Can you keep your promise?

When you are trying to market your services or your product, you will naturally try to make the product or service look appealing. That's fine, as long as you are not overselling or over-promising. If you oversell or promise something you can't deliver, you will run into problems.

Let me give you an example, drawn from my experience this week with the US Postal Service.

My mother sent me an express package on Monday. It was guaranteed to be delivered by noon on Tuesday. It wasn't. I called the 1-800 to track it and find out where it was. After some problems with the automated attendant (that is a whole other issue), I got through to a representative. She had no idea where my package was or when I would get it. At one point, she put me on hold. During this interlude, I found out that:

> *For delivery you can rely on, choose the United States Postal Service.*

Is that supposed to be a joke? My "express" package arrived more than 24 hours after it was "guaranteed" to arrive. And as I learned from the customer service agent, the guarantee is really about your money. They don't actually guarantee the arrival of the express packages at their destination, but rather, if your package doesn't arrive when they say it will, they will give you your money back.

I guess that when you absolutely, positively need it there by a certain time, don't use the USPS, use Fedex (or UPS). For those of you who don't remember the Fedex ad, here it is

[youtube id=31yxkSIIn9A&fs=1&hl=en_US&rel=0]

The quickest thing you can do ruin your reputation is to

promise that you will do something that you can't or won't do. And reputation is important in marketing. What do you think my impression is of the USPS?

So, when you are prepping your marketing materials (and especially your tag line), be careful about what you say. Daily Blog Tips has a great post on 10 Tips to Improve Your Sales Copy Today. Note that their number two tip is: **Don't Make a Promise You Can't Keep.**

