at the expense of the emotional, you lose much of the power of great storytelling. Great stories should excite and engage your audience, not put them to sleep.

Like messages, content, and visuals, stories follow science-based rules. And when you feed your buyer's brain the right storytelling elements, it will hook on, encode the message, and remember to act on it later on.

enrich your stories

From a neuroscience perspective, there are three elements of great storytelling: Perceptive, Cognitive, and Affective.

The best storytellers use all three of these elements, raising and lowering them like dials on stereo equalizer. When you find the right balance of bass, midrange, and treble sounds on your stereo, you experience the music more fully and appreciate it even more.

In the same way, your stories will become exponentially more enjoyable and memorable if you balance these three pillars.



PERCEPTIVE

The ability to create and demonstrate sensitive insight.

- Sensory impressions
- Context
- Actions across time

As you build a story, make sure you're using both words and pictures to incorporate elements the audience can experience with their senses. Add contextual elements to help your audience experience the story more fully as the story progresses.



COGNITIVE

Intellectual activity (such as thinking and reasoning), often driven by facts and information.

- Facts
- Commands
- Meaning

Of the three pillars, your marketing teams are most likely strongest at this pillar. But facts are difficult to remember on their own. You can help your audience remember facts better if you incorporate more Perceptive and Affective elements.

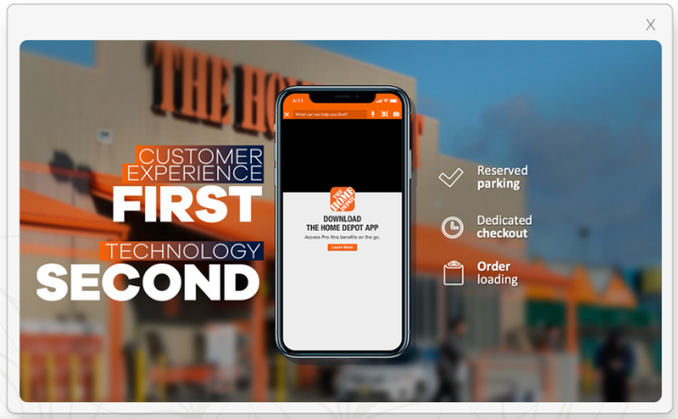


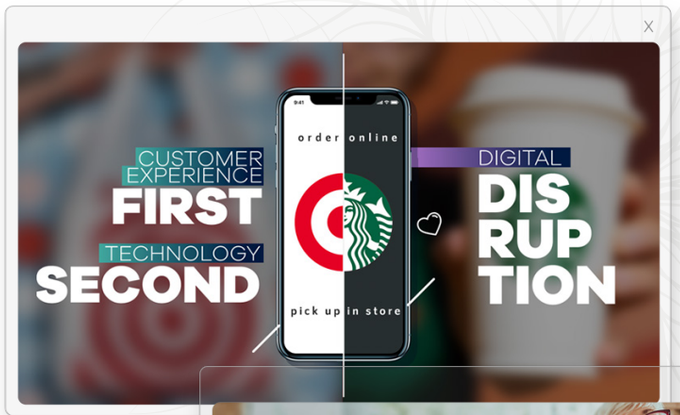
AFFECTIVE

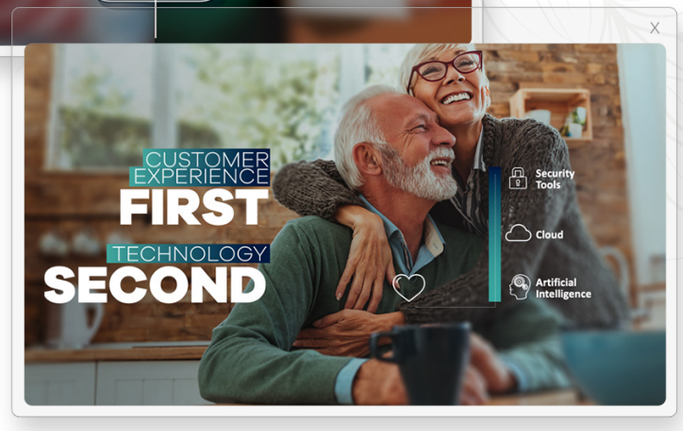
Related to attitudes, feelings, and moods.

- Emotions
- Motivations
- Values

Emotion is a strong pathway to memory. Make your audience feel something when they interact with your content. For example, when you describe a risk, make sure you're describing it in a way that makes your audience feel the emotion of what that loss will be.







elaborate on *abstract concepts*

Elaborating on key ideas with familiar examples improves how precisely your audience will remember your message, especially when you're explaining abstract or complex concepts.

Take, for example, the abstract concept of "digital transformation."

Earlier in this e-book, you saw how turning a fuzzy and unfocused explanation of digital transformation into a clear and repeatable 10% message helped the audience remember the message. But that's not all we did to make that presentation more memorable.

Presentation B elaborated on the idea of digital transformation by showing real examples from recognizable brands like Starbucks, Target, and Home Depot.

Telling audiences, "Digital transformation can help you innovate" is too abstract, which makes it difficult to remember. Illustrating how Home Depot innovated using technology to help customers identify items on shelves through an app, however, helps your audience visualize what innovation means.

As a result, participants in the study were able to remember the 10% message more accurately, and they recalled specific examples from the presentation.

use stories as *sidekicks*

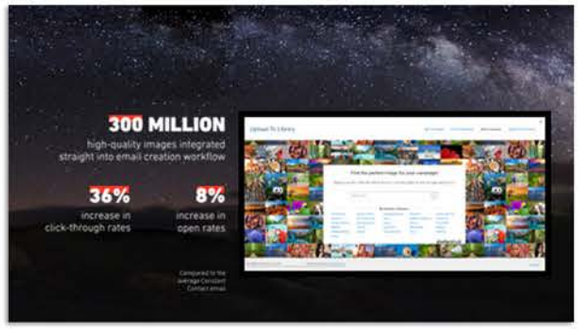
Stories can stand alone, or you can incorporate them into a broader piece of content, almost like a sidekick, to make your 10% message even more memorable.

One effective way to organize a presentation, for example, is to insert a story or story fragment right before you introduce a more abstract 10% message. That helps elaborate on your topic, which makes it more concrete and memorable.

For example, one widely recognized provider of stock imagery and video wanted creative directors and marketing executives to understand that, by working with them, they could free up their own creative teams to do what they did best. Their 10% message was "Free Your Storytellers to Tell Your Stories."

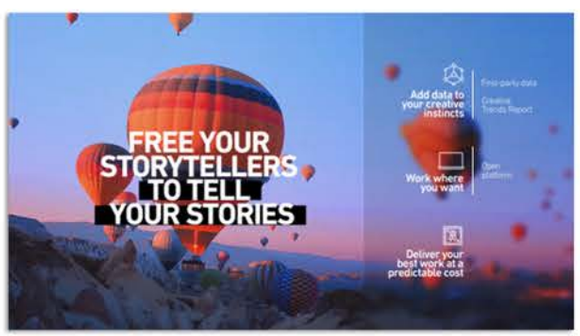
This company had some great customer references that directly supported this message. So, we put those customer stories right before the 10% message throughout the presentation as a way of illustrating and reinforcing that concept.













become a

memorable marketer

Most marketers create messages and content to drive awareness and consideration. But buyers are using that same content to inform their decision-making process much further down the funnel. They're doing research, forming opinions, and sharing that information with other stakeholders.

In other words, you're not just building awareness anymore. Your marketing materials have the power to influence buyers' decisions.

How do you become a memorable marketer? It starts with a message that matches your buyer's situation—whether you're talking to a new prospect or an existing customer. Bring that message to life with unforgettable content that's sticky enough to impact a buying decision that happens in the future. Use powerful, compelling visuals to create designs that spark action. And wrap everything in a remarkable story that uses neuroscience principles to make your marketing more engaging, memorable, and actionable.

1. BUILD **SITUATIONAL MESSAGES**

2. CREATE **UNFORGETTABLE CONTENT**

3. USE **COMPELLING VISUALS**

4. TELL **REMARKABLE STORIES**



Memorable Marketing™ Training
from Corporate Visions

People make buying decisions based on what they remember, not what they forget.

Only with Corporate Visions' Memorable Marketing™ skills training will you get science-backed strategies to:

- Develop **situational messages** for new prospects and existing customers.
- Bring your messages to life with **unforgettable content** that impacts buying decisions.
- Use **compelling visuals** to create memorable designs that inspire action.
- Tell **remarkable stories** that drive decisions using neuroscience principles.

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE

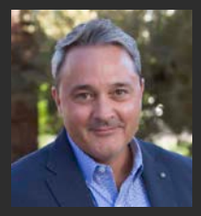
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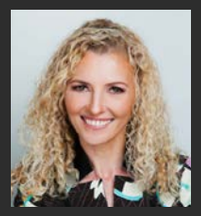
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