

Mintz & Hoke Communications Group

Aviation Communications
A thought piece on the category.

M I N T Z & H O K E

Working in the aviation category for over two decades with brands ranging from Pratt & Whitney to Rockwell Collins, from Sikorsky to Embraer, Mintz & Hoke has gleaned many insights into how and how not to communicate in this dynamic and challenging industry. The insights we share here were forged out of helping our clients overcome diverse communications challenges, allowing them to successfully reach their goals and aspirations.

“At the end of the day,
even engineers buy
with their hearts.”

Engaging the heart as well as the mind

Given the technical nature of aviation, one would think communications need to be all about rational appeals. A line of thought that certainly explains the plethora of marketing materials that are all features and functions along with a dose of technical specs for good measure.

However experience has taught us one irrefutable fact. That people – including engineers – tend to buy emotionally and justify it rationally. Meaning that to forgo any emotion is selling your communications short. Aviation target audiences are highly charged, passionate individuals. They wouldn't be in the category if they weren't. That's why the best aviation communications are those that engage both the heart and the mind. This is where brands are built – and felt. And where deep emotional connections are forged.



Pratt & Whitney

A United Technologies Company



Hamilton Sundstrand

A United Technologies Company

“Everyone needs to see this merger is more than integrating two companies, it’s about a better way to integrate the systems on your aircraft.”

A statement of business intentions

It is often said in aviation circles that an ad will never sell a product or service. Something that is probably true. What the right communications can do is create a favorable market climate for you to demonstrate your business intentions in an industry that cares a great deal about its image. Further, your business intentions must translate into a customer benefit. People in aviation watch closely what you say as well as where you say it. Be it the trade journals or at Farnborough, Paris, Singapore or Dubai Air Shows. You want to see and be seen, as your future is being judged by legions of press, advertising and trade show audiences.

“Buying an aircraft is like a marriage. We’re committed to making it work for 20, 30 years or more.”

It's all about relationships

Very few industry categories are as driven and shaped by relationships as aviation. Long sales and product cycles necessitate relationships that run deep and extend for years, from person to person, from company to company. This same principle holds true for communications and advertising. Relationships are often the core brand attribute for aviation brands. The best aviation communications reflect the tone and tenor of their relationship's influences, serving as a mirror of how they interact and relate with customers day in and day out. People buy from other people and nowhere is that more apparent than in the aviation industry.

“We don’t make the platform. How do we look different than all the other partners on it?”

Hardware is not always needed

Flip through any of the leading aviation and defense publications and you’ll find a plethora of hardware ads, all leading to a vast sea of sameness. The target audience has seen hardware literally thousands of times. It stands to reason you can’t catch their interest with hardware all the time. Instead, you must find a way to creatively render the benefit that makes your audience stop, think and, ultimately, act. By doing this, you are winning the battle for the mind. A very lucrative space that allows you to carve out a differentiated position based on a benefit and/or a solution.

“How do we make sure every employee realizes that they really do ‘Build trust every day’?”

The brand inside

Aviation communications isn't just what you articulate to the outside world. It's what you say to your internal audience that can make all the difference. Communications that resonate with your employees are at the core of any successful marketing and communications effort. When your people personify your brand promise, when they live it, understand it and convey it in the same way, every day, they make your customer trust not only what you say, but who you are.

**Rockwell
Collins**

Building trust every day

The Mintz & Hoke Difference

What have 20 years in the aviation category taught us? That respect in aviation communications isn't given – it's earned. This industry has a steep learning curve, one that can only be overcome by a deep-seated drive for learning its ins and outs. You have to live it and be a part of it to truly know and be accepted by it. Respect comes from talking with everyone from senior level executives to flight line mechanics to engineers to operators in customer service. It's about having a passion to be part of an industry that reserves respect for those who have been there and done that. This is the only way to truly understand how to create advertising and communications that fundamentally change the way the game is played in aviation circles.