



Turning Off the Media with LAQs

By Tom Gable

Most news releases include a quote from a company executive in the second or third paragraph. One editor at a media relations conference named the category as “the typical lame ass quote (LAQs).” He said 90 percent of the releases he receives are rife with self-serving pap and have two chances of getting published – slim and none.

As a test of the quality of any quote, read it aloud. If it doesn’t sound like something any human being would say in polite conversation, dump it.

The following LAQs came from a random selection of releases retrieved off the wire services during a one-week period. The names have been concealed to protect the innocent (guilty!).

- “The project is intended to bring FTA’s business-to-business site to the forefront of leading corporate web initiatives.” *(Previously, the site had the quality of chopped yak liver.)*
“Through the site, FTA’s business users will have access to interactive tools that offer solutions to solve business problems, improve business results and enhance creativity.” *(We have solutions to solve!)*
- “The combination of TUV’s innovative, strategic thinking and WXY’s advanced technology will serve as an accelerator for the development of next generation business systems...to convert into a competitive advantage for our clients by providing them with more reliable, scalable and provable solutions and faster time to market.” *(Guess what we are selling and win a week’s vacation at Hawaii’s leading resort for tanning solutions)*
- “We are thrilled that XYZ embraces and supports our vision of providing e-blank services to the Global 1000. The combined expertise of XYZ and BFD offers businesses a unique blend of consulting services and systems integration with XYZ’s leading world-class software and hardware that results in an array of competitive selling advantages. We’re elated to be working with a company of XYZ’s caliber and view the reliability and scalability of their Internet platforms as critical to the success of our clients.” *(A minimum of eight buzz words in three sentences!)*
- “We are committed to offering the highest quality products and services that provide the biggest values for our customers *(We used to offer low-quality, high-priced products that were usually returned for a full refund within a week of delivery).*”

- “I am dedicated to driving our company to becoming the leading source...our front-end technology is well-suited for back-end solution companies to provide an integrated multimedia exchange or vertical portal for their partners.” *(Some people might worry about front ends and back ends getting together.)*
- “From a business perspective, we recognized the importance of providing services to our customers – patients, members, physicians – electronically. This will allow us to take our Web presence to the next level...provide consumers with healthcare information they can use.” *(In the past, we didn't recognize the importance of providing services to our customers and largely gave them unusable information.)*
- “In the long run, we believe the partnership with XYZ will revolutionize the way we do business throughout the bank. This will both steer our way into the new economy and help us implement Internet solutions throughout our company. XYZ itself is built on a business model that combines proven business strategy with cutting edge Internet solution skills and breakthrough thinking.” *(In the future, we may even think about providing specific examples of what we do!)*
- “ABC is recognized for its strategy and technology expertise and the ability to rapidly design, develop and deliver e-business.” *(If they are so well recognized, who is this company?)*
- “MNO has the vision and technological strategy to service and communicate with current and future Internet users.” *(Previously, we ignored Internet users and just talked to ourselves, hence the fairly poor showing on the revenues front.)*
- "Partnering with RFQ enables us to build an infrastructure that securely manages any of our customers' e-business initiatives. [The software's] flexible and scalable foundation makes secure access in today's complex, Web based environments quick and easy. We are very pleased to be working with a best of breed technology provider like RFQ as we move forward in developing customized solutions that all of our clients can benefit from." *(Prior to this, we used off-the-shelf crap in an unsecured environment that our clients couldn't benefit from.)*

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