

TRAFFIC CONVERSION SECRETS



GETTING MORE OF YOUR WEBSITE VISITORS
TO ACTUALLY BUY INSTEAD OF JUST LOOK

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Starting Out



In this book we'll discuss a myriad of tools and techniques you can use to get inside of the minds of your customers and create a traffic explosion. The first thing you need to do is get into the spirit of things and create something new and exciting. In this section we'll discuss preparations for your traffic boom and how to dazzle your customers with Fresh content.

In each chapter we will discuss the details and semantics of each technique so you can optimize them for mining your traffic for sales. We'll explain what works, the psychological impact of the strategy, and even the how to implement for the best timing and results. Each set of techniques is organized within a larger category. The two main categories are Emotional Control and Logic; we'll be exploring a wide range of tactics that target two

major groups of people: those who are easily controlled by playing on emotional factors and those who think analytically and logically.

This gives you a powerful set of tools that pretty much work on anyone. By blending and combining the techniques you'll be able to create sales campaigns that attract people you never would imagine being interested in your products and services. Changing the way you do business and implementing tactics for creative massive amounts of traffic on your site is easier than you may think; this book intends to prove that!

Get Into the Spirit

Converting visitors into customers is easy if you keep one key fact in mind: people are creatures of habit. If you pay close attention to when people are triggered to open their wallets, then you can use the same dynamics to develop a strategy to have it work for your sales efforts. Understanding triggers that produce sales is one effective way to develop strategies that can work over a large cross-section of people.

The Technique

For a habit to work for you, it has to produce the close of a sales call to action. If you've ever gotten cable or satellite you've seen them use this tactic to make extra sales. They always have free offers that are on a trial basis. They'll give you a bunch of extra channels or special channels for free but it's only for 3 months or 6 months. When your time is up the representative calls and asks you if you want to cancel your subscription; usually they'll act like it's a big deal to come out and change something so you no longer get the channels. You feel committed to your cable purchase and you'll seem cheap if you back out of the extra channels you were enjoying up until now. Most of the time you'll go ahead and keep them and pay a little extra. After the call the rep will usually offer you even more services based on a new special deal and since you've already agreed to the service and the extras you're more inclined to listen to what she says and possibly upgrade.

This strategy works because you already committed to a purchase, no matter how small, and asking for something on top is taking advantage of

the groove you've already slipped into. It may not seem like a lot of extra money going in your pocket, but if you do this to every single sales prospect you encounter, the multiple effect can line your pockets quite nicely.

This strategy works okay with retail sales, but it is dynamite with direct sales on the Internet. The key is to get your visitor to commit to a small sale first and then before they check out, ask them if they want something extra. You will be surprised how fast your orders tend to grow after that.

The Secret

The biggest resistance people tend to have when closing a sale is just the simple act of saying "yes." Once that obstacle is circumvented it becomes much easier to make the sales larger out of pure inertia. Once people are already walking in a specific direction it takes more effort and attention to change directions than it does to just keep going the way you're already headed.

Some people like to call it consistency in action, but it's also about habitual action. Psychologists say that it only takes so much time to create a habit, but it can take more than 21 days to break it and it takes a concerted effort to do so. People generally don't pay attention to their habits and that's why when you identify a trigger it is easy to exploit it to your benefit.

You are actually setting the course without making it obvious to your sales prospect. The minute they agree to even a tiny purchase, you have set the momentum to generate even larger sales, if not immediately – at least, down the road.

How to Make it Work

The trick here is to make the first purchase as simple and as easy as possible. It doesn't even have to be a major purchase. You aren't trying to score a huge sale, you are trying to involve your sales prospect in your business at this point. There's plenty of time to expand their sales later. So, make that first sale as easy and as painless as possible.

This works beautifully online by having a very simple and cheap offer on your home page. It can be anything really, as long as it is a simple process and can produce an immediate effect. Reports and media downloads make very good initial sales online because you can sell them cheap, in mass quantities, and you can also deliver it electronically for an immediate effect. You have a check box to put them on an email or newsletter list too to help you capture their email and allow you to market them for more products later.

With a little research, you can find out what products your customers bought after they bought your initial lead sales package. Then, you can target new customers with that as it's already proven to be a winner. This can lead to larger sales down the road.

However, if you want to implement this strategy immediately, it takes a little more finesse. In the retail, face-to-face world, you would simply do like the deli clerks and offer another product to add to someone's check-out. New home construction companies do this all the time, by calling them "upgrades." You sign for a basic unit and then they start asking you if you want to upgrade the countertops with marble, put in hardwood floors instead of carpet, and so on. Pretty soon, the price you committed to buying comes out to an exorbitant amount with all the additional things you've consented to buy. And, should you decide you don't have enough money for everything

you want, you're stuck with the difficult decision to figure out what you can cut out of your home package. Obviously, the answer is that it's just too difficult to decide what features or options you don't want; instead it's much easier to charge it.

That's why stores also make their payment options as simple and easy as possible. The more payment options you have, the easier it is to close a sale and overrule any objection on a lack of money. Some stores even ante up the ease of purchase by offering their own in-house financing. These financing offers usually start fairly low and come with very little risk on the part of the store, but it can't help to convert sales prospects into bona fide customers.

At any rate, to implement this at the end of a small sale, all you simply have to do is ask, almost as an afterthought, "Oh! Do you want to include this x offer too?" It can be very effective if you are doing this face-to-face and you've already got up to leave and just before departing suddenly realize you forgot to tell them about that extra offer that would go good with his sale.

The key is to be subtle, the hard sell online only makes people mad if you sign them up for extra offers in sneaky, underhanded ways. Always get the customer's approval clearly before charging them for the sale. This can be done at checkout by simply adding an extra page they click through to get to checkout, where other offers are left UNCHECKED but can be selected to add to their original purchase. Make it easy for them to move on and don't confuse them or you'll lose the sale.

Another effective way to implement this technique is called a "one-time-offer" or "OTO". This requires special software that presents the additional product(s) after the first one is purchased but not yet delivered. In this scenario, instead of a download or thank you page, you are delivered to a page which says, "Thank you for your order. Now, because you've just

purchased product xyz, we have a special offer for you and don't close this page because you will lose that offer once you do. In other words you will never have another chance to take advantage of this offer."

Then you make an offer for another, usually complementary product at a discount price. This add-on sale always increases your overall sales and many people report that up to 50% or more take the OTO.

So, imagine you sell the main product for \$27 and then offer the resale rights to the product as an OTO for an additional \$27, normally \$47. So, instead of a \$27 sale, you've now made a \$54 sale.

Why not offer the resale rights for \$54 upfront instead? Because testing has shown that you'll get a lot more sales with the OTO than asking for the \$54 at the start. You see, they've already bought the \$27 product. Now, it's just a small extra amount and that is more likely to get accepted.

So, let's say you make 100 sales at \$27, that's \$2700. With the OTO, you make an additional \$1350 for total sales of \$4050, assuming a 50% OTO rate.

You can also do the same by offering a complementary product instead of resale rights. You can offer the OTO at a higher price, called an up-sell, or at a lower price, called a down-sell.

To get your OTO offer to truly appear once and only once, you'll need special software. There are a couple ways to do this.

You could hire a programmer at one of the outsource sites like Elance.com or VWorker.com or you can purchase an already programmed and much more elegant solution like Rapid Action Profits.

If you go with [Rapid Action Profits](#), you'll be able to do a lot more as well since they have an add-on system where you can add features as they are developed.

There are several different times when this strategy is effective. You can set it up immediately so that a very simple offer is made available on the home page. Make sure to change this offer for repeat visitors. The idea is to start to form a habit by having someone be tempted to buy a small item immediately. So, that's the first time you want to try to slip your visitors into a buying groove.

The second time to use it is after they've already committed to buying a small item and they are checking out. This can be done automatically using software that adds a footer with additional items that might interest your buyer, or an additional page to move through to get to the final checkout.

Dazzle with Something Fresh



In a consumer culture saturated with products for sale everywhere, you have to distinguish what makes your offering better than everyone else's offering. This can be difficult to do if you are selling brooms or something so ordinary that the market has been completely saturated with ads talking about the benefit of brooms or some other item. People become jaded or bored with these ads and can't really justify to themselves why one broom is better than another. After all, they all sweep floors.

That's when you want to try and see your product's unique personality and bring it out into the open where it can be appreciated. Now, that's slick marketing to take something old and make it new again. Not only that, but maybe your product has some benefits that the other products truly don't

have. You can polish those up and mention them in your copy too, to differentiate yourself on the market.

The Technique

Okay, let's pretend you have a bunch of office supplies you are trying to sell online. You want to get into the mindset of your customers as much as you can. Why would they come online to buy office products? Why are they choosing to buy some products and not others? What is unique about a particular product that can give it a competitive edge. You can even gear your product's unique qualities to the audience you've targeted.

Let's say you are using Ads on Facebook (or any social networking site) to target a particular demographic of people for your school supplies. Well, Facebook and other social networking sites attract people who want to communicate their identities. You might decide to sell school supplies that can be customized to suite the owner's personality. Marshall McLuhan, a famous Canadian scholar and educator, once said that "The medium is the message." This essentially implies that the format you deliver your content on embeds itself into the content. The website you choose to advertise on directly affects what you'll be able to sell; keep that in mind.

Try to use strategies that are different from your competitors and that play up your offerings. For instance, if you are selling karate courses, you don't want to only list those benefits that everyone else has on their website, you want to make sure you include extra benefits.

While other people may throw out statistics on how many women are assaulted by someone they know, you might opt to go less of the scare tactic route. Instead, you may want to differentiate your courses by stating how easy they are to learn online and how they can help you develop fitness while keeping you safe or even talk about the stress-relieving factors associated with martial arts. That way even though there is a whole market of people

who may be looking to do martial arts for safety, that's not the only reason. It may be people who are interested in stress relief or fitness who you are engaging online.

That's the beauty of online marketing; the audience is very wide open. You are going to have people world-wide who show up to visit your site and you can't assume you know that the sole reason they are looking at your martial arts courses online is because you are afraid for your safety, even if that is the case. You can always add these benefits, but don't forget to add the other benefits too!

The Secret

The key here is that most people need a reason to say yes. That's why salespeople sell benefits and not products. Ask any good salesperson and they will tell you that the benefits and unique characteristics of the product is what eventually sells it, even if the marketer is the one highlighting these qualities. People generally don't buy things they don't need, but they will need a reason to say yes, even if they do need the product.

The reason for this is that people are constantly pressured in this consumerist society to buy, buy, and buy. At some point, they either become jaded or tune out. When they tune out, it's the marketer's responsibility to help them tune back in. The customer may even be in desperate need of your product, but they may not be aware of it – they are so tuned out. It is your job to slowly bring them back in and educate them about why they need your product.

How to Make it Work

Because your customer may not be aware of their need for your product, you will have to give them time to realize it. This is not a fast way to make a sale, but it is a way to convert visitors into customers, eventually. Once they are your customer, they will be so convinced of your product's unique qualities and benefits, they will be hard-pressed to go elsewhere for their needs. So, you are not just converting a visitor, but you are also promoting your brand and establishing familiarity and authority with your products.

So, don't be upset if you don't make a sale right away. This strategy takes patience. You can hit on a few customers who have an eureka moment when you first start listing your benefits, but mostly people need to hear or read things multiple times for it to have an impact.

Then, something can happen in their lives that suddenly shifts their attention back to all those benefits you've been listing on your website or products for years. Maybe they didn't think they needed to supplement their diet, but now they are turning older and people around them are getting forgetful. Maybe they are noticing they are more forgetful too. Suddenly, they remember that one of the benefits of Gingko Biloba, a supplement you are selling, listed the benefits of memory enhancement. All of a sudden, the product is more appealing. And, the thing is you never know when that eureka moment will happen with the visitors to your website, so you have to keep copy up listing each product's unique qualities to help educate them for when the need actually arises.

So, remember to remind your customers often on the benefits of a particular product, even if they've seen the benefit on other pages. Repetition is important with this strategy. You want to be able to slowly, but surely gain the attention of someone who is hearing the same message from various sources until it finally sinks in. That's why when you develop a new product, you don't just want to put one sales page up, but you want to write articles, introduce it to various people at the same time through groups, discussion forums, or even paid reviews. They need to hear about this product over and

over again until they finally see a need for it in their lives. When that happens, it's totally up to the consumer.

A great way to implement this strategy and make instant sales is with items that can bring out the inner child in people, like electronics. People love computers, cell phones, flat-screen TVs, and other types of electronic wizardry because it mesmerizes them with technology and also brings out the impulse to play around with their new purchase. Anytime you have a product like that, you can make instant sales and they can be very high priced, in comparison to older products in your inventory. So, even though this strategy can work for any product, in order to get it to work instantly, you want to use it most with products that have an instant mesmerizing effect on people. Things that are tactile and produce an experience of child-like wonder or playfulness are excellent products to use with this strategy.

Software is also something that can be sold quite well with this strategy and allow a person to get a small experience of the larger product either with a free trial or a limited demo-like experience. If your software is for games or like a game, this too can bring out the impulse to play and produce the desired effect to influence your potential buyer to want to possess this new toy.

This timing to sell the benefit or the product's unique personality is when they land on your sales page. You should have a sales page that funnels people from a blog, your signature, or other places to where they actually see all the benefits that make your product truly unique. You should set the title of your sales page to include the BIGGEST, and MOST IMPORTANT benefit that you want to highlight about your product or service. Many people don't get past that first title before moving away from the page, so make it count. It should highlight your product's unique nature while being

something that is attractive to the majority of people who might land on your sales page.

The second instance of using this strategy is directly underneath the title. Just list every last benefit you can possibly think of for your product or service. Many online marketers think that the longer your sales page is and the more benefits you list, the more likely you will hit one that eventually produces that eureka moment in the customer. Just be sure to ask for the sale several times on the same page too, so that if they do happen to find that reason to buy that overcomes all their objections, they don't have to scroll too far to see the link to buy too.

Lastly, you can also start to keep a file of one-line benefits for each product you are selling. Add that to your signature and rotate them so that your signature changes constantly and people reading your emails see a new benefit every time they read one of your emails. Don't forget to include links to the sales page too here.

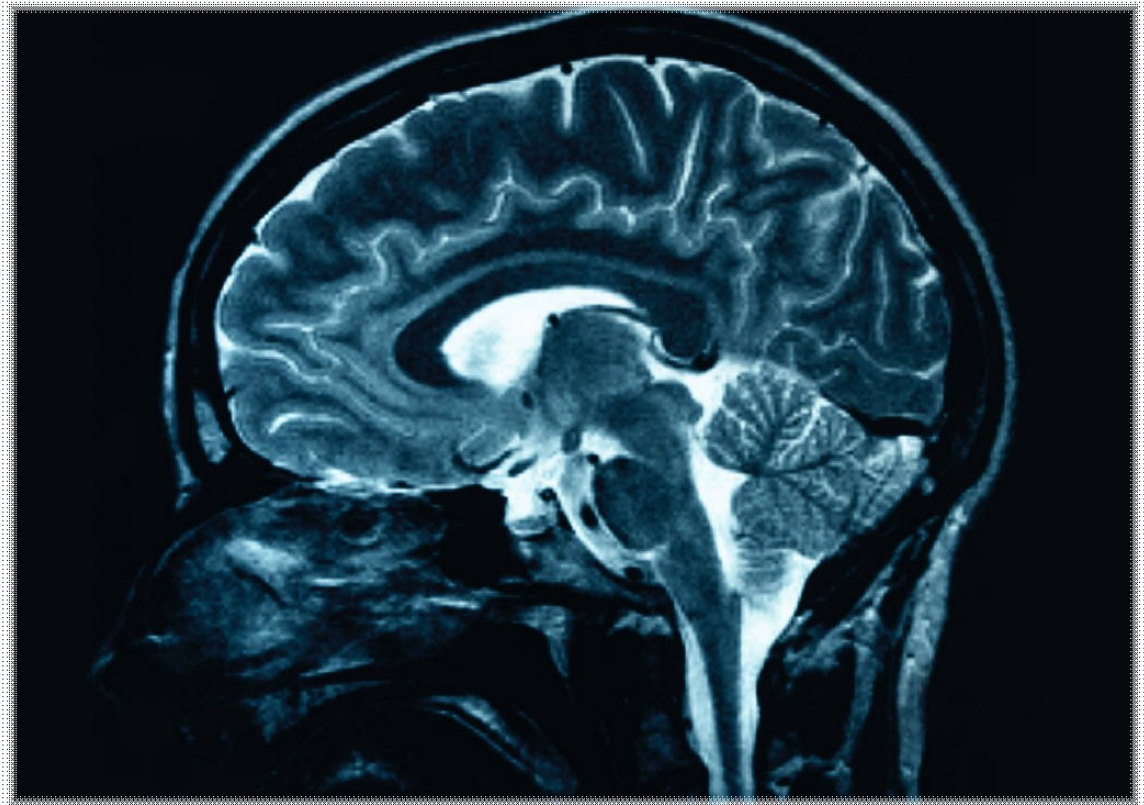
Another time to implement it is when you have multiple items in your inventory. You can highlight newer products over the others by showing how this new product has definite benefits over the other ones. The nice thing about new products is that they often can be higher priced and still sell. Think of when a new style of cell phone comes out. These types of electronic products fascinate people with the way they can push buttons, take pictures, send text mails, and endless other features. And, the price is usually quite high for a new cell phone on the market because demand is expected to be high too. So, when you highlight a new product in your inventory, you also have the potential to make higher priced sales too.

The overall timing on this strategy is sometimes up to the customer, not the marketer. You can constantly remind people why your products are unique, but it's up to them to finally connect their need to your product.

However, this dynamic shifts when the market environment makes your products far more attractive, like when there is a drought and you happen to have rain barrels.

You may have spent years telling everyone that rain barrels save you money by helping them to store water and use it for their landscaping needs. However, if there is no drought, the fact that people have to buy them and install them without a perceived need, can make them difficult to sell. With the drought, you will see your demand skyrocket, because now you can also add: "Don't let the drought kill all your valuable landscaping, buy a rain barrel." See? Your product didn't change, even your benefit did not change, but the environment for the sales changed dramatically, making the timing perfect for selling rain barrels.

Emotional Control



Part of any good advertising, marketing or business strategy is knowing your customers and potential clients well. In fact many Internet marketers would argue that you should "Know your target audience better than the know themselves." In this section we'll be discussing how you can tap into your customers' subconscious minds and use their primal thoughts and feelings to deliver the best possible content and create a marketing scheme that draws them in like moths to a fire.

Tap Into Their Subconscious!

In this strategy to turn your Internet traffic into paying customers, you want to concentrate on the person buying, the sales prospect, rather than the product. Your sales prospects can determine what lures will work best for you in converting visitors to customers, but for that you really have to understand your demographics.

If you haven't done some sort of market research in your demographics, you will want to do that. In face-to-face interactions, the demographics are the people you visit to market with your products, but online it is not as obvious who is visiting your site and why. So, you will want to gather some information through surveys, hiring market research for demographics, checking out the statistics of your website logs, and also using social networking to get a better feel for who might be interested in your products.

The Technique

To understand the unconscious desires that may be lurking in a sales prospect's mind, you need to interact with them and start to get to know them. Some people do this with surveys, by offering a freebie in exchange for visitors filling out a survey. However, that's not going to give you a full view as many people refuse to fill out surveys. So, the next option is to get the people who visit to interact in a forum or group where you can ask questions, see what people are talking about, and get a general feel for who is showing up to your website.

So, start out by gathering information on anything that might appeal to your customer. In social networking places like Facebook, this is a pretty simple thing to do. You just look through the profiles that people draw up in

a network and that tells you a lot about what motivate people who join certain groups on Facebook. But, you also have to direct your market research to your product interest too.

So, say you are trying to find out the subconscious motivations of people who are visiting your pet site. There are the obvious reasons that they are interested in pets and pet products. But, that doesn't determine the subconscious motivation that may get them to buy your pet products. For that, you might want to know more about your visitors. Do they have hobbies? Are they having safety issues? What about where they live, is there something there that might make it more appealing to have pets or more important to have pet products?

At the end of your research into this issue, you may come up with a couple of different ways to implement the strategy, once you have a good idea of some underlying motivations that might be driving traffic to your website.

Then, you simply either provide the solution to this unconscious desire by providing services that match your target market's needs. You will want to do that by writing online copy that expresses how it solves their needs, by selling the benefits first. But, if you have done your homework well, you will be pushing a trigger button that gets immediate attention and can result in an instant sale purely from understanding the psychology of why your customers buy.

The Secret

Let's face it, when it comes to subconscious triggers most people are on automatic pilot. Our entire society is set up to keep people in this hypnotic state, so people generally don't question why they do a certain thing or make a particular purchase, they just may have the vague sense they need it. However, there are some subconscious triggers that appeal to almost

everyone's egos: sex, money, and power. These are not so hidden, except that when people make a purchase, they may not even be aware that it is exactly one of these triggers that finally sealed the deal.

That's why advertisers showcase pretty girls with their products for men. They may be selling electric shavers, but the woman is the one touching his face on television and going: "Aaah!" Right? Isn't that so? So, was it the features of that particular razor that sold it or the subconscious trigger that insinuated that the person's sex appeal would shoot up dramatically if they used it? Probably the latter. However, if you ask a person why they bought that razor, they will most likely start to tell about the features because the trigger was so subconscious they don't even realize they were influenced by it.

Then, there are subconscious triggers that aren't so universal but are specific to your demographic and your product. For instance, do you remember the commercials about the elderly person who falls and can't get up? Then, they have the instant communication system around their neck that notifies someone they need help. Okay, so what is the subconscious trigger here? It's the fear of living alone and having no one around to help. That might be specific to the demographic of the elderly people they were trying to sell. But, no matter how memorable the commercial is, most people buying it would probably not want to admit that fear of being frail or even being elderly, for that matter. They might convince themselves that the reason they bought it was because it was convenient or not that expensive.

So, be aware that the unconscious desires can be universal or specific to your demographic. The key is to provide the solution or associate your product with that unconscious desire so that people will feel more compelled to close the deal.

In a way, you will have to be smarter than the people who are buying your products. You may have a product that doesn't appear to have universal appeal, but you want to use this strategy. It's your job to figure out a way to associate that product with either sex, money, or power or some other unconscious desire that may land you a sale.

How to Make it Work

To implement this strategy online, you will not only be targeting sales, but any call to action that can increase the value of your website or blog. In these terms, a call to action may be to buy something, but it can also be to add a comment to your blog, to discuss something in a public forum, to join your email list, or any other action that makes the buyer interact with the site. If you have a lot of activity on your site, this can help you define what is motivating the visits to your site and how to manifest your visitors' unconscious desires, as we talked about earlier.

You will want to use the gathering phase to cull information on your visitor's subconscious desires. Maybe you experience more sales from people who are visiting your site from the Southern United States in the summer than you do from other regions of the country. That tells you that there is something specific to that region that is motivating sales. The fact is that Southern states have a harder time controlling fleas in the summer months and even though you may not live there, your website is worldwide and people have found it and are buying.

Well, one of the ways you can influence a subconscious trigger is just to advertise how many Southerners actually buy from your site, but that's not very subtle. It may trigger feelings of belonging and also status too, but it can also make them wonder why they're being targeted. The key to using a subconscious trigger is to keep it somewhat subconscious. You may get it, but it shouldn't be too obvious to the people who are buying your products or they will resist it.

So, maybe you find out people in the South who have lots of dogs or cats living in the country and like country music or NASCAR. Voila! You set up your pet site with a referral from a country music star or a Nascar driver. You don't mention the word "south" at all, even though that's your demographic. You don't say that Southerners have too many fleas in the summer; you just have your celebrity showing how effective it is to treat their pets with your product and what they like about it (the benefits).

The subconscious trigger of identity is very powerful. They will identify your product with where they live, in the South, and probably think of you more in association with the celebrity. Every time they hear a song or watch NASCAR, subconsciously they will remember that ad and if they happen to be doing it in the summer, you've probably already made a sale.

So, the thing is to be subtle but focused on your product and target audience when you are going to close the deal. That doesn't mean that you can't use this strategy for other things to get your visitors involved in your site and help you determine their needs. As mentioned earlier, a valid action on your site might be someone putting a comment on your blog or adding a post to a discussion group on your site. If your site is a group site with membership levels and more, you can easily use the subconscious desire to belong to stimulate growth in your website and more activity. You can even sell memberships on your site if you target the subconscious desire to belong to a status group very carefully.

The way to do this is to build a core group first, of people who are already online. This gives your site authority. Then, use strategies like Facebook where people join who have similar networks, interests, or because they are friends already. So, you sign up people, and invite them to have their friends join. You can even give them something for their effort, by either using a point system or some free gift. This will help you build a network of people with similar interests who want to buy your products.

Another way to use the subconscious desire to belong is to add different membership levels to your site. This works particularly well for sites that have a great deal of prestige. EBay uses this strategy by offering sellers a Power seller status on their membership if they happen to have a high number of sales and a 98% feedback rating by the end of several months. If they do, they are automatically promoted to Power seller status.

Meanwhile, this motivates people to sell a lot and keep up good customer service on eBay. Similarly, if you own a respected research or non-profit site, you can have people who want memberships to get different perks per membership level and different types of recognition for being a part of your organization. This helps you sell memberships and increases your pool of people.

The timing for this is actually very flexible. You can influence people through their subconscious programming at any stage of the sales cycle. It is particularly effective at the beginning when people might be attracted to your website, but not quite identifying it with their needs yet. By carefully triggering those subconscious desires they will associate your website, and products, with the solution to their needs. So, while you can do this anytime, at the beginning it can form a powerful first impression without being overbearing or insulting to the buyer's intelligence.

Another time that is perfect for this strategy is on your membership sales page, since you can trigger the particular subconscious reasons someone might join and help them to seal the deal. For instance, maybe you are a non-profit that deals with environmental cleanup, then you can have on your membership page the different levels and how each level helps you to do more good in the community. You can send them a bumper sticker or some other personally identifying perk to make them proud they belong to such a wonderful organization.

Also, when a deal has already been closed, you might still be able to use a subconscious trigger right before the checkout to get more sales. Like the Amazon list that shows "people who bought this item also bought these" which triggers a status subconscious desire. How can you pass up the other books when so many other people have them? Are they smarter than you? Richer than you? What do they know that you don't know? So, you might get triggered to buy more just to keep up with the Jones.

Create Emotional Impact



If you think buying is not an emotional experience, you are mistaken! Every word in sales copy is amplified when it triggers an emotional response and can be the difference between copy that excites the imagination of the potential buyer and that which deadens it. When you engage the buyer's imagination they can even begin to imagine what it's like to own the product you are selling and it stirs up the flames of desire for possessing it.

It is true that if you want to sell, you want to sell by impacting the emotions of your potential buyer. Even though you know that the final decision may be justified through logic, the initial way to get by the mind that will think up all sorts of objections to the sale is to appeal to the emotions.

The Technique

When you are advertising your products or services you will want to pay close attention to the words you choose. Words are powerful tools on the Internet that you can use to frame the way a person perceives not only the

value of your product, but also the experience of possible ownership. Words tell stories that inform your readers about how this product or service solved a problem for some other buyer. Stories can pull a buyer into identifying with the other buyers and help them to visualize their own problems being solved, their lives getting easier or better for having made the purchase.

You will want to pick words that not only tell a vivid story, however, you will also want to use words that influence the buyer's feelings and gives them favorable impressions. It's really not that hard to do. People have a variety of automatic emotional responses to different words. All you have to do is find out which words create the best results and implement them in your sales copy.

You want to create a sales environment that puts people into an emotional mindset. Why? The simple reason is to bypass the logical mind long enough to make the sale. Sure, the final decision to buy will need to be justified with solid benefits, but that's not typically the reason a person ends up making the decision to buy. They may not even be aware that many of their buying decisions are based on how they *feel* about a product rather than what they *think* about it. People actually feel thrills when they buy and that thrill acts as a beacon to get them to buy again. Yet, when they are asked why they buy a particular product, they don't talk about how they feel – that's rather personal! Instead, they list the benefits. That's because when people are asked to justify a purchase, the mind automatically kicks in, even if they made the decision based solely on how they felt at the time of purchase.

The Secret

The brain has two halves and one deals with logic and the other is more intuitive and feeling. The two halves generally don't communicate at the same time in most people. If you have very strong emotions, you're reason is usually blocked from functioning at its highest potential and vice-versa.

This can be really useful information in your marketing efforts because if you can get someone to get emotional about your products, you can sell without even really having to work too hard at it.

Not only that, but once an impression is made on the emotional mind, it tends to have a longer memory than the logical mind. It is even well known that feelings can be associated to various stimuli that bring back powerful memories, complete with the emotions, sometimes just by smelling something that reminds you of your childhood. Words aren't just letters strung together that have a logical meaning. They also have a personal meaning. If you can tap into that emotional intelligence and bypass the logical critic most people have standing ready to say no, you will find that you can sell things much faster and retain customers with a higher sense of satisfaction after the sale.

You don't just have to focus on invoking pleasant emotions, because negative emotions can also be powerful motivators to close a sale. Think of people who are in the market to buy GPS systems for their cars. Why would they want to buy that? On an emotional basis, they may be trying to avoid getting lost. So, the feeling you want to invoke is precisely that confused and lost feeling that they dread. And, then offer the GPS system as a solution to never having to feel that way again!

How to Make it Work

The way to implement this strategy is to start making a list of alternative, emotion-packed words, that influence your potential buyer in subtle, but powerful, ways. Review your copy for opportunities where you can reach out and literally touch the buyer and comfort or assure them that they are making the right decision to buy.

One word that is very powerful and should be used more in copy is the word "invest" instead of buy. When you buy something it almost has the

connotation of being taken for a ride. For instance, when you “buy into” something it means you've been convinced, maybe even despite your feeling it may not be such a good idea. However, the word “invest” has the opposite feeling. It gives you a feeling of security and reaping returns, even if you don't have a logical explanation for why that is so. It's just a good investment.

People in the real estate industry are masters at this game. When a house is small, they call it “cozy.” When the walls are painted in odd colors, they call it “custom paint.” If it is falling apart at the seams, they call it a “handyman special.” These are euphemisms that don't completely hide the meaning, but reframe it to show off the positive aspects of it. They plug into the emotional impact of the words. Cozy gives you the idea of warmth and being hugged by your mother.

Custom paint is a term that can mean anything from a personalized mural complete with the kid's hand prints to a mural vista of the French Riviera by a local artist. It's up to the person reading the ad to fill in the blanks and normally they will fill them in with whatever appeals to them. Handyman special gives you an idea that it's a property that won't last long, being special, and that it only needs a little fixes here and there.

So, paying attention to the choice of words is important to implement this strategy. That can be done by pure trial and error or by looking up sales books to find which words carry a positive impact. There are many such words that you see in television ads, like the words “new, improved, easy” and more. Or, you can just start to switch words here and there in your copy and see what impact it makes on your bottom line.

The second way to implement this strategy is to bring out your inner drama queen. You want to be able to exude emotion and have that pour all over your sales copy. Try to write up an offer that really engages someone

on an emotional level. Use it in your sales presentations by trying to bring in an emotional content that people can quickly identify with and then use it to manipulate people into a frame of mind that makes them buy.

Especially, you want to focus on framing the benefits in an emotional framework. This will help your buyer begin to imagine and experience your product more in their feelings. Try to describe the product in emotional language that triggers people into associations that are positive for them. This is the same idea that real estate people use when they advise you to bake cookies or simmer cinnamon sticks in the house before you show it. The scents pull in memories of mom baking in the kitchen and make the sale for you through subconscious emotional associations. Well, you can do the same with words by painting the picture of the emotional trigger for them to be able to visualize it better in their mind.

Obviously, depending on your demographics, the emotional triggers for one group may be different from another. It's your job to figure out which emotional triggers will appeal to the people you are marketing. If you are marketing to harried, working, moms then triggering the image of a crying, babies, and the phone ringing, while dinner burns on the stove, would sell anything that makes this scenario go away. It might be easy to make microwave meals; it can be an answering machine that shows you who is calling and whether it's important. It's not always going to be obvious how to associate the emotion to your product, but it should be relevant to your demographic.

If you were to use that same imagery to try to sell microwave meals for single professionals, they would not relate to it, even if the microwave meal might appeal to them if it had be framed differently. Do you see how the emotion is triggered specifically by the advertising and the target audience? For some, the emotional trigger will strike them right where they live, and for others, it simply leaves them cold. You have to know who you

are marketing to, to understand how to trigger the emotions that you want to associate with your advertising copy.

Some emotions are universal because they relate to our childhood. We all equate home with feelings of security (which is good for the real estate market). We all want to feel included and accepted by our family and friends. We all want to feel we are achieving or accomplishing something we can feel proud of. These types of emotions can also be used to mine a larger audience, when you are unsure of your demographics. But, the more targeted your emotional marketing campaign the greater the possibility that it will be a stronger influence to trigger buying behavior.

The time to use this strategy is when you are first presenting the product to the public or your website visitor. Don't wait to start to bring some familiarity to the product that the person can begin to identify with it as the solution to their problems. Try to engage all the senses so that they can begin to tie into the sensual aspect of the product – this will lead to the emotional part of their brain and bring forth associated positive memories. Once that first impression is made in the emotional part of the brain, it will be very hard to shake later on.

That's part of the reason that many expert sales people will actually take a sample with them to a presentation, something their potential buyer can touch and experience. It appeals to the emotional side of all human beings and gets them to start imagining what it would be like to own the regular product all to themselves.

Think of how car manufacturers present their advertising for cars. They typically show a convertible car winding down a stunning coastal highway, sea breeze flying through the driver's hair, as the sun beats down on dazzling water and sand. You can practically smell the salt air and taste the spray of sea water in your mouth, and that's the point. They evoke the

emotional response by getting you to imagine buying the car. You then become that person with the perfect life that has the wind wiping through your hair in a breezy, freeing, experience while everyone else is stuck in a cubicle hard at work. It's really quite amusing when we analyze how easily our emotions are manipulated, but that's really the case. There are certain desires that most human beings will do anything to experience: love, freedom, joy, and success. Tie those emotions to your product, and you've got a winner.

Use Their Natural Greed



Greed is a human trait, and maybe we'd like to ignore it because it's not very pretty, but it is a fact of life. People do get greedy and when they do, they tend to lose all sense of reason. That's actually a pretty good time to use this human weakness to help you trigger the impulse to buy your products.

In sales, greed isn't just about charging people the most money you can get out of them, although that is definitely one aspect that marketers use. It's also about providing the trigger so that your buyer believes they are getting a steal, either because of a price differential or the cost versus benefits preview. It's a great way not just to make one sale, but to close on a variety of items.

Closeout and bargain hunting are a form of greed even though it's viewed as frugality. It all depends on if the buyer is buying bargains because

that's what they practically need in their lives or whether the impulse to buy is spurred more by overactive greed glands that can't turn down anything resembling a steal of a deal. So, placing these types of deals on your website can help you start to develop a sales strategy that attracts a wide range of buyers.

The Technique

It may surprise you to know that the disposable income level of your sales prospects actually define what a good deal is, not the actual value of the product or service you are offering. That's because greed is relative to your economic prosperity, even though high income wage earners are not immune to greed, it just takes a slightly different form.

For instance, when you are trying to sell an item that might be worth \$60 to a very well-heeled client, you might want to up the price to \$100, and highlight the features and quality of the product, and see if they bite. The reason for this isn't just your own greed, but also the understanding that price to value is relative based on your disposable income.

For someone making over \$100,000/year, an extra \$40 is not seen as a lot of money and they may be used to paying higher prices due to the markets they shop. They might not even question the price. However, they will assuredly question the quality and want to make sure that the purchase reflects their station in life. The greed here is more about status than money.

On the other hand, if you were to do the same with a person making less than \$25,000/year that \$100 set point may be enough for them to do some comparison shopping and they'll pretty soon find out that they can buy the same item from your competitor for \$40 less. You not only lose the sale, but you lose future sales too from that customer. So, using greed to price your products is tricky. You have to understand your target demographic,

and specifically the income level of most of your customers. Then, you can price accordingly.

If you are not sure of the income level, you can always start using this strategy by offering a more expensive option first and then presenting a much less expensive option second. The difference in prices and a clear explanation of the differences in features can be enough to make the greed glands in any demographic start to salivate. It appeals to the high income earners because it triggers their status greed in elevating the higher priced item as the “must have” product, not just because of additional features, but precisely because it is more expensive. It triggers the lower end crowd because the less expensive option will be seen to be a minor sacrifice in features for a large reduction in cost.

The Secret

Where does greed come from? It's said it is one of the original seven deadly sins, but it's probably more a survival instinct. When human beings lived at the mercy of the elements and environment, there were wide disparities between times of prosperity and harsh times when drought, famine, or disease might invade the security of the home. So, the instinct to hoard things and try to get a bigger share than someone else was basically an innate fear of survival because the future was so uncertain.

That's why even people who are very well off are not immune to greed. It is inbred in our species and helped us, as a species, to survive very bad times, albeit at the expense of others at times. But, the instinct to try to get a very good deal, even one you don't need immediately, is something that appeals to everyone, even if the tactic to implement it is different according to your demographic.

In marketing, the skillful manipulation of price is what triggers this dynamic. Value is something that the buyer determines in a capitalistic system, so that it can fluctuate from person to person. So, the way to engage a perception that your product is a steal is by manipulating the price in relation to the perceived value. Let's be clear, the price itself is viewed as a fixed commodity to the buyer, it is the value that is fluctuating from person to person. If the price is low when compared to the perceived value, even if the price is actually quantitatively high, then it is considered a steal by that potential buyer and the greed glands will kick into high gear.

So, you can either raise or lower the price to stimulate greed, it's that simple. That's the tool you have at your disposal. However, always do it in comparison to your understanding of the customer's perceived value of the product.

How to Make it Work

You may be scratching your head a bit confused about raising a price to stimulate greed. There is a strategy that you can use which shifts the perceived value in the buyer's mind while you do it. It is quite a bit more subtle than lowering a price to stimulate greed, but it can be done, especially for luxury or high-priced markets. Remember that as long as the price is low in comparison to the perceived value, even if it is quantitatively a high dollar value, it's still considered a steal.

Here is how you might try to implement the greed factor in a high-priced market.

Say you are selling collectible fine china. You have several sets that are obviously worth hundreds of dollars and you are interested in getting a stampede of buyers to your door to generate interest in the product. So, you build a marketing campaign and you talk about how the value of the price of this fine china has increased over time substantially and how rare it is becoming. Now, you're attracting the demographics of luxury buyers who are interested in not only quality goods, but they have a nose for great deals too.

So, you say that in another five years, their investment in the fine china **may** be worth twice as much again. Be careful with the wording and be sure that they understand that past performance of an investment is no guarantee of future returns. So, here we are very skillfully changing the perception of this product from china to collectibles and an investment, not a household purchase, and we've even shown how the value might potentially increase after the purchase. So, are we going to sell it for the actual value of the product? No way! We are selling an appreciating asset, not a household item.

So, now the value of the product has increased tremendously in the buyer's mind and we can command a higher figure than the actual present day value. But, wait! That's just the start of our greed enhancing program. Now, you say, that while it's true that the china is a great investment and of quality and high value, you can offer the public a great deal by offering it at a discount because you are either going out of business, having an end of year sale, celebrating your business anniversary or whatever! Make up an excuse and make it somewhat believable. Then, cut the price of the set from the higher price to a lower one, but one still substantially higher than what the product's present day value is worth.

Another way to do this is not to cut the value of one set, but offer a discount on volume buying. This would work perfectly if you are selling place settings and you don't know whether they want four, eight, or twelve place settings. However, they may think it's too expensive to buy twelve, until you offer them a discount for buying eight or more. You trigger the greed, and they will start to justify the reasons why having extra sets on hand are a good idea.

Finally, lowering the price of items is always a sure-fire way to attract greedy customers by the boat load. And, you will soon discover that the amount of attention and enthusiasm you get for your sales is completely proportional to the difference in price drops. The lower the price, the more you sell, in other words. The only time when you can't make those sales is when the product is obviously junk and no one wants to buy it, but for the most part if you continue to persuade your customers of the innate value of the product and lower the price, you can spur them into action to close the sale.

This is a strategy that can be used even before a customer shows up to your website! Yes, that's right, you don't have to wait for them to show

interest in your products, you don't have to wait for them to sign up to mailing list, you can do it as a mass advertising tool to bring customers in who will be attracted by your specials.

This is an excellent tool for people in direct mail and retail sales. You know that when you put out a special in one of those newspaper inserts or ValuPak envelopes, that you are practically, guaranteed new customers as long as the offer is enticing enough to convince them to drop by. Well, on the Internet you don't even have to convince them to gas up their cars and make the trip, you can simply put your link out there and invite them to click on it.

You'll want to include your offer in various third party forums and comment on in discretely where ever you can. Be careful not to span people, but you do want to advertise it on other places besides your own site.

In order to get the widest exposure, you can offer to give key people in the same niche as you the deal for free, if they review it and write about the value. While that may be a sweet enough deal for some, others will want to get a commission off each product they promote and sell. Then, you can also set up an affiliate program for that special so that they are not only able to promote a great deal to their visitors, but they make money off the deal too. That's the true meaning of greed, when you butter the palms of everyone involved in the deal and make it a win-win-win for everyone.

These types of offers are best as either introductory offers or close-out sales, or end of season sales. There should be a reason why you are able to offer these offers so that people don't become habituated to receiving only sharp discounts from you and get offended when you put up a product at a regular price. And, don't forget the luxury market too when you want to implement this strategy, but instead of money, opt to hype the perceived value so that a lowering of the price still keeps the initial price high.

Mesmerize with Story



If you've ever heard the story of 1,001 Arabian Nights you know the power of stories to enchant the listener. That's because people are hard-wired to myth for ancient times. They want to hear things spoken in story form and their subconscious has a way of remembering what they hear in story form better than visual cues. If you use stories in your marketing, you will not only capture people's attention, but you will also help them to remember you long after they've left your website.

The other aspect of stories that enchants people is the capacity to create empathy and communion with the story teller. How many of us remember asking our parents to read a bed time story? Wasn't it a special time of bonding for us? The same can be true of stories that you tell when you are trying to establish a rapport with people coming to your website.

The Technique

The strategy is to try to capture a person's attention by initiating a story that fascinates them into a longer relationship with you. Obviously, they will not leave until they've heard the punch line or found out how the story ended. The story should have some human elements in it, so that your reader can relate to it on a personal level. If it is just a story of a product, without some human element, it will sound like hype. So, be careful to include your product or service in the story, but don't make it a story solely about that product.

The story should try to stir the reader's curiosity from the get go. It is this sense of "what's going to happen" that will lead the reader, deeper and deeper into your story. It can be a story about some people's experience with your product. It can be a story about the development or discovery of your product. It can even be a humorous story about your product. It really doesn't matter, as long as you are engaging the reader in a deeper relationship and connection with your product or service.

The way you know if the strategy is working is if you can get the reader to read the entire story to the very end, where the sales pitch is. Once they have become so involved in the story line, they will empathize with the actors in the story, identify with the product and their own predicaments, and be very likely to consider buying the product right then and there. That's the power of a good story. It breaks down the resistance to buying; much like a set of benefits does too. But, in this case, it works more subconsciously than consciously, which makes it a far more powerful strategy in the long run. They may leave your website and three hours later still remember that story and thus, they will also remember your product better. The deeper the

impact of a story, the more likely the reader will remember your products when they have a need or are looking for a solution like your story relates.

The Secret

Story telling involves telling jokes as well as long, drawn-out stories with a beginning, middle, and end. They work to lessen the awkwardness of a social encounter, especially between people who have never met before. If you can get a person to laugh at your joke or identify with your story, you become more familiar to them and less of a stranger. The impact of a story is only as good as how well it causes the reader to bond with the storyteller and be drawn into the final conclusion of the story.

Jokes are very easy to reel off at the beginning of a sales encounter, but they are much more difficult to enact well. It takes a certain flare to be able to tell a joke well so that it comes out humorous and not lame. However, jokes are brilliant ways to tell a tiny story in a very small amount of time and have people bond with you through the mechanism of humor and laughter. It builds a warm camaraderie and can help you establish mutual trust from the onset.

However, if you're not good at telling jokes, telling a personal account or story can be another great way to bond with your website visitors. It brings the human element to the forefront of your website and humanizes the technological aspect of being online. It appeals to the subconscious triggers within a person and can be a subtle way to manipulate the unconscious desires or fears they may be experiencing to help them make the decision to buy.

How to Make it Work

Online stories can involve all sorts of media from written copy, to cartoons, or video blogs. If you have a good short story that can be made into a video,

you can add that to YouTube to try to make it go viral. It can be a story that relates your product as the solution to an embarrassing event with the title, "Don't let this happen to you!" At the end, you put a link to your website to draw that traffic to your sales page. That's the way to use a video and the power of the Internet to create a sales page story line. It can be very powerful if plenty of people relate to it or find it humorous, as it can be spread across the Internet very quickly if it has mass appeal.

Another way to use a story is through written copy on your website. Maybe the story has a lesson to teach about why your product is the solution to a particular dilemma. Maybe you want to relate a humorous story about your product that is entertaining for the reader. Maybe you want to give the reader the opportunity to experience an "ah-ha" moment that some other customer had when they used your product or service. It really doesn't matter what you write, as long as it stirs the readers curiosity, draws the reader in, and creates a lasting impression. Then, by the time you make your sales pitch at the end, the story has been embedded in their sub consciousness and will have triggered various impulses to buy.

Cartoons or images are like mini-stories that can convey a quick synopsis or be a good lead in for a story. If the image captures a visitor's attention enough, they will probably scroll down and read the story behind it. So, don't think that this is all about copy. Use everything you can to draw a visitor into the copy that eventually has your sales pitch at the end and a call to action to buy your product.

There is one other way to implement this strategy that does not involve actually selling the product. Instead, it could be a story that creates the right environment for your product or educates the reader for why your products are necessary or expedient. This is particularly effective for items that may be so novel that people don't know why they would buy them. There is no conditioning in place or market buzz that has been associated

with the item and so they're left not understanding the value of the product at all.

That's when you need a story about your particular industry and how these products were developed to fulfill a particular need. You want to be clear that people understand the results they will get in their lives by paying attention to this particular issue and this sets the environment for making a sales call at the end.

Computers are a good example. When personal computers hit the scene and started gaining some popularity in the late 80's people were extremely divided about them. Most people didn't realize the capabilities of computers and the modern microprocessor so they couldn't justify spending thousands of dollars on one. Why would you pay that much more for something that you don't understand or value?

It took a while before people realized that computers could vastly improve their lives. Repetitive, menial tasks could be assigned to a computer and save thousands of hours of work. Computers could be connected to each other via the internet and people could communicate with text and images thousands of miles away. Manuscripts could be typed in full without a single drop of ink wasted and then later edited without hassle; the list goes on forever. Once you declare the proper environment and frame the value of your product or service, it becomes much more intriguing and interesting to your potential buyer. So, what might not have been something they saw any value in, becomes very important to try so that they too can see the results in their life.

So, while a story is typically something that can relate the potential buyer to a common experience that will help them bond, there are other times when you have to set the stage first before they get why it is a common experience. It may be they have never ever tried anything organic

in their lives, so you had to introduce that concept to them from some other area that is familiar to them – our polluted environment.

Telling a story that is brief can be done at the very beginning of a sales encounter. It can be done on the home page, in your about me pages, or when you are introducing a new product. Once you've established a nice bond, you can even get into longer stories on the sales page to establish the benefits of your product, especially if it is something new that needs to have the stage set for it to make a dramatic appearance.

You can even use a “joke of the day” type of device to help engage your readers and have it introduce your industry, if not your product. Sort of like the jokes that all relate to the supposed idiosyncrasies of blonde individuals. If you happened to be selling hair dye, this would make an excellent way to establish rapport and humor on your site and eventually sell the dye.

Some people like stories so much that they will email them to other people. You can have an “email this story to your friend” feature that is a great way to have people visiting your market for you. In the same way, a YouTube video that goes viral will work marketing magic for you and you don't have to go and post it to too many places. Other people will start doing it for you.

Most stories will do nothing more than introduce the product or establish rapport. Those are the ones you use on other sites and throughout the Internet to establish a presence online. Reserve the longer, deeper, stories for your website where people can become involved in an area that has calls to action to buy your products.

Involvement Invigorates



People who get involved tend to be more committed to a particular path than those who are just visiting. This is true whether you are doing retail sales or online sales. However, in a face-to-face presentation people are naturally involved because a social interaction is taking place and they usually give you their full attention. Online, people may be surfing the web and be multitasking on their PCs. You don't know if you have their attention or not since you're not directly there to give them eye contact. So, how do you get them involved in your site if you can't reach out through their terminal and put the product in their hands?

Well, the solution is a lot easier than you think since social networking sites are now more predominant. Blogs, discussion groups, forums, and even surveys and games can be a way to engage the person to stop a moment and interact with your site. Once you've engaged their participation, they will start to identify with your site more. Now, if you get them to become a regular visitor who comments on your blog or has tried out some of your products, they start to feel like this is their home. They start to take pride in being part of your site and it can give them feelings like pride of ownership.

The Technique

Direct sales like mail marketing use something called an "involvement device" to get people involved over a long distance. That is something that they can touch and feel and that asks for some participation on their part. The one involvement device that comes to mind is some of the advertisements that ask you to peel a sticker from a particular part of the advertisement and place it somewhere else to signal your acceptance of the offer.

It seems very simplistic that having someone place a sticker or add a business card or drop something into a slot could ever increase sales, but it does. Once a person becomes involved in the sales process, they are more apt to pay attention and buy. Any device that engages the reader brings them into the buying process and reduces their resistance to the offer.

You don't just want to use any involvement device, you typically want to use something that ties into what you are selling. That's why Facebook applications are so popular because they are a great involvement device that typically tie into the product or company and provide a way for people to associate their participation with some company or product. Then, if there is a link available back to the website, you are already primed to consider this a part of your virtual heritage.

Another type of involvement device is like the advertisements that ask you to draw a picture to see if you qualify for drawing lessons. You find that you get so involved in getting the picture done right, that you can hardly wait to mail it off and receive an offer for classes in the mail. Not only did those advertisers correctly identify people who might have an interest in buying art classes, but they also got them so involved they probably waited by the mailbox to see if they were accepted for this offer. That's very clever marketing!

The key there is that involvement device used was directly related to the product or services being sold. You can still use an involvement device that merely gets a person to participate, and online that would be like getting a comment on a blog. A person has taken some action that has gotten them involved in your community. But, did it make a sale? Not really, it might later, but not right away. So, the best involvement devices are those that are tied directly to the product or service you are trying to market.

The Secret

Have you ever seen a baby find a new toy and become completely fascinated by it? It captures their attention and all their old toys get ignored why they explore this new object. They may put it in their mouths, stare at it intently, shake it, or even smash it on the floor. They get highly involved in just touching it and trying to get as much experience as they can out of it. Well, adults still have that fascination with new toys. And, that's part of the psychology of offering them something new that brings up that childish wonder of exploration.

The other thing is that people love to be challenged and to beat something and identify themselves as a winner. Some of the puzzles, games, and involvement devices can include different levels that differentiate your ability from other people and give you a sense of pride that you made it to a certain level.

Another way to involve people is to make it fun. Who doesn't want to include a little entertainment in their day. In fact, entertainment is one of the most sought after things in our Western culture. If you happen to provide a fun involvement device that also happens to lead them to your product, all

the better right? They get to have some fun and you end up with a sale, so in a sense, it's a win-win.

Also, people tend to distrust a product that they can't see, touch, or feel. So in direct retail sales, the involvement device is typically the ability to try on a dress before buying, kick the tires of a new car or test drive it, or even get a free make-over at a make-up department store booth. They want the experience of possessing the item before they actually purchase it.

These types of retail actions are simple ways to involve a person by just allowing them to touch and experience the product first-hand. This becomes a little harder in the virtual world of online sales because your product is not there to have and hold, but you can still produce some very good involvement devices and even virtual "visualize and experience" ads that can lead to bigger sales.

How to Make it Work

Since we are basically concerned with turning traffic from your website into customers, we want to really understand how to create an involvement device online. It's really not that hard, once you understand the concept. What you want to do is put yourself in the customer's shoes and see how you can get them engaged in at least visualizing themselves using your product or service.

In the first strategy, you can simply provide a novel and fun gimmick to your site to get them involved. If you are a dating site, for instance, you might want to add a personality test to your website. Once they complete that, you can sell the service by saying, "Find compatible people who match your personality on our site!" It not only gets them involved right away, but it appeals to ego identity, a large reason people join community sites.

Social networking is great for forming groups of people who can interact with each other. In a sense, the people on your site become the

involvement device that attracts more people. If you are trying to sell memberships, you want to highlight who is already on your site and why it is worth it for you to join so you can network with them too.

If you really think about it, your entire website can be an involvement device. It has buttons people can push, drop-down menus they can fiddle with, and maybe videos they can watch. So, you can do the same thing when you are selling a particular product. Just be careful that you don't get too fancy. Some people try to involve their visitors by adding incredible technologies that look great on newer PCs, but can't be opened on older models! You don't want to lose a customer because the involvement device is too complicated or it crashes their system! You want something simple and you want it to appeal to the psychology more than the technology.

When you are marketing people offline, you can also provide involvement devices that lead back to your products online. There are now business cards that are mini CD-ROMs that can be loaded into a computer and lead people straight to your website. Just the fascination of seeing something so small, so cute, and so novel, will get people to put it in their machine to see what it does. Once they are on your site, you can involve them further with other involvement devices.

But, what if you're selling engagement rings online? How could you possibly create an involvement device for that? Won't someone want to try the ring on first before buying? Here is where you see the magic of the Internet really shine. You can hire a programmer to build a database of your inventory and an applet that allows them to build a ring online in the virtual world. Thus, they not only get the fun of creating something online, but they get to try out the ring too, in their imagination. It's the closest thing to actually being in a retail store where they can hold the ring in their hands. It may take a bit more programming and sophistication, but if your market

demands a virtual try-out there are ways to do this, as many online diamond marketers have proven.

Your call to action can also include an involvement device or a fun game by allowing them some discount for performing a specific function on your site and thus getting access to a coupon code. Once they have that coupon code, wouldn't they want to use it to get the discount? So, you lead the potential buyer from their fun game straight back to your product or service.

Finally, even emails or sales copy can get the reader involved, if you happen to use the person's name in them and help them to imagine what it's like to experience your product. If you have a product that you can personalize, that also will give a person a feeling of pride of ownership before they've gotten the product in their hands. As can be seen, there are a great many ways to use this strategy online to help promote participation and involvement with your website and products.

This strategy works best at the very beginning of your sales funnel, or even before. You should have at least a few involvement devices on your website to help you create membership, if you are a social networking site. Otherwise, people lose interest in just writing posts and move on. If you have a fun game, or add a video from YouTube, when they first land on your page your website appears more interactive and alive.

Have you ever seen the sign on the side of the road as your waiting in a traffic jam that says: "You could live here."? That is a simple device that helps you imagine how much time you could save living there, how much nicer your life would be, and how you could own a condo there if you just took the initiative to walk in the door. That's a very powerful involvement device and it wasn't even in a sales brochure. You might not have even been thinking of buying a condo up until then. So, that explains that the timing on

this strategy is sometimes even *before* the person has realized that your company even exists or what your products are.

You can wait for them to somehow stumble upon your site, but why not go out to places where people in your target demographic are and just put a link to your fun, experiential, involvement device there. You don't have to sell the product, you don't have to tell them at the end, they'll be solicited to buy a product. Once they choose to try this out, they will be hooked and you will have created a sales opportunity where none existed.

Once you have the person involved in the product, you can continue to keep them involved by upgrading the experience. This will create a habit, reducing their resistance to future purchases too. So, if you are using a game, make sure you have various levels. Keep the strategy going continuously and vary it every now and then to keep people involved and buying.

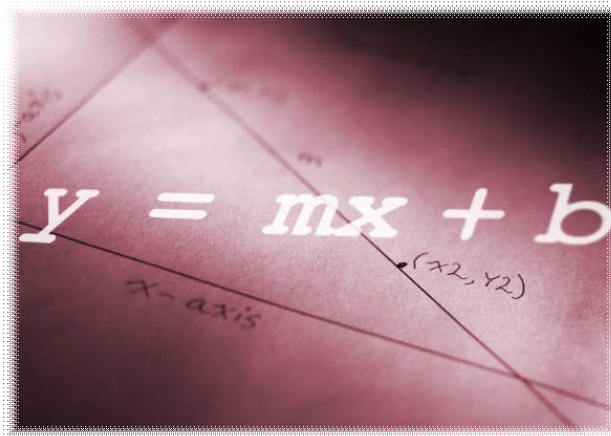
Logic and Business



While an emotional trigger will help to stimulate buying behavior, when it comes time to justify the purchase buyers often seek out logic. Part of being a good sales person or business owner is being able to juggle multiple marketing paradigms at one time and you have to consider that one solution never fits all. Some customers will be very easily controlled emotionally but many will be analytical thinkers who don't fall for those sorts of "Tricks." For these types of clients and customers we must present in a logical way that allows them to assess the facts and understand why your

product or service is better not just because you say so, but because it has proven results.

Use Logic



No one likes to feel that they've been taken on a deal, and so the end result that even if the emotions have carried them away, they will always give a logical reason why they eventually bought the product. That's because people don't admit that it was an emotional response that instigated the buy, they'd rather admit there was a valid reason for the purchase.

Knowing this, that a logical reason may be necessary for some to close a deal, and then you want to provide that logical reason just as you would attempt to resolve an objection before it is raised. It doesn't mean that the reason has to really make any sense; it just has to be enough to justify the purchase. It has to answer the question: "Why should I buy this product?"

The Technique

Here you are going to aim a very definite reason why a customer should buy your product. It's typically done after an emotional appeal, to seal the deal and give your ad a double whammy. You are going to look at the demographics of your visitors and you are going to try to put yourself in their shoes. What would be the defining reason to buy this product?

There are a variety of reasons that can trigger different segments of the population to agree that to purchase your product makes sense. If you are dealing with people who are budget conscious, you can go after economic reasons. Another possibility is to focus on health as a reason. Maybe they are getting older and more health conscious. Maybe you are selling something to people who are sick. That can be a powerful reason to consider buying your product. Safety is also something is top-most in people's minds. This might work well for some people and not for others. Safety means different things to different people. For mothers, child safety might be the reason that you need to express to close the deal. For elderly people, it might be personal safety when they are home alone.

Aside from very logical reasons like that, you don't have to just concentrate on those. Sometimes some of the best reasons are status, especially if you are selling in the luxury market. In that case, the reason you give might be, "You deserve it!" Is there any logic to that? Not from an intellectual perspective, but from a reasoning standpoint it makes perfect sense to a certain subset of people, particularly the affluent.

Another reason that you can use is that it will enhance your personal or professional recognition. That can be a powerful reason for people who are dating or seeking some sort of career advancement. Again, the reason you choose should fit the demographic of people you are marketing.

The way this strategy works best is if you can get into the mindset of the people you are marketing and understand what type of objections they are likely to raise for themselves. If you are not sure what they are, you need to do a little market research with similar products that are selling online. Without understanding some of the potential objections that people might be thinking about when they view your sales page, you will not be able to successfully resolve them in a logical manner, and that's the key to this strategy.

Once you determine the most typical objections, you will be able to think up the proper justifications to overcome them. By doing so, you will eliminate the last bit of resistance in your buyer's mind and close the sale.

The Secret

Our Western culture prides itself on being one of reason and logic. We rely on our intellectual capabilities to justify almost every aspect of our very existence. Since we are young, we are told that civilized people use reason and not emotion to understand their world. While that remains a deep part of our conditioning, the truth is that we react emotionally first and then we attempt to justify our emotions with our thinking minds.

So, when the emotion is felt to make a purchase, we question it. We have a certain suspicion about salesmen and slick marketing tactics. The emotion stirred up by the copy may be so strong that people are just waiting to find the reason to justify to themselves that, yes indeed; this is a really good purchase. But, without that reason, the sale is not finalized. That's because our conditioning steps in to warn us that anything that seems too good to be true, usually is unless we rationally analyze our course of action.

A good salesman anticipates that as the starting point of a sale's negotiation, not the end. He or she understands that the person who begins to create objections in their mind is actually considering buying the product, but the mental conditioning and inherent distrust built up about deals may be causing them to hesitate. The way they are taught to hesitate is to analyze the situation with their minds. So, those people that are raising objections are already half-sold! Otherwise, they'd simply walk away and never engage in any thought process to defend themselves from a potentially making a poor decision. It's your job, as an online marketer, to understand what objections are typically going to occur at this stage of the game, and resolve them satisfactorily to reduce the resistance to your sale.

How to Make it Work

One can get very creative in implementing this strategy because the mind has a way of creating excuses when it really wants something. Realize that the sale was probably already made on an emotional basis; all you are doing now is closing the sale by engaging the proper reason to assuage our cultural conditioning. So, even though you can go after reasons that make sense and go along with the product, there are plenty of reasons that don't exactly have to tie into the product, but offer some benefit and can be used to walk the logic labyrinth.

For instance, say you are leasing vehicles. Well, you can talk all day long about the wonderful qualities of the vehicles and how leasing is such a flexible option. But, the final reason that may make the most sense from a business perspective may be the potential ability to write off the lease on the company's taxes. You may wonder, where did that come from? Well, if you understood the demographic that is buying your product most, you may discover that it is companies that are leasing vehicles so they don't have to buy their own and maintain them. Instead, they buy a lease and use them only when they are under warranty. Maybe they even have a specific brand that fits their needs best and are already sold on that one model. So, then, you know that other companies who are in competition may not understand how they save by leasing a vehicle, instead of buying. So, that can be a powerful logical argument to overcome objections from new customers who never thought about leasing before.

In this scenario, the reason actually had very little to do with the product's features or quality. It had to do with a competitive edge and the ability to rationalize the purchase as a smart business expense. So, that's how you can get extremely creative with this particular strategy. Don't just limit your reasons to things that tie into the product, but widen your net and

cast it into the biggest possible incentive that makes sense for your demographic.

However, if you find that you need to go with standard reasons, there are always reasons available tied to any product. For instance, if you sell computers, you may want to iterate how practical they are, how much work can be accomplished, or even what business-oriented security features the software comes with. Whatever you choose, it has to be something of interest to your demographic.

If you are selling other technology, you can focus on how it does a specific function better than other products, how it can improve your productivity, how it simplifies a particular task. These are all very logical reasons that appeal to that crowd.

One thing to remember when implementing this strategy is that it is related to the price you set for your product. In other words, if you have a high priced item, you will have to justify it more than a less expensive product. The only time that may not be true is when you are marketing to an affluent demographic. Otherwise, you will always have to justify a more expensive product to someone, even if they are head over heels in love with it.

Take luxury cars. There's really nothing all that much different from the way one car operates over another. So, they have to be sold on the features and the reasoning they give is that even though it may have the same parts as another car, they are somehow better quality. It may be a car known for its smooth ride, or it may be known for its high safety record, whatever the reason, it's really something that suggests the car *outperforms* other cars. After all, luxury cars are truly expensive. How would anyone be able to justify ever buying one based on the fact that they needed a car that took them from one place to another? Obviously, that strategy would not

work! Instead, the logic has to include why it is so much better than other cars to justify the high cost. Despite this, it's almost certain that people who buy luxury cars are buying them based on the emotional impact. The feeling of specialness, the luxury of owning one, the way it associates them with a specific class of people is what really sells these cars. But, if you were to ask anyone why they bought a luxury car, they would most likely opt to tell you it outperforms other cars because they have to justify the expense to you and to themselves too.

The funny thing about the way to implement this strategy is that it can actually pay to put in technical reasons to sell the product, even if most people have no idea what most of the features are in technical language. Take a look at how personal computers are sold. They will tell you it had this much RAM, hard drive space, and all kinds of technical features that the majority of people don't understand. The higher the price, the more the technical features are listed in one long list. That's because they are the reasons that people will justify buying a higher priced computer versus a less expensive one, even if they haven't a clue what all those extra features are all about. They only know they have a very smart computer, and likewise, they feel smart opting for a fully loaded personal computer, even if all they want to do is type up a few emails or letters every now and then.

The time to implement this strategy is after you've made the emotional sales pitch and the customer is wavering. It almost always comes at the end of a sales presentation, on the side of the box of the software or as an inset for the PC advertisement. It's not the sole reason anyone is expected to agree to buying your product, it's simply put there at the end to remove the last vestiges of resistance to buying the product.

So, for online marketing, it does go in your list of benefits if you have multiple reasons, but you should have one big reason at the end why this is

the very best thing a person can do to resolve the problem that led them to your sales page. You can even put it in as an afterthought, as in, "Don't forget, this product does this and this and you should take advantage of that."

Debug First!



If you ask a sales person whether an objection to their sales presentation is bad, you'll get the answer: "No." A good sales person knows that with any presentation or marketing, objections will arise. That's a good thing because once an objection is raised by the sales prospect, most marketers can resolve it and dismiss it, leaving the way clear to buying their product. So, objections typically are raised by the customer in most sales transactions, but this strategy is done by the seller and not the potential buyer. That's right, you will be the one raising the objections so that you can just as swiftly dismiss them and get to the closing.

The reason this particular strategy is important in online marketing is because you are not interacting with the potential buyer face to face. They visit your site, find something they like, and like any reasonable customer they will start to think of reasons they shouldn't buy it. That's just what most people do; they resist being marketed. So, if your product has any obvious flaws that's exactly the first objection that will be raised in their mind. Maybe the product is ugly, or it costs too much, or it's gotten bad reviews. Don't

wait for the customer to raise that objection in their own minds and click away, instead you *raise* it first! So, if you know your product costs more than all the competitors, raise that first by saying that your product costs more specifically because it's better than your competition. Then go on to use that as a lead into the benefits.

The Technique

The strategy is to disarm your buyer by bringing up the objection first, before they even have time to think about it or utter it in their minds. This works whether the product has some faults or not, but it is especially effective with those that have obvious faults. Don't believe that a buyer will miss a flaw with the product or that if you concentrate on only highlighting the good qualities that the bad qualities won't be noticed. Consumers are very sophisticated these days.

Online retailing has made it incredibly easy for them to comparison shop without having to visit multiple stores. Some sites even have reviews of products online that tell them which kinds are the best. Of course, magazines like consumer reports will tell buyers what basic features they can expect from a product and what makes one a better deal than another. It's a bit naïve to think that you will have a totally uninformed consumer drop by your website and not notice anything that is obviously flawed about your produce. That doesn't mean you can't bring that up first and either make it a feature or find a way to resolve that objection that satisfies them as fair.

The Secret

When you bring up an objection first it has a couple of effects. First, it makes you appear to be honest and forthright because you willingly brought up the subject first. It also decreases the resistance your buyer may have to the objection because you've reframed it in a way that acknowledges the flaw, but gives them a way to justify it. So, by simply being willing to be upfront, you can undercut the objection before it happens. This is a way of disarming the reaction of the buyer by simply acknowledging the concern upfront.

If, on the other hand, you took the tact of trying to avoid the flaw and hoping they didn't see it, you would appear to be deceitful and the person would lose confidence in the sale. If you brought up the flaw, but minimized it as a valid objection, your buyer will wonder what else is wrong with your product that you don't think is worth mentioning. But, if you bring up the flaw, acknowledge it, and then resolve it for them in a way that they can justify the purchase, you close the deal.

In a way, the buyer is more likely to trust the rest of the presentation because you didn't gloss over the bad features of your product. Since you were honest enough to be upfront, that lends you credibility and that credibility rubs off on the product, whether it deserves it or not. And, when you go on to actually talk about the positive features they are given more weight, because you were honest with the negative ones. While you might think people would be turned off by acknowledging a defect, hiding it under the rug is a worse offense in most people's minds.

How to Make it Work

This is something that you should consider when you have a product or service with an obvious flaw. So, let's say that you are trying to sell used tires. Okay, used tires are obviously not as good as new tires, are they? Well, you can't advertise the tire like new tires. So, you admit – hey, they're used tires. Then, you can go on to say that despite the fact they are used tires and not brand new, they are checked to make sure they have sufficient tread on them, they pass some inspection for holes etc., you offer a guarantee should they not last a certain amount of miles, and you can still offer the same brands that other retail people sell brand new. Oh, and don't forget that if they're used, you save money too because the price is lower for the same name brands.

This works very well if you are selling items on eBay and they are not new or they have some obvious defect. You want to be completely upfront

with that defect. It should be the very first thing you discuss, so that there is absolutely no misunderstanding that the product may be perceived to be flawed by other standards. The worse thing that can happen online is that your customer gets a product delivered to them that doesn't match the description on your website. You can expect them to not only never buy another thing from your site, but on eBay and places that allow your customer's to provide feedback, you will get negative feedback and scare other customers away. However, that doesn't mean that you can only sell new products that are in perfect mint condition online. Far from it! It means that you need to be explicit about the condition of the items that you are selling and very upfront about them.

Another way to implement this is to offer a limited guarantee on the product. That way, if the person is completely unsatisfied, they can return it or get some form of compensation for their troubles. This is one way to dismiss many objections people might have about buying items that aren't new or in perfect condition.

Unfortunately, online, people don't always read every piece of copy you put up about your product. However, they do usually read the very first part of the copy before scrolling down. It seems strange, but that's where you will put the acknowledgement of the defect. If you bury it elsewhere in the copy and get an order and the customer becomes irate, directing them to the online copy where your flaw is buried two-thirds of the way down the page is going to make them even madder.

On the other hand, if you say, "Yeah, this piece of art is BUTT-UGLY...", it's a great way to get attention and dismiss the worst defect you have on the product. Maybe the piece of art you are auctioning is butt-ugly, however, it's also one of a limited collection of prints made by a celebrated artists and worth hundreds of dollars! The customer scrolling through eBay or your site will initially be shocked to see that you actually admit that this product you are selling has an obvious flaw. They may even find it humorous.

It will definitely get their attention, and that will lead them to read the rest of the copy which explains all the other benefits and how you can dismiss the defect as either part of the charm of the piece or as not consequential to its actual value.

Don't be afraid to get down the real nitty gritty details of why the product is flawed. Maybe it's ugly because it has too many loud colors. Maybe it's ugly because it has drab colors. Maybe it's ugly because it's abstract or too primitive. Whatever the problem is, be very clear that you understand that this is something that most people would consider an undesirable trait. Then, go on to dismiss it by building up the positive benefits of the product immediately afterwards. You are dismissing the flaw either by addressing the concern directly or you are going to show that despite this flaw the benefits of the product far outweigh the flaw mentioned.

This strategy is often used by real estate agents when they show houses with obvious flaws. They might point out the fact that the house is a little older than desired by their client, but the location is so good that the money they save in buying an older house can be used to update it and then they have both a good location and a newer home. They might show off the carpet with badly stained carpets and tell their buyers that since the carpets are so badly stained they can ask for a carpet allowance and put in whatever they want after they move it, making it their own.

The trick here is to do this as people are considering buying your product, not as an introduction, but as part of the description of the item. Obviously, this strategy is best left to the actual sales page than as a way to introduce a product to people on online forums or discussion groups. It's for people who already have a good idea that they want to buy in this category and that they may have some decisions to make on whether a flaw that is apparent is a deal-breaker or not.

The time to bring up a default is not after you've sold them on the benefits, but before. It should be brought up immediately before the person has time to discover it themselves, but not as an introduction to people who haven't had a chance to discover your site yet. It's like the difference between seeing a house on the market and wanting to visit it and being at the door of a house and opening the door to actually experience it.

If you are imagining the house from afar, if you start to talk about the flaws even before you've visited it, the value of the house plummets and you're less likely to visit the house. You haven't had a chance to experience it so that the better characteristics of the house can outweigh the flaw. So, don't mention these items unless they are already in an area where they have an option to buy and can have a full experience of the product you are offering it.

Then, it's more like you are there with the potential buyer and they are walking through the door as a real estate agent to show them your property that is for sale. If you are walking into a house as a real estate agent, you can say, "the appliances are old, but you can always ask for an appliance upgrade if you like the house."

You don't wait until the person walks into the kitchen, stares at the appliances and then says: "The appliances are outdated!" If you've been in this house before, you should know the negatives, and it should be said as you're opening the door to let them in, preferably before they've even had a chance to see the kitchen. If you bring it up early in the experience (but not before they're actually there with you visiting the products), and in all its gory detail, they imagine something far worse and when they get to the kitchen they might even mutter, "It's not that bad!" That's because you are so upfront with them, that they realize it's not a big deal.

Online, you don't want to put all kinds of objections on your home page, but you do want the sales page to have them if you know there is a problem with the product. If you are doing eBay to make sales and using them as a sales partner, you will want to make sure it is in bold and a title heading at the top of the page. You don't want people to miss it and then end up with something they object to AFTER they've already paid for the item. That will only get you irate customers and negative feedback. So, the best timing is always right up front.

Create Opportunities from Issues



If you do spot a problem with your product, you can dismiss it (as in the earlier example), or you can convert it into an opportunity. This strategy is a little more creative than the last one, where you are just being blunt about your dirty laundry. In this one, you are being truthful about the problem, but you are reframing it from a negative to a positive. Once people start to see that you may have a point, that negative really is a positive, then you don't even have to dismiss the objection, it becomes another selling feature.

So, you do have to raise the objection first, and use the strategy in Chapter 4, but you want to resolve the objection on a positive note. If you can be really creative and sell that problem as a feature, it can be a way to disarm and even *charm* people reading the copy on your website.

The Technique

The strategy involves learning how your potential buyers perceive your product and any objections they might raise in their own minds. You don't have to be a mind reader to figure that out. You can simply ask them. You can set up surveys that offer a discount coupon on your products or offers a freebie to get a little market research on particular products. You have to know which objections might be converted into opportunities, and often they may not even be objections that you would think about first.

You can even add a few posts about a product on some group site or your own forums and see what people *don't like* about the product as well as what they do like. Some of these objections may be specific to your particular product, but others might be pretty generic. For instance, say you are selling tattoo templates online. Well, you obviously aren't the only one selling tattoo designs and you can visit specialty groups and forums and find out what people are talking about. They might be discussion which tattoo designs are the best or which ones to avoid; they could be talking about the seriousness and permanent nature of tattoos. Maybe you hear about the bad reactions people got years later from some tattoo they got when they were younger; the focus is on the fact that tattoos are essentially "Forever."

However, it also happens to be the opportunity because tattoos are permanent. They don't rub off, they are unique and can highlight your personality or mark a particular moment or event in your life, and you will always have that remembrance. Even though some people will see the indefinite nature of tattoos as a potential problem, many people will be drawn to them for that same reason. All you need to do is educate the person visiting your site on why it is more of an opportunity than a potential problem. For this, you can even suggest that some tattoos now come with ink that can be removed with a laser later.

In the case of tattoos, we have a generic problem that crops up that makes an excellent opportunity. However, there may actually be problems that are specific to your product. In the case of the earlier example of a piece

of art that is terribly ugly, would you be able to make it an opportunity? It is possible with a little creativity. Aren't ugly works of art controversial and conversation starters? Maybe it represents a particular time period or style of art that is only recognized by discriminating art buyers. In that case, the fact that is ugly is the opportunity to express exactly why you were savvy enough to buy the piece anyway. It shows you are a person who understands art and the value of a piece of work.

The Secret

Even though the major part of this strategy is to reframe a negative into a positive, you don't want to try to force something that will never be. You don't want to try to convince the potential buyer of something that is ludicrous or a stretch to believe because people are pretty smart about that sort of thing. So, you are reframing the objection into a positive, but in a way that is believable.

In another way, if you happen to reframe something that would normally appear negative into a positive in a bright and refreshing way, people will be surprised at first. That surprise lowers their resistance to believing the new way the problem has turned into an opportunity. Again, by raising the objection first, you have gotten the upper hand. You have set the stage to be the authority on this particular problem and you have guided the potential buyer to a solution that not only resolves the problem, but presents them with a great opportunity too.

At first, it will stir up feelings of shock that you dared to bring up the problem first, then it will lend you credibility and provide your voice with more authority on the subject. Finally, it will reduce their defenses and make it easy for them to go along with your final assessment of the problem as an opportunity. They will be grateful you actually pointed out something to them they just might have missed.

How to Make it Work

Okay, so you've done some market research and gotten a list of possible objections for your particular product or market. For each product, take out a sheet of paper and create two columns by running a line down the middle of an 8 ½ X 11 sheet of paper. On the first side list all of the objections that you discovered or thought up, and then start to go through them one by one. You don't want to pick every objection and try to make it an opportunity. What that will do is make people think that there are far too many problems with the product and you're just messing with their minds. If you pick an objection is that not very serious to highlight, because it's easily converted into a positive, it will make you appear condescending instead of helpful.

If you pick something that isn't really an objection, you just think it might be able to be perceived as one, you are going to be raising an objection in your potential customer's mind that might never have surfaced. This will make them stop and think about what other red flags they've missed. So, you don't want to pick a weak objection or one that is non-existent. What you want to do is locate serious objections that people might have to your product and then creatively turn them into a positive. So, be careful which objections you consider to highlight as it can make or break this strategy.

Once you know which objections might qualify for this strategy, the fun starts. You have to be very creative and think up a resolution for each strategy that makes that problem an opportunity. There are some objections that universal, not specific to your market or to your product. These are things like the price is too high, it takes too long to get it, it's not convenient, or the competition has better or different features.

Don't forget that you can target these objections as well and maybe you want to start with them for every product, just to get the hang of this. Then, you think up a reason for why that objection is really an opportunity. A

classic example of this is when you have a product that is really expensive when compared to the competition. You can say it is a good value for the money because it offers more features than the competition too. So, while you pay more than the others, you get more and in the end it is worth more too.

This may be a little more “canned” in online presentation than in a regular face-to-face presentation. If you are meeting a sales prospect in person, you can often hear the objections live and/or anticipate them better from the comments they make. Online, you can't really interact that much with your visitor, so you have to take the strategy of doing your research and then picking just one of the biggest flaws and using that as a lead in for your sales page.

If you have multiple objections you want to resolve, then you can use a table that compares features between your product and other leading brands. Tables are very easy on the eyes of people reading online materials. So, they can see, that price-wise you are more expensive, but then the rest of the features are checked for you and your competitors columns are empty. This gives a very big visual impact and is a way of raising objections and resolving them without having to explain it out in a paragraph. The table is a visual tool that does it for you.

Always, always, always be upfront about any flaw or objection that is going to be a major concern for your customer. If you fail to address it, the potential buyers might bring it up or they might not, but they will surely be thinking about it. If you don't bring it up, it will never be resolved in their minds. An unresolved objection is going to dampen your sales. So, despite the fact that it may seem strange to be bringing up your product's bad points, it's far worse to not acknowledge them at all.

So, what happens if you are in the middle of a sales presentation and the product breaks or it doesn't perform the way you would expect it to?

Acknowledge it right away and let people know the reason for that particular problem. Maybe you can bring up the fact that even if the product does not perform the way advertised, there is a guarantee they can use to get a replacement or something similar.

Sometimes people don't want to buy things online because they don't know what they're going to get when it arrives. This is particularly true of diamonds. The biggest objection a person buying a diamond online is how could they be sure the diamond they received was worth the thousands of dollars spent on it? So, many online diamond retailers raise that objection as a valid objection and showcase the fact that their diamonds are appraised by a particular agency. Or, they might discuss how the value is established and how safe the delivery is and any money back guarantees too. Now, the fact that you're buying a diamond online and may not be able to visually see it before it arrives and don't know how to determine worth is an opportunity to have a valid certification of your diamond for free through the website's policies.

The timing of this strategy is similar to the last strategy. Always bring up the objection first, before your customer has a chance to do it for you. You can shock them with the declaration of a particular problem. You can even not make it a statement, but a question. Like, "Are you afraid that you don't know if the diamond you buy online is worth what you paid for it?" That lead in will automatically bring people in because it acknowledges a fear that may lurk in the mind of the prospect but that has not been verbalized. Once you verbalize it, many people can relate to that fear and it draws their attention as being relevant to their personal experience. You come off looking as someone who is sympathetic and understanding for even bringing it up.

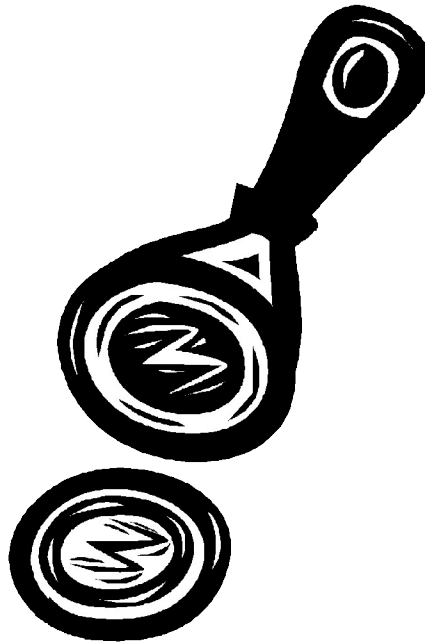
Then, when you provide the resolution, "Our diamonds are certified by third-party appraisals that are board-certified to be..." you not only have given them the prospective buyer the solution right away, but also relieved

the fear and anxiety experienced with that particular problem. That sense of immediate anxiety and relief can end up leading to an instant sale.

You can do this very well in a targeted email campaign for those people who have subscribed to your email list. Don't spam people with advertisements, but if you are trying out a new product that most people have a problem buying online for some reason, you can use that niche to help you use this strategy by turning that objection into an opportunity. When presented correctly, it can be a way to engage the reader and draw them into your copy far enough for them to find the solution to their problem and associate your product with a new opportunity for themselves.

Authenticity Engages Trust

In the past, marketers tried to glamorize their products or services in a way that was clearly inauthentic. The type of hype seems to have really jaded a lot of consumers who are pretty savvy these days. They are more likely to turn a deaf ear to outrageous claims or over-the-top commercial images than to pay attention. They do not engender trust. The newer way to generate trust is not to try and pull the wool over anyone's eyes, but rather to be authentic with our product and who you are.



In the age of social networking, more and more people are beginning to learn the value to their social reputation. A reputation that is misrepresented is one that is not trustworthy. If a person is not trustworthy, they do not have enough credibility to sell anyone in such a transparent environment. What will happen is that others in the social network will appear to warn people about the lack of authenticity and their social reputation will plummet along with their sales.

Now, you can be authentic without necessarily being a squeaky, clean, moralist. Authenticity basically means that you have enough integrity to express things exactly as they are. If you are a person who sells diet advice but can't be bothered to control your own diet, that lack of integrity is going to come back to bite you in a social networking situation. However, if you are authentic and say that you could never stay on any diet and didn't see the reason for them, and then you found this diet and it helped you lose 50 pounds, then you are being authentic. Thus, it becomes more and more important to believe in the products and services you are selling, to be able to report on them authentically and engender trust.

The Technique

Consistency is the buy word here. If you are consistent in your words and actions, then you become more authentic and can be trusted more. We've all had the experience of seeing someone say one thing and do another. What impression does that leave? You immediately realize that the person is a hypocrite or a con, at worst, or doesn't know what they're talking about, at best. So, to avoid giving off that impression, always make sure that your actions match your words. This goes for the way you describe you, your product, and to how well you keep your promises to the people buying from your site.

One way to establish authenticity is to either bank on your own reputation or someone else's well-known reputation. You build a reputation through social networking that carefully represents the image you want for your company or product. Or, if you don't want to go through all that trouble, you find ways to associate with people who have already done that, have a high degree of credibility, and then get them to endorse your product or services.

Be clear about whether all your copy, all your products, and your public image are in line with the way you want people to perceive you. If you genuinely believe in what you are selling, that will come through and people will catch your enthusiasm simply from the power of your own self-trust. However, the same is true if you are careful with the copy or the image you are portraying. If you sell diet products and you are 50 pounds overweight, people will notice it, even if not consciously. You don't want to put your image on that website if you are seriously overweight because it shows you aren't being authentic about helping people lose weight.

So, much of this strategy is about being aware. Be aware what image you are projecting. Be aware what topics or writing is subconsciously influencing your potential buyer. Be sure that anything you associate with,

whether it be a celebrity or an affiliate be in line with that image you want for you and your products. Secondly, always, deliver more than what you promise and your authenticity and integrity score will shoot through the roof.

The Secret

If you are engaging in online marketing and you are trying to sell products or services without even knowing a potential prospect, the need for authenticity increases. It has taken quite a bit of time for people to begin to trust e-commerce, and many of the reasons for that is because of the potential for being conned online. Visitors will be trying to gage your authenticity from every piece of email, copy, blog, or image they view. They want to know that you are trustworthy enough to deliver what you say you deliver. After all, no one wants to send money and either get nothing, or a very bad product in return. Since, they can't even touch the product they are requesting, it becomes more important they trust the vendor enough to deliver what they promise.

When you go retail shopping, you can look into someone's eyes and get a good feel for whether someone is trying to con you or not. The cues for that behavior may be subtle, but people have a sixth sense about these things. They want that firm handshake, that eye-to-eye contact, that honesty, and that ability to resolve their issues for them. In addition, they like to be able to view a product before they actually buy it. They might want to touch it or try it out first too. Well, when all of that is denied, they have to rely on someone else's word for whether they are engaging in a good transaction or whether they are just throwing money away. In order to relieve that anxiety, you implement the strategy to increase your level of authenticity to promote a sense of mutual trust. But how are you going to do that online when they can't even see your face, much less touch the product?

Implementation

The key is in the subtle cues that are given off by all your interactions with a potential buyer. Make sure that every one of your interactions reflects exactly the image you want for your company, your products, or your services. Things to look for in your copy or interactions that could set off doubts in your buyers mind are things like over-exaggerating your product's benefits or speaking out of context from the image you want to portray. The best way to avoid some of these subtle patterns of speech that can trigger doubts about your authenticity is to pay attention or to avoid marketing anything you don't believe in 100%.

Let's face it, if you are selling acne products and you've either never tried it (because you never experienced a bad outbreak) or you tried it and it failed to work for you, when you go to sell that product, the lack of enthusiasm and belief will shine through the choice of words, the images you use, and any other interaction. It's a part of you and despite the fact that you may try to convince yourself that this is really a product that is worth marketing, because acne products sell well on the Internet, you will find that if you don't believe in it, your words and interactions will take on a subtle tone of over-exaggeration or bland endorsements. Worse, when someone contacts you directly to ask you what your experience was with the product, you may even have to outright lie to save face.

This isn't to suggest that you shouldn't sell that particular acne product, the problem is the way you implement the strategy. If you are endorsing it personally, you are going to want to have some good experiences with the product to remain authentic while selling it. If you are simply choosing acne products as your main market, then you can include it with other acne products that you know do work and simply rate is lower than the others or leave it unrated. That way you maintain a degree of authenticity while being able to promote more products. And, you may find a

way to engage your visitors by asking them to rate the products themselves for others. Then, you not only get authenticity from unpaid for reviews, but you didn't have to put up your own reputation in the process.

Forms of this strategy are the celebrity sponsor who tells everyone that they've used your products and like them. Just be sure it is a celebrity that reflects your values and the product's proper image. If your celebrity just got convicted of dog fighting racketeering charges, you would not want them endorsing your pet products.

Social networking also takes this strategy to new heights. If you have a discussion group or forum, and you have a new product, you can offer the product out to the first 10 people who ask for it, in exchange for a review of it on site. Since many discussion groups, social networking sites, and forums have a large audience, you end up picking up a great deal of authenticity by using random people who will give their honest opinion on your products. Just be sure they are good products and good reviews.

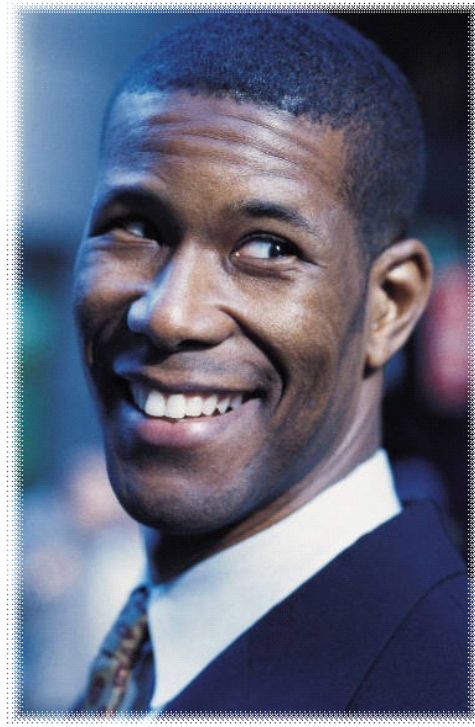
The timing for this is right in the middle of your sales presentation. Once your sales prospect is engaged and they are a loyal visitor to your site or a subscriber to your blog, endeavor to be consistent and trustworthy in all your interactions. This will help to keep people coming back again and again.

Another time to use this is when you are putting out brand new products. There, you have to attract new sales and banking on your reputation is one way to help spur the belief that this new product is just as good, if not better than your other products. Engage others to review your product too and this will help to spur sales. Capitalize on the authentic image you've already created with your past customers. That's the time to market people who already trust you by making sure they are updated on all the new products that you are selling. This can lead to many repeat sales.

Finally, the best way to establish authenticity is to deliver what you promise, when you promise it. Some people try to do this even better by always delivering more than they promise and earlier than expected. That gives them a little leeway should the post office screw up the timing or something else happens. So, if you want to be perceived as being truly authentic strive to take control of all aspects of your business from delivery to customer support. Failure in any of these areas will reduce your authenticity because it reflects badly on the consistency of the promises you make and what is finally delivered.

If you want to see if your authenticity is being questioned, simply send out customer satisfaction surveys on a regular basis or after an online transaction. These are pretty easy to implement on your site and can help you find areas that are not meeting the high standards of consistency that you want to maintain. You can have these collated monthly for review and/or endeavor to contact people who put in negative feedback immediately, without delay. This helps to reduce the impact of any failure in your consistency and can even increase your authenticity if you manage to resolve a problem that has plagued a customer who didn't know what to do or who to contact to resolve the issue. It also shows you care about your customers.

Surpass Their Guarantee Expectations



Everyone remembers the cheesy 100% satisfaction guarantee that old television infomercials would haul out to get people to believe in their products. Well, consumers are much more savvy now and most people understand this to be more of a trial guarantee that after a certain period expires. In other words, the 100% satisfaction guarantee was usually limited to a few weeks or less, and after that you were stuck with the product. So, in all fairness it was more like a free trial than a 100% satisfaction guarantee. After all, if you're not satisfied and the period for returns has ended, aren't you then still a dissatisfied customer?

So, in this chapter we're going to tell you how to put in place something that goes beyond the 100% satisfaction guarantee, even though it may seem impossible. Well, it isn't. It is your conviction that the products you offer are of such worth that you can offer a guarantee that goes beyond

everyone's expectations and still make money on the product. And, when you have that sort of conviction about the products you sell, the customer begins to believe it too.

The Technique

The strategy, on the surface, seems a bit crazy for a business person to implement. What you will suggest to your customers is that if a certain condition is met that you will refund their money or make amends beyond what is expected of you. That means that if you sell a product and it breaks, you promise to refund the money or replace it, even if it's one year or two years down the line.

But, it doesn't just have to be about things breaking, it can also be a usage condition. Say, you buy a subscription to use a particular service and then find you don't use it enough to pay for the membership costs. In this strategy, the way to go beyond the 100% satisfaction guarantee is to offer to refund all the money for the subscription if you don't use the products and services offered by the membership at all within the year. Of course, you would have to have a way of figuring that out.

In a discount club, you have membership costs that give you access to discounts on other products. The idea is that the amount of money you save will easily exceed the membership cost to sign up and you eventually make back your membership fee. But, what if you didn't do that? Would most companies offer you the membership fee back if you found that the use of the club wasn't worth it? Well, if your membership club did this it would set itself above the rest by offering to ensure that whether a member uses the membership they bought or not, they will end up satisfied with the purchase because you will make sure to go beyond the typical business guarantee. Now, add a little perk at the end like a free gift or even a coupon for monies

off popular items for having just tried the membership, even if it didn't end up saving you money, and people will flock to sign up.

The Secret

There are lots of people who offer guarantees, but they are only worth the person issuing them. Many times there are clauses in the guarantee that limit the actual worth, such a specific limited time period or meeting a specific condition that is unlikely to happen.

For instance, most cars these days are sold with six year or 50,000 mile warranties. That's a guarantee that should your car fail before then, it will be replaced for free, right? Wrong! If you look at the fine print, it says that they will pay for the repairs if the problem is a defect in the workmanship, not for any unforeseen event that might cause your car to break down. Your car could overheat while climbing a hill or rainwater could flood the engine. Even if some part of your car breaks due to poor workmanship, it's still up to you to prove that's the case, instead of it being because of some environmental danger that was present. It's just not very likely you'll ever use a warranty these days for cars on a manufacturer defect because most cars are made pretty well these days, no matter what they cost.

However, certain cars are sold based on these guarantees as if the extra money you pay for a really good car with an excellent warranty is going to give you additional customer satisfaction and security. It really isn't. It's the 100% money back guarantee that really isn't about satisfaction as much as it is about clever marketing, and people realize that.

However, when people are willing to put their money where their mouth is, and put it in writing, that is a very impressive act that creates instant credibility. That means that you will replace or make good on any product, regardless of the reason, no matter what happened or how long it

took to occur. Isn't that positively crazy these days? Maybe so, but it also means that you believe above 100% in your company and in its ability to meet the customer's needs. You are betting that your product is so good that people won't need to return it, and that's what you're saying with the beyond 100% satisfaction guarantee.

The person viewing the add thinks that you are either crazy to make such a good offer or your product is really all you say it is! Otherwise, how could you afford to make this type of guarantee? It raises the perceived value of your product or service and instills confidence in the purchase decision. People know that when they see that over 100% satisfaction guarantee that the likelihood of being taken is very small, and that triggers their confidence in making the purchase. Because you believed in your products, they fell in line and believed in them too. It removes any remaining doubts or resistance to buying the product that a customer might hold in their minds.

How to Make it Work

Implementing this strategy is very easy, it just takes guts. After all, you are basically saying you are willing to show customers that you mean business and that your word can be trusted. If you issue a claim that goes beyond the 100% satisfaction guarantee, you had better be able to back it with action. If you issue it and then go back on your word, you will have a publicity nightmare on your hands and the backlash will be tremendous. So, whatever you promise, be sure you can deliver it and then stick to your word.

This strategy shouldn't be implemented as standalone strategy. It should always be used as an additional boost to get the customer over the sales finish line. It might be well used for products where there might be some doubts lingering in the minds of the buyer, either because of the price or the novelty. Maybe you are selling a new technology that is designed to do something really novel, but people don't know how helpful it's really going to

be. They may read the benefits and even be considering it but the product still needs an additional push to make the customer decide to shell out big bucks to try it. Then, you would trot out the beyond 100% satisfaction guarantee and now those people on the fence will rush to buy.

If you think that you will end up losing too much money refunding purchases or replacing products, you are not realizing that most buyers have short memories. Maybe they buy that high tech air cleaning and filtering system from your store only because they're told if it ever breaks, they can return it for a free replacement. But, odds are when it does break they won't even remember what store they bought it from, much less that you offered them that guarantee. If they do remember, they might think they need the box or the receipt in order to take advantage of the guarantee, and that might or might not be the case. And, then after that, they have to motivate themselves to get back to your store and try to take you up on that beyond 100% guarantee with the product in hand. Most people will simply go out and buy something to replace the broken product and not even think about your offer again.

It's a sad statement on the American consume mind, but most people are not as frugal or careful with their purchases to document the guarantees and keep track of them. It may be a real factor when they are trying to make the decision to buy, but after that it's mostly forgotten unless that guarantee is such a classic aspect of your marketing that you make it over and over again to multiple customers. Then, you will find that people begin to associate that product or your company with that guarantee and they will take you up on it more, but still not at a high rate.

Let's be clear, you aren't just going to offer a good guarantee, you are offering an UNBELIEVABLE guarantee. It's so good, people will think you're nuts for offering it. They may just buy the product to try and prove you wrong. If you are selling subscriptions to a discount club, they might be so intrigued by your offer, and knowing they have nothing to lose, and even

maybe something to gain, they will put their money down and see if you are right.

The UNBELIEVABLE part should come when you not only offer to keep them from losing money on the deal, but also add some incentive to sweeten the deal should the product not meet their expectations. So, for a subscription to a discount club, you offer to give them a free gift at the end of the year AND their money back just for trying the membership, if they find that they don't make up all the money in discounts throughout the year that they paid in the membership fee. What this tells people is that you believe that EVERYONE will save money using your discount club because you're just that fantastic. You're so convinced that's the case, that you're even willing to pay people to try your club out and offer them a free gift should that not occur as you expect.

To figure out which offers need this additional strategy, you should look at your sales numbers. Are some offers languishing while others are going gang busters? Don't fix what isn't broken. Instead, opt for the slow movers to try this strategy as an additional incentive to move those other offers into better performance.

This is definitely a trial and error business when deciding which offers need it and which don't. If you find that after implementing the beyond 100% satisfaction guarantee, your sales jump 200%, then you know that you've got it in the right place. That's the power this strategy has when you use it with offers that may need just that extra boost to get them to go from underperformers to star sellers.

Since this is not a standalone strategy, you want to choose other strategies to pull out first. Then, after you have made the case for your product, through selling the benefits, and you notice that you still have the customer teetering on the seat of their chairs biting their nails over the

decision, then try the beyond 100% satisfaction guarantee at the very end of the copy. That's right. We want it at the very end of all the selling copy. You may think that's the worst place for it, but it's really the only place for it.

That's because if a person has gotten that far down the sales page and still hasn't made up their mind, then you need to add something to push them over the edge. If you did it earlier, you would not have a chance to implement the other strategies that can help you make the sale instantly. This one works best when there is still some doubt left in the mind of the potential buyer that needs to be removed, and therefore it goes last.

Take Pride in Your Authority



People love to deal with experts. Experts can be trusted. Experts are “in the know.” And, when we deal with experts we feel smart for being able to spot them. So, when you want people to automatically give you more credibility and authority to encourage them to do business with you more, flaunt your expertise.

That's right, no one else is going to do it for you and this is something that is not only all right, on the Internet, but it is easily done. It's called self-promotion and the Internet makes it a very easy thing to do online. If you want people to recognize you for your expertise, you will want to concentrate on your area of expertise and then show off what you know. It's that simple.

The Technique

There is a fine line between coming off as an expert and being a pretentious imposter or know-it-all. If you really don't know what you're talking about, that is going to come across sooner or later. So, you do want to know your market niche extremely well. You should do enough research so that you can even anticipate your customers concerns and have solutions ready for them when they come up. You will want to be the person who not only knows your market, but the desires of your customers too.

Then, you will want to visit places that can allow you to show off that knowledge without seeming pretentious or an attention hog. Least of all, you don't want to visit just to spam a group with your expertise when it's not even related to the discussion. You should pick the venues that you will be using to show off your expertise very carefully. They should include forums, discussion groups, blogs, your website, and sales page that allow you to add information that gathers attention and solves a problem without it appearing to be a direct solicitation.

This means that you will need to spend some time creating your online image as the expert in residence. You will have to write articles, author eBooks, write in other people's blogs, do guest posts, frequent discussion groups, enter topics into forums, and more. It's not easy being an expert, but it's well worth it.

Some people build their image as an expert by collecting titles or degrees. That's perfectly legitimate. If you have a PhD, flaunt it. Put the initials after your name in all your email correspondence and on your website too. There's nothing wrong with having extra initials after your name and you'd be surprised the air of credibility and authority that this gives you.

Use any advantage you have to express your authority on a subject. If you are selling video games, you don't want images on your website that show people incorrectly using game consoles. If you are trying to sell beach supplies, you don't want people on the site photographed in suits and ties. This type of subtle visual statement leads people to question your expertise, not because you yourself are portrayed less professionally, but because you don't associate with people who have authority. People with power generally congregate with other people with power.

If you show up with less than ideal business partners or affiliates, your expertise and authority are questioned, not to mention your judgment.

The Secret

Since we were children, we have been taught to respect authority. We idolized our parents for knowing more than we did and we trusted them to guide us to make the right decisions in life. Later, in school, we are put into an educational system that grades us based on our knowledge of the course material with the teachers being the ultimate symbol of someone with the most expertise in a subject. They were the ones we were supposed to respect and listen to. After we started work, the same rules apply.

Those people who know the system or the game of politics, the experts in the company who deal with the other experts, are the ones that demand our respect and obedience. Through them, we gain our promotions and get the good things in life.

This habit of obedience to authority and recognition of experts as the final say in life never really goes away. It's been impressed upon us since early childhood and, in many cases, a trusted expert becomes the reflection of a trusted parent. We are more inclined to listen to these experts, even feeling a sense of gratitude that there is someone to listen to who can guide us in the proper choices to make. It makes our lives easier and it becomes a

subconscious desire to follow authority just as we've been programmed to do. It is so ingrained that some people never question an expert, even if it appears they may not be all that trustworthy. They are so accustomed to having someone to tell them what to do that they actually can feel very reassured just by having someone willing to take up the mantle of authority for them.

Since marketers know that showing your expertise is a great way to make a sale, there is plenty of competition from people trying to sell themselves as experts. It's up to you to differentiate your own knowledge, image, and authority from everyone else so that people are more likely to come to you than the next guy.

How to Make it Work

To become an expert on the web is easy. All you have to do is make sure people know your qualifications and be careful to always project the image of an expert everywhere you go. Unlike a job interview that requires someone who you worked with to offer a reference, you can be your own reference on the web. For that, you want to take the time to develop this strategy everywhere, not just for yourself, but your company image too.

As we mentioned earlier, you will want to mine your personal experience and express that whenever appropriate. If you have a Master's or a PhD be sure use those initials after your name when you email, when you add a post to a discussion group or forum, or even when you comment on a blog. It's a very simple matter and it adds loads of authority to your current image. When people see those initials, they will be triggered to defer to you automatically. So, be sure to put ALL initials that represent some degree of expertise next to your name.

If you are doing this for your website or business image, you want to capture your expertise in a single phrase that represent why people should do business with you. This can be like "voted best value for the money by Consumer Magazine." Of course, only add that if it's true! You don't want to be caught echoing some claim that later points out that you clearly don't have any expertise and are a liar to boot! So, be genuine, but also be sure to take pride in your accomplishments. If you don't have any recognition from others that you can point to, you can still raise the audience's awareness of what makes your business special. Maybe you are the biggest distributor on the East Coast for your particular item. Maybe you make the most unique ukuleles in Hawaii. Maybe you are the oldest company on record for the business. Believe it or not, people hold a great deal of respect for businesses that can say they've been around for decades. Imagine if you could say that about your online business where most have a habit of disappearing overnight? It creates the image of tremendous stability and also expertise in your area of commerce.

If you still can't think of anything, start by telling your audience why you think your business or staff is special. Maybe you think you have the best group of positive thinkers on staff who find ways to make everyone's day brighter. Maybe you sell environmentally-friendly profits and for each sale you donate to a green cause. This can make people think that you know about the issues important to them and they can trust you as an expert because you walk your talk.

So ask yourself a few questions to help you establish what makes you or your business experts on your market niche:

What credentials do I have to prove our expertise?

Are my workers specially trained or gifted?

How many years have you been in business?

What is your satisfaction rating for customers?

What separates your knowledge from your competitors?

What image should you be portraying to be considered an expert?

Am I or my company certified by any outside agencies?

Who else thinks you or your business is expert in your market niche?

What do I know that no one else knows?

Once you have the answer to those questions, you can write up articles and feed them to article directories. At the end, in your author's bio box, you can add information on who you are and your status as an expert. Either submit the articles to directories yourself or hire a company to do it for you. These article directories will show up in search engines when someone searches for your company name or your own name. If you have multiple different articles out there under different directories, the search results on a search engine will bring up so many results that you look like an instant expert!

That's one way to get your name out there as an expert fairly quickly. Another way is to visit forums and discussion groups that are within your target niche. Add to the discussions, when you can show off your knowledge and increase your exposure online. If you keep coming back and doing this, at least that audience will begin to equate your name or your company's name as experts in a particular field. And, that also will show up in search results from a search engine.

Writing a book and putting it up on Amazon or some other large distributor will also qualify you as an expert. It used to be that you had to

find a publisher to publish your book to really be perceived a formally approved expert. That's not the case anymore. Anyone can self-publish a book and then submit it to online retailers for sale. You can even do an eBook format and offer it for free in various places and build your reputation that way too. Just make sure your books contain reference to your website, your products, and your own credentials.

Finally, you can ask to do guest posts to other people's websites or solicit testimonials for your own website and products. Guest posts on big blogs are particularly effective because it builds traffic as well as allows you to target your particular niche and convert it to sales. And, major bloggers are always looking for guest posters from noted experts so that they can take a break every now and then from posting.

If you are on Facebook, the number and quality of friends and social network that you build can add to your reputation as an expert. If you have a network of 300 people who all are big names in your industry, that automatically qualifies you as a big name too. It's authority and expertise solely by association.

The time to self-promote is ALWAYS. It can't be said enough. You might get tired of constantly re-iterating the same catch phrases that note your expertise, but you don't know what new prospects are coming in that will need that reassurance. You want to do it when you are at other people's sites, when you are not selling but rather building a marketing presence online, and when you are selling too.

Almost every interaction you have should echo your expertise so as to trigger that deep-seated desire to obey the call to action later. You don't want to come off as demanding, but simply showing you know your stuff and that they can have a quiet confidence in your history, knowledge, or products can be a great way to trigger the desire to buy.

Prove The Product is Worthy



In online marketing, you want to get rid of any fears the buyer may have over purchasing your products or services. People have a big fear of being taken advantage of or buying something that later makes them feel like a fool for being duped into the purchase. There are other people who are always looking for a good deal and demand that they get a high return on their financial investment, no matter what they're buying.

Since you are dealing with consumers who are Internet savvy, you know that they will be able to compare your products or service easily simply by browsing other companies online or doing a quick search through Google. So, you will have to beat them to that and provide whatever comparisons they need to prove your product's true worth. It's far better for you to do it, and limit and frame the results of your research to make your product appear favorably than it is for them to do it and figure out that there is at least one product out there that is a better deal for them or has some feature they like better.

This is particularly important if your product has no brand name. Maybe you are selling your own line of products and competing against much better known brands. If you cannot prove your product's true worth in a relatively short amount of time, there's no reason for a sales prospect to even consider buying your product. The fear of being taken will override the possibility of getting a good deal. So, again, you have to make sure they know they are getting just as good a value as the name brands you are competing against, or maybe even a better value.

The Technique

When you are targeting value as your main selling point, you want to be able to educate your potential buyer not just about your products, but about the overall market offerings too. So, that means, you have to do a little more research than just being aware of your own value, as compared to other products in your own inventory. Instead, you want to be aware of the product's value when compared to the rest of the market that the sales prospect will eventually want to want to view.

There are two factors involved here: quality versus price. Price is often not the determining factor for buying a product, unless that product is being compared to the same product somewhere else for a lower price. So, if you have a top selling product available in your inventory, price will determine how good a value someone perceives it to be. Now, however, if you are working with a range of products, and not a specific brand, then you want to concentrate on quality, more than price. The more features, the higher the quality, than the competition and the product becomes a better value, regardless of the price. This may seem odd, but that's because the actual intrinsic value of the product is more, when compared to the rest of the other products on the market.

The Secret

When people see you comparing your own products and are educated about the product's intrinsic value, they equate a better value with a lower price, even if your price is actually much higher than your competition. In other words, it's like a unit price at the grocery store. When people go to compare two different cans of peaches at the store, they look at all the canned peaches and decided which they want to buy. If they are focused solely on price, they will look for the generic brands and not even bother looking at the different types of peach syrups or even the weight by can. Instead, they will

gravitate to cheaper brands because that's what they're looking for to start: a deal on the price. Value is not a consideration until after that when they will look at the unit price for that brand to determine which can actually is the better deal by weight. That's when price is a consideration for value only.

However, most people don't buy items this way. They want to go and shop and come home with something they are proud of and feel they got a great deal on too. For that, they would be the buyer that goes to the grocery store and looks at all the canned peaches. They look at the labels and they admire the different ways the peaches are sliced or diced. They look at the types of syrups, light or heavy. They look to see if any are special peaches for some reason.

So, what they are comparing is the value based on the characteristics and features of each brand. Then, when they find a couple of brands they like, they start to look at unit prices. In their mind, the fact that the value is so much higher in one brand than another automatically reduces the expense of them, and that's the first priority. After that price may be a consideration, but let's face it, they will be higher than the generic prices. It's just that the cheaper peaches are simply not worth their money, in their perception.

So, when you are going to show your product's intrinsic value it's important to highlight the features that make it special. If you are comparing it to name brands, you have to show why your product is a better value, not based solely on price, but on the features that it offers or the quality of the product. Otherwise, very few people are willing to spend their money on cheap products just to save a few bucks. They know that after a bit of time, the cheap products break and they will just have to go out and get a new product much more quickly.

How to Make it Work

This is probably the most complicated strategy to implement. It requires you to take the time to educate your sales prospect in a way that they find informative and enlightening, instead of boring. You can do this quickly with a table of comparison with check marks for features, and that tool works very well here. However, what happens when you have features that your customer won't even understand? That's truly the case when you are dealing with technical equipment and people really don't know whether one processor is really better than another. That's when you also have to educate them on why they want that feature too.

That's why you will want to be a little more descriptive here than normal. It can be a bit of a drain for people coming to your site to find a long list of features but it will be necessary to educate the buyer. You can have the short summary in a table and then a bulleted list underneath to indicate what each feature is all about. That way, when someone comes to your website who is knowledgeable on your products, they won't bother to read the bulleted list. The table of comparison is sufficient. Those that don't have that same background will read the list and be impressed that you took the time to educate them on the features and why they are important to them. It shows that you care enough to make them informed consumers.

Another way you can implement this strategy is to have a short story that talks about why the features on your product are a good value. Maybe you are selling purses and your purses are leather and not synthetic. Maybe they have features like a cell phone compartment, an accompanying wallet that matches, and the potential to add your personalized monograph too. When you compare your purse to other purses, you will want to show that the reason these things are important is because they serve a function, they help you to express your identity, and they are durable, valuable, or aesthetically pleasing – even more so than your competitor's purses.

You can even bring up the product's price and compare that to show that even though your products cost more, they are a better value. Or you can show that your products cost less and deliver the same or better value! People still want to know that they are saving money, whether it is through quality or price value.

One way to help you get higher sales is to offer the cheaper product first. The way this works is that people will be so excited by the low price on the cheaper product that when you bring out the higher priced version of that product, they will transfer their excitement to the new product and equate it as a better value. Most of the time, when they hear about all the additional features they get for just x amount of dollars more, they will jump at the chance of getting an even bigger value than they thought they were getting with the cheaper version.

This strategy of offering several versions works well when you are comparing items too. You don't want to compare apples to oranges, so several different versions of the same product in your inventory greatly increase your potential for making a sale. After all, you are giving the customer a choice, it just so happens the choice is still going to mean a sale for you. So, it doesn't matter how you compare them or what features they have, the fact that they are able to figure out for themselves whether it really is price or intrinsic value that will motivate them to buy helps you to make a sale.

This strategy can be turned on its head to still offer a sales opportunity, particularly if you are selling memberships or fundraising for an online charity. In that case, you would not offer the cheapest alternative first. You would show them the most expensive option first. When people balk at that, you would then offer the cheaper alternative. The reason for that is that they are not so much comparing products, but services or donations. When

they buy, they're not going to get anything place in their hands, unless of course you make that an option for the higher priced memberships.

If you are selling packages, like trips to other countries that include hotel, airfare, and sightseeing, you should start with the highest priced package first. Packages include many different benefits and will automatically be perceived to have a higher value than a single item. So, you don't want to start with the cheaper package in this instance. Then, you can offer the cheaper products as an alternative if the higher priced package is rejected.

So, when you are considering implementing this strategy think about the order you want to present your products online. Do you want to highlight the higher priced item first and then offer the lower one or vice versa? You could try it both ways and then see when you make more sales. That's the answer to your problem then. But, be aware, that the order of product presentation will influence people on subconscious levels in the area of proving your product's value.

This strategy can be done when people are browsing your product inventories. When they search your site for a particular product, make sure the other products in that inventory show up too. Depending on what they are looking for you can manipulate the order of display to influence them to perceive a higher value.

If you are competing against brand names and using your own generic products, be sure to include that information on your sales page so people know your products are worth it. If you are writing copy ads that are going in printed material, you can compare your products quickly and then put a link to a site where you sell the product.

You can also educate your customer on getting a better value just before they check out. It's like when you go to a fast food place and you

order a single item. That's the time when you're told that if you buy a combo package you get a better value. And, most people then buy the combo whether they actually were that hungry or not. The same can be done online, by saying on the checkout, "did you know that for x amount more you could get such and such?" If you have that placed as standard programming in your website, then it will come up and alert the customer that there is a potential for a better value deal and usually bigger bucks for you.



Final Thoughts

As you can see from these ten strategies, there are ways to influence a customer who is visiting your site to cause them to buy your products. However, you have to understand your audience, your products benefits, and the correct timing as to when to try each strategy. Once you start to implement some of these strategies on your site, you will see that some work better than others on particular products or at different times. If you pay attention to when you go shopping, you can see instances of each of these strategies at work in your own buying behavior. And, many retailers do train

their staff to trigger buying behavior by evaluating the consumer's needs and choosing to interact at particular times with particular phrases that trigger the subconscious to buy.

It's really not magic, but it can seem to be at times. People go about their days mostly unconscious of their own motivations and in sales, this can be a big advantage. They may all come from different backgrounds, but still some behaviors like respect for authority, the desire to play with things, and the desire to bond through stories have their start in childhood programming. These daily habits become so powerful that as adults, we don't even think about why we respect experts, what makes something more fascinating than something else, and why everyone loves a good joke! Yet, that is all part and parcel of being human.

Once you begin to understand your own triggers and why you do certain things, it becomes easier to predict what will trigger other people to close a deal or not. They are no different from you and they will follow their better instincts too. So, learn the psychology, seek to understand the dynamics of human behavior, and then try to find ways to influence people to increase your sales. That's how you turn a visitor on your site into a customer and build life-long relationships.

As you get the hang of using all the tools online available to create that hypnotic spell, you will find it easy to flit from forums to blogs to sales pages and maybe even into third-party vendors like eBay. You will build the confidence you need that you know what works and when and what's the appropriate time to use one strategy over another to make a sale. You will have learned that it isn't difficult to engage people online, it just takes a bit more skill since you are not face-to-face with your potential buyers. But, once you have those skills they can be used all over the Internet to help you gather customers and sales from all over the globe.

Internet marketing resources

Resell Rights Products you can resell as your own

<http://www.JeremyBurns.com>

"How to write and publish your own OUTRAGEOUSLY Profitable eBook in as little as 7 days - even if you can't write, can't type and failed high school English class!" Go to <http://www.jeremyburns.com/a/7dayebook> to get started.

Merchant Account Authorize / e-OnlineData –

www.e-onlinedata.com/accuratemarketing

This is our 1st choice recommendation for merchant accounts, this is a very easy place to get approved and in the many systems we have tested are the easiest to work with! **Super Low Rates!!**

Shopping Cart 1ShoppingCart.com –

<http://www.webmarketingmagic.com>: Instant merchant accounts and real-time payment gateway services. This is a private label of the 1sc system and provides great service!

AutoResponder service You absolutely must have a good autoresponder service to build an email list, and follow up with your customers. We recommend <http://wwwAutomatic-Responder.com>