

thinking

ALL THE
PODCASTS

LAST CHANCE
TO SAVE

LIKE OUR
VIDEO

SEE WHAT YOUR
FRIENDS LIKED

TEXT TO
SAVE

FOLLOW
US

THE ORIGINAL
COAST GUARD

VISIT OUR
WEBSITE

BOGO
SALE

ADD IT TO
WATCHLIST

BINGE-
WORTHY TV

WE HAVE 500
VARIETIES

SHARE THIS

GET IT FIRST





CALM AND RELAXED
A Tale of Nostalgic Adjectives

MAR 2019 BOZ

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Our time is spread thin as we try to balance the stresses of work and the chaos of life. What little space we do have, when these activities aren't vying for our attention, is used for catching our breath. In this issue of Thinking, we'll take a peek into the overwhelming life of the consumer. We'll examine the sources of stress and explore the value of simplicity.

BY DAVID MOORE, SENIOR ACCOUNT PLANNER

AVOID THE COOKIE CLUTTER CLICHÉS



Consumers today (also known as “audience,” “customers,” “target,” or just plain “people”) are overwhelmed. By the daily onslaught of news. By helpful tips on how to live a more fulfilling, healthy life. By the latest celebrity scandals. And, annoyingly (for our business), by advertising.

Some reports say we receive more than 10,000 brand messages per day, but that number seems a little short. Advertising follows us everywhere we go – across the digital landscape and in the real world. Ad messages are inescapable, whether it's product placement in film and TV or on our coffee cups, Amazon boxes, clothing, stadiums and sidewalks. Not to mention traditional places like radio, TV and print media for those who still consume it.

What's a marketer to do? How can we overcome the wall of indifference that this overload of information creates?

The answer is actually pretty easy. It's the same approach that is the hallmark of most successful marketing communications: focus, simplicity and respect.

K.I.S.S.
KEEP IT SIMPLE STUPID



Keep it simple. Remember the mantra K.I.S.S.? “Keep It Simple, Stupid.” Tossing a complex, nuanced message at an already overwhelmed audience is asking for failure. Try to focus on one message, not a list of copy points. Get in, get out.

Respect the clock. We're already strapped for available time, and we see most ads as an interruption. Asking us to “follow the rest of the story” online is both insulting and unrealistic. Be clear, be concise, be relevant. Everything else is just noise.

Be realistic. “Join the conversation” is an inane way to get people to be interested in your brand. Who really wants a relationship or dialogue with their toothpaste or coffee? Know your objectives before you start crafting your communication.

Yes, we are all overwhelmed by a never-ending stream of information, content, news and brand storytelling. But, if you focus your message, say one thing, say it well and say it in a relevant manner in a relevant place, your chances of cutting through the clutter are greatly enhanced. ♥



Years ago, my friend Dave packed his two kids in the car for their first day of elementary school. It was a bright and sunny Monday morning. The kids had fresh haircuts, bright smiles and new backpacks. They were ready to go.

But there was one detail their dad didn't account for: the first day of school wasn't for another week.

It didn't take Dave long to realize his error when he arrived in an empty parking lot next to an empty school. So, he did what anyone else would have done: he laughed at himself. And then he did something few of us tend to do: he shared his embarrassment with everyone else. Dave posed his two kids in front of the empty school's locked doors, snapped a photo and shared his tale on Facebook.

As I scrolled through Facebook that morning, I gave Dave's photo a "like." Hundreds of his friends did too. Not all of us had driven the kids to school when it was still summer. But we all knew the feeling of screwing up like that. We could all identify with Dave.

So, nearly 10 years later, why do I still remember a failed-first-day-of-school Facebook post? Because it was real. And most of what I see on social media is not.

If my Instagram feed is to be believed, then nearly all my friends live beautiful, problem-free lives. They take amazing vacations and land exciting promotions. They go on long runs every morning and take short trips to the organic grocer each night. They rear soccer-star children who never get a B.

✦ **Identify with our struggles.**

✦ **Embrace our daily problems.**

✦ **And root your message in reality.**

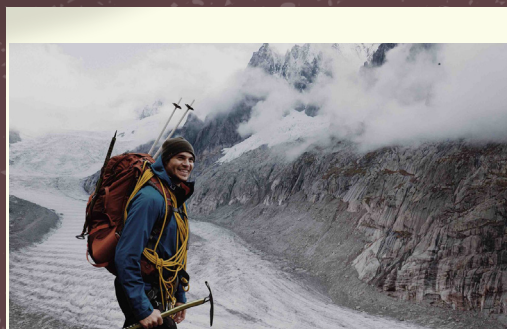
Good for them! Meanwhile, away from the internet, the rest of us live in a different world. Sure, we take a road trip now and then and we love our kids and try to eat healthy food. But sometimes we argue with our spouses. Sometimes our kids get Ds in math. And most of the time we're not at the gym. We're on the couch with Chinese takeout and a Roku.

Here's the problem: as we sit on the couch dealing with reality, we scroll through Instagram's fairytale. There's our neighbor on the beach for the third time this winter. There's our cousin with another post about her fabulous kids. And how do we feel? Like crap. We know our Instagram friends deal with problems just like everybody else. But it's hard to believe that when you're sitting in snowy Omaha under a blanket looking at 10 photos of your friend's perfect trip to Costa Rica.

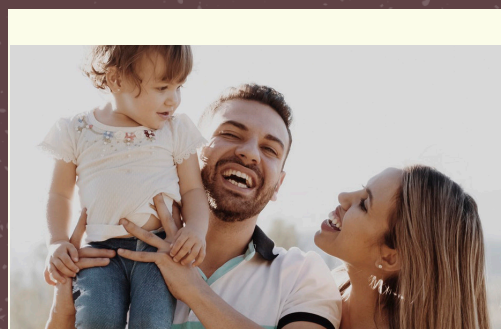
Marketers everywhere, here's my advice: reject the temptation of the Instagram filter. Don't add another chapter to the social media fairy tale. Identify with our struggles. Embrace our daily problems. And root your message in reality.

What if companies acknowledged that parents are sick of hearing their kids bicker? Or that spouses don't always get along? Or that most grocery carts contain more processed chocolate than organic veggies?

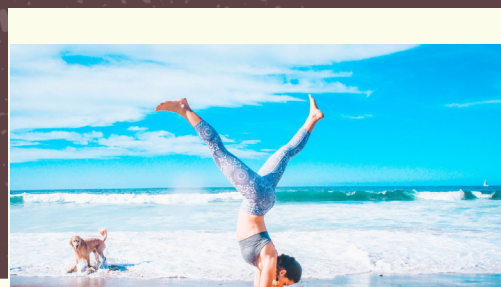
A little reality could go a long way in this world. We'd all appreciate a little more candor. Especially as we sit in the car, waiting for the kids to get dressed for school. One week early.



♥ #HIKINGISLIFE



♥ #BESTDAYEVER



♥ #ALLCLEANEATING



By Kim Mickelsen, CEO

I needed toothpaste. I drink iced tea night and day, so I wanted to try something different for whitening. As I stood in the toothpaste aisle at Target, I was so overwhelmed that I literally started laughing. The aisle was probably 30' long, 6' tall and both sides were loaded with options. That's 360 square feet of toothpaste choices. Toothpaste. It was crazy. I had neither the time, energy, nor interest in reviewing all those options. So I just grabbed my go-to Crest and headed out.

While we consumers crave choice, we're also overwhelmed by the task of weighing our options. So, more often than not, we often find ourselves going to the same places, doing the same things, buying the same things and eating the same things. Over and over again.

It may sound kind of boring, but making smart decisions, when faced with lots of choices, is emotionally taxing. And there is some science behind limited choices making us happier. Studies have shown that when you give

consumers infinite choice, selection becomes problematic and cognitive stress increases.

Take this example, published in USA Today last July:

“Consider the relatively insignificant decision of what type of jam to buy. Researchers Sheena Lyengar and Mark Lepper used a simple experiment to show the effect of too much choice. One day they offered shoppers at an upscale market 24 types of specialty jams, complete with free samples. About 3 percent of people who tried a jam sample also purchased a full-size jar. Then, they cut back on choices and set up a table offering only six jams. About the same number of people tasted

Sales increased tenfold by offering less choice.

the jam, but of this group, 30 percent purchased a jar. Sales increased tenfold by offering less choice.

“It may seem counterintuitive that fewer choices lead to more sales and happier consumers, but Angelika Dimoka, director of the Center for Neural Decision Making at Temple University, has shown why. To see how the brain reacts to information overload, she asked study participants to solve a complex problem, then added more pieces of information while watching their brains with an fMRI scanner.

“As the brain took in more information, the prefrontal cortex (the region responsible for strategic planning and decision-making) became more and more active. This is what we would expect. But here's the kicker: At a certain point, the participants simply couldn't handle any more information, and their prefrontal cortexes went dark. Like an overloaded circuit, the brain simply shuts down when presented with too much information. Information overload, it seems, is a real phenomenon in our brains.”

Think about that. We desire and demand choice, but, at some point, it becomes literally too much for our brains to handle. Now think about what ecommerce has added to that mix. And you can see why shoppers are becoming overwhelmed.

So, what about the 800-pound gorilla? Amazon. It's the epitome of choice. Why does Amazon, with its millions and millions of available products, continue to grow while other large players shrink?

They've managed to make 'choice' less emotionally taxing and the whole process easier. They've helped us manage our lives. You search

for what you need. You filter the options based on your preferences (price, ratings, newest, etc.). You add to cart. And, for Prime members, there is one simple click and you're done. You don't have to get out your credit/debit card or fill out any forms. An address book keeps all your "Ship to" info. Returns are easy. You can even talk to Alexa while cooking or cleaning to create your shopping list. You can set up recurring delivery and more. They are fast and dependable on delivery. In fact, Amazon was rated as the second most trusted organization behind the military in a recent consumer survey by Georgetown University.

So what does this all mean for marketers?

Think through your customer's experience. Every single step of it. Do your research and understand their needs, wants, desires and obstacles. Look for ways to make the process of doing business with you easier, simpler and faster. Constantly make incremental improvements to each step of the process.



no jams, no problems

BY JIM MINGE, CONTENT DEVELOPER

BAD CASE OF THE FOMO

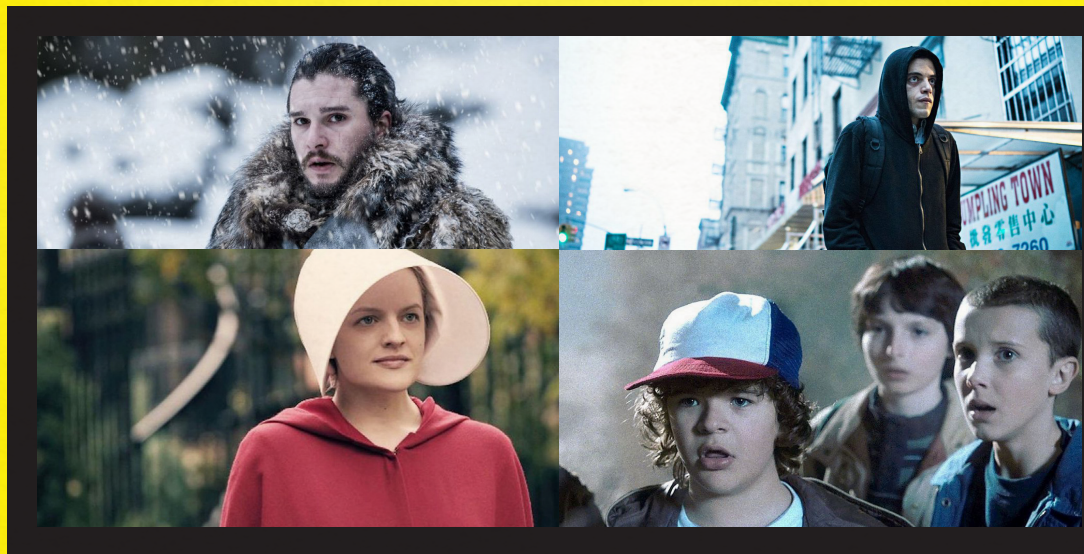
The fear of missing out – FOMO – is so widespread that you might only be reading this brief article because you can't stand not being in the know.

On one hand, good for you – knowledge is power. On the other, you probably have a long list of must-reads, so we'll keep it simple.

FOMO has taken over so many aspects of our lives that it has practically paralyzed us. It leads to a paradox of choice. We have so many shows cued up in our watch list on Netflix – the ones our friends insist we must see – that we end up watching none of them because we can't decide where to begin. The more choices you have, the more you feel frozen by indecision.

In a TED talk given by psychologist Barry Schwartz, he discusses a study done by investment group Vanguard that researched about a million employees at more than 2,000 companies. It discovered that, for every 10 additional mutual funds an employer offered,

THE MORE CHOICES YOU HAVE
THE MORE YOU FEEL FROZEN BY INDECISION.



P.S. THE NERDS AT BOZELL RECOMMEND THESE SHOWS.

the rate of participation went down two percent.

"You offer 50 funds, 10 percent fewer employees participate than if you only offer five. Why? Because with 50 funds to choose from, it's so damn hard to decide which fund to choose, that you'll just put it off until tomorrow. And then tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, and, of course, tomorrow never comes," Schwartz said.

Did people watch more TV when they only had three channels? Are there too many flavors of Pringles? Does having too many entertainment options – so many places to eat, so many places to go, so many things to see – result in staying home? But how can you? Not when that hand-held digital (de)vice is screaming at you. "You can't miss this!"

And here you are – business owner, marketing director, media manager – just trying to get people to buy your cookies. And they're good cookies. Great ingredients, well made, delicious, and offered at a reasonable price. That's the easy part. Now, if you can just get consumers to take a bite in this age of information overload.

**YOU CAN.
AND THEY
WILL, IF
YOU KEEP
IT SIMPLE.**

There are lots of self-help videos, blogs and books on how to "get more done." Try going in the opposite direction. Go against the digital deluge and do more by doing less.

Be concise and to-the-point. Keep your message simple. No one has time to go to your website to watch the "rest of the story" that you couldn't tell in your 30-second, \$5.25 million Super Bowl commercial.

Also, don't hide your product or your message. Be dependable and trustworthy by being up front about it. Loyalty will follow.

As for that Netflix queue. Empty it. Pick one series at a time to watch and commit to it. And while you're at it, go with the original Pringles. Simple, right?

THE PARADOX
OF CHOICE
IS REAL.



EMBRACE WHITE SPACE

BY ROBIN DONOVAN, PRESIDENT

25 years ago, industry pundits told marketers their messaging was competing with about 8,000 other messages daily. That was a whole lot of clutter attacking us through billboards, radio, TV and all forms of print. We literally could not escape it.

And then came electronics, which took us from being overwhelmed to full bore suffocation. Taking the overwhelmed feeling to a whole new level is the frightening fact that we have become – as stated in a Brian Gardner article on nosidebar.com – “addicted to being busy” and he cautions that “the need for less-often results in a life of more.” We are now actively working to ensure that we’re buried in our tablets, phones and laptops.

A recent article by Jocelyn K. Gleib cites researchers Mullainathan and Shafir as creating the term “time scarcity,” which they caution “diminishes our imaginative powers.” They further warn that we are “preoccupied by time scarcity.” Does that sound familiar? Are you proud of being “booked solid” or “slammed?” In a chilling pronouncement, Gleib notes that “time scarcity is like kryptonite for creativity.”

We clearly have a problem – even an addiction. Gleib and Gardner, along with noted business consultant Lori Stohs of Lori Stohs Consulting Group, believe that white space is our path out of this largely self-imposed prison cell. Self-regulated white space may be our only hope of escaping our time scarcity addiction to reach our “life of more.”

First, we need to understand “white space.” In her article, Gleib defines “work” and “life” whitespace as an extension of “design” white space. As stated by Gleib, in design “white space” is negative space. It’s not blank because it has a purpose. It is balancing the rest of the design by throwing what is on the page into relief. The white space helps focus your visual attention. Gleib goes on to suggest that you “analyze your schedule with an eye toward design.” Have you preserved enough “white space” within your daily

SELF-REGULATED WHITE SPACE MAY BE OUR ONLY HOPE OF ESCAPING OUR TIME SCARCITY ADDICTION TO REACH OUR “LIFE OF MORE.”

Closed for daydreaming. Back tomorrow!

workflow? Or does your day look extremely busy and cluttered? This also holds true for your daily lifeflow. Knowing what to do is the first step. Next you have to make a deliberate effort to find your “white space.” And this won’t be any easier than expelling your other addictions.

A recent article on Intentionally Designed offers some simple tips for incorporating white space into your life:

- Learn to say no.
- Be more productive and less busy.
- Schedule time for something you enjoy.
- Give yourself grace periods.
- Don’t feel guilty about taking a break.
- Live intentionally (i.e., run your electronics, don’t let them run you).

This list is just the beginning of the steps that can lead you away from time scarcity and into an existence balanced by white space.

If you are able to make that transition successfully, Gardner promises a life that is no longer stunted, that observes what was formerly missed and that embraces authenticity by allowing vulnerability.

We partake in a lot of wellness challenges in our office, I’m going to suggest that our next challenge be a white space marathon.



