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The Association for Convenience and Petroleum Retailing

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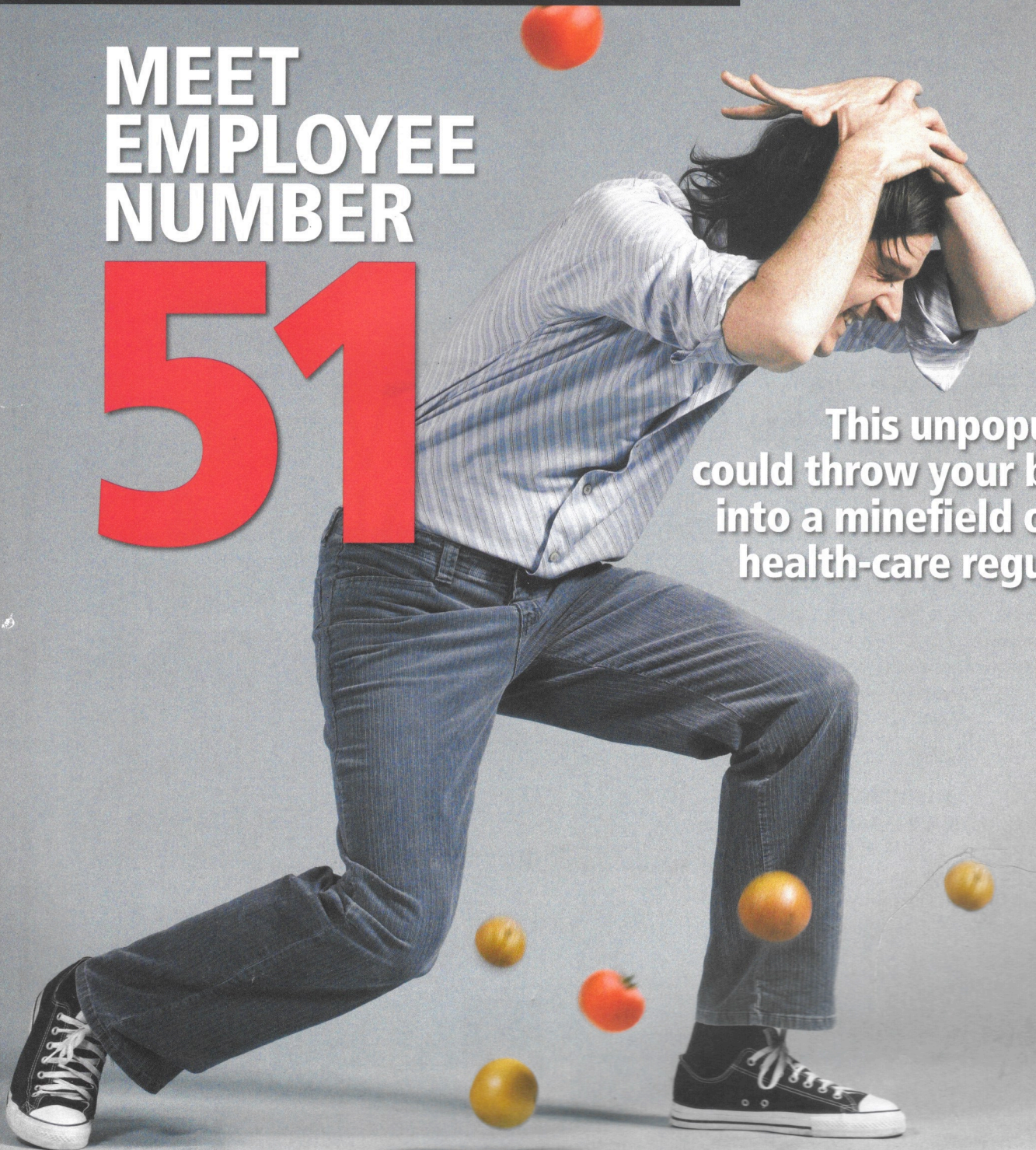
**Slogans Define  
Your Business — But  
Do You Need One?**

**NACS Show  
Coverage Begins!**

**Cool New  
Products**

**MEET  
EMPLOYEE  
NUMBER**

**51**



**This unpopular guy  
could throw your business  
into a minefield of costly  
health-care regulations.**





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American consumers are crazy about pizza — is a take-and-bake program right for your stores?

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*Slogans can help define your business —  
but do you really need one?*

BY MICHAEL KLEIN

**T**here's a famous quote attributed to department store mogul John Wanamaker: "Half the money I spend on advertising is wasted; the trouble is I don't know which half."

Whether Wanamaker actually said it or not is unclear, but as a major advertiser, he probably felt that way on a few occasions. The line nicely captures the angst of the advertiser — why do some ads work and others fall flat? Why do some ads enter the mainstream consciousness and others force apologies?

One marketing element that seems hardest to successfully navigate is the slogan. A slogan or tagline is supposed to be a quick phrase or motto that sums up the message the advertiser or merchant is sending. Think, "When you care enough to send the very best," (Hallmark), or "All the news that's fit to print," (*The New York Times*).

# Finding the Right



**Curiously Strong!**

**The Uncola**

**Good to the  
Last Drop!**

**Great Taste,  
Less Filling!**

**The Choice of a  
New Generation**

**The Breakfast  
of Champions!**

**The King of Beers!**

**Two Words**





**“Slogans are one way a convenience store can develop a point of difference in a crowded field where there is a great deal of similarity.”**

— Mark Williams,  
The Motus Group



Done well, a slogan simply and effectively connects a brand with the consumer, “It’s hard to stop a Trane,” or “Nothing runs like a Deere.”

Sometimes slogans work so well they are remembered long after the merchant stops using them. Mr. Whipple stopped admonishing customers, “Please don’t squeeze the Charmin,” in 1985. But many people can still recite that slogan word for word. (Charmin brought Whipple back briefly in 1999 and 2000, but the campaign and taglines were different.)

### **“Moving at the Speed of Business”**

Good slogans can help a brand establish itself, but they certainly aren’t required.

“Slogans are one way a convenience store can develop a point of difference in a crowded field where there is a great deal of similarity,” said marketing executive Mark Williams, managing partner of The Motus Group. “A slogan would help to differentiate a convenience store if in fact the slogan actually stood for something that was the essence of that place or what makes it different from competitors. If the experience, service or appearance is different from what the slogan promises, it won’t work.”

In other words, don’t give yourself a tagline like “The fastest stop in town,” if you clearly aren’t.

Williams knows a thing or two about connecting with consumers — he was on the creative team responsible for two of the most enduring and recognizable ad campaigns in history: “The Milk Mustache” and “Pork: The Other White Meat.”

Williams believes effective slogans convey a clear benefit one brand has over another. Along the way it should also define the brand’s position in the marketplace.

“Southwest Airlines built its business

on the line, ‘The low fare airline.’ It absolutely defines them — what they want to be, how they want to be perceived. It’s not particularly creative, but there’s no way you walk away from that not knowing exactly what they are trying to tell you,” said Williams. “Johnson & Johnson baby shampoo — ‘No more tears’ — or Allstate Insurance — ‘You’re in good hands’ — these clearly communicate the benefit of the brand, and they do it in a way those brands own.”

A tagline that has nothing to do with a brand, one that could be plucked off one merchant and stuck on another, is a waste of time and money. JCPenney replaced their bland, “It’s All Inside,” with the even more meaningless, “Every Day Matters.” Is it a department store? A pharmaceutical manufacturer? A tattoo parlor? Who knows. At least the first one implied the store stocked everything the consumer could possibly want — even though they obviously couldn’t deliver on the promise.

QuikTrip Corporation, the 500-plus store retailer headquartered in Tulsa, Oklahoma, conveyed a clear benefit with their long-time slogan, “Every Trip Guaranteed.”

Vice President of Marketing Jim Denny explained the slogan is an extension of the company’s guaranteed gasoline campaign — used to instill confidence in its un-branded gasoline. “We had been hitting the guaranteed gasoline message hard and it really resonated with our customers,” Denny said. “So we extended it to cover the whole business: Every trip was guaranteed.”

Williams points out that the “Every Trip Guaranteed” slogan works on a higher level — something not easy to accomplish. “What I like about it is that it plays off the brand name itself — every trip to the store is guaranteed, and every ‘Trip’ — the actual store — is also guaranteed. It works.”



But QuikTrip felt that after 10 years it may be time for a change.

“We were talking to our ad agency about what it really means to go to Quik-Trip and it all boils down to people coming to you because it’s a quick experience,” said Denny. “So our campaign now is ‘Think Quik, Think QuikTrip.’ Our new slogan is ‘Think Quik.’ We feel it has a lot of value going forward because we run a lot of people through our stores quickly, better than anybody else, and that’s a key element for us.”

The new slogan continues to play off the brand name so they may have another winner on their hands, but only time will tell.

All parties agree that it takes time for consumers to make the link between a slogan and a brand. Denny says they may have to invest two or three years in the new slogan, hammering away in ads and signage before their customers make the connection. In the meantime, they still stand by the “guarantee message” that has earned them brand equity in the marketplace.

Another benefit slogan belongs to E-Z Mart Stores Inc. of Texarkana, Texas.

“As we updated our image I was asked what we stood for,” recalled CEO Sonja Hubbard. “I could think of no better service to sell than convenience — so our old tagline, ‘Making Life Easier for You,’ still fit. The graphic designers suggested an update since all the kids were texting and abbreviating things, so our new slogan, ‘Making Life EZR 4 U!’ evolved.”

The abbreviated execution should not only connect with kids texting, but also with “non-texters” for whom it reads like a clever license plate. “The convenience store/gas station is inextricably linked to the car — this is a perfect match,” said Williams.

**“Be All You Can Be”**

Williams cautions that once a brand establishes itself with consumers, trying to get away from the slogan that got you there can be just as futile as trying to leverage a slogan that doesn’t connect at all with reality.



**Trying to leverage a slogan that doesn’t connect at all with reality can be futile.**

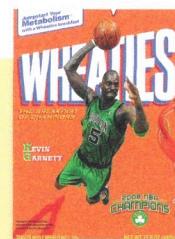
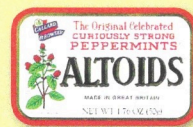


**Mix and Match**

Can you match the slogan with the product you likely stock in your stores?

- “The Freshmaker”
- “You’ve Come a Long Way Baby”
- “The Quicker Picker Upper”
- “Curiously Strong”
- “The Uncola”
- “The Choice of a New Generation”
- “Melts in Your Mouth, Not in Your Hands”
- “The Breakfast of Champions”
- “The King of Beers”
- “Australian for Beer”

- Pepsi
- Bounty paper towels
- Altoids mints
- Budweiser
- Foster’s
- M&M’s
- Virginia Slims cigarettes
- Wheaties
- 7UP
- Mentos candy



- “The Freshmaker,” Mentos candy
- “You’ve Come a Long Way Baby,” Virginia Slims cigarettes
- “The Quicker Picker Upper,” Bounty paper towels
- “Curiously Strong,” Altoids mints
- “The Uncola,” 7UP
- “The Choice of a New Generation,” Pepsi
- “Melts in Your Mouth, Not in Your Hands,” M&M’s
- “The Breakfast of Champions,” Wheaties
- “The King of Beers,” Budweiser
- “Australian for Beer,” Foster’s

**Answers**





**Remember that a tag stands for something uniquely you, or states a truism, or at the very least helps establish an emotional or values connection between you and your customer (“Just Do It” — Nike).**



Nike once abandoned the “Just Do It” tag for a few years. But the slogan so perfectly connected the brand and its image with the consumers that the company realized they will be “Just Do It” forever. And the tag returned.

In 1969, 7-Eleven introduced a slogan for stores in New Mexico and Texas, “Oh Thank Heaven for 7-Eleven.” Immediately successful, the tag spread to all other stores by 1970. Over time, 7-Eleven tweaked the tag and even experimented with other tags, but in the end, the retailer found the public so closely identified and liked “Oh Thank Heaven,” that it returned full time in the 1990s and is still the slogan today.

“There is a nice rhyme to ‘Heaven’ and ‘7-Eleven,’ and the introduction back in the late ‘60s was so strong and memorable, that it stuck with pop culture,” said Margaret Chabris, director of public relations and marketing for 7-Eleven. “The slogan fits because people are thankful for 7-Eleven [and] what it delivers — convenience and value — what people need, when and where they need it.”

### “Good to the Last Drop”

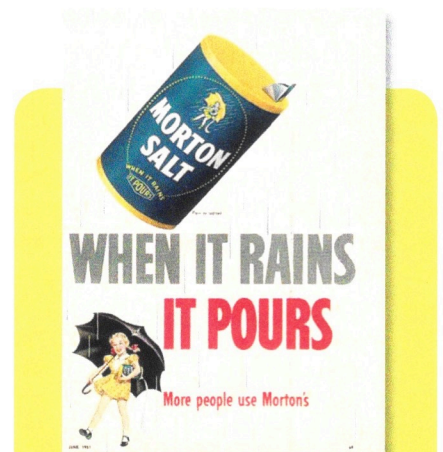
Often slogans and tags are stand-alone statements, “Put a tiger in your tank” (Exxon). Other times they emerge from a rhyme or jingle, “You can trust your car to the man who wears the star” (Texaco). At the end of the day, if you want to make use of a tagline or slogan for your business you should.

Remember that a tag that stands for something uniquely you (“We Answer to a Higher Authority” — Hebrew National), or states a truism (“Save Money. Live Better.” — Walmart), or at the very least helps establish an emotional or values connection between you and your customer (“Just Do It” — Nike) will carry you much further than a generic, meaningless slogan.

Williams explains that a brand doesn’t need a slogan to excel, but a good

one can help form a bond between consumer and company. “You don’t have to have a slogan to be different. And having a slogan in and of itself doesn’t make you different, but you do need something that helps establish who you are or defines you if you want to be more than just a stop people make. And a good slogan can be a part of that.” **NACS**

*Michael Klein is a freelance writer living in Virginia. Also, he’s a Pepper and thinks you’d like to be one too. He can be reached at michael.klein18@verizon.net.*



### DID YOU KNOW?

Morton Salt’s very famous tagline, “When It Rains It Pours,” used to convey a clear benefit to consumers, even though that meaning is now lost on most of us. Unlike other brands, Morton made their salt in a way so that it wouldn’t clump together when it became humid. The salt literally continued pouring, even if it was raining outside. The slogan really meant something to your great-grandmother, less so to you, but you probably still recognize it.