



## When Less Is More... More or Less

By Ken Mitchell  
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A lot of time, effort, and money (let alone blood, sweat, and tears) go into developing and marketing every new product in the juvenile market. However, most new infant and toddler products start from a basic understanding or insight into an unmet need, usually through the simple act of observation. Someone sees a need and says, "A-ha, if only..." and then complexity sets in.

Translating this simple unmet need into a marketable product takes months of effort, internal de-bates, consumer research, and trade-offs. With this complexity comes the biggest temptation of all—to try to explain all of the reasons that a given product is something every mom must have for her newest addition. After all, there is a lot to say. There are so many great things about the product and we have to tell them all of it, right?

Wrong. Moms today are bombard-ed with advertisements and pitches. From the TV and radio to newsprint, the internet, and the store shelf, consumers have more in-formation thrust at them than they can handle. New moms are already overwhelmed just taking care of their new babies. What chance does a complex message have of getting through to her in-store, when she's got a crying baby on her hip, is late for a doctor's appointment, and isn't sure which product to buy?

Not much. But there's hope!

Mom just needs a single, compelling reason to buy. She wants to understand that one important insight that inspired your product—the one that will make her life or her child's life easier, better, or more enriched. And she needs to get it quickly. Don't make her work through an over-whelming number of images and copy points just to understand what it is that your product will do for her. What happened to the simple insight that inspired the product in the first place? It was lost in the attempt to make sure that the consumer understood all that this product went through to get on the shelf.

So what can you do?

1. Go back to the basics. Think back to the original reason you wanted to make this product in the first place. Then use that reason to create an intensely focused, single-minded positioning for your product. Be sure this positioning is unique, believable, and most importantly, meaningful to mom.

2. Make sure your positioning communicates to mom's heart and her head—she processes with both. Think back to the focus groups and online surveys you did during the product development phase. What words did mom use to describe this product and its benefit to her and her kids? What was her tone? Replicate those emotions in your communications.

3. Stick to your message. Do not stray, elaborate, or expand upon it. Be simple, clear, and concise. Do not be tempted to clutter the packaging with every last feature and benefit. Many of these are meaningful only to you, the manufacturer.

4. Repeat your message. All over the packaging.

5. Repeat your message again. And again. And again. In different locations. Using different mediums—packaging, print ads, TV ads, publicity coverage... In this world of intense complexity, we as marketers must remember that less is more—more or less—especially for new moms.

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