

# Taking Control of Your Business Success

## Be Proactive: Use Proven Marketing Strategies

45 Articles on Subjects Important to Your Business Success--Including...  
The Pieces You Need • How to Create Them • Strategies • Techniques • Trends  
Plus Bonus Articles on Select Niches

*Lisa J. Lehr is the 9th-ranked author of 3300 marketing authors on  
EzineArticles.com.*

You've received this Marketing Guide  
Compliments of Lisa J. Lehr  
Just Right Copy, LLC  
[www.justrightcopy.com](http://www.justrightcopy.com)  
[lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com)  
fax (267)345-2761  
Lisa J. Lehr ©2008

*This Marketing Guide may be shared, distributed, republished, and reprinted freely,  
provided it is kept intact.*

Complete Table of Contents on pages 2-3

Page 5: **Reminder list of essential marketing pieces**

Page 7: **Special offer for serious marketers**

Pages 8-53: **45 Information-packed articles on marketing**

Page 8: **Why a Recession Is No Time to Cut Back on Advertising**

Pages 9-13: 4 articles on **Things you must know before you get started**

Pages 14-32: 19 articles on **Essential marketing pieces**

Pages 32-43: 13 articles on **Techniques to maximize the impact of  
your sales message**

Pages 44-46: 3 articles on important **Miscellaneous marketing-related  
topics**

Pages 47-53: **5 bonus articles** on pets, health, self-help, and more

Pages 54-55: **About the Author, Lisa J. Lehr**

## Table of contents

1. Marketing trend: **Why a Recession Is No Time to Cut Back on Advertising**

### Things you must know before you get started

2. 12 Questions to Ask Your Copywriter
3. How to Save Money on Your Marketing (More Importantly--How Not To)
4. 7 Secrets to Shortcut Moneymaking
5. Your Ultimate Personal Marketing Plan

### Essential marketing pieces

6. Your **USP**: What If Your Competition Has a Better One?
7. Your Sales Letter's **Headline**--How Important Is It?
8. Your Offer's **Guarantee**: 9 Important Principles
9. Your **Order Device**: 9 Mistakes You Might Be Making
10. How to Get Your Audience to **Take Action**
11. **Testimonials, part 1**--Essential Part of Your Promotion
12. **Testimonials, part 2**--Powerful Ways to Use Them
13. **Testimonials, part 3**--What If You Don't Have Any?
14. **Articles**: Why You Need Your Own
15. **Autoresponders**: The Tool That Could Mean 90% of Your Sales
16. **Bios** as Part of Your Marketing Package--Who, Why, and How
17. **Case Studies**: a Powerful Marketing Tool
18. **Catalogs**--If You Don't Have One, Why Not?
19. **Magalog**--the Next Logical Step
20. **Postcards**--Yes, They Still Work
21. **Press Releases**: Small Tool With Big Power
22. **Self-Mailers**--When and How to Use Them
23. **White Papers**--a Marketing Tool You Might Not Have Thought Of
24. 3 Ways to Get **Free** (or Inexpensive) **Publicity** for Your Business

### Techniques to maximize the impact of your message

25. **You're Not Selling the Obvious**
26. How to **Target Your Market**
27. **Solve Your Customer's Problem**--Their Happiness Is Your Success
28. Use the Right Language to **Reach Your Target Audience**
29. **Correct English** in Your Sales Message--Important or Not?
30. Right Ways and Wrong Ways to **Ask Questions in Your Sales Copy**
31. How to **Make Money by Giving Stuff Away**
32. How to **Make Your Customers Think You're a Genius**
33. How to **Price Your Product or Service Just Right**
34. The Perfect **Length** for a Sales Letter
35. The Power of **Storytelling**

- 36. Using **the Charismatic Approach** to Selling
- 37. Win-Win **Discount Coupon Strategy**

### **Miscellaneous**

- 38. **Complaining Customers** Are Good for Your Business
- 39. **Marketing Articles:** Writing Them Isn't a Job for Marketers
- 40. **Research:** Why It's Important to the Success of Your Sales Message

Five bonus articles that reflect some of today's **best niches**:

- 41. Bonus article #1: **Healthcare Business:** Where the Money Is--Baby Boomers
- 42. Bonus article #2: **Pet Business:** Profitable Strategy: Treat Pets Like People
- 43. Bonus article #3: **Food Business:** Delicious Opportunity: Chocolate
- 44. Bonus article #4: **Self-Help Business:** Smart Strategy: Gender-Specific Help
- 45. Bonus article #5: **Capitalize on Warm Fuzzies: Donate to Charities**

*"Understand that you need to sell you and your ideas in order to advance your career, gain more respect, and increase your success, influence, and income."  
--Jay Abraham*

Dear Marketer,

You've received this free Marketing Guide either because you've visited my website, or because someone thought you'd find it useful. Perhaps you first heard about me from a friend or colleague, by searching the Internet for a copywriter, or from one of my articles or press releases. However this paper found its way into your hands, I'm glad it did--and you will be, too.

Please read on. With my compliments, you'll find many tips and techniques for marketing your product or service. Do you have an online business? A brick-and-mortar business? Both? Whatever form your business takes, you'll increase its moneymaking potential using the strategies described in this paper.

You've already seen the table of contents, so you may be eager to get busy reading the articles on the following pages. Great! But before you do, please scan the list of essential marketing pieces on the very next page, and keep these in mind while you read the articles. It's important that you understand that a marketing program works properly only when *all* the pieces are in place.

For example, you need to have an effective website--driving traffic to an ineffective website is useless. *But*--the best website in the world is useless if it gets no traffic. You'll need a list of warmed-up prospects, because they're easier to sell to than cold leads. And you'll need a way to continue communicating with your prospects so they don't forget about you before they're ready to buy.

That may sound complicated, but a professional marketing writer knows how to create all these pieces and put them in place so you can begin making money--or make more money faster.

If you'd like to start a business but aren't sure what niche to go into, you'll find a sample list on page 6. (If you need more advice on how to choose a niche, just ask me.)

And if you want to know how to get a discount on marketing materials for the rest of 2008...well, that's on page 7.

To your success,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

P.S. You have my permission to pass this Marketing Guide around to your friends and colleagues, provided you keep it intact. No individual page or part may be used without my written permission.

Lisa J. Lehr • [www.justrightcopy.com](http://www.justrightcopy.com) • [lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com)

## More than just sales letters: essential marketing pieces

- ✓ Abstracts
- ✓ Ads (Yellow Pages, space ads)
- ✓ Annual reports
- ✓ Audiovisual scripts
- ✓ Autoresponders
- ✓ Bios/personality profiles
- ✓ Brochures
- ✓ Business history
- ✓ Case studies
- ✓ Catalog copy
- ✓ Editing & proofreading copy
- ✓ Fact sheets
- ✓ Fundraising letters
- ✓ Ghostwriting
- ✓ Instruction manuals
- ✓ Lead generation letters
- ✓ Letters (appeal, apology, complaint, other)
- ✓ Magalogs
- ✓ News releases
- ✓ Newsletters (internal, external)
- ✓ Product literature
- ✓ Research
- ✓ Sales letters
- ✓ Web content
- ✓ White papers

Are you too busy to read? Let me read those important books, articles, and reports for you. I'll write you a summary covering the most important points, leaving you free to do your job...or whatever else you choose to spend your time on.

*"If you pay peanuts you get monkeys, so most copy is not very good. A shame, as it is perhaps the cheapest ingredient in success."--Drayton Bird*

*"Drayton Bird knows more about direct marketing than anyone else in the world."  
--Advertising Legend David Ogilvy*

## Niches worth getting into

Quality of life issues define many of our choices, from what we eat to how we spend our free time. If your product or service falls into any of the following niches, you're positioned for success in the 21st century. Let's talk about the next step in your journey to success.

- Health/alternative health/fitness
- Pets
- Food (natural foods, chocolate, coffee and tea, wine, imported and specialty foods)
- Education
- Art
- Self-help, self-improvement
- Faith-based, inspirational, motivational

If your niche is outside this list, feel free to ask me anyway. I've actually created marketing pieces for niches as diverse as computer consulting, professional cleaning services, and real estate. I love to research! Let me tackle your project.

*"Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising."*

*--Mark Twain*

Tell 3 friends or business associates about  
**Just Right Copy**  
and receive 10% off any services in 2008.  
Here's how you do it:

- Tell 3 people (preferably more!) about me and what I can do for their business.
- When they visit my website, [www.justrightcopy.com](http://www.justrightcopy.com), make sure they put *your name* in the "How you found me" box of the opt-in form.
- When you contact me about a project, remind me to look for your name in the "How you found me" field on my list. (You don't have to know who used your name!)

You receive 10% off any and all projects I do for you in 2008! It really is that simple, and you really do have nothing to lose.

*"The best looking merchandise won't sell without the intelligent persuasion of somebody's words."  
--Elmer Wheeler*

## Bonus article on current marketing trend

### 1. Why a Recession Is No Time to Cut Back on Advertising

Fears of recession have a definite impact on people's buying habits. When money is tight, people automatically cut back on things they think they can do without. If you're in business, however, some things you may be inclined "cut" are things your business really *cannot* survive without.

One potentially fatal mistake is to cut back on advertising. Even in a recession, people buy things, and the products and services they choose are the ones with the greatest top-of-mind awareness.

The products and services that have the greatest top-of-mind awareness are the ones being advertised, of course. When people are spending more selectively, you want your share of the dollars they do spend, so you must put your advertising dollars where they'll work the hardest. Here's how to leverage your advertising dollars for the greatest return on investment:

1. Outsource. Find freelancers to take care of your design and marketing needs. Burdening staff members who aren't skilled in these areas is a sure path to wasted time and money.
2. Don't use an ad agency. Snazzy, clever ads win awards but don't bring in consumer dollars. Results aren't measured--and guesswork is a costly game.
3. Study the competition. Pinpoint what they're doing to win a share of the market, then make one of two choices: do the same thing better, or do something else.
4. Find the emotional hot button that activates people in difficult times. You may need to tweak your marketing message to fit the circumstances.
5. Stay top-of-mind. Publish a newsletter (online and/or offline), maintain an effective website, do direct mail pieces, send press releases, submit a regular stream of marketing articles to online article directories, offer free reports and white papers, write a column for a local or trade publication, start a blog.

The important thing is *not* to waste time doing nothing. Successful businesses are already taking the above actions. The more time you waste on weak marketing efforts, the better a foothold your competition gains in your market niche. And the better a foothold they gain, the harder it will be for you to reclaim your lost ground--*especially* in tough economic times.

You don't want the business you've worked so hard to build fail just because of a temporarily weak economy!

## Before you get started

### 2. 12 Questions to Ask Your Copywriter

A major portion of your success in business will depend upon your selection of a copywriter. Before you choose one to work with, you'll need to ask him or her a series of important questions. I recommend these 15 questions along with the answers you should be listening for.

1. "How much do you charge for (web copy, a sales letter, or any piece or package)?"

If the copywriter immediately answers with a specific figure, that's a red flag. A good copywriter will want to ask *you* a lot of questions first, including how much research and/or how many interviews she'll be doing, etc. She should also make suggestions you may not have thought of, and most copywriters offer a "package," wherein the total fee is less than it would be for the sum of the individual components.

2. "Can you turn this around fast? I need it yesterday."

Some copywriters may get a "rush" out of doing "rush jobs," but here are a couple things to consider. First, if the copywriter is available immediately, his schedule is not very full, and there may be a reason for that. Second, most copywriters recognize the need to take time to get "into" a new project.

3. "Will it cost less if I do it myself, and you 'improve' it?"

The answer to look for here is "no." The project needs to be developed with a marketing mindset from concept to completion. Some copywriters may do editing work on the side, but a boring, unconvincing piece of prose cannot be "edited" or "improved" into a marketing piece.

4. "Do you have a website?"

If he says no, that's a *big* red flag. A website and an autoresponder series are *basic* components of a marketing plan. A copywriter who doesn't have his own shouldn't be doing yours.

5. "Will you be writing my copy yourself?"

This may seem like an odd question, but some copywriters actually "farm out" their projects to other copywriters and take a cut of the fee. This isn't *necessarily* bad, but you do want to know who is actually writing your copy.

6. "How good a writer are you?"

This is also a trick question. While a copywriter should be a good writer, she should be, above all, a good salesperson. Copywriting isn't creative writing. It's writing words that *sell* your product or service and *make you money*.

7. "How much do you charge per hour/word/page?"

The answer to this question should be "I don't." Most copywriters charge by the project, and some will work on a monthly retainer basis. That's the only way you can be sure from the start how much the project is going to cost you.

8. "What happens if you change your mind about doing the project?"

If the copywriter changes her mind and decides not to do the project--for any reason--after you've paid all or part of the fee, she should return the money to you. If *you* decide to cancel the project, however, she will be entitled to a "kill fee." If you're concerned about this, make sure you discuss it up-front.

9. "What happens if I want something changed in the copy?"

A common policy is two reasonable revisions allowed within 30 days after the deadline. If you want bigger changes, or future revisions, expect a Change Order. Be sure to discuss what "reasonable" means if you're concerned about this.

10. "Who critiques your work?"

The answer to this should be another working copywriter. If she says "nobody--I don't need anyone's critique," or if she says, "my mom/neighbor/best friend/etc.," this is not a good sign. All good copywriters welcome input from colleagues.

11. "Are you an SEO expert?"

If he says "yes," you should be concerned. Most copywriters know that content is king. Keyword-stuffing usually backfires in the form of reduced sales. If the copywriter doesn't know this, keep looking.

12. "Do you offer a complete marketing program?"

The answer to this one should be a resounding "yes." Expect the copywriter to know more about what you need than you do.

One more thing: you should be able to fit these 12 questions and answers into a half-hour consultation. Many copywriters offer this for free.

### **3. How to Save Money on Your Marketing (More Importantly--How Not To)**

Unless they're independently wealthy and run their business as a hobby, every marketer wants to know how to sell their product or service in the least wasteful, most cost-effective manner. Here are five things people often do--but shouldn't.

1. Develop your marketing program yourself. (Don't.)

Most copywriters have spent years and tens of thousands of dollars developing their skills. And no matter how good they are, until they retire, they continue to learn and improve their skills. If you do what they do, you'll *be* a copywriter--instead of whatever your role really is.

2. Use an advertising agency. (Don't.)

Ad agencies are expensive. They don't measure results. And unfortunately, their goal isn't necessarily to please you. The ads that win awards are clever and entertaining, but they don't necessarily motivate people to buy.

3. Leave your marketing success to chance. (Don't.)

Some people get lucky. They come up with some great idea and it catches on like wildfire. (Remember the pet rock?) More often, people make their own luck by making smart decisions. Do you have the luxury of wasting time and money on hit-or-miss marketing strategies?

4. Choose the copywriter who bids the lowest. (Don't.)

If you've been paying attention so far, you've decided to work with a professional copywriter. But you pretty much get what you pay for, so never choose the one who bids the lowest. Lowest-bid copywriters aren't the way to save money; chances are you'll next be looking for a higher-bid copywriter to get the job re-done right.

5. Conclude that nobody wants your product or service, give up, and start over with a new idea. (Don't.)

If possible, make sure there's a demand for your product or service before you invest time and money in it. But keep in mind that even the best offering will flop if your marketing efforts are inadequate. Your success in business will be only as great as your marketing strategy.

There you have it--five ways *not* to try to save money promoting your product or service.

#### **4. 7 Secrets to Shortcut Moneymaking**

Most people are in business to make money, and preferably as much as possible and as fast as possible. Here are seven secrets on how to do just that:

The first secret is that there is no real shortcut. There is, fortunately, a shortest distance between where you are now and where you want to be, and everyone knows the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. *Your* straight line is a plan that includes no wasteful expenditure of money or action.

The second secret is to decide what your product or service will be. The two best considerations in making this choice are your area of expertise/experience and your passion: you have to know what you're doing, and you have to enjoy doing it.

The third secret is that you need to make sure there's a demand for your product or service. Search for similar/competing products or services; see how many

books and magazines are devoted to the subject. Lots of company in your niche isn't *necessarily* bad. If *too many* competing businesses are already out there, you'll need a killer USP to make it; yet if *no one* is providing a similar product or service, it may indicate the lack of a market for it.

The fourth secret is that you must advertise your product or service. Do all the advertising your budget will allow. If your budget is small, take advantage of inexpensive (and free, whenever possible) forms of advertising. As you begin making sales, roll as much as you can back into advertising.

The fifth secret: ramp up your marketing as your budget increases. Do everything you can to stay in front of your target market. Even as you grab hold of your share of the market, and word-of-mouth advertising spreads--unless you're getting so many orders you just can't keep up--continue advertising.

The sixth secret: upsell. It's a basic principle of selling that there are three ways to increase profits: get more customers, get your customers to make more purchases, and get your customers to make more expensive purchases. The third is the most cost-effective. If your customers trust you and like what you offer, they are eager to spend more money with you.

The seventh and final secret is to work with a professional copywriter. Many companies have tried to crank out their own marketing programs, and even as that tactic has failed, have continued to throw good money after bad. We've all heard the definition of insanity: Doing the same thing and expecting different results. Let a professional take charge of your marketing from the beginning.

There you have them: seven secrets to shortcut moneymaking. The truth, however, is that they're not really secrets--most smart marketers already know them. And they're not really shortcuts--they're just the *shortest possible* route to where you want to be: making money selling your product or service.

## **5. Your Ultimate Personal Marketing Plan**

In this day of one-size-fits-all, impersonal service, some businesses still offer personalized attention. If you own a business, you probably don't have money to waste on ineffective advertising. Yet if you don't know where to look and what to look for, one-size-fits-all, impersonal marketing may be all you can find.

Here are nine things you should expect from the copywriter you choose for developing your marketing program:

1. A free consultation. Good service starts there. You don't want to pay a copywriter just to *find out* if he or she is a good fit for you.

2. A thoughtful answer to the question "How much do you charge for [whatever]?" A quick answer says "one size fits all."
3. Copy that is actually written by the copywriter you choose. You may not be aware that some copywriters actually farm out projects to lesser-paid copywriters and take a cut of the fee.
4. A copywriter who specializes in your niche. A "generalist" copywriter may do a pretty good of writing your copy--but a specialist will capture your message so much better.
5. A copywriter honest enough to say so if it turns out he can't or doesn't want to do your project--and return any and all fees you've paid. If he truly doesn't have time, and ends up rushing through your project; or really can't get excited about your niche, and fakes his way through it, you'll end up with copy that fails to resonate with your audience.
6. A copywriter who'll allow you to make one or two reasonable revisions within a set time frame. Whether you or the copywriter has made an honest mistake, or whether it was a simple miscommunication, she should be willing to work with you a little.
7. Service that includes a critique by at least one other copywriter. Most copywriters have good working relationships with each other, and a second opinion on your project can result in small changes that make a huge difference.
8. A complete marketing program customized to your niche, your business, your goals, your time frame, your priorities, and your budget. A copywriter who offers a boilerplate, set-in-concrete plan to every client isn't giving you the individualized attention you deserve.
9. A copywriter who isn't too busy for you. A good copywriter will probably have a pretty full schedule, but if the one you're considering is booked for six months to a year, keep looking. There are plenty of good copywriters who can fit you into their schedules in a more timely manner.

Expect personalized service. Accept nothing less.

*"The professional that most people think they can do without--the copywriter--is the one who can have the biggest impact on the success of your site."  
--Scottie Claiborne, "The Secret Sauce in Web Site Marketing"*

## Important marketing pieces you need

### 6. Your USP: What If Your Competition Has a Better One?

If you want your business to succeed, one of the first things you need to determine is: what's your USP?

In his book *Reality in Advertising*, Rosser Reeves, Chairman of the Board at Ted Bates & Company, gives this definition of unique selling proposition (also called unique selling point):

1. Each advertisement must make a proposition to the customer: "buy this product, and you will get this specific benefit."
2. The proposition itself must be unique--something that competitors do not, or will not, offer.
3. The proposition must be strong enough to pull new customers to the product.

So what's *yours*?

If you're not sure, spend some time figuring it out. Ask for--and accept--feedback from others. One way you can do this is a customer survey, which can be done online or offline. Offer them something of value in return for their input. Then see what features and benefits of your product, service, or business seem to stand out.

You may not have complete choice in your USP. For example, if you're not the oldest pizza joint/pharmacy/dry-cleaning establishment in town, you never will be, unless and until all competitors with more seniority go out of business. But you can leverage your position--whatever it may be--to your advantage. A few examples:

- You're not the biggest: Your small size makes you more personal and more responsive to your customers' needs and preferences.
- You're not the oldest: Your newness means you're not set in your ways; you're open to suggestions.
- You don't have the best location: Your out-of-the-way spot means less traffic and a not-yet-discovered feel.
- You're not the cheapest: Your focus on quality and personalized service appeals to customers who appreciate it.

- You're not the fastest: You give each job the time and attention it deserves and won't rush through your customer's job to get to the next one.

Whether yours is an online or offline business, the above USPs can work.

Jay Abraham, "America's Number One Marketing Wizard," says, "The possibilities for building a USP are unlimited. It's best, however, to adopt a USP that dynamically addresses an obvious void in the marketplace.... Most business owners don't have a USP.... There's nothing unique; there's nothing distinct. They promise no great value, benefit, or service--just 'buy from us' for no justifiable, rational reason."

If you don't have a USP--or you're not sure what it is--you can enlist the services of a professional copywriter to develop one. Besides, if your competitors don't have well-defined USPs either, you will have a huge and immediate advantage over them as soon as you identify your USP and capitalize on it.

## **7. Your Sales Letter's Headline--How Important Is It?**

Your headline is only a few words out of your entire sales piece. So how important can it be? Well, according to advertising legend David Ogilvy, the headline is *the most important part* of your sales piece. On the average, he says, five times as many people read the headline as the body copy.

Here are some other figures to illustrate the importance of a headline:

1. You have 5 seconds to get your prospect's attention.
2. You might spend 80% of your copywriting time on just the headline.
3. You could write dozens of headlines before you choose one.

Once you've selected the best headline out of those dozens, you can still use the others:

1. Some as subheads.
2. Different headlines to target different audiences.
3. The runners-up can be used for testing purposes, until you find the one that pulls best.

There are many effective ways to write a headline, but here are three:

1. Ask a question (caution--there are right and wrong ways to ask questions in headlines).
2. Use a testimonial--a quote from a person who's had the same problem, and found your product or service as the solution, is powerfully persuasive.

3. Give statistics--specific numbers are always more convincing than vague claims. For example, "Lose up to 75 pounds in 3 months!" is more convincing than just "Lose a lot of weight fast."

Write your headline first, and 80% of your work may be done. At the same time, if you don't give enough attention to this part of your sales piece, you may be losing 80% of your sales. That's how important headlines are!

## **8. Your Offer's Guarantee: 9 Important Principles**

The guarantee is sometimes an undervalued part of a sales package. Actually, it's one of the most important, because the prospect might be completely sold until he or she reaches the buying decision--and then chicken out. The guarantee's job is to prevent "shopping cart dropout" by removing all doubts, reservations, and hesitations the prospect might still have.

Here are 9 important principles of the guarantee:

1. The guarantee removes all risks associated with the buying decision. If there's nothing to lose, your prospect will think: why not? Make sure they have nothing to lose.
2. The guarantee strengthens the customer's faith in her purchase. If you stand behind your product, she trusts you--and people who trust you are likely to buy from you.
3. Throughout the copy, anticipate and dispel any misgivings the prospect may have about the product. The prospect arrives at the buying decision with few reservations.
4. Remember what's in it for you! A satisfied customer is a loyal customer...and a loyal customer is a profitable one.
5. The stronger the claim, the stronger the guarantee must be. If the claims made in the offer are a stretch of credibility, instead of the standard 15-, 30-, or 60-day guarantee, make it a longer time period.
6. The reverse holds true--the *more* credibility an offer has, the *less* of a guarantee it needs. And, by the same token, there's a point of diminishing returns; an over-the-top guarantee suggests product claims are not believable.
7. Repeat the guarantee throughout the sales package.
8. Restate the guarantee in the P.S.

9. For a special touch, create a Certificate of Guarantee. The customer can use it as a return form if he needs to ask for his money back. (But he probably won't.)

Use these 9 principles of the guarantee in your offer, and your chances of making the sale (and not having to make a refund) increase greatly.

### Nine (9). **Your Order Device: 9 Mistakes You Might Be Making**

Some people think of the order form as just a boring document, and thus treat it almost as an afterthought. That's a big mistake. Studies have shown that once your prospect has opened the sales package, the order form is usually the *first thing* he or she reads. So if you miss the mark with your order device, your entire package stands a good chance of ending up in the trash.

Here are nine characteristics you want to avoid with your order device:

1. Confusing. Just like your call to action, if it's not clear to your prospect what he's supposed to do...he's not going to do it.
2. Boring. You must restate the benefits of your offer; otherwise, your prospect may forget what she was so excited about and change her mind about buying.
3. Ugly. Don't neglect to keep the design elements consistent with the rest of your sales package--layout, colors, font, and graphics. Remember, if the order device is a turnoff, your prospect will probably toss the package.
4. Not believable. The voice and tone of the order form must also be consistent, or your prospects may sense something's not right and back out.
5. Missing the guarantee. You need to tell your prospect he has nothing to lose by trying what you're offering.
6. Physically challenging. If it's too small or crowded to fill out, some prospects won't. Some people have long names or addresses that won't fit into a tiny space. Some people have vision problems; others may have difficulty writing small and neatly. Make it easy for everyone.
7. Limiting. Offer several levels ("good-better-best") and payment options, as well as several means of contact in case your prospect has questions.
8. Missing the premiums. A premium is a bonus or gift your customer gets for buying what you're offering. It's important for making your customer feel she's

getting more than she's paying for, and there's lots of room for creativity in choosing the premiums.

9. Doubling as something else. If you've put other important information on the back, such as your contact information or the guarantee, your prospect may hesitate to part with it to send in the order form. That's a "mixed message" you want to avoid.

The order device is so important, it's often the *first thing* a copywriter writes in a sales package. Remember, a prospect is not a customer until he or she buys. You may make a brilliant case for buying your product or service, but if you lose the prospect at the order device, you don't make the sale.

## **10. How to Get Your Audience to Take Action**

Whether your sales message is a web page, sales letter, e-mail, brochure, or other piece, one of the last things your prospect reads is also one of the most important--the *call to action*. That's where you tell the prospect what to do, and it could be any of a number of things:

- Click the order button.
- Fill out the order form.
- Call and talk to a representative/make an appointment/request further information.
- Return this card/coupon/survey for something of value.
- Make a donation.

You may think your prospects will figure out how to get what they want, if they want it badly enough. But if it's too much work, many people will just give up. People have short attention spans, and the easier you make it for them, the better response you'll get.

Of course, the copy leading up to the call to action has to be compelling enough to make the reader *want* to take action. If you've already lost your prospect, the best call to action in the world isn't going to get read. At the same time, the most fascinating story or convincing sales pitch is pointless if it doesn't result in an action that helps you make money.

Here are some ways to make the desired action perfectly clear:

1. Tell them in plain language: click...call...send...e-mail...write a check...just say it.
2. Warn them what they'll miss if they don't--restate the benefits they'll receive only by taking action.

3. Emphasize any urgency or mention any limitations to the offer--time or quantity, for example.
4. Offer several forms of contact--phone number, e-mail, and mailing address. Different people are comfortable with different methods, so make it easy for everyone.
5. Tell them again. The P.S. is often used to reiterate what the prospect is supposed to do, and sometimes even a P.P.S. and/or a P.P.P.S.

No, you're not suggesting your readers are clueless. But you don't want to make the mistake of leading them through a convincing, well-crafted sales piece only to have them bail out without buying because it's too much trouble to figure out what to do.

## **11. Testimonials, part 1--an Essential Part of Your Promotion**

Testimonials are a powerful selling tool because they're an unbiased source of information. Of course the person selling the product or service is going to say it's great, but quoting satisfied customers is a powerful credibility builder. Testimonials are regular people saying, "I'm just like you. I had the same problem. This helped me, and it'll work for you too."

### How to get testimonials

The easiest way is to record the testimonials you receive naturally. Ask your customers' permission to quote them and used their names; full names and hometowns are most convincing, but if they're reluctant to be identified, I'll suggest some alternatives in a later article.

Another way to get testimonials is simply to ask your satisfied customers. A third party asking for testimonials *for* you, however, will get a more honest and heartfelt response.

A great strategy is to send out a customer feedback questionnaire. Give them space to tell you things they *don't* like, and they'll be more likely to give you *positive* feedback as well. Be sure to offer them something of value in exchange for their input.

### Where to put your testimonials

You have several options depending on the format of the package. In an offline letter, the testimonials can be in the body of the letter, either sprinkled throughout the copy or in a sidebar. A longer testimonial can be turned into a lift note. Testimonials can even be made into headlines and/or subheads.

Online, the same general principles apply.

What if you have a new business, product, or service?

You can still find testimonials--testimonials about your skill and integrity from other careers or pursuits; testimonials about the product or service itself, gleaned from corporate information.

You can offer an introductory discount to get your business off the ground and get those testimonials rolling in.

The other kind of testimonials: endorsements

An endorsement is similar to a testimonial, but comes from someone with a recognized name or credentials and kind of connection to the product or service. An endorsement is a goldmine if you have a new offering with little in the way of customer testimonials.

Testimonials require skill

Like other sales tools, testimonials aren't as easy to write as they may appear. They're not simply plugged in word-for-word; certain elements of a testimonial can actually harm your credibility or bore your prospects, which means they'll stop reading before they buy. A skilled copywriter can even build an entire sales message out of testimonials.

## **12. Testimonials, part 2--Powerful Ways to Use Them**

Once you have a good supply of testimonials, there are many ways you can use them to strengthen your copy.

Here are five:

1. **Headline.** A quote by a real person is a good way to draw your reader into your copy. If your reader wants to lose weight, who wouldn't pay attention to "How I lost 37 pounds in 30 days--and how you can too!"? Be sure to put it in quotes so it's easily recognized as a real person's real words.
2. **Subheads.** After you've selected one for the headline, choose from the others for your subheads. You can do this even if your headline *isn't* a testimonial.
3. **Lift note.** A separate page gives you more space to tell the satisfied customer's story in his or her own words. Because the customer also signs it, it's more personal, therefore more convincing.

4. Boxes or a sidebar. In either case, place each one near the part of the copy that it's related to. For example, put a testimonial saying how delicious your weight-loss diet is near the part of the copy that tells about this benefit.
5. Substance. Gathering the testimonials first to use as major points in your sales message is especially powerful because once you've heard from your satisfied customers, you know exactly what to say in your copy that will resonate with your prospects.

### **13. Testimonials, part 3--What If You Don't Have Any?**

There are a several reasons why you might not have a collection of testimonials; or, you may have an impressive collection of testimonials, but confidentiality issues make it difficult to use them. Following are some possible scenarios and how to deal with them:

Problem 1: You simply have never asked for--or bothered to record--your testimonials.

Solution: Send a letter or e-mail to satisfied customers asking for their testimonials--and their permission to use them. Offer them something of value, such as a discount coupon, in exchange for their feedback. Inviting them to complain, too, makes it more likely they'll share their nice comments with you.

Having a third party ask is a great way to get people to say good things about you.

Problem 2: You have a new business, or your product or service is new.

Solution: Get around this by using testimonials related to--if not directly about--your product or service. Get testimonials from people who know you and can vouch for your integrity and dedication, and from people who knew you in previous business or volunteer pursuits and can praise your knowledge and skill.

Get testimonials about the products from the manufacturer, from vendors of the same or similar products, or for the ingredients or components of the product.

Problem 3: It's a confidentiality situation.

Solution: If you're in a medical or financial niche where privacy is paramount, you can still get testimonials. Simply ask your satisfied customers to check off a list of identifying features they're willing to reveal--first name, initials, hometown, age, occupation, etc. "A 45-year-old woman from Birmingham" or "Bob, a builder" isn't likely to betray anyone's identity. If your market is local, and client identity is still a concern, just invent names--and state that the names are fictitious.

## 14. Articles: Why You Need Your Own

If you have a company website, you may be offering free articles with additional information on your product or service. You may also have articles in online article directories to drive traffic to your website. These are effective strategies, because they a.) increase your website traffic, b.) allow your prospects to educate themselves about your product or service and become convinced of their need for it without pressure, and c.) enable you to go "viral."

Your articles can take several forms. Here are some of the most common--and the benefits and pitfalls of each:

- Links to other websites with copyrighted articles. The good thing about this tactic is that it costs you little in time and usually nothing in money. You simply search your niche, find good information, and provide a link to it on your site.

The negatives are that your readers may get sidetracked with something interesting they find on the other website and forget about you; and that someone else owns the copyright to it, so you can't use it--other than direct your visitors to it--without their permission.

- Syndicated articles in directories like EzineArticles. The pluses here are that, especially if you choose articles by Platinum Authors, there's plenty of good material to choose from, and that you are free to redistribute it.

The minus is that you must keep the authors' resource information intact--giving credit to someone else and sending traffic to someone else's website.

- "Private label rights (PLR)" articles. This may seem like the best of both worlds: you get the information relatively inexpensively, and you can adopt it as your own, changing it however you want and passing it around freely.

In reality, it's the worst of both worlds. Most private label material has been so used, misused, and overused that the search engines eventually recognize it as duplicate content; worse, your readers may also recognize it, which harms your credibility. By the time you've rewritten each sentence to make sure it's both well written and original, you might as well have started from scratch.

The perfect solution: professionally ghostwritten articles. Find a professional who will write quality articles *just for you*. Then you can use them and reuse them in any number of ways:

- Put them on your website.
- Get them published in print publications.

- Repurpose them into video scripts.
- Compile them into an e-book and/or print book.
- Give them away at first so your audience develops a taste for what you have to offer...then sell bigger and better material.
- Publish them online to send traffic to your website; if others use it, they must keep *your* resource information intact--and send you more traffic.

All these strategies accomplish worthy goals: generate traffic, establish you as an expert in your field, and create a mental "stickiness" that leads to your ultimate goal: sales. The big pluses are that you can have your name as the author, and you own the copyright.

## **15. Autoresponders: The Tool That Could Mean 90% of Your Sales**

Did you know there's a tool that could literally bring you 90% of your sales?

This powerful tool is an autoresponder series. You may have heard that it takes "seven touches" to turn a prospect into a buyer. Autoresponders are the perfect way to accomplish those seven touches. Here's why:

1. They're automatic. Once you've placed the opt-in form on your web page and composed your series of seven (or more) messages, those messages go out to your list with no further effort on your part.
2. You create top-of-mind awareness. When your potential buyers need the product or service you offer, they'll think of you first.
3. The system is flexible. You can add, delete, edit, and/or re-order your queue of messages; you can broadcast to your entire list at once if you need to announce a special offer or news item.
4. You're "spam-less." An opt-out link is automatically included at the end of each message. If someone is tired of hearing from you, they just click, they're removed from the list, and no one gets angry with you.
5. You can offer back-end products. You may be able to split your list into those who've bought from you and those who haven't, and offer things like higher-end products and services, continuity programs, and affiliate products to your satisfied customers.

Autoresponders are *particularly* useful if your product is a one-time type of purchase or seasonal item, or an expensive item that people don't buy on

impulse. You don't want your prospects to forget about you between that first visit and when they actually need what you offer.

Autoresponders can be created around any of a variety of themes. They can be based on case studies or testimonials; they can be written like stories; they can each focus on a particular product or service you offer; they can be written like informative articles, establishing you as an authority in your niche, with a "soft sell" message.

## **16. Bios as Part of Your Marketing Package--Who, Why, and How**

You should have a complete set of professional bios as part of your marketing toolkit. They should have their own page on your website, and be part of your print materials as well. The bios should be interesting to read, yet related to the services your company offers and/or market segments you target.

You may want to include bios of all your employees (depending on the size of your company); at the very least, all management, the Board of Directors, and consultants. The best length is approximately 200 to 300 words, perhaps four or five paragraphs. Include each person's role in the company, previous experience, accomplishments, education, awards/honors, memberships in professional or academic organizations, and any other pertinent skills such as speaking a foreign language.

The bios should be updated at least annually, and any time an important change takes place in the company or an individual's biographical information. Each person can write his or her own, but usually everyone is too busy with their primary job functions, and most people don't have the skills or the third-party perspective to determine what's important and craft it into a readable and meaningful piece. Also, uniformity in style, voice, and format is essential.

Include professional, print-quality photos (both online and in the print materials).

Next, compile the bios and pictures into an attractive booklet or binder and place it in the lobby of your business. For customers, it can establish confidence in working with your company; vendors, interviewees, and new employees can familiarize themselves with the important players in the business.

Be sure to ask your copywriter about creating a complete set of bios to add to your website and print marketing materials.

*"Advertising says to people, 'Here's what we've got. Here's what it will do for you. Here's how to get it.'"*

*--Leo Burnett*

## **17. Case Studies: a Powerful Marketing Tool**

Case studies are quite possibly the single best investment your company can make in marketing collateral. Also called case histories, they are so effective because they:

1. Are success stories with your product or service playing a starring role. People like stories; stories have a natural mental "stickiness."
2. Are like extended testimonials, high-credibility third-party endorsements of your product or service. People put more trust in brands that offer customer ratings and reviews.
3. Offer a real-world perspective. While your product or service might perform well in a test setting, case studies show that it works for real people in real life.

Reading about your product or service as a case study makes your prospect feel informed rather than "sold to." If you may have a complex product or service, it may be particularly suited to a case study format rather than a brochure or other traditional sales piece.

In simple terms, a case study goes like this: Customer has a problem. He has a decision to make: which company's product or service will solve his problem? Customer discovers Your Company's product or service and decides to try it. It works! Customer is happy and wants to tell everyone about this thing that solved his problem.

You'll want a variety of case studies. Look at your target market and identify the different segments, then craft a unique case study that resonates with each one.

Case studies can also be re-purposed into a wide variety of other marketing materials: publicity, web copy, a lead-generation letter, material that salespeople hand out, giveaways at trade shows, etc. They can even be made into scripts for video case studies.

## **18. Catalogs--If You Don't Have One, Why Not?**

A catalog is an important marketing tool for all types of businesses, both web-based and brick-and-mortar. These days, virtually anything can be purchased from a catalog: traditional items such as clothing, furniture, books, music, and other forms of entertainment; specialty items like pet, gardening, craft, and beauty supplies; food, wine, and flowers; even intangibles such as concert tickets and trips.

Whatever your product or service, you're missing a huge opportunity if you're not marketing it with a catalog--both a print and an online version. For maximum user-friendliness, also provide a simple PDF version that visitors to your site can print themselves (preferably without using a lot of ink).

The benefits of having a print (or printable) version of your catalog are numerous. It's tangible, portable, and appealing to people who are used to shopping from print catalogs--even if they're computer- and Internet-savvy. Lots of people like to read in bed, while waiting in the car, and other places where viewing a computer screen is inconvenient or impossible.

A U.S. Postal Service study found that "15 percent of consumers who receive a catalog and visit the cataloger's web site make an online purchase."

The study also found that catalogs:

- Move consumers into the sales funnel.
- Impact online purchasing across all customer segments (consumers who received a catalog of a company from which they had not previously purchased were twice as likely to buy as those who did not; existing customers were 33 percent more likely to buy from a retailer's site after receiving one).
- Pack more punch when received in the last 30 days (so you'll want to create a new one at least that often).

Some retailers may be concerned about the high (and rising) cost of postage. Well, you don't have to mail the catalogs. Give them to visitors to your store; the catalogs direct them your website. For online and mail orders, include a catalog with each order. And don't forget the printable PDF version--let customers print their own.

This is exciting news for all kinds of retailers, both online and offline. As the popularity of Internet shopping explodes, the addition of catalogs to a marketing program supports purchasing by people who start offline and go online, and vice-versa. Don't miss out on this opportunity to get your products and services in front of a bigger audience and make more sales!

## **19. Magalog--the Next Logical Step**

Once you've created a catalog to market your products and services, the next logical step is a magalog--a marketing "power tool" reserved for your best customers.

Just as it sounds, a magalog is a combination of magazine and catalog, an information piece that subtly convinces your readers they need your product or service. People will keep a magalog longer than a catalog because of the useful information in it. And each time they return to it, they are reminded of you and your business; you thereby create a "stickiness" surpassed by an ordinary catalog.

First used to sell magazine subscriptions, magalogs are now used to market nearly any product or service.

For best results, include the following elements:

- Articles
- Columns by expert authors
- Product reviews
- Attractive graphics
- Tips and hints in sidebars and boxes
- Coupons and offers
- Questionnaires/surveys to improve your products and services
- Affiliate products
- Throughout, the subtly convincing message that you're a standout in your niche and have everything they need to solve their problem. When they're ready to buy, they'll think of you first.

You can also include some advertising from complementary, non-competing companies. In fact, if you sell enough advertising, you can have your entire magalog paid for before you print it--then your sales are pure profit.

## **20. Postcards--Yes, They Still Work**

One might think that the postcard, with its space and design limitations, couldn't compete for reader attention with a mailbox full of big and colorful envelopes, catalogs, packages, and self-mailers. Fortunately, it can. In fact, postcards are inexpensive, easy to produce, and quick to get results.

Here are six ways to use postcards effectively:

1. Don't try to crowd too much information onto it; it'll be too hard to read. A postcard isn't meant to do the job of a complete sales package.
2. Tell your readers to do just one thing: visit your store (for a sale or a grand opening, for example) or your website (for more information or to opt in to a list).

3. Follow the usual rules of good sales writing. Words sell. (You'll need to choose your words very carefully.)
4. Make it attractive with some graphics. But don't overdo it--remember, the words do the selling.
5. Tease your readers with what they'll get when they take the next step. (You're not trying to tell them *everything*.)
6. Be ready with the next step--what your prospects will get when they visit your website or store. This is where you close the sale...and make the money.

Postcards do work, but they require skill. You need to fit a persuasive message into a small space, and you need to be ready to sell to those prospects who respond. But don't overlook this relatively quick, easy, and cheap marketing tool.

## **21. Press Release: Small Piece With Big Power**

Press releases are amazing in their ability to accomplish so much in so few words. Consider this: a piece of writing of, say, 300 to 500 words can reach readers all over the world, almost instantaneously, at little or no cost. You can submit frequent press releases for a cumulative effect. And sometimes a news publication will get so excited about it that they'll want to turn it into a complete story.

Following are the basics of creating an effective news release:

The purposes of a press release are to create awareness, to establish an image of you and your business as standouts in your niche, and to drive traffic to your website or store.

In order to use press releases most effectively:

- Don't think of it as a one-time thing. Send regular press releases, perhaps one per month, to maintain top-of-mind awareness among your target audience.
- Remember, your goal is to sell. Your news needs to be more compelling than "here we are, we'd love to have your business." It's okay to use that occasionally, or just to get started. More persuasive angles are discussed below.
- Distribute them far and wide. Depending on whether you're an online business, a brick-and-mortar business, or both, you have many options: your

local newspaper(s), trade publications, and online news release services. Go ahead and send it multiple places.

Attention-grabbing angles for a press release:

- Push an emotional hot button. Depending on your product or service, there's a lot to choose from; hot-button issues are effective at getting people to take notice--and take action.
- Piggyback on a current news item. Anything in the news already has their attention; they'll read your story because their interest has been sparked.
- Tie into a holiday. And be imaginative with what counts as a holiday! Probably every week of the year, there's a recognition of some sort; find one that relates to what you do.
- Tell about a controversy. Or create one, by challenging something an expert has said.
- Reveal a scam. People love to hate scams; this works especially well in certain niches.
- Announce a free report you've just released. (Be prepared to deliver the report, of course.)
- Hold a contest. And/or ask for reader contributions of stories on a particular theme that relates to your business.
- Give away a free sample of your product or service.
- Do a human-interest story. People love warm-fuzzy stories, so this one has great potential for being turned into a feature-length story.
- Hook up with a charity. Depending on your niche, it could be animals, children, world hunger, or any number of good causes. You can capitalize on people's generosity in almost countless ways.

Whatever angle you choose, the press release should always lead back to you, your business, your product or service, your website, or your store. The ultimate goal of a press release is to get people to buy from you.

*"Your object in all advertising is to buy new customers at a price which pays a profit."*

*--Claude Hopkins*

## **22. Self-Mailers--When and How to Use Them**

A self-mailer is any mailing that is completely self-contained and doesn't require an envelope. It could be a simple postcard, a piece that is folded once and stapled/glued/taped to provide more space, or something more complex.

As with any type of marketing piece, the self-mailer has pluses, minuses, and specific strategies and purposes. Follow these tips on how to use the self-mailer most effectively:

A plus: a self-mailer is less expensive than a multi-part package. It's cheaper to produce, less costly to mail, and less time-consuming to create.

A minus: a self-mailer is less personal than a letter. It announces itself as junk mail at a glance and is at risk for being tossed. It also provides less space for a sales pitch.

When to use a self-mailer: it works best with simple offers. Use it for lead generation (where you don't need a hard sell), to announce a sale, or to send coupons to previous customers.

Some ways to use your space most efficiently:

1. Put your contact information on the front where it's easy to find.
2. Make the business reply card easy to tear off and return--*don't* put anything on the other side that the prospect will need later.
3. Devote some space to a picture of the item being offered, so your prospect can tell at a glance if she's interested.
4. Make it easy to open--and be careful to design it so that important information isn't lost when the prospect tears it open.
5. Test! Try a self-mailer, and try a complete package.

Whatever you do, don't completely delete the lowly self-mailer from your marketing repertoire. Used correctly, it can be an effective marketing tool.

## **23. White Papers--a Marketing Tool You Might Not Have Thought Of**

White papers are the sleeping giants of marketing tools. They represent a great opportunity for businesses who haven't discovered them yet, because, according to Bitpipe online, "nearly 90% of executives find [them] helpful or extremely

helpful and more than half claim white papers influence their buying decisions." (February 2004.)

What is a white paper?

It is essentially a hybrid of a magazine article and a brochure. Its job is to educate first, then sell; to convince readers they have a problem or need, then offer the company's product or service as the solution. They position the company in a place of authority, trustworthiness, and expertise--powerful for generating leads.

What do you do with a white paper?

They are always given away free, usually electronically. Post them on your website; send them out in e-mails; syndicate them online. Bitpipe is perhaps the best-known white paper source, although there are others. People searching for information on your topic find them on these sites, read them, print them out, keep them for later reference, and share them.

How will white papers benefit your business?

As compared to a brochure or other marketing piece, a white paper enjoys a long shelf life. People keep them for their useful information and often come back to make a purchase a year or more later. They can be reworked into trade publication articles and other pieces.

The bottom line on white papers...

For a company wanting to establish itself as a standout in its field, white papers are an excellent investment. With the right amount of input and feedback from you, your copywriter can create an effective marketing piece with a wide reach, a long shelf life, and the power to make huge profits for you.

## **24. 3 Ways to Get Free (or Inexpensive) Publicity**

Advertising can be expensive. And unfortunately, the most expensive advertising isn't necessarily the most effective. But advertising doesn't *have to* be expensive, and sometimes free or inexpensive publicity is at least as effective.

Here are three ways to spread the word about your business, product, or service without spending a lot of money:

1. **Articles.** Numerous free article sites are available, from general to very topic-specific ones. You simply write the article (following the article site's guidelines), include a "mini" call to action and a link to your site in the

resource box, and post it. Then watch the traffic come. These articles are picked up by other publishers and are often spread far and wide.

2. Press releases. These aren't always free, but several online press release sites will broadcast your news item widely over the Internet. On the plus side, you can usually choose from a range of features and corresponding prices. Again, these releases often go viral, taking your contact information all over the Internet.
3. White papers. A white paper is basically a tool to educate your customers about a particular topic and promote your company's product and/or service as a solution to a problem. You can read my article on white papers preceding this one.

What makes these tools so effective is:

1. They build awareness. Articles, news releases, and white papers are typically passed from one reader and one publication to another, both online and offline.
2. They establish you as an authority. When you sound like an expert, people trust you, and when they trust you, they buy from you.
3. They create a mental "stickiness." These informative, soft-sell pieces are often printed and saved. Then, when a potential client needs what you offer, they look on their reference shelf for a solution to their problem and find your piece. And you've found a new client.

So be sure to take advantage of these free publicity tools.

## **Techniques to maximize the impact of your sales message**

### **25. You're Not Selling the Obvious**

What are you selling? Whatever it is, what you should be *trying* to sell is not what you think you're selling. That may sound confusing....

If you're selling books, you're selling stacks of paper glued together. Music? Little circular plastic discs. Supplements? Capsules, tablets, powders, or liquids that smell funny. Well, the difficulty with that is, nobody wants them.

It gets worse. Weight loss? Starvation. Exercise? Hard work, wasted time. Giving up a bad habit? Deprivation.

When no one buys, you begin to ask what's wrong. Price too high? Product or service not good enough? Too much competition?

It may be something much more basic: misdirected marketing.

Selling is harder than it looks, so you need to figure out what you're *really* selling; when you do, selling it suddenly becomes much easier.

Books? Adventure. Escape. The tools to create a better life.

Music? Relaxation. Happiness. Inspiration to create wonderful things.

Supplements, weight loss, exercise? A whole new "you," one who's more attractive, more desirable, better able to enjoy the good things in life.

It takes a skilled copywriter to transform the "obvious" into the big picture. Nearly everybody wants certain things: money, leisure time, a bright future, good relationships, attractiveness and desirability; perhaps prestige, convenience, bragging rights, inclusion in an exclusive group. Figure out how to transform your product or service into one of these things, and it will practically sell itself.

## **26. How to Target Your Market**

The number of people who buy things is nearly infinite. But the number of people who want and need what *you* offer is definitely finite. Trying to market to everyone is a waste of money.

Identifying your target market makes creating, pricing, distributing, promoting, positioning, and continually improving your product or service faster, easier, and ultimately more profitable. Simply defined, a target market is the majority of people your business attracts, either by design (yours) or by accident.

If you don't already know, figure out who buys your product or and service, and why. Develop a picture of your ideal buyer: their demographics and the problems they're trying to solve. Then use this information to create a marketing strategy that will attract those ideal customers to you.

The five major demographic breakdowns are as follows:

Gender--women make the vast majority of buying decisions.

Age--younger people increasingly have money to spend, and the explosion of online shopping has made it easier for them to do so.

Family composition--size, genders and age of its members, etc., and whether pets are included all affect a family's buying habits.

Income level--wealthier people buy more expensive things and are less affected by fluctuations in the economy, yet are a smaller segment of the population.

Geographic location--regional habits and tastes and climate--among other things --affect buying patterns.

Finally, don't ignore your most valuable target market--your existing customers.

## **27. Solve Your Customer's Problem--Their Happiness Is Your Success**

You're in business to make money, and your customers keep you in business. But they buy your products and services not because they want you to make money, but because they have a problem to solve. So it's important to tell your prospects in all your marketing materials just how you're going to do that.

For example, let's suppose you have a massage business, and your potential customer has a sore back. She wants to avoid expensive, painful, and potentially dangerous medication and surgery, so she's thinking of getting a massage. She's opened her phone book or searched online and looked at a few ads for massage businesses. They all look pretty similar; she sees these same words over and over:

Reiki, hot stone, Swedish, deep tissue, acupressure, trigger point, shiatsu.

Now, if your potential customer is new to massage, she may not know what any of these words mean. So she goes back online and looks up one example: Reiki.

She finds that Reiki can be used for many situations, including stress reduction, relieving pain, headaches--and back problems. Now she's a potential customer.

Your next step is to tell your prospect how Reiki is going to relieve her of her problem--her back pain.

She keeps reading and learns that Reiki puts no pressure on the body; sometimes the massager's hands don't even touch her body. The energy flows where it's needed and can be felt as a warm or tingling sensation. It's a very relaxing and soothing experience.

Your potential customer can almost feel the massage. She picks up the phone to make an appointment.

If you're in the massage business, your customers come to you with a problem--stress, pain, headache, backache, or whatever--and your job is to solve this problem.

Whatever business you're in, you'll be a giant leap ahead of the competition if you tell your prospects how you're going to solve their problems. Remember, phone books everywhere--and increasingly the Internet--show many ads for competing businesses, but few go to the trouble of telling the customer what they really want to know: "What's in it for me?"

How do you educate your prospective customers about your products and/or services? Is your advertising simply a boring list of features, similar to every one of your competitors'? Or is it a convincing, benefit-oriented description of your solution to their problem?

Bonus idea: Do a survey among your existing customers to learn what problems they're having with your competitors. Then solve those problems, and see your sales rocket above the competition.

## **28. Use the Right Language to Reach Your Target Audience**

Before you begin your marketing campaign, you'll need to figure out exactly who your audience is. While it's possible that "everybody" wants or needs your product or service, the reality is that "everybody" is still made up of people with certain things in common that make them want to buy *yours*.

In other words, you may have several *different* target audiences; each one needs to be talked to as if they're your only one.

Target audience is defined by characteristics such as age, gender, income, educational level, marital status, geographic location, political orientation, whether the buyer has kids and/or pets, etc. In order to reach your different audiences, you'll need to customize your marketing materials, using the language that speaks to each.

As an example of two different groups of people interested in the same product, let's say you have an e-book about caring for Himalayan cats. Some people will have paid a breeder hundreds of dollars for their cat, while others will have adopted theirs from a breed-specific rescue organization or even an animal shelter.

The "I'd never own a cat that doesn't have papers" group is very different from the "I couldn't let that beautiful cat just sit there at the shelter" group. Your marketing materials--and even the price point of your product itself--must reflect the different motivations and images of the groups, or you stand to lose your

audience. Each segment of your market will have the vague feeling that you're talking to someone else.

Some ways you can customize your marketing message:

- Write your web copy in plain English. Then have "click for more information" links to different pages where certain segments of your audience can find more detail--in language that speaks to them.
- Create different landing pages with material tailored to different audiences, with your pay-per-click ads, marketing articles, etc., corresponding to the different pages.
- Have a shorter home page, but with menu links leading to pages for different segments of your market--again, in language that speaks to them.

A similar strategy would be applied to your print materials such as brochures; inserts can be added for different audiences. Remember, your target market is never "everybody"--it's distinct groups of people with distinct wants, needs, and goals.

## **29. Correct English in Your Sales Message--Important or Not?**

When it comes to crafting convincing, compelling sales copy, there are two extremes to the "correct English" approach--and both are equally dangerous to the success of your sales message.

One extreme says that spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure must be perfect. "Make any mistakes in these areas and you'll lose all your credibility."

The other extreme says spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure don't matter at all. "Write the way you talk and your audience will think you're one of them."

The truth lies somewhere in the middle. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure do matter as far as ease of reading is concerned. You don't want your message to get lost because of mangled English; if your readers can't understand you, they'll stop reading.

On the other hand, your audience doesn't (usually) consist entirely of English professors, and they *will* find you stilted and unconvincing if your writing is "too perfect." You want to write the way your audience talks...and that, of course, depends upon who your audience is.

And another thing: while mistakes in sales copy can be annoying, if your readers are totally captivated with your sales message, they won't even notice.

The bottom line is that it takes a skilled copywriter to find that sweet spot between "ridiculously perfect English" and "casual and conversational taken to the idiotic extreme." It also takes a skilled copywriter to master the language of your particular audience.

### **30. Right Ways and Wrong Ways to Ask Questions in Your Sales Copy**

Asking questions in your sales copy can make the difference between killer copy and death to your promotion, depending on how it's done. Questions that work to draw your reader into the copy can be good; those that stop your reader are bad.

Here are six guidelines for asking the right kinds of questions in your sales message and avoiding the wrong kind:

1. *Do* ask a question that arouses curiosity. For example, "Do you close the bathroom door--even when you're home alone?" Most people, regardless of their answer, will wonder why you're asking--and will read the letter to find out.
2. *Don't* ask a question that can be answered the wrong way. "Do you need a lawyer?" won't entice many people to read on, because the idea of needing a lawyer is not a pleasant one for most people. But if you can convince them they do--they're hooked.
3. *Do* ask a question that most people will answer "yes" to. For example, many people will respond positively to "Would you like to improve your relationship with your teenager?" (even if they don't think they're having a problem).
4. *Do* ask a "Did you know...?" question, followed by a shocking fact. For example, "Did you know that \_\_\_\_ can be bad for you?"--and fill in the blank with something that most people never worried about.
5. *Do* ask a question that defines your audience. "Would you like to improve your golf swing in three easy steps?" will appeal to those who play golf; those who don't will know immediately the message isn't for them.
6. *Don't* ask too many questions. Regardless of how good your questions are, after a point, they become annoying, although there's no specific recommended number of questions per letter or per page.

Questions can get your readers' attention and draw them into the copy, ultimately leading them to action. The *wrong* questions, however, will stop your readers--and end the conversation without a sale.

### **31. How to Make Money by Giving Stuff Away**

It's a paradox that makes solid marketing sense: give stuff away to make money. Keep in mind, of course, that your goal in giving things away free is to create top-of-mind awareness, establish yourself as an expert, and make people feel indebted to you.

Here are several kinds of giveaways that will make your prospects return with money in hand...again and again:

1. Completely free, no-strings attached stuff. These could be articles, reports, white papers, e-books--all of which establish you as an expert in your niche. These things are usually intangible, electronic products that cost you virtually nothing to provide.
2. Stuff that's free, but for which your prospects must trade their contact information. This is an excellent way to build a list that you keep in touch with indefinitely. It could include a monthly newsletter, special offers, additional articles, etc. This category of free stuff has a higher perceived value than completely free stuff.
3. Higher-value free stuff such as bigger and better e-books, tangible books, audio and video materials, membership in a teleconference series, and so on, all to strengthen your image as an expert. While your cost for creating these products is greater, you can create a demand for them and eventually sell to a large audience you can't reach in person and/or who couldn't otherwise afford your product or service.
4. Last but not least, a free consultation. Give it a specified length of time (say, a half-hour) and a value. If you're a lawyer, for example, who typically consults at \$500 per hour, a half-hour consultation would have a dollar value of \$250. Who wouldn't want *that* for free? And once you've begun a relationship with your prospect, he or she will most likely come back to you for an actual purchase--because you've established your value.

The goal here is to convince your prospect, in a safe, no-obligation way, that you are the right choice, whereby you turn a freebie into a paying customer/client.

### **32. How to Make Your Customers Think You're a Genius**

When you reach your target market with a message that resonates with them, they feel as if you're reading their minds. Consider some of the emotionally loaded niches on the marketing scene:

Losing weight

Overcoming addictions

Enjoying a variety of food and drink without guilt

Getting out of debt

Succeeding in business

Finding a life partner

Conceiving a child

Choosing a safe, affordable, and environmentally friendly family car

Raising children in a politically, economically, and environmentally complicated world

Whatever niche you're in, people may not be consciously aware of their wants and needs, but they'll gratefully spend their hard-earned money on it when they find it. Your job as a marketer is to convince them that you understand their problem and that you have the answer.

But telling people what they think--and being *wrong*--is probably the fastest way to offend people, alienate your audience, and lose the sale. There's a subtle difference between *telling your readers what they think* and getting inside their heads and hopping aboard the train of thought that's already there.

You almost have to be a psychologist to accomplish this, and that's where the skills of a professional copywriter come in. A professional copywriter is part writer, part salesperson, and part psychologist. He or she understands why people think and buy as they do, and knows how to craft sales messages accordingly.

### **33. How to Price Your Product or Service Just Right**

When you're in business, one of the most difficult--and important--decisions you make is how to price your product or service. Too high, and you lose some of your buyers; too low, and you don't make a profit. Here are seven strategies to get your price point just right:

1. Cover your costs. Obviously this is the first consideration; you need to make more selling the product or service than it cost you to produce it.
2. Test. Try offering it at different price points. You may sell more at a lower price--but perhaps not enough to make a bigger profit.

3. Offer the item at different price points to different markets. Some markets actually prefer to pay more for the same item, because they attach more value to the item at a higher price.
4. Create urgency. Offer the item at a limited-time discount price or offer a coupon with an expiration date, which will encourage bargain shoppers to hurry.
5. Create "pretend" urgency. Issue a coupon with the words "redeem immediately" or "redeem within 30 days." Most people will forget when they received it; some people will hurry to take advantage of it, and those who redeem it much later still get the discount--and you still make the sale.
6. Offer different payment options. Give a discount to those who pay in full.
7. State your guarantee. This removes all risk; people are more likely to buy if they know they can get their money back. Most people won't ask for a refund, but if anyone does, you can learn something about how to improve your product or service.

Try these seven strategies to get your product or service priced just right for making the biggest profits.

### **34. The Perfect Length for a Sales Letter**

What's the perfect length for a sales letter? While there's no "ideal" length, there are a few guidelines--some of which may seem contradictory. The only absolute rule is: make the letter exactly as long as it needs to be to sell the product or service. Write just as long as you can hold the reader's attention, then stop.

Here are six general guidelines:

1. Long copy pulls better than short copy--traditionally.
2. Sales letters are getting shorter. Michel Fortin, a copywriter who wrote a 50-plus-page sales letter that made a million dollars in one day, is leading the trend toward shorter sales letters.
3. The more expensive the item, the longer the copy. People need more information before they're ready to commit to, say, a vacation timeshare than to a book club.

4. Some audiences like to read more than others. If you're selling a book club membership, for example, your prospects are people who like to read. Many other audiences are not as willing to read a long letter.
5. Long copy is more acceptable offline than online. The printed page is easier to read than a computer screen; also, people do set aside letters to read later, while online readers more often disappear for good.
6. If you're not sure--test. Create a short letter and a long letter, and do a split test.

Finally, don't make the mistake of thinking a short sales letter is easier to write than a long one, and that you'll save money by asking your copywriter for a short letter. Many copywriters will agree that short copy is actually harder to write because you have to choose your words more carefully.

### **35. The Power of Storytelling**

"On a beautiful late spring afternoon, twenty-five years ago, two young men graduated from the same college. They were very much alike, these two young men.... Recently, these men returned to their college for their 25th reunion....

"They were still very much alike.... But there was a difference. One of the men was manager of a small department of [the company they both worked for]. The other was its president."

If this story sounds familiar, that's because it's a classic. It's a letter offering a subscription to the *Wall Street Journal*, said to be the most successful piece of advertising in history. Written by Martin Conroy, it was first mailed in 1974 and then continuously for over 25 years.

The selling power in this promotion lies in its storytelling.

In any marketing piece, your goal is to get your readers to take a desired action--make a purchase or a donation, request more information, etc. To accomplish your goal, you must keep them interested until they take that action.

These five principles of storytelling will make all the difference in your sales message:

First, know your prospect and speak in the voice that reaches them. This particular letter speaks to business-minded people and hints at articles on inflation, tax incentives, major developments in Washington--topics with a defined audience. If you're writing a letter to sell a different sort of publication, your language will be different.

Second, include details to strengthen your story. We learn that each young man was happily married with three children and had gone to work for the same Midwestern manufacturing company--details that make them seem more real. The letter gives no specific numbers, such as each man's salary, stock portfolio, or home value; although it's hard to argue with the success of this letter, specific numbers are recommended for making your piece stronger.

Third, get your audience emotionally involved. Make them care about the characters. Tell about an experience they've been through that the reader can relate to. In the *WSJ* letter, we begin to like these two young men and want to know why their lives turned out differently. Don't we admire one, and feel a little sorry for the other? We want to go back in time and offer the less-successful young man a subscription to the *Wall Street Journal*!

Fourth, create suspense. Readers of this letter want to find out "what made the difference." That will keep them reading until they reach the call to action--in this case, subscribe to the newspaper.

Fifth, tell your readers what to do! Without a clear call to action, they may be entertained, but they won't perform the desired action--in this case, subscribe to the newspaper; in your case, request more information, buy something, donate money...whatever it is you want them to do.

### **36. Using the Charismatic Approach to Selling**

The classical approach to selling a product or service is to focus on it and what it can do for the customer. Depending on the product or service and the audience, that may be the best way. Other times, however, the charismatic approach is more effective.

With the charismatic approach, people buy because they like *the person selling the thing*. Regardless of what's being sold, people are more likely to buy from people they like. It's not uncommon for a shopper to go to a store with the intention of buying something, only to leave because the salesperson was rude or indifferent--and then buy it somewhere else. The reverse is also true: people buy things they hadn't planned to buy, because the salesperson was so charming.

The same thing happens in print. Make your prospects like you, and they are much more likely to buy from you. Here are five ways to be charismatic in your sales piece:

1. Speak in first person. "You" will always be a powerful word. But putting "I" in your letter too can still make it stronger.

2. Tell about a personal experience. When you say, "I've been through this too," you create a powerful connection with your reader.
3. Enclose a survey. Your readers will feel that you care about their opinions.
4. Include a picture. It doesn't have to be a picture of you--it can be of a satisfied customer using your product or service (with their permission, of course).
5. Add some comments that look handwritten. This can even be done in online sales letters.

Of course, with some products and services, the classical approach is still better. But depending on your business's image and what you're selling, the charismatic approach could make a huge difference in your response. You might want to test--mail a letter of each type and see which gets better results.

### **37. Win-Win Discount Coupon Strategy**

Here's a great way to get business and create satisfied customers. With this "50-50" coupon offering, everybody wins. How it works: You send a limited offer to your list; let's say 100 coupons are available. People hurry to your website, where a counter shows how many coupons are left, and those lucky 100 download the coupon.

The coupon is worth double its face value. For example, the coupon costs \$25; with it, they can purchase \$50 worth of goods or services. The catch is that they must pay for it immediately, so they won't simply print it and risk losing it or forgetting about it.

You get your \$25 right away. The customer is motivated to make a purchase with you because she's essentially put down a \$25 deposit. Depending on what your product or service is, the average customer may well spend more than \$50. If you're a restaurant, for example, where a family or group will spend \$100 on dinner, they're getting a bargain because they've saved \$25. And you've made a profit, plus you've created some customer loyalty. Everybody wins.

You can offer the coupon as part of your autoresponder series. This strategy works very well as a broadcast, as you can control the time frame of the offer and anticipate when the coupons will be purchased.

*"Advertising is the ability to sense, interpret... to put the very heart throbs of a business into type, paper and ink."--Leo Burnett*

## Three articles on miscellaneous marketing topics

### 38. Complaining Customers Are Good for Your Business

To a business owner, customer complaints may seem like an unnecessary evil. They take time to respond to, they stress everybody out, and sometimes it seems the best solution is just to let the whiny customers go away and become your competitor's problem. Good riddance, right?

Well...no.

You see, each customer who *actually complains* about your product or service probably represents many others who simply vow never to patronize your business again--and to tell everyone they know not to do business with you either. You may never see those annoying customers again, but neither will you ever see the business they turn away from you with their word-of-mouth negative advertising.

It's been said that one unhappy customer will tell about ten people, and those ten will each tell five. If this is accurate, one unhappy customer is actually sixty people who will never (or never again) do business with you.

Now, that's different!

Just like physical pain, whiny customers serve a useful purpose. You can ignore them--to your detriment--or you can learn from them, improve the way you do things, and build a better business.

Here are several ways you can actually encourage your customers to complain--and use their complaints to improve your business.

1. Include a survey with each product or service, or send one to each customer a little later. If everything was "fine," they might ignore you; if something is wrong, however, they'll probably speak up. The fact that you're *asking* for complaints will lead to more constructive criticism. You can also offer an ethical bribe of some sort for returning the survey--say, entry into a drawing for a gift certificate, or a coupon for a percent off the next purchase.

2. Set up a special e-mail address and/or place a form on your website specifically for complaints. Delegate someone of authority in your business (or hire someone just for the purpose) to field the complaints, identify any patterns, and work out a solution to turn the unsatisfied customers into satisfied ones. Angry people calm down as if by magic when they find out someone cares.

3. Restore to unhappy customers more than they lost. If an item was lost or damaged, replace it *and* refund their money. Or upgrade their purchase at no

extra cost. If they say service was lousy, re-do the job for free. If they feel someone in your company was rude to them, write them a letter of apology signed by the highest person in the company.

Complaining customers are really a blessing in disguise. They let you know what's wrong and give you a chance to fix it before you lose any more business. "If a complainer damages your business, you may deserve it," says Derek Moore, SVP and Chief Creative Officer at The Marketing Store in Chicago, in a September 3, 2007 article in *DM News*.

If you encourage customers to complain, though, be prepared to make right whatever was wrong. Isn't it worth it, when you consider those sixty potential customers whose loyalty is on the table?

### **39. Marketing Articles: Writing Them Isn't a Job for Marketers**

Internet marketing is big business, and growing daily. Over two-thirds of United States residents now have Internet access, with 17% being the worldwide average. That's over a billion Internet users, with a reasonable estimate being that close to half use the Internet for shopping.

More Internet users are also upgrading to broadband, which makes online shopping easier; people are also spending more per purchase as companies improve their online offerings. Men, generally considered unenthusiastic shoppers, have taken to Internet shopping, and kids too young to drive have found a way to get stuff from the right stores. Women, by far the biggest purchasers of goods and services, use the Internet for research and comparison.

These trends should only continue--perhaps at steeper rates than ever. All this spells enormous moneymaking opportunity for Internet marketers. Yet even tech-savvy Internet marketers can quickly be overwhelmed with all the different skills that need to be mastered--technical, creative, and marketing skills--and on top of that, copywriting skills.

Copywriting skills may be relegated to least-important status--which is unfortunate, because it is *words* that send traffic to those sales sites. Whether it be pay-per-click ads, press releases, or concise, informative, interesting, syndicated articles, skillfully crafted words drive the entire sales process.

A badly written, boring, keyword-crammed article, or a heavily recycled "private label" article, won't help you sell your products and services, because people won't finish reading and click the link to your site. They won't pass it along to other readers or post it on their own sites. This is where a professional article writer can make the difference between success and failure for an Internet marketer.

#### 40. Research: Why It's Important to the Success of Your Sales Message

Every sales message needs to begin with a certain amount of research. A successful copywriter will always be eager to discover new information in his or her niche, no matter how well informed he or she may already be. Of course, some niches--health, for example--change faster than others. Almost any niche, however, can change as new discoveries are made.

Research will uncover any number of things that add credibility and intrigue to your piece. Here are some ideas:

1. Something that's unique or different about your product or service as compared to your competitors' similar offerings.
2. Something that's the same as your competitors' products or services--but you make it sound special, because they don't mention it at all.
3. Something that's true of your competitors' products or services--but even they don't know it. (For example, the story behind the tradition associated with your offering.)

Of course, research takes time--time to find a new and interesting angle to engage your prospect, time to weave it into the sales message. But it's time well invested, because it results in a far more powerful piece. This is part of the job of a professional copywriter--to find fascinating bits of information to draw your readers into the copy and convince them to buy.

If you're working with a copywriter, ask how much research he or she does in preparation for creating a sales package. Depending on the project, the answer might vary from "an hour or two" to "a day or two." Neither of those answers is necessarily "correct"; the important thing is that the copywriter is planning to do *some* research. It's unlikely that anyone can just "wing it" and produce an effective sales message with just the information that's already in their head.

The eagerness to dig in and dig up interesting "stuff" is an indication of the copywriter's motivation to do the best possible job.

The amount research may vary according to the project itself as well as the copywriter's level of competence in that niche. While you want a copywriter who's comfortable in--and passionate about--your niche, don't make the mistake of thinking that the need to do research is a sign of incompetence, or that the time spent on it means wasted money. Remember, too, that if you plan to continue working with this copywriter, all that research will be used on future projects.

A word of caution, however--an *inordinate* amount of research built into the project bid may hint at an effort to "pad" the value of the project.

## **Five bonus articles on sample niches**

### **Bonus article #1: Health Business**

#### **Marketers, Put Your Message Where the Money Is: Baby Boomers**

Whatever niche your business is in, the Baby Boomer generation represents a goldmine of opportunity for you. And if you're selling anything in the health niche, this is especially true.

According to BabyBoomerMagazine online, Baby Boomers "are the largest buying group in America. [They] represent the generation with the greatest buying power in the history of our country and account for a dramatic 40% of total consumer demand." The article goes on to say that to attract the huge Baby Boomer market, you must "find a way to appeal to us through our desire to stay young, act young, think young and feel young! Do that, and the company will have a customer for life!"

Here's the key to the goldmine: Baby Boomers want to act, think, and feel young, and no one will ever convince them that they can't. Factor in some other characteristics of Baby Boomers, and you have a huge demographic of buyers willing--and able--to spend a lot of money on their health.

As a group, Baby Boomers:

- are living longer than any previous generation, and will enjoy more years of retirement, which we want to enjoy in good health.
- are more educated than prior generations, and so are easier to reach with health-related messages.
- are more informed than earlier generations through reading and watching TV, which means you have a variety of ways to reach us.
- are largely computer- and Internet-savvy, so if you run an online business, you have access to this group.
- are not as brand-loyal as younger buyers, so it doesn't matter much if we've never heard of you--an advantage to small and new businesses.
- thrive on appearing younger, so skincare, hair care, and beauty products all represent huge opportunity to sell to this demographic.
- will increasingly shop from home as we age, because of a number of factors including mobility issues and potential embarrassment about the products we need--which also spells opportunity for online marketers.

If you have a healthcare product or service to offer the Baby Boomer generation, you're positioned to make huge profits over the next several decades.

## Bonus article #2: **Pet Business**

### **Profitable Strategy: Treat Pets Like People**

A businessperson with even a casual liking of pets is positioned to capitalize big-time on America's pet craze. All you need to do is remember that Americans increasingly treat their pets as children.

As the number of human children per household declines, the number of pets increases. Baby boomers, a powerful segment of today's market, are quickly becoming empty-nesters and replacing their grown two-legged children with four-legged ones.

Indeed, many people now call themselves "pet parents" or "guardians" rather than "owners." This trend suggests a hugely profitable strategy for entrepreneurs in the pet business--or any business: position pets as members of the family.

Here are three ways:

Create human-like products and services for pets:

- Gourmet and specialty pet foods.
- Doggy and kitty treat cookbooks.
- Pet clothing.
- Human-type pet furniture.
- Coordinating "Mommy and pet" jewelry.
- Designer pet carriers, buggies, and strollers.
- In-home grooming services.
- High-end grooming products.
- Pet portraiture.
- Pet birthday party supplies.
- Pet communication services for pets with behavioral problems and lost pets.

Rename your existing pet products and services:

- Your pet supply store becomes a pet boutique.
- Your boarding facility becomes a pet hotel.
- Your kennel becomes doggy and kitty day care.
- Your grooming business becomes a pet spa.
- Your dog-training skills make you a pet behavior specialist.

Capitalize on the fur frenzy with your non-pet business:

- Extend your brand to include pet products.
- Feature pets in your ads and marketing pieces.
- Welcome pets in your store or lodging place.
- Donate a portion of your profits to an animal support group.
- Host dog-and-human cocktail parties with your food business.
- Offer custom dog baths/showers in high-end homes with your construction business.

People are eager to spend lots of money on their pets; you might as well get your share of the jackpot.

### Bonus article #3: **Food Business**

#### **Delicious Opportunity: Chocolate**

If you're in the food business, here's a niche where you can capture buyers from a wide spectrum of the market: chocolate. Chocolate has always appealed to gourmets, but now it can be marketed to the health-conscious, too.

Chocolate used to be considered a "sinful indulgence." We now know that it is not only "okay...occasionally," it is *good* for us. (In moderation, of course.) Chocolate has truly become the latest hero in the fight against a variety of health problems.

Several studies have shown that chocolate consumption offers the following benefits:

- Decreased blood pressure and improved circulation
- Lower risk of heart disease and stroke
- Lowered LDL (bad cholesterol); raised HDL (good cholesterol)
- Defense against destructive free radicals, which trigger cancer and other ailments
- Improved digestion
- Relief from headaches
- Defense against tooth decay
- Stabilized insulin levels
- Elevated mood

Cacao beans are a rich source of antioxidants; dark chocolate has four times the antioxidant content as tea, and 1 1/2 ounces of it have about the same amount as a glass of red wine. (Dark chocolate has twice the antioxidants of light, and white chocolate has none.) Chocolate also contains significant amounts of

several minerals. Contrary to popular belief, chocolate has little caffeine; its main stimulant is the much milder theobromine.

The Swiss eat the most chocolate of anyone--about twice as much as Americans--yet they have among the lowest obesity rates. And according to [immunesupport.com](http://immunesupport.com), "The residents of an island called Kuna in Panama...rarely develop high blood pressure, although they drink about 5 cups of cocoa each day and include it in many recipes. But if they leave the island, the risk of high blood pressure increases, and studies found it wasn't related to salt intake or obesity."

It all depends on the quality of the chocolate. Health-conscious people should eat high-quality *dark* chocolate with a 60 to 70% cocoa content. Normal dark chocolate is around 30%; ordinary chocolate has as little as 10 to 20% cocoa content, with a lot of sugar and hydrogenated vegetable fats. Dark chocolate is actually quite low in fat and sugar.

So go ahead and eat chocolate without guilt. And if you're in the food business, you can market it without guilt, too.

#### Bonus article #4: **Self-Help Business**

##### **Smart Strategy: Gender-Specific Help**

The breathtaking success of John Gray's *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*, which has sold more than 15 million copies, hints at a truth that people instinctively know: males and females are different. If you're in the self-help business, the best place to start helping people is to acknowledge the fundamental differences between men and women.

Gender identity is, always has been, and always will be the most integral, unalterable aspect of our selves. Sadly, saying so has become "politically incorrect." A certain segment of our population has tried valiantly to convince us that male and female are made, not born--the product of brainwashed parents and an antiquated, male-dominated, Judeo-Christian society.

In fact, males and females differ long before society has the opportunity to make an impression upon us. Neurobiological research on babies *in utero* fully supports our everyday observations; with the advent of ultrasound, MRI, and PET scans, we can study the brains of pre-born children. In an ultrasound exam at no later than 26 weeks' gestation, we can distinguish between male and female brains, noting that the male brain is more asymmetrical between hemispheres and the language area of the brain is larger in females.

Differences in brain structure explain the differences in the way we think. In all brains, the two hemispheres are connected by nerve fibers. As baby boys

develop *in utero*, testosterone and other male hormones are produced and bind to brain tissue, doing significant damage to these connective nerve fibers. By the middle of gestation, the concentration of testosterone in the boy's brain is comparable to that of a young man.

These hormones make boys and men competitive and driven to risky behavior and dominance, while the female brain secretes the powerful bonding hormone oxytocin and the calming chemical serotonin, leading girls and women to more nurturing roles.

Because the female brain's connective nerve fibers remain intact, females use both hemispheres for language and problem solving, while males use only one at a time. This explains why men seem to have trouble putting their feelings into words. They can't, because the left brain controls speech, and the right, emotions; in men, these two parts are not connected.

Also, feelings (in both sexes) occur in a more primitive part of the brain than does speech. With age, the brain's "feeling" activity moves to a higher part of brain during adolescence--but only for girls. Grown men can no more put their feelings into words than can young children of either sex.

Another angle is to study the behavior of other animals. Let's take monkeys, with their arguably human-like behavior, as an example. It turns out that monkey toy preferences are consistent along gender lines with those of human children. In a study of vervet monkeys by Gerianne Alexander and Melissa Hines, boy monkeys chose the car and the ball, while girl monkeys preferred the doll and the pot. Both genders of monkey children seemed equally comfortable with a picture book and a stuffed dog.

What makes a particular toy a "boy toy" or a "girl toy"? Boy toys are ones with the ability to be used actively; girl toys are ones that invite contact. Boys' and girls' toy preferences are biologically pre-wired, which causes gender stereotyping of toys--not the other way around.

Regardless of one's ideology, it's easy to see that males and females of any higher animal behave differently. (Why do people castrate horses? Because geldings are more docile than stallions.)

We can pretend that traditional gender roles are imposed by society. But why would we want to? The truth is much more interesting. And if the goal of the self-help industry is to help people, the truth is also much more useful.

## Bonus article #5

### Capitalize on Warm Fuzzies: Donate to Charities

Whatever niche you're in, donating a portion of your proceeds to charity makes good business sense. Americans are a generous people; we love to give to a good cause, so people feel they're giving vicariously by supporting your business and will want to buy from you instead of your less-generous competitors.

So now you can accomplish three things at once: indulge your passion for your niche, make a tidy profit, *and* support a good cause.

Consider these trends:

- The names and logos of charitable organizations are appearing more frequently in advertisements and packaging for a variety of products and services. A 1997 study conducted jointly by Roper Starch Worldwide and Cone Communications shows that 76% of consumers would likely switch from their current brand to one associated with a charity, price and quality being equal.
- SunTrust Bank conducted a survey before launching their new promotion-- offering new checking account customers either \$100 to donate to the customer's favorite charity, or a \$50 gift card for customers to spend on themselves. 59% of respondents said they'd prefer to give the donation to charity.
- According to Benevolink, "e-Giving, the method of linking online businesses that donate money, charity-minded consumers, and nonprofit organizations, is a relatively recent concept. [Customers] enjoy the benefits of online retail shopping. Your charity benefits from receiving unrestricted funds.... And businesses benefit from increased sales and brand recognition."

This works particularly well in some niches--say, animals and children--but can be adapted to virtually any type of business. To be sure you're profiting from your own generosity, make sure everyone *knows* you're sharing the wealth with a charity.

Ideas:

- Devote a page on your website to the charity of your choice.
- Create an autoresponder series around the charity.
- Write syndicated online articles about the charity, again with links to you.

- Submit press releases about the charity, with links sending traffic back to your site.
- Host a blog about your chosen charity, with links back to your various products and services.
- In your mail promotions, include a lift note about your relationship with the charity.
- Mention the charity in your brochure and all your print materials, using their logo.
- Tie in the charity to one of your products or services. For example, on every purchase of this product or service, half the price goes to a charity.
- Give something away--an item or an informational product--relating to the charity. Children's books are especially popular, as socially conscious people are eager to educate the next generation.
- Start a loyalty program: after a customer has spent a certain amount of money on your business, you give a significant gift to the charity.
- Establish a referral system with another company supporting the same--or a related--charity.
- Hold events with all proceeds going to the charity (which also promotes recognition and loyalty).
- Allow customers to choose which charity their purchases support; use surveys and contests to find out which causes they care most about.
- List specific items their purchases will support, giving the dollar value of each.
- Post a list--in your store, on your website, in your newsletter--of people who've purchased a certain amount, calling them "benefactors" and including a quote or testimonial from each about why they support your business.

The more you brand yourself as someone who's closely involved with the real world, the more you establish a rapport with your customer base. And that will come back to you in the form of increased profits.

## About the author, Lisa J. Lehr

As I look back over my life, everything I've done has led me to where I am now--writing copy to educate people about why they should trade their hard-earned dollars for a certain product or service.

It's all about making people's lives better.

The jobs I held as a kid included picking and selling things from my parents' garden, lots of babysitting, caring for other people's plants and pets, and tutoring younger kids. My first volunteer job was helping with a children's theater production at age 15--I got to tell the lighting technicians what to do.



My second volunteer job was as a classroom aide for 11 fifth- and sixth-grade educationally handicapped boys, including those with ADD and ADHD. This might have been frightening were I not already five-foot-nine.

All through school, I excelled in art and English. I won my first art contest around third grade and earned all of my college English credit in high school. The general assumption among family and friends was that my college major and future career would be one or the other. I fooled everybody by majoring in biology, reasoning that English was too easy and art was more of a hobby than a job. But I kept and nurtured my love of the written word, and I still love art, too.

My first semester of college, my astronomy professor, upon reading the first college paper I ever turned in, said, "This is the best paper I've ever received on this subject." That was a proud moment. I went to school on a huge campus and didn't own a car for three years. I still love to walk. I studied guitar for awhile (mostly taught myself), but haven't played in years (so don't ask).

During college, I worked as a librarian, soup and salad server, camp counselor, and security guard (carried keys and a two-way radio but no gun). My first few months after graduation I worked in a bank and a store. Librarian was my favorite job.

My first "real" job out of college was quality control technician for a national pharmaceutical company. Parts of it were fascinating, like knowing that the company made products that made people well. The predictable, boring routine of my job, however, threatened to unhinge me. I gave my notice, then created a procedural manual so that the next person could learn the job much faster.

I continued to take classes during several years as a stay-at-home mom, earning majority credit toward an Associate Degree in graphic art and a Certificate from Central California Bible Institute. I took foreign-language classes. I raised

numerous pets and a Guide Dog puppy. Along the way, I began to develop my career goals, knowing one thing for sure: it would be some type of writing.

While building my writing career, I worked as a classroom aide. Some of my students had special needs. I loved explaining things to kids and spending one-on-one time with those who needed extra help and attention. I did not like the office politics and the educational baloney that gets foisted upon the public schools. By then, I was writing a novel and studying marketing, so my heart wasn't totally in that job.

I was also writing articles for newspapers and magazines, which led to editing, then ghostwriting autobiographies. I taught a class on that subject to seniors. That was my first experience with teaching adults, and from it I discovered that I'd be interested in public speaking. That's on my list of things to do.

During this time I was tutoring English As a Second Language adults (as a volunteer first, leveraged into one of my favorite jobs), writing grants and fundraising letters for construction of a no-kill animal shelter, volunteering at the county animal shelter, and helping disabled kids learn horseback riding skills.

I finished my novel manuscript and am working on the sequel. I'm waiting for just the right publisher, because I don't believe in surrendering control of my work or accepting stingy advances and paltry royalties. In the meantime I'd discovered my true calling:

Copywriting. Copywriting combines my core passions...

- Writing anything that needs to be expressed in words.
- Educating people about products and services that will improve their lives.
- Finding just the right words and just the right voice to communicate the message.

Some other things you might find interesting:

- I believe in gratitude.
- I'm a fan of *The Secret*.
- I believe the Universe is full of love and abundance.
- I believe that by creating value for others, I become rich.
- I believe in sharing, but not to the point of making others dependent.
- I believe that creativity, not competition, is the way to fulfill our dreams and desires.
- I love Renaissance Faires and other events where I can play dress-up.
- I love music but don't play an instrument.
- I intend to see my novel made into a movie.
- I'm listed in *Who's Who in America* and *Who's Who of American Women*, although I have no idea who nominated me.

Compiled from hundreds of articles by copywriter Lisa J. Lehr,  
here's the scoop on:

- How you need to market differently in a weak economy...see page 8
- How to know if a copywriter is right for your project...see page 9
- How to make the *most* money the *fastest*...see page 11
- Which part of your sales package you should spend 80% of your time on...see page 15
- The thing that's always last--but never least...see page 16
- What testimonials can do for you--and how to get them, no matter what...see page 19
- Which tool can mean 90% of your sales...see page 23
- How to get free publicity...see page 31
- How to find the right voice for your audience...see page 35
- What you should give away free (and why)...see page 38
- How to get a discount on marketing for the rest of the year...see page 7
- The perfect length for a sales letter, the right price your product or service, how to capitalize on customer complaints, and much, much more....

*all without spending any more time or money...  
and without learning any new skills.*

**For a free consultation, contact:**

Lisa J. Lehr • Just Right Copy, LLC

[www.justrightcopy.com](http://www.justrightcopy.com) • [lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com)

Are you receiving my e-mail series? If not, just go to my website and enter your name and e-mail address in the opt-in form. You'll get regular updates with marketing ideas and news from the Internet marketing world.

*"Salesmanship is the art and science of serving the needs of a market by helping them overcome their natural resistance to purchasing something that is ultimately to their advantage and far more valuable to them than the money they exchange for it."*

*--Carl Galletti*

Lisa J. Lehr • [www.justrightcopy.com](http://www.justrightcopy.com) • [lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.justrightcopy@gmail.com)



