

That's Right I Just Called You A Superhero! □ What Are YOU Going To Do About It?

By Matt Zagula

In last month's Outrageous Advisor Marketing article we discussed why being outrageous in your marketing is necessary. As a quick review, the reason is simple: Americans get hit by more than 3,000 marketing messages a day. So being outrageous gives you the opportunity to be seen and heard in a world cluttered with marketing messages – thank goodness most of them are stale and boring.

So this month we need to focus on how to be outrageous in the right way. The first key concept you must acknowledge and accept to be outrageously successful is that people buy from people they like and people they relate to, and frankly they don't really care how much you know. Ouch. I know... I'm sorry, but somebody had to let this out. You see, the character that you are is much more important than all the technical stuff you know. It always amazes me how magnetic a technical message is to financial advisors. I guess the belief is if you know more "stuff" than all the rest of the advisors in your town, you'll get all the good clients, right? Sorry – wrong! Even if it should be that way, it isn't.

To be outrageously successful, you need to build your own Superhero story.

Your story matters. Who you are and what you stand for matter to your prospects and to your clients. Consider Batman, Spiderman and Superman. First, they all have superpowers. Superman can leap tall buildings in a single bound, right? But get him around kryptonite and watch out, he's toast. Even superheroes have flaws, just like you and me. But they all have a defining story. What made Bruce Wayne become Batman? His family was killed in a violent crime. He had a reason to do what he did. He had a story, and his story defined his mission – to fight crime. What's your mission? For many reasons, my natural market is protecting assets from the cost of long-term care by using public benefits. My wife's a registered nurse who worked on an Alzheimer's unit. My father-in-law is a wartime veteran who needed help paying for his wife's care costs; my mother-in-law has dementia and needs 24-hour care. I've had three family members who needed full, skilled, nursing home care. So I have a story – a true story – and I have a mission. You need a story too.

To build your character, make a list that you can work from and include the answers to these questions:

1. Why do you do what you do? How did you learn what you know? You should find your mission in these answers.
2. Who are or were your mentors in life? We all mirror and mimic. Whom have you chosen to model yourself after? This will help you visualize your character. You want to be able to see this image of yourself in your mind.
3. What are some signature stories about your life that teach people about your character? Often these are experiences whose value you don't fully appreciate. Look at your own life with objective, fresh eyes and find your superpower.
4. What are your favorite things to do? Why do you enjoy these activities? Do you like to watch sports, do you like to shoot guns? Do you love tropical fish? Do you ride a Harley in a fancy leather jacket with skulls on it on the weekend but wear a three-piece suit Monday through Friday? Do you live to eat out or cook? Do you love wine? You'll find that people are attracted to others who have the same affinity.
5. What do you hate doing? Did I hear you say painting?
6. When you consider your mission, whom or what do you want to align with your clients against? Taxes, big-government spending, the costs of long-term care? Your response to this question is that you want to align with the clients you serve against their enemies. Every superhero has an enemy – you are no different.
7. What are your flaws? Perhaps you eat too much popcorn, you have no hair or, like me, you've put on a few holiday pounds. We all have flaws and weaknesses, but this doesn't strip us of our superpowers or our mission.

Once you know your mission, exactly what your character stands for and the enemy you need to help your clients combat, you are well on your way to success. Ninety-nine percent of advisors will dismiss this as a waste of time, and that's good for us. I can assure you there is no better use of your time than this exercise. Being focused on your target market with a message crafted specifically for them that makes you the superhero of their real-life story is the beginning of your total market domination plan – accept nothing less.