

SCIENTIFIC ADVERTISING

Illustrated and Annotated

by CLAUDE HOPKINS

It's Thrifty...it's Smart
and so Easy
to ride!

HARLEY-DAVIDSON 125
POWER RIDING FOR EVERYONE!

ENJOYABLE PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION
AT LOW COST
FOR EVERYBODY

If you have never ridden a Harley-Davidson 125, you have a big, pleasant surprise coming! Lightweight and low center of gravity make almost automatic. Control is simple and sure. One less you'll be able to go anywhere quickly, dependably amazingly low cost! 90 miles and more per gallon! Typically no upkeep, no parking fees! Good looks streamlined, colorful. Smooth, quiet performance with such advanced automotive features as brakes on both wheels, 3-speed transmission, drop-forged steering head, oversize tires, easy-chair saddle, brilliant night lighting. Thousands in use by men, women, boys, girls, for work, business, school, errands, outings. You owe it to yourself to try it. A penny saved is a penny earned—and think of the fun you can have! Low down payment, easy terms. Phone or see your Harley-Davidson dealer for a FREE ride.

MAIL THE COUPON NOW!

HARLEY-DAVIDSON MOTOR CO., Dept. C, Milwaukee 1, Wisconsin
Send catalog, folder and full information about the low-cost Harley-Davidson 125.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
DEALERS: Reliable independent dealers throughout the country. To find the nearest dealer, write or wire for information today.



No "pot-watching"!

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Electric cooking is automated! Fully built-in, cook and grill without separate controls. Electric oven has a built-in timer. Now and makes any pot automatically. Electric oven has a built-in timer. Now and makes any pot automatically. Electric oven has a built-in timer. Now and makes any pot automatically.

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FOR SMALLER
BUSINESSES WITH
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A Note to the Reader

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Preface ⌘

By Bob Bly

Scientific Advertising by Claude Hopkins is widely recognized as one of the great classic how-to books on advertising – although ironically, not one advertising professional out of a thousand on Madison Avenue today has ever heard about it, much less read it. And that's a crying shame.

The reason the book is not popular with mainstream advertising people is that Hopkins has his roots in direct response – “mail order” it was called back then – and Madison Avenue looks down its nose at mail order marketers.

But as Hopkins points out, mail order marketers are light-years ahead of general advertisers in their knowledge of what works and what doesn't in advertising. The reason is simple and obvious: we direct marketers can measure the results of our advertising, while image and brand advertisers cannot.

For instance, if I run an ad selling a \$100 software product in a magazine, I can allow the reader to order by calling an 800 number, mailing me a check, or ordering online. If I get 1,000 orders, I know my ad has produced \$100,000 in revenue. Say the ad cost \$50,000. In that event, I have doubled my money.

But if Burger King runs a commercial tonight on TV and spends \$50,000, how do they know it was worth that much or whether it paid for itself? They do not, because the results of image advertising are not traceable – that is, you cannot tell whether someone coming to a BK and buying a burger is doing so *as a direct result of that commercial*.

Therefore, general advertisers have very little idea of what works in their advertising or even whether it works. Mail order advertisers know to the penny the sales generated from their ad and whether it was profitable.

Hopkins was among the first to apply mail order techniques, such as response tracking and return coupons, to packaged goods and other consumer advertising. Therefore, he was a pioneer in “scientific advertising” in that he applied measurement to the analysis of advertising effectiveness.

As a result, Hopkins knew more about what works – and what doesn't – in advertising than practically any other copywriter of his time. Fortunately for us, his learning and observations are preserved for study in his classic book *Scientific Advertising*.

A word about this “illustrated and annotated” edition: it is just that: illustrated and annotated, but not edited.

By that, I mean we did not edit or rewrite Hopkins. After all, why tinker with genius? His words and ideas are exactly as he wrote them, conveying the precise lessons he meant to convey.

In particular, language in the 1920s was sexist; Hopkins frequently talks about “men in advertising” – largely because few women worked at the time.

We have elected not to edit his sexist language and to preserve the flavor of his writing; and by telling you this in our introduction, to avoid any offense his sexist language may have given.

By “illustrated,” I mean we have included ads that illustrate the principles taught in the book.

Wherever possible, we used an ad Hopkins wrote. In other places, we used ads that best illustrated the principle being examined.

By annotated, I mean we include sidebars that expand on and explain Hopkins’ principles in more detail than he himself did in the book.

For instance, chapter 2 includes a discussion of copy length. But Hopkins gives only partial guidelines for determining how long copy should be.

We added a sidebar with a diagnostic tool – the Copy Length Grid – that determines correct copy length in a scientific method we feel Hopkins would agree with were he alive today.

Another major addition not found in other editions of Scientific Advertising is the Lord & Thomas Creeds.

Lord & Thomas is the advertising agency that employed Hopkins, and there is reason to think he had a hand in composing the creeds, which sound very “Hopkins-esque.”

In any case, the Creeds give you 41 rules for business success. Written in the early days of advertising, every one of the rules seems even more applicable in today’s marketplace.

I think you will find the Creeds enjoyable reading and, by themselves, worth the price of this new edition of *Scientific Advertising*.

– Bob Bly

Introduction

By David Ogilvy

Nobody, at any level, should be allowed to have anything to do with advertising until he has read this book seven times. Claude Hopkins wrote it in 1923. Rosser Reeves, bless him, gave it to me in 1938. Since then, I have given 379 copies to clients and colleagues.

Every time I see a bad advertisement, I say to myself, "The man who wrote this copy has never read Claude Hopkins."

If you read this book of his, you will never write another bad advertisement – and never approve one either.

Don't be put off by Hopkins' staccato, graceless style. When he was a boy he had to go to church five times every Sunday, and knew most of the Bible by heart. This caused him to write with the brevity of the King James Version, but with none of its beauty.

Don't be put off by his misuse of the word scientific. As Alfred Politz has pointed out, Hopkins "does not indicate the boundaries between direct findings from experimentation and conclusions arrived at by general observation and reasoning."

A few of his conclusions have been disproved by later research. For example, Dr. Gallup and Dr. Starch would not agree with Hopkins when he writes: "In every ad consider only new customers. People using your product are not going to read your ads."

Nor would Procter & Gamble now agree that "the most successful toothpaste advertiser never features tooth troubles in his headlines."

Hopkins believed that nobody with a college education could write copy for the millions. Perhaps that was because he had not been to college himself.

He thought that illustrations were a waste of space. Perhaps they were less important fifty years ago, when magazines and newspapers were thinner, and competition for the reader's attention less severe.

But forty-two years after Hopkins wrote this book, almost everybody would agree with the following conclusions:

"Almost any question can be answered, cheaply, quickly and finally, by a test campaign. And

that's the way to answer them – not by arguments around a table."

"The only purpose of advertising is to make sales. It is profitable or unprofitable according to its actual sales."

"Ad-writers abandon their parts. They forget they are salesmen and try to be performers. Instead of sales, they seek applause."

"Don't try to be amusing. Money spending is a serious matter."

"Whenever possible we introduce a personality into our ads. By making a man famous we make his product famous."

"It is not uncommon for a change in headlines to multiply returns from five to ten times over."

"Some say, 'Be very brief. People will read but little.' Would you say that to a salesman? Brief ads are never keyed. Every traced ad tells a complete story. The more you tell the more you sell."

"We try to give each advertiser a becoming style. He is given an individuality best suited to the people he addresses."

"To create the right individuality is a supreme accomplishment. Never weary of that part."

"Platitudes and generalities roll off the human understanding like water from a duck."

"Actual figures are not generally discounted. Specific facts, when stated, have their full weight and effect."

Claude Hopkins was born in 1866 and died in 1932. At seventeen he was a lay preacher, and his ambition was to become a clergyman. But he rebelled against his family's fundamentalist brand of religion, and got a job as a bookkeeper at \$4.50 a week.

Not long afterwards he joined the Bissell Carpet Sweeper Company, and invented selling strategies which gave Bissell a virtual monopoly (see Fig. I-1). Then to Swift as Advertising Manager. Then to Dr. Shoop's patent medicine company in Racine, where he persuaded his agency to let him write all the copy – not only his own account, but on several of the agency's other accounts as well, including Montgomery Ward and Schlitz Beer.

In 1908, when Hopkins was forty-one, he was hired by Albert Lasker to write copy for Lord & Thomas. Lasker paid him \$185,000 a year – equivalent to \$639,000 in today's money. Hopkins earned every penny of it. He seldom stopped work before midnight, and was prodigiously fertile. From his typewriter came campaigns which made a long list of products famous and profitable. They include Pepsodent and Palmolive.

He was more than a copywriter in today's narrow sense of the word. He was a total advertising man. He invented ways to force distribution for new products. He invented test marketing. He invented sampling. He invented copy research. He invented brand images. He invented preempting the truth. And he wrote copy which sold merchandise.

His unique effectiveness was due to three things. First, he loved his work. Second, he was a showman. Third, he was an unrelenting practitioner of the experimental method – forever testing new ideas in search of better results.

Like most good copywriters, Hopkins had little facility. More than once, his first wife found him sitting on a park bench in the middle of the night, wracked with despair after days of failure to invent an idea which he thought strong enough to sell.

He used to say, "No argument in the world can ever compare with one dramatic demonstration." Which makes me think that he would have been as successful in television today as he was in print fifty years ago.

You may deplore Hopkins, on the ground that he devoted his life to bamboozling the American public. But autres temps, autres moeurs. Before he died, Hopkins himself had come to regret some of his early copy for patent medicines.

Hopkins was a shy man who spoke with a strong lisp. But he was a superb raconteur and a tremendous after-dinner speaker. He always wore fuchsia in his buttonhole. He chewed dry licorice root, to cut down on smoking.

He was notoriously stingy, but his second wife persuaded him to buy an ocean-going yacht, to employ an army of gardeners on their estate, and to buy splendid Louis XVI furniture. She filled their vast house with an endless procession of guests. Her cook was famous. And she played Scarlatti to Hopkins for hours at a time. Today, thirty-three years after his death, she is still alive and vigorous.

In later life, Hopkins came to resent the fact that he had made so many of his clients richer than himself. And he was interested in nothing but advertising. There is macabre pathos in the last sentence of his autobiography: "The happiest are those who live closest to nature, an essential to advertising success."

Fig. I-1. Hopkins ad for Bissell's Sweeper.

BISSELL'S "CYCO" BEARING SWEEPER

Makes An Ideal Christmas Gift



What article can you buy at the same cost that will contribute as much genuine, lasting pleasure and comfort to the recipient as a Bissell sweeper? It will be a constant reminder of the giver for ten years or more, and will gratify mother, wife, sister or friend during all this time as no other article at a similar cost possibly can. Remember, the name

BISSELL marks the genuine sweeper that for over a quarter of a century has been the recognized leader throughout the world. Bissell "Cyco" Bearing Sweepers have taken Gold Medals at Paris, 1889; Paris, 1900; Pan-American, 1901; Grand Prix, Osaka, '03; World's Fair, St. Louis, 1904.

Buy a Bissell "Cyco" Bearing before Jan. 1st, & send us the purchase slip and we will send you Free a Handsome Card Case with no printing on it.

For sale everywhere. Price \$2.50 to \$4.00

Bissell Carpet Sweeper Co., Dept. E, Grand Rapids, Mich.
(Largest Sweeper Makers in the World)

Part I: The Lord and Thomas Creed

As David Ogilvy mentions in his introduction, Claude Hopkins was a copywriter at Lord & Thomas, an ad agency built around the principles he espoused.

The ad agency published a set of creeds, which Hopkins may have written or contributed to, that codifies these advertising principles.

My co-editor, Bob Martel, found these in some old archival files, and they are reproduced here for, as far as we know, the first time ever in e-book form; no other edition of *Scientific Advertising* we are aware of includes them.

Lord & Thomas Creeds

No. 1. *Exaggeration*

Men whose opinions are effective are men of moderation.

Instinct discounts superlatives. And the discount often goes too far – to the article's injustice.

Adjectives callous credulity.

Blatancy does not command respect.

Over-statement, in reaction, creates commensurate resistance.

Some things may be the best of their kind in the world. But it is pretty hard for finite minds to know it. And harder still for cynical minds to believe it.

Modesty, by its very rarity, commands attention. And by its fascination wins.

Too much effort makes men think that your selling task is hard.

Remember how the expression "Morgan & Wright Tires are Good Tires" stood out amidst the bombast of its time.

What advertising phrase was ever more effective than the simple words "It Floats"?

No. 2. *Good Nature*

In selling goods, in print or person, good nature is a prime essential.

Never attack a competitor. Never appear ungracious.

Never complain at defeat.

Play business like a game of golf – Be always the cultured gentleman, always the good fellow.

Be efficient. – Watch your chances. Make every stroke tell to the limit.

But be fair with your opponent. Observe the rules. Sometimes stretch them, if you see a chance, in your rival's favor.

Applaud his master strokes. Show a sunny disposition. Be always a good sport.

An easy manner indicates reserve power. To the casual onlooker, the man who smiles seems the winner.

Men buy more things because they like the salesman than logic ever sold them.

No. 3. Service

All business worth-while, and all that's enduring, is based on superior service.

In primitive business, one man raised corn, another hunted pelts. And they exchanged their products.

The basis was, "You work for me, I'll work for you." And that basis has never altered.

Now some men study medicine, some law, some advertising. Some make motor cars, some clothing and some food.

But all are selling service.

Men don't buy brains or trucks or clothes. They buy a certain needed service, and pay in other service.

The man who shirks will fail.

The man who gives more than another will eventually outstrip him.

Every sale or purchase, every business alliance, should be based on service only.

If this is faulty, or if it is superlative, men will find it out. And the verdict will fix your place.

No. 4. *Not Like War*

Twas said at one time that business is like war.

Perhaps it was at one time, but there's been a reformation.

War means enmity, bitterness, deception and destruction. Victory rides on ruin.

Modern business means co-operation.

Secrets have become uncommon.

Oppression is obsolete, almost.

Strategy is rivalry in service.

Attacks are in bad odor.

Expediency, as well as conscience, forbids a ruthless act.

Competitors meet in conventions. What one man learns he gladly gives to others.

We have found that business thrives best in an atmosphere of courtesy and of mutual help.

The man who lacks this spirit should not advertise at discord with the new-day trend.
The less he lets men know of him the better.

No. 5. *Joy of Work*

Men do best what they *like* best.

A man will little succeed – for himself or for others – who considers his work as a hardship.

In employing helpers, learn their attitude of mind. Get men, if you can, who go at the job as a ball-player goes to bat.

Get men who think more of the winning than they do of the recompense.

Most of the big things are being done by men who don't need the money. They are done for the joy of doing. And joy-work is done well.

Some men object to calling business a game. We like that description of it. When our office ceases to seem a play-ground we shall think we belong elsewhere.

We look for helpers who see only the goal, and not the rough road that leads there. And we believe that every client whom we serve in advertising is glad that we find it fun.

No. 6. *Individuality*

Cultivate a personality peculiar to yourself. Make that distinction, if you can, point in the right direction. But better a wrong direction – in degree – than similarity.

Uniqueness alone gets attention.

A crowd never progresses. The very first step toward leadership takes a man away from the rest.

So in advertising. Any article, to succeed, must **first** be made distinctive.

Clothe it with individuality. Make it stand out from its rivals.

Learn what buyers most want. Then give to your product that characteristic, if the article deserves it.

Picture an ideal product, based on wanted qualities. Make sure that the maker conforms to it. Then never deviate, in picture or in product.

Varying claims are elusive. Too many claims are confusing. One great distinction is usually enough.

Work to that single model. Then in time it will come to typify something that men want.

No. 7. *Simplicity*

Be simple in the language which you use in print. Especially in advertising. The world is full of very simple people.

Use common words – short sentences – so all may comprehend.

Erase yourself. Make no attempt to impress your own capacity.

Let no unique phrase, no happy turn, take attention from the product that you talk.

The ad-writer is anonymous and should be. He is talking for the man who sells. That man is selling merchandise, not literary style.

Don't seem to strain after effect.

Hide your effort to sell. Such effort, when apparent, creates a resistance.

Be brief. Folks won't listen to a salesman long. Say nothing which doesn't count.

Stop when you finish. Don't repeat. Printed words are costly.

Make your first words – your headlines – strike the very heart of your subject.

Don't mix major and minor claims. Little claims belittle all. And paltry qualities, when cited, suggest the lack of great ones.

ON THE ART OF PLAIN TALK

Functional illiteracy is nothing new, but among advertising people? I was skeptical until I turned on the television that evening and heard a commercial describing a new television series as "the most unique show of the season."

This seems a strange claim to make, since *unique* means, "one of a kind" and it is therefore impossible for anything to be the most unique. Or *very* unique, or *quite* unique, or *somewhat* unique, or even, as one advertising executive used the phrase modestly, a *little* unique.

But the television network is not the only advertiser guilty of turning advertising copy into what E.B. White, coauthor of *The Elements of Style*, called "the language of mutilation." A Detroit automobile manufacturer once based an ad campaign around the theme "new innovations" – which may lead one to believe that there can be such a thing as an *old* innovation.

One of my clients, normally an articulate and intelligent marketer, changed some ad copy I had written for one of their products, a wire splint that helps keep loose teeth in place. The advertiser decided that what the product *really* did was "to stabilize mobile dentition."

Dentition is what you brush with Crest. And if someone should punch you in the dentition, my client believes that the dentition may become mobile, but certainly not loose. (If they fall out, the dentition fairy may deposit some "monetary compensation" under your pillow.)

"I'm chagrined at the decline in the writing skills of college graduates," Hugh Farrell, then president of Hammond Farrell, Inc., a New York business-to-business advertising agency, told me in another interview for my book. "Roughly half of the cover letters accompanying resumes that cross my desk contain errors, and I don't think that was true 15 years ago. And good writing is important, even with account people. If a person can't write a lucid, clear, correct report, he or she shouldn't be in this business."

Jargon, double-talk, and weak, watered-down prose proliferate in advertising, but are nowhere more prevalent than in business-to-business marketing. A brochure for a storage silo informs us that material is "gravimetrically conveyed" – not dumped. Sony's advertisement for cassette recorders explains that my tape recorder captured Burt Manning's voice so perfectly because "a counter-inertial flywheel keeps the tape speed constant."

True perhaps, but did I really need to know this? And, of course, every system, product, and service now sold to business is said to be "cost-effective" or provide a lower "total cost of ownership." How refreshing it would be to read of a product that was inexpensive, low in price, or just plain cheap!

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

ON THE ART OF PLAIN TALK (CONTINUED)

I've always maintained that good copywriting is clear and conversational ... but there are many marketers who apparently disagree. For instance, here's an excerpt from a brochure promoting a conference on Buying and Selling eContent:

"Instead of building universal, definitive taxonomies, information architects are finding there is a tremendous benefit to creating un-taxonomized miscellaneous pools of enriched data objects so that users can sort and organize to suit their own peculiar needs ... [resulting in] information systems that are far more contextualized."

I call this example "What did he say?" It's pretentious, laden with jargon, and it's not how people talk. My fellow copywriter Steve Slaunwhite comments: "This is a case of trying to impress, rather than express. The problem is, it does neither."

Certainly, such obfuscation has not always been embraced by English-speaking people. Winston Churchill, faced with Hitler's armed forces, said to Americans, "Give us the tools and we will do the job." He did *not* say: "Aid our organization in the procurement of the necessary equipments and we will in turn implement the program to accomplish its planned objectives."

Happily, academia has now recognized the problem and is working toward a solution. *Forbes* reports that undergraduate engineering students at MIT will be required to take a course in English composition. The *New York Times* notes that the number of writing courses at colleges throughout the nation is now on the rise – and that American corporations are now spending more than \$3 billion a year teaching employees how to write clearly.

As a result of improved education, the next generation of college graduates should be able to write sales letters and reports that buyers and managers can understand. Meanwhile, those of us who may never see the inside of a classroom again would do well to heed this bit of advice from E.B. White: "When you have said something, make sure you have said it. The chances of your having said it are only fair."

No. 8. *Sincerity*

Humor has no place in advertising.

Nor has poetry. Nor any touch of lightness.

Spending money is serious business. And most folks so regard it.

YOU are seeking confidence. Deserve it.

You are courting respect. Avoid frivolity.

People are not reading ads for amusement. They seek information. And they want it from a man who seems sincere.

Picture a typical customer. Consider his wants – and his ignorance – respecting what you have to sell.

Consider the importance – to him and to you – of what you ask him to do.

Write as though that man were before you.

Write as though your future depended on that sale. Your future does, when your words go to millions.

Don't pass an ad until you feel that the reader will find it resistless.

Make your case impregnable.

Make every word ring with truth.

There is nothing so winning in the world as absolute sincerity. Nothing is so abhorrent as its lack.

No. 9. Brevity

This is a hurried world. Yet we linger long over interesting things, and wish to linger longer.

We like brief sermons, but not brief plays. We want our sweetmeats in bulky form, but our quinine in a capsule.

All this applies to advertising.

Tell an interesting story to an interested man and brevity becomes a fault.

For instance, a motor enthusiast, about to spend a year's savings on a car. You can't say too much to him.

"Reason Why" - a Lord & Thomas copy idea - has had a thousand critics. But look at its successes.

This all depends on the ad.

If you are talking of something which nobody wants, better stop talking entirely.

If you are talking bombast, brevity is much to be desired.

If your treatment isn't interesting, length is an added fault.

But don't omit things worth saying. None of your readers is seeking amusement. Unless they want information they'll pass the briefest ad by.

Don't skimp them on what they want.

No. 10. Good Name

Foster respect for the line you live by, and for the men who make it.

Never abuse a competitor.

Cite your able rivals. Praise their deeds. Show pride that they are compeers. Your own importance is enhanced by a background of the great.

Don't limelight the unworthy until men feel that your whole field is infested.

No man can discredit his co-workers without sharing the shadow himself.

Remember how muckraking once beclouded all the best in American business. The few attacked came to typify the whole. The innocent and guilty suffered equal opprobrium.

Don't invite a like disaster to the confidence you share.

In full force, this applies to advertising.

Note its wondrous growth. Mark the power it wields. Consider how the ablest men respect it. Think what vast issues are committed to its care.

You did not make it what it is. Ten thousand men worked with you. And every man who smirches one becomes a mutual enemy.

Protect that priceless prestige by every word and act. Do your part to dignify the line.

Rome was not built in a day, we know. But we know it was burned in a night.

No. 11. *Confidence*

Do nothing in advertising which by any chance may lessen men's confidence in it.

That's our most priceless possession.

Discourage speculation in this line.

Minimize the chances of mistakes.

Move slowly in new undertakings.

Attempt to sell nothing until convinced that the product deserves success.

Venture in no line until you measure carefully the possible demand.

Enter no big field until your plans have first met success in a small one.

Aim always to prove advertising safe.

Avert disasters. Under right methods they have no excuse.

One glaring failure, due to rashness, may discredit you forever. And it should. But, more than that, it lends to this line the aspect of a gamble. One man's costly error has deterred a hundred men from advertising.

Never let an untruth or a half-truth creep into an ad. Your readers may never know it. But the men you serve will judge your standards by it.

No man suffers alone for a misdeed in business. His whole line shares the blame.

No. 12. *Self-Respect*

Do not use the arts of friendship in seeking or holding trade.

They have no place in business.

You are not selling personality. Clients worth having are not buying good fellowship.
You insult them when you intrude it.

You will never gain the world's respect until you show self-respect.

In advertising, any worthy expert is a man of rare accomplishments. He has spent a lifetime in acquiring the ability he offers. It was coined from precious years.

You degrade such talents when you try to sell them as courtiers sell manners.

Then flattery little flatters when used as a business bribe. Compliments used to sway men's judgment are far from complimentary.

In any enterprise worth winning, fawning brings contempt.

Seem the leader if you wish to lead.

Merit is the question in every business deal. Let it stand unhampered and alone.

Alas for the man who ventures in advertising with a sycophant as pilot. Better, if necessary, a qualified boor.

The big men you meet well know that.

No. 13. *The Golden Rule*

The greatest business axiom ever uttered is The Golden Rule. But it took two thousand years to discover it.

Disregard of others' rights once made business a reproach. Self was the guiding spirit. Customers were often lambs, workers slaves, and rivals enemies.

But in the valleys of despair business learned a lesson. And big-brained men – among them Gary, Lovett and the McCormicks – applied The Golden Rule.

Now competitors are friends.

Now directors are trustees.

Now customers are wards.

Now co-workers are partners.

Note the different aspect. Business men are now regarded as builders of communities. As crusaders in prosperity. As socialistic leaders.

Also note the sounder business structure. Note its greater profits.

Article one in every by-law should be this Golden Rule. Chapter one in every business lesson.

Blaze it on every office wall.

Measure with it every word and deed.

Gains made without it wither in one's hands. They form a trembling structure. And they come, in time, to symbolize contempt.

No. 14. *Picking Men*

In commercial fields, the great successes are due largely to skill in picking men.

Few other acts are so far-reaching, so persistent in effect.

Office boys and officers may be equally important. For your coming captains should grow up from the ranks. Developed big men are pretty hard to get.

Your advertising pilots are particularly important. Your place with the millions depends on them.

But happily, the right men here are easily selected. A mistake is inexcusable.

Every master of advertising, at every step, leaves his indelible record. You have only to consult it.

Mediocrity, when on parade, looks much like competence. But it is your own fault if you judge men by such off-hand impressions.

In advertising, where so much is staked, beware men of unproved powers.

In Lord & Thomas, with all our skill at selection, hardly one in fifty unproved men proves a master.

The men who can do big things for you have done them repeatedly elsewhere.

Don't try to measure them up for yourself. Go to the men who have tried them.

Go to the greatest successes you know and ask who their pilots were.

They are the safe ones – the certain.

No. 15. *Self-Confidence*

In any game of skill you play mark the value of self-confidence.

Sometimes you play well, sometimes ill - due to varying mental attitude.

"It never rains but it pours" and "Troubles never come singly" mean simply that misfortune breeds misfortune through the mind.

Some men attain the habit of success, and all things come their way. Other men, expecting ill luck, rarely fail to meet it.

In business we call this esprit de corps. In the army they call it morale. In any contest of wits or arms it is all-important.

Years alone bring none to the age limit. It is dead self-assurance, which the years have killed.

Consider these facts in employing advertising helpers. Don't resent egotism that's born of experience. It denotes habitual success, while modesty may mean a fear, due to repeated blows.

Be careful, however. Self-assertion is too often only bumptious ignorance. But a battle-scarred veteran who remains sure of himself can be trusted to succeed.

The man who knows, and knows he knows, is the man to follow.

No. 16. Efficiency

Efficiency is the ability to get maximum results at minimum cost in money, time or effort.

It is so rare a quality that the man who has it need fear no competition.

Men waste more effort than they utilize in nearly every undertaking. Often ten times as much.

They spend countless working hours on trifles, unworthy of their caliber. They have no schedules. They fritter time away.

Rare is the man doing half what he could if he corrected this evil of waste.

But advertising, probably, holds the palm for flagrant inefficiency. That it survives such prodigality shows its wondrous latent powers.

Mark how few costly ads exhibit masterly salesmanship. How few carry conviction. Or could ever lead to action or decision.

A \$25-a-week salesman would lose his job if he attempted like methods in person.

Too many ad-writers think of men in masses. They scatter words like grass seed.

Aim at an individual's typical possible customer. Address that man as you would talk in person.

Seek to accomplish action.

How many of your ads could measure up to that essential standard ?

No. 17. *Imagination*

What is Imagination, so cited as a business asset?

Certainly it is not a dreamer's dream.

The architect, when he plans a 40-story structure, has every line and detail pictured in advance.

The engineer, when he spans a chasm, first ascertains the strength requirements of a million separate parts.

They see the end, and mark the way there, before one step is taken. For they know that deviation is expensive.

So should it be in business, and in advertising.

Haphazard efforts lead in many different ways. To gain a goal, one's every effort should aim directly at it.

In advertising, more than most lines, one needs imagination. But it must be trained.

As in architecture and engineering, it must be the picture of a man who knows.

Such a man can see the end because he has seen it often. And he knows the way.

The picture is essential. One must have in mind – perhaps years in advance – exactly what he aims at. And every move must fit the end, else the act is wasted.

A difficult thing, but vital in advertising, is to keep in one direction.

Zigzag paths are long.

No. 18. *Averages*

Judge all things possible by the law of averages. Avoid isolated facts.

As well judge climate by some weather extreme, as a man by an hour on parade.

All unfit men do the fit thing at times. And unsafe men the safe thing.

Many men create one business success who could never create another.

Like causes often bring opposite effects.

All men are many-sided. All business enterprises alternate ups and downs. So one can prove by selected facts whatever he wishes about them.

Remember these truths in advertising.

Here you appeal to the millions. Mistakes are very costly. Don't be guided by a few opinions.

Don't view the whole world through the dot of your little circle.

Get the viewpoint of myriad prospects before taking important steps.

Get the verdict of the thousands before the millions are approached.

The vagaries of human nature belie the shrewdest guesses.

Nearly all the mistakes made in advertising are the errors of egotism.

Bigots always blunder.

No. 19. *Diplomacy*

The wheels of business, like all human cogs, need oiling.

Opinions differ, interests clash, and pride is often ruffled. And friction retards progress.

The preventive is diplomacy.

Don't be arbitrary. The ablest men – who best can serve you – resent autocracy the most.

Don't be obstinate. Think how often other viewpoints have proved better than your own.

In advertising, the layman and the expert often disagree. But usually on non-essentials, due to different types of mind.

The expert errs when he contests a point which matters little. Life is all compromise. No one is always right. And contests, won or lost, leave scars.

Yield such things with a "thank you," and thus create desire for reciprocity.

The time may come when the dispute involves a principle with you. A point you can't concede. For no man, guardian of his own prestige, can knowingly share in an error.

Fortunate for you then if you have concessions to your credit. If you have stood for give and take. For men are fair in general. All they ask, among their equals, is a "fifty-fifty" deal.

No. 20. *Genius*

There is no such thing as an advertising genius.

To be an average man, with an average viewpoint, is the first essential of success.

The advertising expert must be many-sided. Genius is never that.

One must be very human to win humanity his way. Genius isn't human.

Beware the high-brow in any field of selling. The workings of the common mind are beyond his comprehension.

One must know why Farmer Jones buys a certain plow. Why Mrs. Housewife likes a certain soap. What Anyman thinks most about when he goes to buy a car.

It isn't genius – it is common sense – which tells these things to men. And men in the clouds are excluded.

Success in business comes from doing just the obvious things, which dreamers overlook.

Salesmanship is not an intellectual pursuit.

Review your schoolmates. Mark how the brilliant men have fallen. Note where the plodders are.

Consider that in choosing men to help you.

In business, the greatest and the rarest quality is plain horse-sense.

No. 21. *Psychology*

Unguided by Psychology, salesmanship is crude. Good advertising must recognize facts like these:

People are dilatory. Without some incentive to prompt action or decision they will usually delay and forget.

It is natural to follow others. Impress folks with the crowd that goes your way.

It is natural to obey. A direct command is more effective than request.

People don't like problems. Present them only the worked-out solutions.

Too evident desire to sell puts men on guard against you.

Curiosity incites men more than fact. Half-told tales have interest which completed tales have not.

Men covet an advantage. Things they can get which others can't are things they want the most.

Folks are not impressed by boasting.

When you quote others to confirm your statements you indict your own veracity.

Evident bias kills influence. Praise of an article is made doubly effective by a touch of criticism.

One's honesty can never be impressed save by some evident self-denial.

Masterful advertising has to consider a thousand such basic axioms.

That's one reason for its rarity.

No. 22. *Eccentricity*

Every evidence of Eccentricity, in word, manner or person diminishes one's influence.

It is considered abnormal. And only normal things can seriously appeal to normal minds.

Interest and amusement are often engendered by it. But it never carries conviction. And it never breeds respect.

Yet how common it is in advertising.

How many Jekylls in personal salesmanship are Hydes when they sell in print.

Still these very ad-writers, in their serious reading, particularly abhor Eccentricity.

In newspapers, magazines and books they desire simplicity. They stand for clearness and directness, familiar types and settings, normal pictures and displays. Always, save when queerness is intended to amuse.

Only in ads do they depart from these standards, and employ uniqueness for attention's sake.

Might as well place a clown's garb on a salesman, have him talk through a megaphone, or walk on stilts.

Of what use is attention from amusement seekers who lack interest in your subject?

How can you hope to get a man's patronage through capers in frivolity?

When will advertisers learn that selling is serious business? That substance alone can count? And that anything which leads minds away from the argument prohibits effective impressions?

No. 23. *Vanity*

Let us not rail at Vanity.

It's a universal trait. And it adds to life a needed piquancy and charm.

Also, it is profitable. Half the business in the world would disappear if it perished. And Ambition would die with it.

But let us open an account with it. Let us frankly charge to Vanity exactly what it costs us.

Separate it from essentials. In personal affairs or business, let us not fool ourselves.

Particularly in advertising.

When we depict our buildings and boast accomplishments, let us not charge that to selling.

Mark the unnecessary pictures, the wasteful borders and displays, the words inserted only for self-pride.

Measure the space used solely to make ads attractive to yourself and friends.

Charge all that to Vanity's account.

Do this by comparison with mail order ads. For in all traced advertising, where cost and result can be accurately measured, Vanity obliterates itself.

Vanity is a friend of ours. Ads would be smaller and advertisers fewer without it. So this Creed is not meant unkindly.

But as trusted advisers we must say to our clients, Don't charge Vanity to Salesmanship. Keep a separate account.

Then, if the tax is too great, reduce it.

No. 24. *Frills*

Advertising success, as every veteran knows, has little to do with the frills.

No more than business success has to do with clothes. Or the value of a book with the cover.

Only to inexpert observers are appearances impressive. But they are the multitude.

Nine laymen in ten judge an advertising campaign entirely by the pictures. Yet how rarely is anyone sold by them alone.

So in all lines. The big things masters do are beyond casual comprehension. Men and their efforts are largely judged by meaningless externals, until they are judged by results.

Thus it behooves us to be careful of appearance. That is, if we crave credit from the many, or even from those we serve.

But, knowing how appearances deceive, we should guard ourselves against them.

Let them not sway your judgment.

A myriad of men can make an ad attractive to one who can make it effective.

To look like success is child's play compared with its achievement.

In business, no man is a capable captain unless immune to frills.

No. 25. Power

Forget not the responsibilities of power.

Virile advertising is a fearful force, and every master knows it. He can feel the millions yielding to his sway.

The ad-writer is the only advocate who has everybody's ear. Around every fireside, far and near, folks listen to his logic.

A frequent result is to create a monopoly. And the courts have decided, in a Sherman Law case, that it is legal monopoly.

But, unless such monopolies serve the common good, they won't be legal long.

Forceful advertising leads or misleads in a tremendous way. It is serving Man or Mammon, Greed or Justice, with a billion able cohorts.

In self-defense, the world will ever hold such forces to account.

Mark the history of misused power, in whatever field exerted. Avarice has never long succeeded. Mankind was never long deluded. Never has injustice escaped punishment for long.

The guardians of advertising closed its doors to the liars and the frauds. And that was all that saved it.

But all infractions of the square deal are dangers equally acute. We must guard this field against them, else that power will be deposed.

All of us will share in the disaster.

No. 26. *Folderol*

A certain magazine reaches two million homes. A page ad in one issue costs \$5,000.

To reach all homes in America just once at like rate would cost \$50,000.

One ad writer figures that advertisers spend \$10 per word on his copy.

Look over advertising pages with that thought in mind, and judge what ads are worth that.

The trouble is just this:

Most advertisers cannot judge what their ads are doing. There are many factors in success, and advertising in the mélange gets an undue credit.

The result is much folderol which could never survive a real test.

All great ad-writers got their training in the school of direct results. Beware of one who did not.

It takes real salesmanship to meet the test of traced returns. And a man who has to face them long will never publish folderol.

Those foolish ads, those wasteful pictures, those inert platitudes. The men who write them never squarely faced an advertising issue.

They will perish if they ever do.

Every worth-while ad is a master salesman's supreme effort to sell goods. In this costly field, lesser efforts are folly.

There is no middle ground.

No. 27. *Industry*

Nature does less toward making big men than is generally supposed.

In fact, most masters were in youth particularly unpromising.

Demosthenes was a stutterer, Napoleon a recluse, Lincoln a rail-splitter.

Most biographies of great men start in lowliest surroundings. Their only visible distinction lay in surplus handicaps.

The chief uniqueness which their record shows is overwhelming industry.

They did a day's work in a day, as did their fellows. But they stole an extra day from night.

We find it so in advertising.

Geniuses are failures. Brilliant writers never sell the goods. Great talent, by breeding over-confidence, multiplies mistakes.

The tragedy of this line is its countless fallen stars.

The rulers who stay are the plodders.

While others enjoyed their brief place in the sun, they basked by the midnight lamp.

After 44 years, this is our analysis: The only way to succeed is to work.

To out-rival others, do double work. Learn twice as much as they do, both of pitfalls and of peaks.

No amount of brains can compete with double experience in salesmanship-in-print.

No. 28. *Honesty*

Honesty is not self-apparent.

And strangers rarely assume it.

So the man who desires a reputation for probity must actively work to attain it.

In selling goods, one way to secure it is by dealing frankly with both pro and con.

Honest men do that in personal dealings. They say, "That is your due, this is my due." And they stand for both alike.

The result is implicit trust.

Think what it would mean to have equal prestige accrue to your selling in print.

Like methods will attain it.

Give to your rivals their due.

Assume your patron's viewpoint. Present, in his interest, every side of the question.

Mix some censure with your praise.

Some shortcomings with supremacies.

Make your fairness evident.

People expect laudations. Surprise them with a touch of self-criticism.

Be more the judge than advocate.

We know some will exclaim, "What, pay my money to cite defects in my wares!"

Yes, it would pay. It is not altruistic.

The weight of your praise would be multiplied.

And the man who thinks he can hide a delinquency is fooling himself at best.

No. 29. *Atmosphere*

Around anything which typifies high attainment there accrues an air of prestige.

With a concern it sometimes grows until patronage seems a privilege.

With a man, it multiplies the effectiveness of every utterance and action.

To a product it gives what we call atmosphere in advertising. And that's its chief asset.

But prestige is intangible and volatile.

It is easily marred. It departs over-night if one fails to live up to it.

A man by one act can tarnish a luster which years have been spent to create.

And so may an advertiser in respect to his product. Its whole atmosphere with thousands may be changed by a single ad.

One unworthy idea, made public, has razed many a slow-built structure.

Anything which indicates your own lack of respect forfeits the respect of your patrons.

Yet how often we see that done.

Some master salesman, by striking a high key, gives a product a rare prestige.

Then somebody else, over the same signature, destroys it by flippant treatment.

Scandal has more power than praise - by a hundred fold. Just so, one ad which shows a low conception may bedim a thousand luster-giving touches.

We must protect our atmosphere from clouds.

No. 30. *Courage*

One reason why brave men succeed so easily is the prevalence of cowards.

Most opposition is mere bravado, which withers upon attack.

For lack of courage, the masses cling to life-rafts. And drift where the life-rafts go.

Only men who strike out where they sink or swim can hope to reach coveted ports.

Fear more than incapacity keeps men in ruts. And the feared things are bugaboos, usually.

Timid men often take seven years to do what other men do in seven months.

For fear of a risk they let rivals outstrip them, then flatter themselves on conservatism.

Advertising success is easy because so few men vigorously attempt it.

In a good many lines a solitary brand has the whole mammoth field to itself.

Yet the value of advertising as an aid to success is the best-advertised fact in the world.

Men don't know the way. The road is dark. And darkness breeds ghosts of disaster.

The fact is that advertising, rightly conducted, is the safest of business ventures. In nothing else with equal prospects can one so feel his way.

It is a pity that more men don't consult pilots who have proved themselves trustworthy.

*No. 31. *Caveat Emptor**

That is an old-time rule which still retains some legal recognition.

But woe to the man, selling service or product, who today lets the buyer beware.

Modern business is no battle of wits. It's an offer of service, with a pledge of good faith.

Goods are sold on approval. And service would be, could time, like the goods, be reclaimed.

Selling inducements are all implied guarantees. To fail an iota is cheating.

Giving what patrons expect is but value received. And that is a matter of course.

Credit comes only through some over measure.

In your line and our line and all lines, very few men rise high.

Instinctively, in those who do, we look for super-service. Their place proves that they give it.

There lies the appeal of bigness.

It proves that many have there found some unique satisfaction. It proves that patrons stay.
And their verdicts have been endorsements.

Buyers know they don't need to beware.

It is not what we say, but what customers say, that finally fixes our place.

And the big concern's place has been fixed.

No. 32. Time

In the valuations which you place on time, multiply each business hour by ten.

Each working hour, normally, calls for an hour of sleep. And an hour of recreation.

Six working days call for a day of rest.

And the years of our full-blown powers were preceded by full as many years of preparation.

So an hour of your time, as a business asset, makes at least ten hours of life.

Think of time that way, you easy-going men. You who let things lag.

You who waste countless hours in doing what less valuable men could do for you.

You who permit inefficient methods to cut your accomplishments in two.

You who do slowly what can be done quickly.

You who cultivate your fields with ox-plows when competitors use tractors.

You who employ mediocrity when ability could multiply your momentum.

You who continue in important positions, helpers who must be helped.

You who do in person what can be done a thousand fold better in print.

And you who use print in a pop-gun way when conditions call for cannon.

The money wasted is a minor matter. That is easily replaced.

But the time is lost forever. And wasted time, in your heyday, is what limits your career.

No. 33. Modesty

Remember how winsome is Modesty. And how repugnant is Conceit. Boasting wins no allies.

Men resent domination. They rebel at coercion. And they fear over-growth.

Sympathy lies with the under dog.

Size and strength excite interest. But they suggest self-sufficiency, and that chills the heart.

The great majority, fighting in the ranks, feel no fellowship with leaders.

They have no love for the powerful.

Twas the distrust and fear of overlords that bred the grudge against big business.

It is evident still in the growing trend to help in an uphill fight.

So it isn't wise to flaunt bigness. Or to show a desire to crush rivals. Or to indicate dominance, usually.

Even too-big ads have, again and again, proved that they arouse resentment.

And many an ad, by its braggadocio, drives away goodwill.

Men who really command do not seem to attempt it. Men with the most power least display it.

That is particularly true where success depends on a following. Above all, in politics and advertising.

No. 34. *Strategy*

The primeval instinct in mankind is to gain our ends by force.

In advertising that means reliance on the power of money. And it rarely wins.

Sheer force is wasteful, crude, offensive. What it gains a greater force can always take away.

The skillful salesman uses strategy instead.

With much less effort, and perhaps less backing, he gets what money can't get.

That's the secret of successful advertising.

It isn't words or pictures, size of space, or anything you see. It is some subtle method which escapes opposition, melts apathy, wins sympathy, and kindles instant interest.

Big concerns are most apt to rely on money. They waste millions every year in bold, mistaken strokes.

And big concerns, in fights for public favor, make most of the mistakes.

Small concerns, for lack of money, are forced to strategy. So the great majority of advertising successes spring from those conditions.

Many are won without risking a dollar. Many by men with almost nothing to risk.

That fact is rich in meaning.

It is skill, not money, that wins success in this field. And the men most likely to employ it are the men who must.

No. 35. *Mistakes*

Don't figure to avoid mistakes.

You will never do anything new.

But minimize them. Don't be rash. Feel your way on new ground.

The "great decision" need rarely come in business. And never in advertising. The wise man finds the light by groping, never by sudden plunge.

On wants and wishes, likes and dislikes, there is no authority. Preferences can't be guessed. But they are easily and cheaply ascertained.

The great masters of advertising are never infallible. They are simply efficient. Wrong or right, you get a final answer.

But they get it "on the dog."

One never hears of their mistakes. They are too small, too brief. And nobody suffers by them.

They let no effort reach the limelight save a well-proved certainty.

"Nothing risked, nothing gained," is a gambler's apology. "Nothing gained if much is risked" is a better business proverb.

In advertising, nine-tenths of the successes staked a trifle at the start. And no thing afterwards. But the graveyards of business are filled with the plungers.

No. 36. *Gentility*

In dealing with the great majority it pays to be a gentleman.

There are stupid people, boisterous people, lovers of brute force. But they are a minority. And they, like the rest, are impressed by gentility.

Do you see black headlines, fairly yelling for attention? Settings grotesque or unusual? Displays too urgent, claims blatant and insistent?

You feel that the man behind them is not one you'd care to meet.

There's an etiquette in advertising, as in all human relations. And it calls, like all codes, for the following of fixed customs.

People are accustomed to certain line lengths, to certain types and settings.

These have been fixed by generations, for ease of reading and convenience.

Why discard those standards when you invite a hearing as a courtesy?

Suppose you went where your ads go - into the family circle. Would you talk as loud as your ads do? Or dress as grotesquely? Or so pound your points home? Or employ their slang or boast?

If not, conform your ads to your personal standards. They are your representatives.

No. 37. *Character*

The longer we live, and the wider our viewpoint, the more we rely upon character.

Any seeming success made without it is not a safe investment.

Any brilliant man, unsound in his principles, will soon or late meet disaster.

The men who trust him will be led astray.

The business he serves will be weakened.

That's acutely true in advertising.

Lack of character cannot be concealed in the limelight of publicity.

Keep in the shadow and the world's appraisal may be long delayed. But not in print.

Therefore, well consider character in choosing counselors in advertising.

They are your portrait-painters to the world at large. It can't be otherwise.

What they are you are bound to seem, however you restrict them. Try as they will, in word or method they cannot conceal themselves.

Are they such men as you want the world to think you? Are their business principles deserving of respect?

If not, avoid them. The more you trust them the more they will mislead you. And they in this field, to a large extent, are bound to mirror you.

No. 38. *Skeptics*

We are dealing with a world of skeptics.

People fear their own credulity. So, in self-protection, they seek flaws in all that sellers say.

They don't fear actual lying so much as exaggeration. For laws now punish liars.

In advertising we must disarm this skepticism, else we can't convince.

Don't use fluent generalities.

Be specific in your claims.

Say only that which must be truth, if it isn't a deliberate lie. Then people will believe it.

Be exact and careful. If a statement may arouse a doubt, explain the doubt away.

Make truth seem like truth.

People are easily fooled, and they know it. But in guarding themselves they usually discredit things that don't deserve it.

More salesmen fail through looseness than through lies. They make fact seem like fiction, just by careless handling.

Many an ad when analyzed seems both fair and true. But in hasty reading it appears a fabrication.

The man you trust qualifies all statements that require it. Words good as bonds always sound like bonds.

But the voluble man whose words flow too easily is ever at a discount.

So it is in ads.

No. 39. *Pacemakers*

Two similar products were developed by the same man. One under old methods, one under new.

Under old methods, it took ten years to attain a certain volume.

Under new methods, on a like product, the same volume was reached in seven months.

The old way succeeded. But the new method proved itself 17 times as efficient.

Many other men, in many lines, will sometime face a like awakening.

They are moving, and they feel content. But they judge without a pacemaker.

Perhaps they have no rivals, or the rivals they have are plugs.

Sometime, if their line is worth-while, a speeder will appear. And his new methods will reveal undreamed of possibilities.

In a line with capable pacemakers, it is easy to gauge one's efforts. In a line without, beware.

There may be ways to move ten times as fast. If another finds them and employs them, you'll be left behind.

Many lines of advertising, deemed passable now, will seem pretty bad when a pacemaker appears.

But they are just as bad now, just as out-of-date. And there are men who know it.

No. 40. Basic Laws

The first essential in a modern government is a constitution.

The first steps in a corporation are its charter and its by-laws.

We recognize in such things the need of basic laws. But how rarely we apply them in our day-to-day affairs.

How often we are guided by floating conditions, or an impulse of the moment.

The result is a zig-zag course.

One action often counteracts another.

We must decide on certain principles and methods to make consistent progress toward a goal.

They should endure until we prove them wrong.

Then the principles which supplant them should be equally immutable. And every minor action should be measured by them.

Otherwise we drift. Each mood, each circumstance may sway us from our course. And we never arrive at our harbor.

This applies to advertising policy.

It applies to advertising method. Once adopted, it should never be changed or abated, save for well-considered reasons.

Whatever we are in private it does not do to seem a weather-vane in print.

No. 41. *Self-Reliance*

Don't rely too much on dealers to help foster your ambitions.

Treat them fairly. Justify their service. Try to harmonize their interests with your own.

Their good-will is important.

But don't expect that they will fight your battles. They have battles of their own.

Don't count them allies, if their interests ever clash with yours.

Don't whimper at substitution, if your methods make it profitable or possible.

And don't expect them to invest much on mere pictured prospects.

Your work is with consumers.

Dealers say, "Bring the trade and we'll supply it." And they will.

Many a campaign has spent itself in getting distribution. In stocking dealers, in urging their enthusiasm. Then the advertising was a fiasco.

Now these skeptical dealers enthuse best when you go the other way around. Center your efforts on the consumer. He'll get what he comes to want.

Initial sales may be lost, but still the plan will prove most economical.

And its best effect perhaps will come in nurturing self-reliance.

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Part II: Scientific Advertising

A note on the text: The complete original text of the 1923 hardcover edition of Scientific Advertising by Bell Publishing follows in ordinary type.

In certain places, we have bolded lines of the original text to emphasize and draw your attention to key points.

In other places, we have annotated the text, and these annotations appear in boxed sidebars throughout the copy.

There are also reproductions of images of certain advertisements that illustrate one or more of the principles Hopkins teaches. Unless otherwise noted, these are ads selected for their content and were not ads that Hopkins actually wrote.

CHAPTER ONE

How Advertising Laws Are Established

The time has come when advertising has in some hands reached the status of a science. It is based on fixed principles and is reasonably exact. The causes and effects have been analyzed until they are well understood. The correct methods of procedure have been proved and established. We know what is most effective, and we act on basic laws.

Advertising, once a gamble, has thus become, under able direction, one of the safest of business ventures. Certainly no other enterprise with comparable possibilities need involve so little risk.

Therefore this book deals, not with theories and opinions, but with well-proved principles and facts. It is written as a text book for students and a safe guide for advertisers. Every statement has been weighed. The book is confined to established fundamentals. If we enter any realms of uncertainty we shall carefully denote them.

The present status of advertising is due to many reasons. Much national advertising has long been handled by large organizations known as advertising agencies. Some of these agencies, in their hundreds of campaigns, have tested and compared thousands of plans and ideas. The results have been watched and recorded, so no lessons have been lost.

Such agencies employ a high grade of talent. None but able and experienced men can meet the requirements in national advertising. Working in co-operation, learning from each other and from each new undertaking, some of these men develop into masters.

Individuals may come and go, but they leave their records and ideas behind them. These become a part of the organization's equipment, and a guide to all who follow. Thus, in the course of decades, such agencies become storehouses of advertising experiences, proved principles, and methods.

The larger agencies also come into intimate contact with experts in every department of business. Their clients are usually dominating concerns. So they see the results of countless methods and policies. They become a clearing house for everything pertaining to merchandising. Nearly every selling question which arises in business is accurately answered by many experiences.

Under these conditions, where they long exist, advertising and merchandising become exact sciences. Every course is charted. The compass of accurate knowledge directs the shortest, safest, cheapest course to any destination.

We learn the principles and prove them by repeated tests. This is done through keyed advertising, by traced returns, largely by the use of coupons. We compare one way with many others, backward and forward, and record the results. When one method invariably proves best, that method becomes a fixed principle.

Mail order advertising is traced down to the fraction of a penny. The cost per reply and cost per dollar of sale show up with utter exactness.

One ad is compared with another, one method with another. Headlines, settings, sizes, arguments and pictures are compared. To reduce the cost of results even one percent means much in some mail order advertising. So no guesswork is permitted. One must know what is best. Thus mail order advertising first established many of our basic laws.

In lines where direct returns are impossible we compare one town with another. Scores of methods may be compared in this way, measured by cost of sales.

But the most common way is by use of the coupon. We offer a sample, a book, a free package or something to induce direct replies. Thus we learn the amount of action which each ad engenders (see Fig. 1-1).

But those figures are not final. One ad may bring too many worthless replies, another replies that are valuable. So our final conclusions are always based on cost per customer or cost per dollar of sale.

These coupon plans are dealt with further in the chapter on "Test Campaigns." Here we explain only how we employ them to discover advertising principles.

In a large agency coupon returns are watched and recorded on hundreds of different lines. In a single line they are sometimes recorded on thousands of separate ads. Thus we test everything pertaining to advertising. We answer nearly every possible question by multitudinous traced returns.

Some things we learn in this way apply only to particular lines. But even those supply basic principles for analogous undertakings.

Others apply to all lines. They become fundamentals for advertising in general. They are universally applied. No wise advertiser will ever depart from those unvarying laws.

We propose in this book to deal with those fundamentals, those universal principles. To teach only established technique. There is that technique in advertising, as in all art, science and mechanics. And it is, as in all lines, a basic essential.

The lack of those fundamentals has been the main trouble with advertising of the past. Each worker was a law to himself. All previous knowledge, all progress in the line, was a closed book to him. It was like a man trying to build a modern locomotive without first ascertaining what others

had done. It was like a Columbus starting out to find an undiscovered land.

Men were guided by whims and fancies – vagrant, changing breezes. They rarely arrived at their port. When they did – by accident – it was by a long roundabout course.

Each early mariner in this sea mapped his own separate course.

There were no charts to guide him. Not a lighthouse marked a harbor, not a buoy showed a reef. The wrecks were unrecorded, so countless ventures came to grief on the same rocks and shoals.

Advertising was then a gamble – a speculation of the rashest sort. One man's guess on the proper course was as likely to be as good as another's. There were no safe pilots, because few sailed the same course twice.

That condition has been corrected. Now the only uncertainties pertain to people and to products, not to methods. It is hard to measure human idiosyncrasies, the preferences and prejudices, the likes and dislikes that exist. We cannot say that an article will be popular, but we know how to find out very quickly. We do know how to sell it in the most effective way.

Ventures may fail, but the failures are not disasters. Losses, when they occur, are but trifling. And the causes are factors which have nothing to do with the advertising.

Advertising has flourished under these new conditions. It has multiplied in volume, in prestige and respect. The perils have been almost eliminated. The results have increased many fold. Just because the gamble has become a science, the speculation a very conservative business.

These facts should be recognized by all. This is no proper field for sophistry or theory, or for any other will-o'-the-wisp. The blind leading the blind is ridiculous. It is pitiful in a field with such vast possibilities. Success is a rarity, maximum success an impossibility, unless one is guided by laws as immutable as the law of gravitation.

So our main purpose here is to set down those laws, and to tell you how to prove them for yourself. After them come a myriad variations. No two advertising campaigns are ever conducted on lines that are identical. Individuality is an essential. Imitation is a reproach. But those variable things which depend on ingenuity have no place in a text book on advertising.
This is for groundwork only.

Our hope is to foster advertising through a better understanding. To place it on a business basis. To have it recognized as among the safest, surest ventures which lead to large returns.

Thousands of conspicuous successes show its possibilities. Their variety points out its almost unlimited scope. Yet thousands who need it – who can never attain their deserts without it – still look upon its accomplishments as somewhat accidental.

That was so, but it is not so now. We hope that this book will throw some new lights on the subject.

**It's Thrifty...it's Smart
and so Easy
to ride!**

HARLEY-DAVIDSON 125
POWER RIDING FOR EVERYONE!

ENJOYABLE PERSONAL TRANSPORTATION
AT LOW COST
FOR EVERYBODY

If you have never ridden a Harley-Davidson 125, you have a big, pleasant surprise coming! Lightweight and low center of gravity make balancing almost automatic. Control is simple and sure. One lesson and you'll be able to go anywhere quickly, dependably and at amazingly low cost! 90 miles and more per gallon, practically no upkeep, no parking fees. Good looking, too, streamlined, colorful. Smooth, quiet performance with such advanced automotive features as brakes on both wheels, 5-speed transmission, drop-forged steering head, oversize tires, easy-chair saddle, brilliant night lighting. Thousands in use by men, women, boys, girls, for work, business, school, errands, outings. You owe it to yourself to try it. "A penny saved is a penny earned" and think of the fun you can have! Low down payment, easy terms. Phone or see your Harley-Davidson dealer for a FREE ride.

MAIL THE COUPON NOW!

DEALERS: Valuable franchises available for the full line of famous Big Twins and the 125 model. Your opportunity to line up with the greatest name in motorcycles. Write or wire for information today.

Roadmaster Bicycle, 1952 • Harley-Davidson, 1950

Fig. 1-1. Coupons produce an ad response that can be measured.

CHAPTER TWO ☈

Just Salesmanship

To properly understand advertising or to learn even its rudiments one must start with the right conception. *Advertising is salesmanship.* Its principles are the principles of salesmanship. Successes and failures in both lines are due to like causes. Thus every advertising question should be answered by the salesman's standards.

Let us emphasize that point. The only purpose of advertising is to make sales. It is profitable or unprofitable according to its actual sales.

It is not for general effect. It is not to keep your name before the people. It is not primarily to aid your other salesmen.

Treat it as a salesman. Force it to justify itself. Compare it with other salesmen. Figure its cost and result. Accept no excuses which good salesmen do not make. Then you will not go far wrong.

The difference is only in degree. Advertising is multiplied salesmanship. It may appeal to thousands while the salesman talks to one. It involves a corresponding cost. Some people spend \$10 per word on an average advertisement. Therefore every ad should be a super-salesman.

A salesman's mistake may cost little. An advertising mistake may cost a thousand times as much. Be more cautious, more exacting, therefore.

A mediocre salesman may affect a small part of your trade. Mediocre advertising affects all of your trade.

Many think of advertising as ad-writing. Literary qualifications have no more to do with it than oratory has with salesmanship.

One must be able to express himself briefly, clearly and convincingly, just as a salesman must. But fine writing is a distinct disadvantage. So is unique literary style. They take attention from the subject. They reveal the hook. Any studied attempt to sell, if apparent, creates corresponding resistance.

That is so in personal salesmanship as in salesmanship-in-print. Fine talkers are rarely good salesmen. They inspire buyers with the fear of over-influence. They create the suspicion that an effort is made to sell them on other lines than merit.

Successful salesmen are rarely good speech makers. They have few oratorical graces. They are plain and sincere men who know their customers and know their lines. So it is in ad-writing.

Many of the ablest men in advertising are graduate salesmen. The best we know have been house-to-house canvassers. They may know little of grammar, nothing of rhetoric, but they know how to use words that convince.

There is one simple and right way to answer many advertising questions. Ask yourself, “Would this help a salesman sell the goods?” “Would it help me sell them if I met the buyer in person?”

A fair answer to those questions avoids countless mistakes. But when one tries to show off, or does things merely to please himself, he is little likely to strike a chord which leads people to spend money.

Some argue for slogans, some like clever conceits. Would you use them in personal salesmanship? Can you imagine a customer whom such things would impress? If not, don't rely on them for selling in print.

Some say, "Be very brief. People will read but little." Would you say that to a salesman? With a prospect standing before him, would you confine him to any certain number of words? That would be an unthinkable handicap.

So in advertising. The only readers we get are people whom our subject interests. No one reads ads for amusement, long or short. Consider them as prospects standing before you, seeking for information. Give them enough to get action.

WHAT WORKS BEST – LONG COPY OR SHORT?

Hopkins was an advocate of long-copy advertising. "Give them enough to get action," was his advice on copy length.

But today people are busier. And there is more to read. Does Hopkins' preference for long copy still apply today?

I don't pretend that I can settle the debate once and for all. But I've developed a tool, which I call the Copy Length Grid (see Fig. 2-1), that can at least enable us to determine copy length in a somewhat more scientific and semi-quantitative fashion.

The Copy Length Grid says there are two major factors determining whether long or short copy will work best for your promotion: emotion and involvement.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

WHAT WORKS BEST – LONG COPY OR SHORT?

(CONTINUED)

Emotion refers to the degree to which the purchase is emotional. Buying a diamond engagement ring is a highly emotional purchase, while you are moved very little emotionally when deciding which brand of paper clips to buy.

Involvement refers to how much time, effort, and thought goes into the product purchase. As with most large purchases, a lot of consideration goes into the selection and purchase of a diamond engagement ring. But most of us grab the first box of paper clips on the shelf of the stationery store without giving it a second thought.

To use this system for determining copy length, rate these two criteria – emotion and involvement – as high or low. This dictates what quadrant of the Copy Length Grid you end up in, which in turn gives you at least a rough guideline for copy length.

For instance, the purchase of a diamond engagement ring is highly emotional. And, it's a "considered purchase" – something you give a lot of thought to – so it rates high in involvement.

As you can see in Fig. 2-1, this puts us firmly in the upper left quadrant of the grid, indicating that long copy is appropriate for this offer.

On the other hand, paper clips are more of an impulse purchase; when we need them, we go to the store and pick up the first box we see, providing it's the right size. There's no emotion and very little thought that goes into this purchase.

This puts us in the lower right quadrant of Fig. 2-1, which indicates that writing long, passionate copy about paper clips probably isn't going to sell more of them.

Of course, the Copy Length Grid is only a rough guide, not a precise analyzer. There are a number of other factors that also must be taken into account when determining copy length.

These factors include:

* *Price.* The more expensive a product is, the more copy you generally need to sell it. Lots of copy is needed to build the case for value before asking for the order, so that when the price is finally given, it seems like a drop in the bucket compared to what the buyer is getting in return.

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WHAT WORKS BEST – LONG COPY OR SHORT?

(CONTINUED)

* *Purpose.* Copy that sells the product directly off the printed page or screen (known as “one-step” or “mail order” copy) usually has to be long, because it must present all product information and overcome all objections. Copy designed to generate a lead (“two-step copy”) can be short, since a catalog, brochure, or salesperson will have the opportunity to present product details and overcome objections later.

* *Audience.* People who are pressed for time, such as busy executives and professionals, often respond better to short copy. Prospects with more time on their hands, such as retirees, as well as those with a keen interest in your offer, such as hobbyists, are more likely to read long copy.

* *Importance.* Products that people *need* (e.g., a refrigerator, a fax machine) can be sold with short copy because ... well, the prospect has to buy them. Products that people *want* but don’t *have* to buy (e.g., exercise videos, self-help audio programs, financial newsletters) must be “sold” and require long copy to do so.

* *Familiarity.* Short copy works well with products the prospect already is familiar with and understand. This is why vouchers and double postcards are used so frequently to sell subscriptions to popular, well-known magazines (e.g., *Newsweek*, *BusinessWeek*).

Based on the Copy Length Grid and these other factors, clearly long copy is not always better, and there are many instances when short or almost no copy works well. This is the case with items that “sell themselves,” such as staplers or garden hoses.

But for items that have to be “sold” – life insurance policies, luxury automobiles, IT systems, collectibles, high-end jewelry, career training – long copy is often required because of the degree of emotion and involvement.

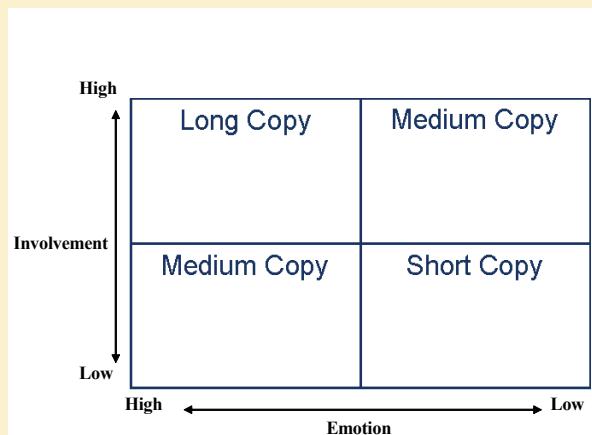


Fig. 2-1. Copy length grid.

Some advocate large type and big headlines. Yet they do not admire salesmen who talk in loud voices. People read all they care to read in 8-point type. Our magazines and newspapers are printed in that type. Folks are accustomed to it. Anything larger is like loud conversation. It gains no attention worth-while. It may not be offensive, but it is useless and wasteful. It multiplies the cost of your story. And to many it seems loud and blatant.

Others look for something queer and unusual. They want ads distinctive in style or illustration. Would you want that in a salesman? Do not men who act and dress in normal ways make a far better impression?

Some insist on dressy ads. That is all right to a certain degree, but it is quite unimportant. Some poorly dressed ads, like poorly dressed men, prove to be excellent salesmen. Over-dress in either is a fault.

So with countless questions. Measure them by salesmen's standards, not by amusement standards. Ads are not written to entertain. When they do, those entertainment seekers are little likely to be the people whom you want.

That is one of the greatest advertising faults. Ad-writers abandon their parts. They forget they are salesmen and try to be performers. Instead of sales, they seek applause.

When you plan and prepare an advertisement, keep before you a typical buyer. Your subject, your headline has gained his or her attention. Then in everything be guided by what you would do if you met the buyer face-to-face. If you are a normal man and a good salesman you will then do your level best.

Don't think of people in the mass. That gives you a blurred view. Think of a typical individual, man or woman, who is likely to want what you sell. Don't try to be amusing. Money spending is a serious matter. Don't boast, for all people resent it. Don't try to show off. Do just what you think a good salesman should do with a half-sold person before him.

Some advertising men go out in person and sell to people before they plan or write an ad. One of the ablest of them has spent weeks on one article, selling from house to house. In this way they learn the reactions from different forms of argument and approach. They learn what possible buyers want and the factors which don't appeal. It is quite customary to interview hundreds of possible customers.

Others send out questionnaires to learn the attitude of buyers. In some way all must learn how to strike responsive chords. Guesswork is very expensive.

The maker of an advertised article knows the manufacturing side and probably the dealer's side. But this very knowledge often leads him astray in respect to consumers. His interests are not their interests.

The advertising man studies the consumer. He tries to place himself in the position of the buyer.

His success largely depends on doing that to the exclusion of everything else.

This book will contain no more important chapter than this one on salesmanship. The reason for most of the non-successes in advertising is trying to sell people what they do not want. But next to that comes the lack of true salesmanship.

Ads are planned and written with some utterly wrong conception. They are written to please the seller. The interests of the buyer are forgotten. One can never sell goods profitably, in person or in print, when that attitude exists.



Fig. 2-2. Today "packaged goods" are sold with ads that are mainly images with brief copy. But Hopkins built brands with long-copy ads giving detailed facts proving the product's superiority.

CHAPTER THREE ©

Offer Service

Remember that the people you address are selfish, as we all are. They care nothing about your interest or your profit. They seek service for themselves. Ignoring this fact is a common mistake and a costly mistake in advertising. Ads say in effect, "Buy my brand. Give me the trade you give to others. Let me have the money." That is not a popular appeal.

The best ads ask no one to buy. That is useless. Often they do not quote a price. They do not say that dealers handle the product.

The ads are based entirely on service. They offer wanted information. They cite advantages to users. Perhaps they offer a sample, or to buy the first package, or to send something on approval, so the customer may prove the claims without any cost or risk.

Some of these ads seem altruistic. But they are based on a knowledge of human nature. The writers know how people are led to buy.

Here again is salesmanship. The good salesman does not merely cry a name. He doesn't say, "Buy my article." He pictures the customer's side of his service until the natural result is to buy.

A brush maker has some 2,000 canvassers who sell brushes from house to house. He is enormously successful in a line which would seem very difficult. And it would be if his men asked the housewives to buy.

But they don't. They go to the door and say, "I was sent here to give you a brush. I have samples here and I want you to take your choice."

The housewife is all smiles and attention. In picking out one brush she sees several she wants. She is also anxious to reciprocate the gift. So the salesman gets an order.

Another concern sells coffee, etc., by wagons in some 500 cities. The man drops in with a half-pound of coffee and says, "Accept this package and try it. I'll come back in a few days to ask how you like it."

Even when he comes back he doesn't ask for an order. He explains that he wants to send the woman a fine kitchen utensil. It isn't free, but if she likes the coffee he will credit five cents on each pound she buys until she has paid for the article. Always some service.

The maker of an electric sewing machine motor found advertising difficult. So, on good advice, he ceased soliciting a purchase. He offered to send to any home, through any dealer, a motor for one week's use. With it would come a man to show how to operate it. "Let us help you for a week without cost or obligation," said the ad. Such an offer was irresistible, and about nine in ten of the trials led to sales.

So in many, many lines. Cigar makers send out boxes to anyone and say, "Smoke ten, then keep them or return them, as you wish."

Makers of books, typewriters, washing machines, kitchen cabinets, vacuum sweepers, etc., send out their products without any prepayment. They say, "Use them a week, then do as you wish." Practically all merchandise sold by mail is sent subject to return.

These are all common principles of salesmanship. The most ignorant peddler applies them. Yet the salesman-in-print very often forgets them. He talks about his interests. He blazons a name, as though that was of any importance. His phrase is "Drive people to the stores," and that is his attitude in everything he says. People can be coaxed but not driven. Whatever they do they do to please themselves. Many fewer mistakes would be made in advertising if these facts were never forgotten.



Turn your hot patio or deck into a cool "outdoor room".

It's an outdoor lover's dream . . . an attractive and flexible way to cover your deck or patio with large retractable shade. This revolutionary yet simple, retractable shade system lets you add shade anywhere. Overhead canopy kits attach to your house, to an existing structure, or to a new wood structure you design - a chance to be creative! You can also use our complete support structures in aluminum or vinyl. Whether you're seeking shelter from the sun's intense rays, or simply putting up the patio area, you'll appreciate the many benefits of ShadeTree® Retractable Canopies.

FREE ShadeTree® "Shade Ideas" Catalog
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**Canopies extend to protect
for Sun or Shade.**

- Unlike traditional retractable awnings, "ShadeTree" Canopies cover small, odd-shaped, or **LARGE** areas - extends over 200' (no pitch required).
- Canopies adjust to your structure, or use our aluminum or vinyl supports - Add shade to your beautiful wooden or low-maintenance vinyl pergola!
- Patented wind protection • Easy financing • Matching privacy blinds
- Easy do-it-yourself installation, or we'll arrange installation for you!

See ShadeTree® On Tour -
Visit our website for a Home Show in your area!

YES! Please send me your FREE "Shade Ideas" Catalog.

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP

MAILING LIST
Put a check in your box for a free CD showing 30 shade ideas.
How you handle my information - **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

Fig. 3-1. This ad offers what Hopkins called "wanted information" – in this case, a free catalog.

CHAPTER FOUR

Mail Order Advertising: What It Teaches

The severest test of an advertising man is in selling goods by mail. But that is a school from which he must graduate before he can hope for success. There cost and result are immediately apparent. False theories melt away like snowflakes in the sun. The advertising is profitable or it is not, clearly on the face of returns. Figures which do not lie tell one at once the merits of an ad.

This puts men on their mettle. All guesswork is eliminated. Every mistake is conspicuous. One quickly loses his conceit by learning how often his judgment errs – often nine times in ten.

There one learns that advertising must be done on a scientific basis to have any fair chance at success. And he learns how every wasted dollar adds to the cost of results.

Here he is taught efficiency and economy under a master who can't be fooled. Then, and then only, is he apt to apply the same principles and keys to all advertising.

A man was selling a five-dollar article. The replies from his ad cost him 85 cents. Another man submitted an ad which he thought better. The replies cost \$14.20 each. Another man submitted an ad which for two years brought replies at an average of 41 cents each.

Consider that difference, on 250,000 replies per year. Think how valuable was the man who cut the cost in two. Think what it would have meant to have continued that \$14.20 ad without any key on returns.

Yet there are thousands of advertisers who do just that. They spend large sums on a guess. And they are doing what that man did – paying for sales from 2 to 5 times what they need cost.

A study of mail order advertising reveals many things worth learning. It is a prime subject for study. In the first place, if continued, you know that it pays. It is therefore good advertising as applied to that line.

The probability is that the ad has resulted from many traced comparisons. It is therefore the best advertising yet discovered for that line.

Study those ads with respect. There is proved advertising, not theoretical. It will not deceive you. The lessons it teaches are principles which wise men apply to all advertising.

Mail order advertising is always set in small type. It is usually set in smaller type than ordinary print. That economy of space is universal. So it proves conclusively that larger type does not pay.

Remember that when you double your space by doubling the size of your type. The ad may still be profitable. But traced returns have proved that you are paying a double price for sales.

In mail order advertising there is no waste of space. Every line is utilized. Borders are rarely used. Remember that when you are tempted to leave valuable space unoccupied.

In mail order advertising there is no palaver. There is no boasting, save of super-service. There is no useless talk. There is no attempt at entertainment. There is nothing to amuse.

Mail order advertising usually contains a coupon. That is there to get some action from the converts partly made. It is there to cut out as a reminder of something the reader has decided to do.

Mail order advertisers know that readers forget. They are reading a magazine of interest. They may be absorbed in a story. A large percentage of people who read an ad and decide to act will forget that decision in five minutes. The mail order advertiser knows that waste by tests, and he does not propose to accept it. So he inserts that reminder to be cut out, and it turns up when the reader is ready to act.

In mail order advertising the pictures are always to the point. They are salesmen in themselves. They earn the space they occupy. The size is gauged by their importance. The picture of a dress one is trying to sell may occupy much space. Less important things get smaller spaces.

Pictures in ordinary advertising may teach little. They probably result from whims. But pictures in mail order advertising may form half the cost of selling. And you may be sure that everything about them has been decided by many comparative tests.

Before you use useless pictures, merely to decorate or interest, look over some mail order ads. Mark what their verdict is.

A man advertised an incubator to be sold by mail. Type ads with right headlines brought excellent returns. But he conceived the idea that a striking picture would increase those returns. So he increased his space 50 percent to add a row of chickens in silhouette.

It did make a striking ad, but his cost per reply was increased by exactly 50 percent. The new ad, costing one-half more for every insertion, brought not one added sale.

The man learned that incubator buyers were practical people. They were looking for attractive offers, not for pictures.

Think of the countless untraced campaigns where a whim of that kind costs half the advertising money without a penny of return. And it may go on year after year.

Mail order advertising tells a complete story if the purpose is to make an immediate sale. You see no limitations there on amount of copy.

The motto there is, "The more you tell the more you sell." And it has never failed to prove out so in any test we know.

Sometimes the advertiser uses small ads, sometimes large ads. None are too small to tell a reasonable story. But an ad twice larger brings twice the returns. A four-times-larger ad brings four times the returns, and usually some in addition.

But this occurs only when the larger space is utilized as well as the small space. Set half-page copy in a page space and you double the cost of returns. We have seen many a test prove that.

Look at an ad of the Mead Cycle Company – a typical mail order ad. These have been running for many years. The ads are unchanging. Mr. Mead told the writer that not for \$10,000 would he change a single word in his ads.

For many years he compared one ad with another. And the ads you see today are the final result of all those experiments. Note the picture he uses, the headlines, the economy of space, the small type. Those ads are as near perfect for their purpose as an ad can be.

So with any other mail order ad which has long continued. Every feature, every word and picture teaches advertising at its best. You may not like them. You may say they are unattractive, crowded, hard to read – anything you will. But the test of results has proved those ads the best salesmen those lines have yet discovered. And they certainly pay.

Mail order advertising is the court of last resort. You may get the same instruction, if you will, by keying other ads. But mail order ads are models. They are selling goods profitably in a difficult way. It is far harder to get mail orders than to send buyers to the stores. It is hard to sell goods which can't be seen. Ads which do that are excellent examples of what advertising should be.

We cannot often follow all the principles of mail order advertising, though we know we should. The advertiser forces a compromise. Perhaps pride in our ads has an influence. But every departure from those principles adds to our selling cost. Therefore it is always a question of what we are willing to pay for our frivolities.

We can at least know what we pay. We can make keyed comparisons, one ad with another. Whenever we do we invariably find that the nearer we get to proved mail order copy the more customers we get for our money.

This is another important chapter. Think it over. What real difference is there between inducing a customer to order by mail or order from his dealer? Why should the methods of salesmanship differ?

They should not. When they do, it is for one of two reasons. Either the advertiser does not know

what the mail order advertiser knows. He is advertising blindly. Or he is deliberately sacrificing a percentage of his returns to gratify some desire.

There is some apology for that, just as there is for fine offices and buildings. Most of us can afford to do something for pride and opinion. But let us know what we are doing. Let us know the cost of our pride. Then, if our advertising fails to bring the wanted returns, let us go back to our model - a good mail order ad - and eliminate some of our waste.

Develop ClipperTM applications four times faster or your money back.

With Sycero db,TM The application generator for ClipperTM and FoxBASE.TM



Looking for an easier, faster way to create dBASE applications? SYCERO db is the answer. SYCERO db automates the tedious portions of dBASE applications development, allowing you to generate complex applications and suites of programs without writing or modifying a single line of dBASE code. Which means you can develop the applications you need — in 1/3 to 1/4 the time it now takes you!

What's more, SYCERO db lets you add up to 300 lines of code (using dBASE, Clipper, FoxBASE, or SYCERO command language) to every field, giving you the flexibility to customize applications to any depth you choose. And, the code is added before the program is generated, so the customization becomes part of your program definition.

SYCERO db also lets you incorporate existing subroutines and programs into new applications...without having to "retrofit" the code. And, SYCERO db provides 166 powerful commands not found in Clipper or FoxBASE to further enhance your personal productivity!

With SYCERO db you can:

- Build screens, reports, menus, and databases — without writing a single line of dBASE code
- Generate file, maintenance, inquiry, posting, report, and other program types — automatically

*Don't wait!
Order Now.* **1-800-634-4555**

dBASE and Clipper are registered trademarks of Ashton Tate Corp. and Novellsoft Corp., respectively. ©
CIRCLE READER SERVICE NUMBER 269

- Generate and compile programs (using Clipper or FoxBASE) in a single step — with overlays
- Slash debugging and development time by 50 to 75% or more
- Automatically generate networking applications — with the enhanced SYCERO-db "NET" version.

The applications you develop with SYCERO db can include:

- Up to 30 databases and 14 key indexes per program. (Defining them is as easy as answering prompts on a screen!)
- Up to 21 menus, 10 levels of submenus, and memory variables and fields from up to 30 databases per screen. (Plus, screens can be called conditionally and overlaid on one another.)
- Overlaying of 26 programs into a single .EXE file. (And, you can run a Clipper .EXE on another Clipper .EXE with a 1K common area.)
- Unlimited code and subroutines added in at the generator level. (So customization doesn't break the link between program definition and generated code.)

Try SYCERO db for the next 30 days — risk-free!

We'll send you SYCERO db to use for one full month. If you cannot develop complex applications faster than ever before, simply return the diskettes and

manual to us and we will refund your money in full — no questions asked. We can't think of a fairer way for you to try SYCERO db without risk of any kind!

a rave review from PC WEEK.

"SYCERO db...certainly achieves what it set out to do — simplifying dBASE programming, cutting development cycles, and making programmers more productive."
— PC WEEK/U.K. (11/10/87)

PC Publishing

1801 Avenue of the Stars
Los Angeles, CA 90067
Tel. (213) 556-3630
FAX: 213-556-7987

YES I'd like to develop dBASE applications four times faster! **SAVE \$200**

Send me SYCERO db. The version I want to try is:

- SYCERO db NET, generating both networking and single-user applications.
Price: \$695.00 (Reg. Price \$895.00)
 SYCERO db, Standard version for creating single-user applications only.
Price: \$495.00 (Reg. Price \$695.00)
 Check enclosed (made payable to "PC Publishing")
 Charge my: Visa MC card,
Exp. date _____

Card # _____

Signature _____

Name _____

Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Not ready to order. Send me **FREE DEMO DISK**
MAIL TO: PC Publishing,
1801 Avenue of the Stars, Los Angeles, CA 90067

Fig. 4-1. Mail order ads use long copy.

CHAPTER FIVE ❧

Headlines

The difference between advertising and personal salesmanship lies largely in personal contact. The salesman is there to demand attention. He cannot well be ignored. The advertisement can be ignored.

But the salesman wastes much of his time on prospects whom he never can hope to interest. He cannot pick them out. The advertisement is read only by interested people who, by their own volition, study what we have to say.

The purpose of a headline is to pick out people you can interest. You wish to talk to someone in a crowd. So the first thing you say is, "Hey there, Bill Jones" to get the right person's attention.

THE 4 FUNCTIONS OF THE HEADLINE

Hopkins says the purpose of the headline is to "pick out people you can interest" and to "get attention."

Any effective headline performs one or more of the following functions: (a) get attention, (b) target the audience, (c) deliver a complete message, and (d) draw the reader into the body copy. Let's look at each of these four functions in detail.

A. *Get attention.* Getting attention is the most basic, important function of your headline. If your headline doesn't get attention ... if it doesn't compel the busy reader to stop turning pages and notice your ad ... you will fail to achieve your sales goal.

But what can you say in your headline that will grab your prospect's attention? You can appeal to the reader's self-interest by promising him a reward for reading your ad. The headline for a Charles Schwab ad, "Cut your brokerage costs 50% ... 60% ... even 75%," is effective because it promises the reader that he will save money.

Another tactic is to tell the reader that he will get useful information if he reads or responds to your ad. "How-to" headlines are ideal for this purpose. For example: Dale Carnegie's classic headline: "How to Win Friends and Influence People."

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

THE 4 FUNCTIONS OF THE HEADLINE (CONTINUED)

B. Target the audience. If you're selling second mortgages or home equity loans, the headline "Attention homeowners!" helps to attract logical prospects (homeowners) and discourage inquiries from those who do not own homes. The following are examples of headlines that target an audience for their ad:

IMPORTANT NEWS FOR WOMEN WITH
FLAT OR THINNING HAIR

Natural Images

WE'RE LOOKING FOR PEOPLE
TO WRITE CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Institute of
Children's Literature

C. Deliver a complete selling message. Another function the headline can perform is to deliver a complete product or brand message:

CAUGHT SOON ENOUGH, EARLY TOOTH DECAY Colgate
CAN ACTUALLY BE REPAIRED BY COLGATE

GAS ENERGY, INC. CUTS
HEATING AND COOLING COSTS
UP TO 50%

Gas Energy, Inc.

YOU CAN MAKE BIG MONEY IN REAL ESTATE Century 21
RIGHT NOW

D. Lure the reader into the ad. The headline must draw the reader into the body copy. Most products and services cannot be sold effectively in a single sentence or headline. In such cases, getting the reader to understand and respond to your sales pitch requires the reader to read or at least skim the body copy. You can use your headline as a lure that hooks the reader and draws him into the body copy.

So in an advertisement. What you have will interest certain people only, and for certain reasons. You care only for those people. Then create a headline which will hail those people only.

Perhaps a blind headline or some clever conceit will attract many times as many. But they may consist mostly of impossible subjects for what you have to offer. And the people you are after may never realize that the ad refers to something they may want.

Headlines on ads are like headlines on news items. Nobody reads a whole newspaper. One is interested in financial news, one in political, one in society, one in cookery, one in sports, etc.

There are whole pages in any newspaper which we never scan at all. Yet other people may turn directly to those pages.

We pick out what we wish to read by headlines, and we don't want those headlines misleading. The writing of headlines is one of the greatest journalistic arts. They either conceal or reveal an interest.

Suppose a newspaper article stated that a certain woman was the most beautiful in the city. That article would be of intense interest to that woman and her friends. But neither she nor her friends would ever read it if the headline was "Egyptian Psychology."

So in advertising. It is commonly said that people do not read advertisements. That is silly, of course. We who spend millions in advertising and watch the returns marvel at the readers we get. Again and again we see 20 percent of all the readers of a newspaper cut out a certain coupon.

But people do not read ads for amusement. They don't read ads which, at a glance, seem to offer nothing interesting. A double-page ad on women's dresses will not gain a glance from a man. Nor will a shaving cream ad from a woman.

Always bear these facts in mind. People are hurried. The average person worth cultivating has too much to read. They skip three-fourths of the reading matter which they pay to get. They are not going to read your business talk unless you make it worth their while and let the headline show it.

People will not be bored in print. They may listen politely at a dinner table to boasts and personalities, life histories, etc. But in print they choose their own companions, their own subjects. They want to be amused or benefited. They want economy, beauty, labor saving, good things to eat and wear. There may be products which interest them more than anything else in a magazine. But they will never know it unless the headline or the picture tells them.

The writer of this chapter spends far more time on headlines than on writing. He often spends hours on a single headline. Often scores of headlines are discarded before the right one is selected. For the entire return from an ad depends on attracting the right sort of readers. The best of salesmanship has no chance whatever unless we get a hearing.

The vast difference in headlines is shown by keyed returns which this book advocates. The identical ad run with various headlines differs tremendously in its returns. It is not uncommon for a change in headlines to multiply returns from five to ten times over.

So we compare headlines until we know what sort of appeal pays best. That differs in every line, of course.

The writer has before him keyed returns on nearly two thousand headlines used on a single product. The story in these ads is nearly identical. But the returns vary enormously, due to the headlines. So with every keyed return in our record appears the headline that we used.

Thus we learn what type of headline has the most wide-spread appeal. The product has many uses. It fosters beauty. It prevents disease. It aids daintiness and cleanliness. We learn to exactness which quality most of our readers seek.

That does not mean that we neglect the others. One sort of appeal may bring half the returns of another, yet be important enough to be profitable. We overlook no field that pays. But we know what proportion of our ads should, in the headline, attract any certain class.

For this same reason we employ a vast variety of ads. If we are using twenty magazines we may use twenty separate ads. This is because circulations overlap, and because a considerable percentage of people are attracted by each of several forms of approach. We wish to reach them all.

On a soap, for instance, the headline "Keep Clean" might attract a very small percentage. It is too commonplace. So might the headline, "No animal fats." People may not care much about that. The headline, "It floats" might prove interesting. But a headline referring to beauty or complexion might attract many times as many.

An automobile ad might refer in the headline to a good universal joint. It might fall flat, because so few buyers think of universal joints. The same ad, with a headline "The Sportiest of Sport Bodies," might outpull the other by fifty to one.

This is enough to suggest the importance of headlines. Anyone who keys ads will be amazed at the difference. The appeals we like best will rarely prove best, because we do not know enough people to average up their desires. So we learn on each line by experiment.

But back of all lie fixed principles. You are presenting an ad to millions. Among them is a percentage, small or large, whom you hope to interest. Go after that percentage and try to strike the chord that responds. If you are advertising corsets, men and children don't interest you. If you are advertising cigars, you have no use for non-smokers. Razors won't attract women, rouge will not interest men.

Don't think that those millions will read your ads to find out if your product interests. They will decide by a glance - by your headline or your pictures. Address the people you seek, and them only.

38 GREAT IDEAS FOR YOUR NEXT HEADLINE

The best way to get ideas for headlines when you are stuck is to keep a swipe file of successful headlines, and consult it for inspiration when you sit down to write a new ad or mailing.

As a shortcut, here's a partial collection of such headlines from my vast swipe file, organized by category so as to make clear the approach being used:

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

38 GREAT IDEAS FOR YOUR NEXT HEADLINE

(CONTINUED)

1. Ask a question in the headline.

"What Do Japanese Managers Have That American Managers Sometimes Lack?"

2. Tie-in to current events.

"Stay One Step Ahead of the Stock Market Just Like Martha Stewart – But Without Her Legal Liability!"

3. Create a new terminology.

"New 'Polarized Oil' Magnetically Adheres to Wear Parts in Machine Tools, Making Them Last Up to 6 Times Longer."

4. Give news using the words "new," "introduction," or "announcing."

"Announcing a Painless Cut in Defense Spending."

5. Give the reader a command – tell him to do something.

"Try Burning This Coupon."

6. Use numbers and statistics.

"Who Ever Heard of 17,000 Blooms from a Single Plant?"

7. Promise the reader useful information.

"How to Avoid the Biggest Mistake You Can Make in Building or Buying a Home."

8. Highlight your offer.

"You Can Now Subscribe to the Best New Books – Just as You Do to a Magazine."

9. Tell a story.

"They Laughed When I Sat Down at the Piano ... But When I Started to Play."

10. Make a recommendation.

"The 5 Tech Stocks You Must Own NOW."

11. State a benefit.

"Managing UNIX Data Centers – Once Difficult, Now Easy."

12. Make a comparison.

"How to Solve Your Emissions Problems – at Half the Energy Cost of Conventional Venturi Scrubbers."

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

38 GREAT IDEAS FOR YOUR NEXT HEADLINE

(CONTINUED)

13. Use words that help the reader visualize.

"Why Some Foods 'Explode' In Your Stomach."

14. Use a testimonial.

"After Over Half a Million Miles in the Air Using AVBLEND, We've Had No Premature Camshaft Failures."

15. Offer a free special report, catalog, or booklet.

"New FREE Special Report Reveals Little-Known Strategy Millionaires Use to Keep Wealth in Their Hands - and Out of Uncle Sam's."

16. State the selling proposition directly and plainly.

"Surgical Tables Rebuilt - Free Loaners Available."

17. Arouse reader curiosity.

"The One Internet Stock You MUST Own Now. Hint: It's NOT What You Think!"

18. Promise to reveal a secret.

"Unlock Wall Street's Secret Logic."

19. Be specific.

"At 60 Miles an Hour, the Loudest Noise in This New Rolls Royce Comes from the Electric Clock."

20. Target a particular type of reader.

"We're Looking for People to Write Children's Books."

21. Add a time element.

"Instant Incorporation While U-Wait."

22. Stress cost savings, discounts, or value.

"Now You Can Get \$2,177 Worth of Expensive Stock Market Newsletters for the Incredibly Low Price of Just \$69!"

23. Give the reader good news.

"You're Never Too Old to Hear Better."

24. Offer an alternative to other products and services.

"No Time for Yale - Took College At Home."

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

38 GREAT IDEAS FOR YOUR NEXT HEADLINE

(CONTINUED)

25. Issue a challenge.

"Will Your Scalp Stand the Fingernail Test?"

26. Stress your guarantee.

"Develop Software Applications Up to 6 Times Faster or Your Money Back."

27. State the price.

"Link 8 PCs to Your Mainframe - Only \$2,395."

28. Set up a seeming contradiction.

"Profit from 'Insider Trading' - 100% Legal!"

29. Offer an exclusive the reader can't get elsewhere.

"Earn 500+% Gains With Little-Known 'Trader's Secret Weapon.'"

30. Address the reader's concern.

"Why Most Small Businesses Fail - and What You Can Do About It.'

31. "As Crazy as It Sounds..."

"Crazy as it Sounds, Shares of This Tiny R&D Company, Selling for \$2 Today, Could be Worth as Much as \$100 in the Not-Too-Distant Future."

32. Make a big promise.

"Slice 20 Years Off Your Age!"

33. Show ROI (return on investment) for purchase of your product.

"Hiring the Wrong Person Costs You Three Times Their Annual Salary."

34. Use a "reasons-why" headline.

"7 Reasons Why Production Houses Nationwide Prefer Unilux Strobe Lighting When Shooting Important TV Commercials."

35. Answer important questions about your product or service.

"7 Questions to Ask Before You Hire a Collection Agency ... And One Good Answer to Each."

36. Stress the value of your premiums.

"Yours Free - Order Now and Receive \$280 in Free Gifts With Your Paid Subscription."

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

38 GREAT IDEAS FOR YOUR NEXT HEADLINE

(CONTINUED)

37. Help the reader achieve a goal.

"Now You Can Create a Breakthrough Marketing Plan Within the Next 30 Days ... for FREE!"

38. Make a seemingly contradictory statement or promise.

"Cool Any Room in Your House Fast - Without Air Conditioning!"



Always stays in focus... runs by itself!

Now Bausch & Lomb gives you *High Picture Fidelity*. Now you can project color slides with all the detail of the scenes you originally captured on film. The magic moments of your memories spring to life with full brilliance, astounding clarity and faithful color, just as high fidelity sound faithfully reproduces the beauty of great music. In addition, your slides *always stay in focus*, slide after slide after slide. No annoying slide "pop"... no fuzzy images. You have *true automatic operation* because you never have to

get up to re-focus! Balomatic runs through your slide collection *all by itself*. You watch big, life-sized pictures, not the projector! Serve your guests refreshments... your slide show goes right along without you. Best relaxation a slide showman ever had!

The Balomatic—developed by world famous Bausch & Lomb optical scientists, creators of CinemaScope lenses and the finest optical instruments—operates just as beautifully as it looks. You project with 500-watt illumination; all controls grouped together on

illuminated panel; 100% automatic with 4-to-60 second timing; finger-tip automatic and optional remote control; precise B & L Balomeric 3" lens; non-spill slide trays that store and protect 40 slides—35 mm, 3235 and Super Slides in any kind of 2x2 mount.

Choose from three Balomatic models. Prices start at \$84.50... available at low monthly terms. Your dealer is featuring *High Picture Fidelity* Balomatic today...visit him and see for yourself. Bausch & Lomb Optical Co., Rochester 2, New York.

BAUSCH & LOMB  BALOMATIC

Wolfensak, Electric Eye-Matic, 1953 ▶ Bausch & Lomb Balomatic, 1958

► Keystone, 1956

146 Consumer Products

Fig. 5-1. This headline delivers a complete selling message: that this is a slide projector with high picture fidelity.

CHAPTER SIX ☈ Psychology

The competent advertising man must understand psychology. The more he knows about it the better. He must learn that certain effects lead to certain reactions, and use that knowledge to increase results and avoid mistakes.

Human nature is perpetual. In most respects it is the same today as in the time of Caesar. So the principles of psychology are fixed and enduring. You will never need to unlearn what you learn about them.

We learn, for instance, that curiosity is one of the strongest of human incentives. We employ it whenever we can. Puffed Wheat and Puffed Rice were made successful largely through curiosity. "Grains puffed to 8 times normal size." "Foods shot from guns." "125 million steam explosions caused in every kernel." These foods were failures before that factor was discovered.

We learn that cheapness is not a strong appeal. Americans are extravagant. They want bargains but not cheapness. They want to feel that they can afford to eat and have and wear the best. Treat them as though they could not and they resent your attitude.

We learn that people judge largely by price. They are not experts. In the British National Gallery is a painting which is announced in the catalog to have cost \$750,000. Most people at first pass it by at a glance. Then later they get farther on in the catalog and learn what the painting cost. They return then and surround it.

A department store advertised at one Easter time a \$1,000 hat, and the floor could not hold the women who came to see it.

We often employ this factor in psychology. Perhaps we are advertising a valuable formula. To merely say that would not be impressive. So we state – as a fact – that we paid \$100,000 for that formula. That statement when tried has won a wealth of respect.

Many articles are sold under guarantee – so commonly sold that guarantees have ceased to be impressive. But one concern made a fortune by offering a dealer's signed warrant. The dealer to whom one paid his money agreed in writing to pay it back if asked. Instead of a far-away stranger, a neighbor gave the warrant. The results have led many to try that plan, and it has always proved effective.

Many have advertised, "Try it for a week. If you don't like it we'll return your money." Then

someone conceived the idea of sending goods without any money down, and saying, "Pay in a week if you like them." That proved many times as impressive.

One great advertising man stated the difference in this way: "Two men came to me, each offering me a horse. Both made equal claims. They were good horses, kind and gentle. A child could drive them. One man said, 'Try the horse for a week. If my claims are not true, come back for your money.' The other man also said, 'Try the horse for a week.' But he added, 'Come and pay me then.' I naturally bought the second man's horse."

Now countless things – cigars, typewriters, washing machines, books, etc. – are sent out in this way on approval. And we find that people are honest. The losses are very small.

An advertiser offered a set of books to business men. The advertising was unprofitable, so he consulted another expert. The ads were impressive. The offer seemed attractive. "But," said the second man, "let us add one little touch which I have found effective. Let us offer to put the buyer's name in gilt lettering on each book." That was done, and with scarcely another change in the ads they sold some hundreds of thousands of books. Through some peculiar kink in human psychology that name in gilt gave much added value to the books.

Many send out small gifts, like memorandum books, to customers and prospects. They get very small results. One man sent out a letter to the effect that he had a leather-covered book with the man's name on it. It was waiting for him and would be sent on request. The form of request was enclosed, and it also asked for certain information. That information indicated lines on which the man might be sold.

Nearly all men, it was found, filled out that request and supplied the information. When a man knows that something belongs to him – something with his name on it – he will make the effort to get it, even though the thing is a trifle.

In the same way it is found that an offer limited to a certain class of people is far more effective than a general offer. For instance, an offer limited to veterans of the war. Or to members of a lodge or sect. Or to executives. Those who are entitled to any seeming advantage will go a long way not to lose that advantage.

An advertiser suffered much from substitution. He said, "Look out for substitutes," "Be sure you get this brand," etc., with no effect. Those were selfish appeals.

Then he said, "Try our rivals' too" – said it in his headlines. He invited comparisons and showed that he did not fear them. That corrected the situation. Buyers were careful to get the brand so conspicuously superior that its maker could court a trial of the rest.

Two advertisers offered food products nearly identical. Both offered a full-size package as an introduction. But one gave his package free. The other bought the package. A coupon was good at any store for a package, for which the maker paid retail price.

The first advertiser failed and the second succeeded. The first even lost a large part of the trade he had. He cheapened his product by giving a 15-cent package away. It is hard to pay for an article which has once been free. It is like paying railroad fare after traveling on a pass.

The other gained added respect for his article by paying retail price to let the user try it. An article good enough for the maker to buy is good enough for the user to buy. It is vastly different to pay 15 cents to let you try an article than to simply say "It's free."

So with sampling. Hand an unwanted product to a housewife and she pays it slight respect. She is in no mood to see its virtues. But get her to ask for a sample after reading your story, and she is in a very different position. She knows your claims. She is interested in them, else she would not act. And she expects to find the qualities you told her it had.

There is a great deal in mental impression. Submit five articles exactly alike and five people may each choose one of them. But point out in one some qualities to notice and everyone will find them. The five people then will all choose the same article.

If people can be made sick or well by mental impressions, they can be made to favor a certain brand in that way. And that, on some lines, is the only way to win them.

Two concerns, side by side, sold women's clothing on installments. The appeal, of course, was to poor girls who desired to dress better. One treated them like poor girls and made the bare business offer.

The other put a woman in charge - a motherly, dignified, capable woman. They did business in her name. They used her picture. She signed all ads and letters. She wrote to these girls like a friend. She knew herself what it meant to a girl not to be able to dress her best. She had long sought a chance to supply women good clothes and give them all season to pay. Now she was able to do so, with the aid of the men behind her.

There was no comparison in those two appeals. It was not long before this woman's long-established next-door rival had to quit.

The backers of this business sold house furnishings on installments. Sending out catalogs promiscuously did not pay. Offering long-time credit often seems like a reflection.

But when a married woman bought garments from Mrs. ___, and paid as agreed, they wrote to her something like this: "Mrs. ___, whom we know, tells us that you are one of her good customers. She has dealt with you, she says, and you do just as you agree. So we have opened with you a credit account on our books, good any time you wish. When you want anything in furnishings, just order it. Pay nothing in advance. We are glad to send it without any investigation to a person recommended as you are."

That was flattering. Naturally those people, when they wanted some furniture, would order from that house.

There are endless phases to psychology. Some people know them by instinct. Many of them are taught by experience. But we learn most of them from others. When we see a winning method we note it down for use when the occasion offers.

These things are very important. An identical offer made in a different way may bring multiplied returns. Somewhere in the mines of business experience we must find the best method somehow.

No "pot-watching"!

MODEL J-40B—\$4.12 per week after small down payment*

Electric cooking is automatic! Bake, boil, roast and grill without watching . . . even cook meals while you're away! New unit makes any pan automatic. Oven timer turns oven on and off by itself. Rotisserie barbecues automatically, too.

MODEL J-40B (shown above) is G.E.'s finest range—embodies every G-E advance including: Famous G-E Keyboard Controls • Two fully automatic ovens • Master Oven with family-size rotisserie • Electric meat thermometer • Thrifty Companion Oven cooks dinner for six • New automatic surface unit, big removable griddle holds any temperature you set—automatically!

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Admiral, 1956 ▲ General Electric, 1959 ▶ General Electric, 1956

Fig. 6-1. The psychology behind this ad? Ovens help you cook better. But what the woman wants is to spend less time slaving over a hot stove, and more time talking with her friends on the phone — and that's the desire the ad appeals to.

CHAPTER SEVEN ☈

Being Specific

Platitudes and generalities roll off the human understanding like water from a duck. They leave no impression whatever. To say, "Best in the world," "Lowest prices in existence," etc., are at best simply claiming the expected. But superlatives of that sort are usually damaging. They suggest looseness of expression, a tendency to exaggerate, a carelessness of truth. They lead readers to discount all the statements that you make.

People recognize a certain license in selling talk as they do in poetry. A man may say, "Supreme in quality" without seeming a liar, though one may know that other brands are equally as good.

One expects a salesman to put his best foot forward, and excuses some exaggeration born of enthusiasm. But just for that reason general statements count for little. And a man inclined to superlatives must expect that his every statement will be taken with some caution.

But a man who makes a specific claim is either telling the truth or a lie. People do not expect an advertiser to lie. They know that he can't lie in the best mediums. The growing respect for advertising has largely come through a growing regard for its truth.

So a definite statement is usually accepted. Actual figures are not generally discounted. Specific facts, when stated, have their full weight and effect (see Fig. 7-1).

This is very important to consider in written or personal salesmanship. The weight of an argument may often be multiplied by making it specific. Say that a tungsten lamp gives more light than a carbon and you leave some doubt. Say that it gives three and one-third times the light and people realize that you have made tests and comparisons.

A dealer may say, "Our prices have been reduced" without creating any marked impression. But when he says, "Our prices have been reduced 25 percent" he gets the full value of his announcement.

A mail order advertiser sold women's clothing to people of the poorer classes. For years he used the slogan, "Lowest prices in America." His rivals all copied that. Then he guaranteed to undersell any other dealer. His rivals did likewise. Soon those claims became common to every advertiser in his line, and they became commonplace.

Then, under able advice, he changed his statement to "Our net profit is 3 percent." That was a definite statement and it proved very impressive. With their volume of business it was evident that their prices must be minimum. No one could be expected to do business on less than 3 percent.

The next year their business made a sensational increase.

At one time in the automobile business there was a general impression that profits were excessive. One well-advised advertiser came out with the statement, "Our profit is 9 percent." Then he cited actual costs on the hidden parts of a \$1,500 car. They amounted to \$735, without including anything one could easily see. This advertiser made a great success along those lines at that time.

Shaving soaps have long been advertised "Abundant lather," "Does not dry on the face," "Acts quickly," etc. One advertiser had as good a chance as another to impress those claims.

Then a new maker came into the field. It was a tremendously difficult field, for every customer had to be taken from someone else. He stated specific facts. He said, "Multiplies itself in lather 250 times." "Softens the beard in one minute." "Maintains its creamy fullness for ten minutes on the face." "The final result of testing and comparing 130 formulas." Perhaps never in advertising has there been a quicker and greater success in an equally difficult field.

Makers of safety razors have long advertised quick shaves. One maker advertised a 78-second shave. That was definite. It indicated actual tests. That man at once made a sensational advance in his sales.

In the old days all beers were advertised as "Pure." The claim made no impression. The bigger the type used, the bigger the folly. After millions had been spent to impress a platitude, one brewer pictured a plate glass room where beer was cooled in filtered air. He pictured a filter of white wood pulp through which every drop was cleared. He told how bottles were washed four times by machinery. How he went down 4,000 feet for pure water. How 1,018 experiments had been made to attain a yeast to give beer that matchless flavor. And how all the yeast was forever made from that adopted mother cell (see Fig. 7-2).

All the claims were such as any brewer might have made. They were mere essentials in ordinary brewing. But he was the first to tell the people about them, while others cried merely "pure beer." He made the greatest success that was ever made in beer advertising.

"Used the world over" is a very elastic claim. Then one advertiser said, "Used by the peoples of 52 nations," and many another has followed.

One statement may take as much room as another, yet a definite statement may be many times as effective. The difference is vast. If a claim is worth making, make it in the most impressive way.

All these effects must be studied. Salesmanship-in-print is very expensive. Every word you use may cost \$10 to insert. A salesman's loose talk matters little. But when you are talking to millions at enormous cost, the weight of your claims is important.

No generality has any weight whatever. It is like saying, "How do you do?" when you have no intention of inquiring about one's health. But specific claims when made in print are taken at their value.

MAKE YOUR COPY MORE SPECIFIC WITH A USP

In 1961, almost 40 years after Hopkins wrote *Scientific Advertising*, Rosser Reeves published his classic book *Reality in Advertising* in which he introduced the notion of the Unique Selling Proposition, or USP.

According to Reeves, there are three requirements for a USP (and I am quoting, in the italics, from *Reality in Advertising* directly):

1. *Each advertisement must make a proposition to the consumer. Each must say, "Buy this product, and you will get this specific benefit."* Your headline must contain a benefit – a promise to the reader.
2. *The proposition must be one that the competition either cannot, or does not, offer.* Here's where the “unique” in Unique Selling Proposition comes in. It is not enough merely to offer a benefit. You must also *differentiate* your product.
3. *The proposition must be so strong that it can move the mass millions, i.e., pull over new customers to your product.* The differentiation cannot be trivial. It must be a difference that is very important to the reader.

Why, as Hopkins observes numerous times in *Scientific Advertising*, do so many advertisements fail? One reason is that the marketer has not formulated a strong USP for his product and built his advertising upon it.

When you create advertising without first thinking about what your USP is, your marketing is weak because there is nothing in it to compel the reader to respond. It looks and sounds like everyone else, and what it says isn't important to the reader.

In general advertising for packaged goods, marketers achieve differentiation by building a strong brand at a cost of millions or even billions of dollars.

Coca Cola has an advantage because of its brand. If you want a cola, you can get it from a dozen soda makers. But if you want a Coke, you can only get it from Coca Cola.

Intel has achieved a similar brand dominance, at an extraordinary cost, with its Pentium line of semiconductors.

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MAKE YOUR COPY MORE SPECIFIC WITH A USP

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Most direct marketers are too small, and have too strong a need to generate an immediate positive ROI from their marketing, to engage in this kind of expensive brand building. So we use other means to achieve the differentiation in our USP.

One popular method is to differentiate your product or service from the competition based on a feature that your product or service has and they don't.

The common error here is building the USP around a feature that, while different, is unimportant to the prospect, and therefore unlikely to move him to try your product or service.

For example, in the pump industry, it is common for pump manufacturers to attempt to win customers by advertising a unique design feature.

Unfortunately, these design twists often result in no real performance improvement, no real advantage that the customer cares about.

Realizing that they could not differentiate based on a concrete design principle, Blackmer pump took a different tack: to create a USP based upon *application* of the product.

Their trade ads showed a Yellow Pages ripped out of an industrial buying guide, full of listings for pump manufacturers, including Blackmer. Their company name was circled in pen.

The headline of the ad read, "There are only certain times you should call Blackmer for a pump. Know when?"

Body copy explained (and I am paraphrasing here), "In many applications, Blackmer performs no better or worse than any pumps, and so we are not a particularly advantageous choice."

But, the ad went on, for certain applications (viscous fluids, fluids containing abrasives, slurries, and a few other situations) Blackmer was proven to outperform all other pumps, and was the logical brand of choice. Blackmer closed the ad by offering a free technical manual proving the claim.

My old friend, Jim Alexander, of Alexander Marketing in Grand Rapids, Michigan, created this campaign and tells me it worked extremely well.

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MAKE YOUR COPY MORE SPECIFIC WITH A USP

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The easiest situation in which to create a strong USP is when your product has a unique feature – one that competitors lack – that delivers a strong benefit.

This must be an advantage the customer really cares about. Not one that, though a difference, is trivial.

But what if such a proprietary advantage does not exist? What if your product is basically the same as the competition, with no special features?

Reeves has the answer here too. He said the uniqueness can either stem from a strong brand (already discussed as an option 95% of marketers can't use) or from "a claim not otherwise made in that particular form of advertising" – that is, other products may have this feature too, but advertisers haven't told consumers about it.

An example from packaged goods advertising: "M&Ms melt in your mouth, not in your hand." Once M&Ms established this claim as their USP, what could the competition do? Run an ad that said, "We *also* melt in your mouth, not in your hand!"?

In *Scientific Advertising*, Claude Hopkins gives an example of a USP that has become a classic story.

The short version: An ad man walking through his beer client's brewery was fascinated by a machine that blasted steam into beer bottles to sanitize them.

"Don't use that in advertising," the brewer told the ad man. "It is nothing unique; every brewer does the same."

"Maybe," the ad man replied, "but I had never heard of it before, and neither has any of the beer-drinking public."

He then created a successful ad campaign for a beer advertised as "so pure the bottles are washed in live steam."

One more point: As direct marketers, we – unlike most general advertisers today – are compelled to create advertising that generates net revenues in excess of its cost.

Reeves believed all advertising had to do this. He defined advertising as "the art of getting a USP into the heads of the most people at the lowest possible cost."

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MAKE YOUR COPY MORE SPECIFIC WITH A USP

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If I were to modify his definition, I would change it to "getting a USP into the heads of the people *most likely to buy the product*, at the lowest possible advertising cost."

But who am I to quibble with the master?



Fig. 7-1. "Actual figures are not generally discounted," says Hopkins. This ad is credible because the size claim of a bigger TV picture is given as a precise number.



Fig. 7-2. Claude Hopkins' ad positioning Schlitz as a pure beer and backing it up with fact after fact.

CHAPTER EIGHT ☙

Tell Your Full Story

Whatever claim you use to gain attention, the advertisement should tell a reasonably complete story. If you watch returns, you will find that certain claims appeal far more than others. But in usual lines a number of claims appeal to a large percentage. Then present those claims in every ad for their effect on that percentage.

Some advertisers, for the sake of brevity, present one claim at a time. Or they write a serial ad, continued in another issue. There is no greater folly. Those serials almost never connect.

When you once get a person's attention, then is the time to accomplish all you ever hope with him. Bring all your good arguments to bear. Cover every phase of your subject. One fact appeals to some, one to another. Omit any one and a certain percentage will lose the fact which might convince.

People are not apt to read successive advertisements on any single line. No more than you read a news item twice, or a story. In one reading of an advertisement one decides for or against a proposition. And that operates against a second reading. So present to the reader, when once you get him, every important claim you have.

The best advertisers do that. They learn their appealing claims by tests – by comparing results from various headlines. Gradually they accumulate a list of claims important enough to use. All those claims appear in every ad thereafter.

The advertisements seem monotonous to the men who read them all. A complete story is always the same. But one must consider that the average reader is only once a reader, probably. And what you fail to tell him in that ad is something he may never know.

Some advertisers go so far as to never change their ads. Single mail order ads often run year after year without diminishing returns. So with some general ads. They are perfected ads, embodying in the best way known all that one has to say. Advertisers do not expect a second reading. Their constant returns come from getting new readers.

In every ad consider only new customers. People using your product are not going to read your ads. They have already read and decided. You might advertise month after month to present users that the product they use is poison, and they would never know it. So never waste one line of your space to say something to present users, unless you can say it in headlines. Bear in mind always

that you address an unconverted prospect.

Any reader of your ad is interested, else he would not be a reader. You are dealing with someone willing to listen. Then do your level best. That reader, if you lose him now, may never again be a reader.

You are like a salesman in a busy man's office. He may have tried again and again to get entree. He may never be admitted again. This is his one chance to get action, and he must employ it to the fullest.

This again brings up the question of brevity. The most common expression you hear about advertising is that people will not read much. Yet a vast amount of the best-paying advertising shows that people do read much. Then they write for a book, perhaps - for added information.

There is no fixed rule on this subject of brevity. One sentence may tell a complete story on a line like chewing gum. It may not on an article like Cream of Wheat. But, whether long or short, an advertising story should be reasonably complete.

A certain man desired a personal car. He cared little about the price. He wanted a car to take pride in, else he felt he would never drive it. But, being a good business man, he wanted value for his money.

His inclination was toward a Rolls-Royce. He also considered a Pierce-Arrow, a Locomobile and others. But these famous cars offered no information. Their advertisements were very short. Evidently the makers considered it undignified to argue comparative merits.

The Marmon, on the contrary, told a complete story. He read columns and books about it. So he bought a Marmon, and was never sorry. But he afterwards learned facts about another car at nearly three times the price which would have sold him that car had he known them.

What folly it is to cry a name in a line like that, plus a few brief generalities. A car may be a lifetime investment. It involves an important expenditure. A man interested enough to buy a car will read a volume about it if the volume is interesting.

So with everything. You may be simply trying to change a woman from one breakfast food to another, or one toothpaste, or one soap. She is wedded to what she is using. Perhaps she has used it for years.

You have a hard proposition. If you do not believe it, go to her in person and try to make the change. Not to merely buy a first package to please you, but to adopt your brand. A man who once does that at a woman's door won't argue for brief advertisements. He will never again say, "A sentence will do," or a name or a claim or a boast.

Nor will the man who traces his results. Note that brief ads are never keyed. Note that every traced ad tells a complete story, though it takes columns to tell.

Never be guided in any way by ads which are untraced. Never do anything because some uninformed advertiser considers that something right. Never be led in new paths by the blind.

Apply to your advertising ordinary common sense. Take the opinion of nobody, the verdict of nobody, who knows nothing about his returns.



Fig. 8-1. Hopkins recommend you tell the full story of your product in your ads. In this Hopkins ad, the benefit is that the soap is a beauty aid, but the unique story is that it is made from trees.

CHAPTER NINE

Art in Advertising

Pictures in advertising are very expensive. Not in the cost of good art work alone, but in the cost of space. From one-third to one-half of an advertising campaign is often staked on the power of the pictures.

Anything expensive must be effective, else it involves much waste. So art in advertising is a study of paramount importance.

Pictures should not be used merely because they are interesting. Or to attract attention. Or to decorate an ad. We have covered these points elsewhere. Ads are not written to interest, please or amuse. You are not writing to please the hoi-polloi. You are writing on a serious subject – the subject of money-spending. And you address a restricted minority.

Use pictures only to attract those who may profit you. Use them only when they form a better selling argument than the same amount of space set in type.

Mail order advertisers, as we have said, have pictures down to a science. Some use large pictures, some use small, some omit pictures entirely. A noticeable fact is that none of them uses expensive art work. Be sure that all these things are done for reasons made apparent by results.

Any other advertiser should apply the same principles. Or, if none exist which apply to his line, he should work out his own by tests. It is certainly unwise to spend large sums on a dubious adventure.

Pictures in many lines form a major factor, omitting the lines where the article itself should be pictured. In some lines, like Arrow Collars and in clothing advertising, pictures have proved most convincing. Not only in picturing the collar or the clothes, but in picturing men whom others envy, in surroundings which others covet. The pictures subtly suggest that these articles of apparel will aid men to those desired positions.

So with correspondence schools. Theirs is traced advertising. Picturing men in high positions or taking upward steps forms a very convincing argument.

So with beauty articles. Picturing beautiful women, admired and attractive, is a supreme inducement. But there is a great advantage in including a fascinated man. Women desire beauty largely because of men. Then show them using their beauty, as women do use it, to gain maximum effect.

Advertising pictures should not be eccentric. Don't treat your subject lightly. Don't lessen respect for yourself or your article by any attempt at frivolity. People do not patronize a clown.

There are two things about which men should never joke. One is business, one is home.

An eccentric picture may do you serious damage. One may gain attention by wearing a fool's cap. But he would ruin his selling prospects.

Then a picture which is eccentric or unique takes attention from your subject. You cannot afford to do that. Your main appeal lies in your headline. Over-shadow that and you kill it. Don't, to gain general and useless attention, sacrifice the attention that you want.

Don't be like a salesman who wears conspicuous clothes. The small percentage he appeals to are not usually good buyers. The great majority of the sane and thrifty heartily despise him. Be normal in everything you do when you are seeking confidence and conviction.

Generalities cannot well be applied to art. There are seeming exceptions to most statements. Each line must be studied by itself.

But the picture must help sell the goods. It should help more than anything else could do in like space, else use that something else.

Many pictures tell a story better than type can do. In the advertising of Puffed Grains the pictures of the grains were found to be most effective. They awaken curiosity. No figure drawings in that case compare in results with these grains.

Other pictures form a total loss. We have cited cases of that kind. The only way to know, as is with most other questions, is by compared results.

There are disputed questions in art work which we will cite without expressing opinions. They seem to be answered both ways, according to the line which is advertised.

Does it pay better to use fine art work or ordinary? Some advertisers pay up to \$2,000 per drawing. They figure that the space is expensive. The art is small in comparison. So they consider the best worth its cost.

Others argue that few people have art education. The art judges form a percentage too small to consider. They bring out their ideas, and bring them out well, at a fraction of the cost. Mail order advertisers are generally in this class.

The question is one of small moment. Certainly good art pays as well as mediocre. And the cost of preparing ads is very small compared with the cost of insertion.

Should every ad have a new picture? Or may a picture be repeated? Both viewpoints have many supporters. The probability is that repetition is an economy. We are after new customers always.

It is not probable that they remember a picture we have used before. If they do, repetition does not detract.

Do color pictures pay better than black and white? Not generally, according to the evidence we have gathered to date. Yet there are exceptions. Certain food dishes look far better in color.

Tests on lines like oranges, desserts, etc. show that color pays. Color comes close to placing the products on actual exhibition.

But color used to amuse or to gain attention is like anything else that we use for that purpose. It may attract many times as many people, yet not secure a hearing from as many whom we want.

The general rule applies. Do nothing to merely interest, amuse, or attract. That is not your province. Do only that which wins the people you are after in the cheapest possible way. But these are minor questions. They are mere economies, not largely affecting the results of a campaign.

Some things you do may cut all your results in two. Other things can be done which multiply those results. Minor costs are insignificant when compared with basic principles. One man may do business in a shed, another in a palace. That is immaterial. The great question is one's power to get the maximum results.

HOW TO ILLUSTRATE YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS

When selecting visuals for your ads, keep these rules in mind:

- Don't force yourself to put a visual in your ad if you can't think of anything appropriate. Many, many advertisers have had tremendous success with all-copy ads. An ad does not need a picture to sell.
- Often, the simplest visuals are the best visuals. Look around you. The record club ads are illustrated with pictures of records. The videotape club ads are illustrated with pictures of video cassettes.
- Small ads have limited space for illustrations. If your ad is one-quarter page or less, consider using a very simple visual; or no visual at all.
- Use full-color ads when your product must be seen in color to be fully appreciated. For instance, if you're selling a vacation in the Bahamas, then a photo of the crystal blue sea, with the waves gently lapping at a white sandy beach, has a lot more appeal than a black-and-white photo of the same beach.

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HOW TO ILLUSTRATE YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS

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- If your product doesn't benefit from being shown in color, save money and use black-and white. For instance, in an ad selling a home study course in accounting, why would you need color?
- Try to use existing photographs and illustrations, if possible. Creating new artwork or illustrations is expensive.
- For simple visuals, you might be able to save a photographer's or illustrator's fee if you can find a competent amateur to do your photo or drawing. But for anything more complex than a simple product photo, you need a professional.
- If it's a choice between doing a simple visual concept well or a complex, sophisticated visual poorly, do the simple visual well. Second-rate work cheapens your ad – and your image.
- Photos are usually better than drawings. Readers find photos more credible because they are real; drawings are only an artist's interpretation of how you want your product to be.

CHAPTER TEN

Things Too Costly

Many things are possible in advertising which are too costly to attempt. That is another reason why every project and method should be weighed and determined by a known scale of cost and result.

Changing people's habits is very expensive. A project which involves that must be seriously considered. To sell shaving soap to the peasants of Russia one would first need to change their beard-wearing habits. The cost would be excessive. Yet countless advertisers try to do things almost as impossible. Just because questions are not ably considered, and results are untraced and unknown.

"The power, the force, the overwhelming urge to own that makes advertising work, comes from the market itself, and not from the copy. Copy cannot create a desire for a product. It can only take the hopes, dreams, fears, and desires that already exist in the hearts of millions of people, and focus those already existing desires onto a particular product. This is the copywriter's task: not to create this mass desire – but to channel and direct it."

– Eugene Schwartz, *Breakthrough Advertising*

For instance, the advertiser of a dentifrice may spend much space and money to educate people to brush their teeth. Tests which we know of have indicated that the cost of such converts may run from \$20 to \$25 each. Not only because of the difficulty, but because much of the advertising goes to people already converted.

Such a cost, of course, is unthinkable. One might not in a lifetime get it back in sales. The maker who learned these facts by tests makes no attempt to educate people to the toothbrush habit.

What cannot be done on a large scale profitably cannot be done on a small scale. So not one line in any ad is devoted to this object. This maker, who is constantly guided in everything by keying every ad, has made a remarkable success.

Another dentifrice maker spends much money to make converts to the toothbrush. The object is commendable, but altruistic. The new business he creates is shared by his rivals. He is wondering why his sales increase is in no way commensurate with his expenditure.

An advertiser at one time spent much money to educate people to the use of oatmeal. The results were too small to discover. All people know of oatmeal. As a food for children it has age-old fame. Doctors have advised it for many generations. People who don't serve oatmeal are therefore difficult to start. Perhaps their objections are insurmountable. Anyway, the cost proved to be beyond all possible return.

There are many advertisers who know facts like these and concede them. They would not think of devoting a whole campaign to any such impossible object. Yet they devote a share of their space to that object. That is only the same folly on a smaller scale. It is not good business.

No one orange grower or raisin grower could attempt to increase the consumption of those fruits. The cost might be a thousand times his share of the returns. But thousands of growers combined have done it on those and many other lines. There lies one of the great possibilities of advertising development. The general consumption of scores of foods can be profitably increased. But it must be done through wide co-operation.

No advertiser could afford to educate people on vitamins or germicides. Such things are done by authorities, through countless columns of unpaid-for space. But great successes have been made by going to people already educated and satisfying their created wants.

It is a very shrewd thing to watch the development of a popular trend, the creation of new desires. Then at the right time offer to satisfy those desires. That was done on yeasts, for instance, and on numerous antiseptics. It can every year be done on new things which some popular fashion or wide-spread influence is bringing into vogue. But it is a very different thing to create that fashion, taste or influence for all in your field to share.

There are some things we know of which might possibly be sold to half the homes in the country. A Dakin-fluid germicide, for instance. But the consumption would be very small. A small bottle might last for years. Customers might cost \$1.50 each. And the revenue per customer might not in ten years repay the cost of getting.

Mail order sales on single articles, however popular, rarely cost less than \$2.50 each. It is reasonable to suppose that sales made through dealers on like articles will cost approximately as much. Those facts must be considered on any one-sale article. Possibly one user will win others.

But traced returns as in mail order advertising would prohibit much advertising which is now being done.

Costly mistakes are made by blindly following some ill-conceived idea. An article, for instance, may have many uses, one of which is to prevent disease. Prevention is not a popular subject, however much it should be. People will do much to cure a trouble, but people in general will do little to prevent it. This has been proved by many disappointments.

One may spend much money in arguing prevention when the same money spent on another claim would bring many times the sales. A heading which asserts one claim may bring ten times

the results of a heading which asserts another. An advertiser may go far astray unless he finds this out.

A toothpaste may tend to prevent decay. It may also beautify the teeth. Tests will probably show that the latter appeal is many times as strong as the former. The most successful toothpaste advertiser never features tooth troubles in his headlines. Tests have proved them unappealing. Other advertisers in this line center on those troubles. That is often because results are not known and compared.

A soap may tend to cure eczema. It may at the same time improve the complexion. The eczema claim may appeal to one in a hundred while the beauty claims would appeal to nearly all. To even mention the eczema claims might destroy the beauty claim.

A man has a relief for asthma. It has done so much for him that he considers it a great advertising possibility. We have no statistics on this subject. We do not know the percentage of people who suffer from asthma.

A canvass might show it to be one in a hundred. If so, he would need to cover a hundred useless readers to reach the one he wants. His cost of results might be twenty times as high as on another article which appeals to one in five. That excessive cost would probably mean disaster. For reasons like these every new advertiser should seek for wise advice. No one with the interests of advertising at heart will advise any dubious venture.

Some claims not popular enough to feature in the main are still popular enough to consider. They influence a certain number of people – say one-fourth of your possible customers. Such a claim may be featured to advantage in a certain percentage of headlines. It should probably be included in every advertisement. But those are not things to guess at. They should be decided by actual knowledge, usually by traced returns.

This chapter, like every chapter, points out a very important reason for knowing your results. Scientific advertising is impossible without that. So is safe advertising. So is maximum profit.

Groping in the dark in this field has probably cost enough money to pay the national debt. That is what has filled the advertising graveyards. That is what has discouraged thousands who could profit in this field. And the dawn of knowledge is what is bringing a new day in the advertising world.

CHAPTER ELEVEN ☈

Information

An ad-writer, to have a chance at success, must gain full information on his subject. The library of an advertising agency should have books on every line that calls for research. A painstaking advertising man will often read for weeks on some problem which comes up.

Perhaps in many volumes he will find few facts to use. But some one fact may be the keynote of success.

This writer has just completed an enormous amount of reading, medical and otherwise, on coffee. This to advertise a coffee without caffeine. One scientific article out of a thousand perused gave the keynote for that campaign. It was the fact that caffeine stimulation comes two hours after drinking. So the immediate bracing effects which people seek from coffee do not come from the caffeine. Removing caffeine does not remove the kick. It does not modify coffee's delights, for caffeine is tasteless and odorless.

Caffeineless coffee has been advertised for years. People regarded it like near-beer. Only through weeks of reading did we find the way to put it in another light.

To advertise a toothpaste this writer has also read many volumes of scientific matter dry as dust. But in the middle of one volume he found the idea which has helped make millions for that toothpaste maker. And has made this campaign one of the sensations of advertising.

Genius is the art of taking pains. The advertising man who spares the midnight oil will never get very far.

Before advertising a food product, 130 men were employed for weeks to interview all classes of consumers.

On another line, letters were sent to 12,000 physicians. Questionnaires are often mailed to tens of thousands of men and women to get the viewpoint of consumers.

A \$25,000-a-year man, before advertising outfits for acetylene gas, spent weeks in going from farm to farm. Another man did that on a tractor.

Before advertising a shaving cream, one thousand men were asked to state what they most desired in shaving soap.

Called on to advertise pork and beans, a canvass was made of some thousands of homes. Theretofore all pork and bean advertising had been based on "Buy my brand." That canvass showed that only 4 percent of the people used any canned pork and beans. Ninety-six percent baked their beans at home.

The problem was not to sell a particular brand. Any such attempt appealed to only 4 percent. The right appeal was to win the people away from home-baked beans. That advertising which, without that knowledge must have failed, proved a great success.

A canvass is made, not only of homes, but of dealers. Competition is measured up. Every advertiser of a similar product is written for his literature and claims. Thus we start with exact information on all that our rivals are doing.

Clipping bureaus are patronized, so that everything printed on our subject comes to the man who writes ads.

Every comment which comes from consumers or dealers goes to this man's desk.

It is often necessary in a line to learn the total expenditure. We must learn what a user spends a year, else we shall not know if users are worth the cost of getting.

We must learn the total consumption, else we may overspend.

We must learn the percentage of readers to whom our product appeals. We must often gather this data on classes. The percentage may differ on farms and in cities. The cost of advertising largely depends on the percentage of waste circulation.

Thus an advertising campaign is usually preceded by a very large volume of data. Even an experimental campaign, for effective experiments cost a great deal of work and time.

Often chemists are employed to prove or disprove doubtful claims. An advertiser, in all good faith, makes an impressive assertion. If it is true, it will form a big factor in advertising. If untrue, it may prove a boomerang. And it may bar our ads from good mediums. It is remarkable how often a maker proves wrong on assertions he has made for years.

Impressive claims are made far more impressive by making them exact. So many experiments are often made to get the actual figures. For instance, a certain drink is known to have a large food value. That simple assertion is not very convincing. So we send the drink to a laboratory and find that its food value is 425 calories per pint. One pint is equal to six eggs in calories of nutriment. That claim makes a great impression.

In every line involving scientific details a censor is appointed. The ad-writer, however well-informed, may draw wrong inferences from facts. So an authority passes on every advertisement.

The uninformed would be staggered to know the amount of work involved in a single ad. Weeks

of work sometimes. The ad seems so simple, and it must be simple to appeal to simple people.

But back of that ad may lie reams of data, volumes of information, months of research. So this is no lazy man's field.

42 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU WRITE YOUR AD COPY

1. What are all the product benefits?
2. What are all the features of the product?
3. How is the product different and, hopefully, better than the competition?
4. What does the buyer expect when he or she plunks down a few dollars for the product? And do we deliver?
5. What methods, approaches and sales techniques is the competition using?
6. How is the audience for my product differing from the general public?
7. How much can my buyer reasonably expect to pay?
8. Does my average buyer have a credit card or a checking account?
9. Will my product be purchased for business or personal use?
10. Can I expect to get multiple sales from my buyer?
11. What is the logical "back end" product to sell someone – after he has purchased my product? (Back end refers to other products in your product line you can offer to someone who has bought the primary product featured in your ad.)
12. Will I need to show my product in color?
13. What's the 'universe' i.e. what's the total number of potential customers?
14. Who will buy my product: teenagers or octogenarians ... men or women ... executives or blue collar workers?
15. Is there a market for overseas sales?
16. Should I offer time payments?
17. Will my product be a good gift item?
18. Should my copy be long or short?
19. What should the tone of my copy be?
20. Should I test the price?

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42 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE YOU WRITE YOUR AD COPY

(CONTINUED)

21. Should I test copy approaches?
22. Is there a seasonal market for my product and am I taking advantage of it?
23. Are testimonials available from satisfied customers?
24. Do I need photographs or illustrations?
25. Which appeals have worked in the past for this product?
26. What objections might arise from a prospective customer? How can I overcome these objections?
27. Should I use a premium?
28. Should I offer a money-back guarantee?
29. Is this item also sold by retail? Are there price advantages I can stress for buying direct from the ad?
30. Should I consider a celebrity testimonial?
31. Can I tie in my copy to some news event?
32. Can I tie my copy to some holiday or seasonal event?
33. Does my product sell better in a particular region or climate?
34. Should I consider using a sweepstakes?
35. Can my product be sold through a two-step advertising campaign? (In a two-step campaign, ads generate inquiries rather than direct sales.)
36. What must I do to give the reader a sense of urgency so he or she will buy my product now?
37. Can I use scientific evidence in my sales approach?
38. Have I allowed enough time to write, design, produce my ad and place my insertion order?
39. Can I get my customer to order by telephone?
40. What unsuccessful approaches have been used to sell this product?
41. Can I get powerful "before" and "after" pictures?
42. Assuming the ad is successful, am I prepared to fill all the orders?

CHAPTER TWELVE ☈

Strategy

Advertising is much like war, minus the venom. Or much, if you prefer, like a game of chess.

We are usually out to capture others' citadels or garner others' trade.

We must have skill and knowledge. We must have training and experience, also right equipment. We must have proper ammunition, and enough. We dare not underestimate opponents.

Our intelligence department is a vital factor, as told in the previous chapter. We need alliances with dealers, as another chapter tells. We also need strategy of the ablest sort, to multiply the value of our forces.

Sometimes in new campaigns comes the question of a name. That may be most important. Often the right name is an advertisement in itself. It may tell a fairly complete story, like Shredded Wheat, Cream of Wheat, Puffed Rice, Spearmint Gum, Palmolive Soap, etc.

That may be a great advantage. The name is usually conspicuously displayed. Many a name has proved to be the greatest factor in an article's success. Other names prove a distinct disadvantage - Toasted Corn Flakes, for instance. Too many others may share a demand with the man who builds it up.

Many coined names without meaning have succeeded. Kodak, Karo, Mazda, etc., are examples. They are exclusive. The advertiser who gives them meaning never needs to share his advantage.

But a significant name which helps to impress a dominant claim is certainly a great advantage. Names which tell stories have been worth millions of dollars. So a great deal of research often precedes the selection of a name.

Sometimes a price must be decided. A high price creates resistance. It tends to limit one's field. The cost of getting an added profit may be more than the profit.

It is a well-known fact that the greatest profits are made on great volume at small profit. Campbell's Soups, Palmolive Soap, Karo Syrup and Ford cars are conspicuous examples. A price which appeals only to - say 10 percent - multiplies the cost of selling.

But on other lines high price is unimportant. High profit is essential. The line may have small sale

per customer. One hardly cares what he pays for a corn remedy because he uses little. The maker must have a large margin because of small consumption.

On other lines a higher price may be even an inducement. Such lines are judged largely by price. A product which costs more than the ordinary is considered above the ordinary. So the price question is always a very big factor in strategy.

Competition must be considered. What are the forces against you? What have they in price or quality or claims to weigh against your appeal? What have you to win trade against them? What have you to hold trade against them when you get it?

How strongly are your rivals entrenched? There are some fields which are almost impregnable. They are usually lines which created a new habit or custom and which typify that custom with consumers. They so dominate a field that one can hardly hope to invade it. They have the volume, the profit to make a tremendous fight.

Such fields are being constantly invaded. But it is done through some convincing advantage, or through very superior salesmanship-in-print.

Other lines are only slightly less difficult. A new shaving soap, as an example. About every possible customer is using some rival soap. Most of them are satisfied with it. Many are wedded to it. The appeal must be strong enough to win those people from long-established favorites.

Such things are not accomplished by haphazard efforts. Not by considering people in the mass and making blind stabs for their favors. We must consider individuals, typical people who are using rival brands.

A man on a Pullman, for instance, using his favorite soap. What could you say to him in person to get him to change to yours? We cannot go after thousands of men until we learn how to win one.

The maker may say that he has no distinctions. He is making a good product, but much like others. He deserves a share of the trade, but he has nothing exclusive to offer. However, there is nearly always something impressive which others have not told. We must discover it. We must have a seeming advantage. People don't quit habits without reason.

There is the problem of substitution and how to head it off. That often steals much of one's trade. This must be considered in one's original plan. One must have the foresight to see all eventualities, and the wisdom to establish his defenses in advance.

Many pioneers in a line establish large demands. Then, through some fault in their foundations, lose a large share of the harvest. Theirs is a mere brand, for instance, where it might have stood for an exclusive product.

Vaseline is an example. That product established a new demand, then almost monopolized that

demand through wisdom at the start. To have called it some brand of petroleum jelly might have made a difference of millions in results.

Jell-O, Postum, Victrola, Kodak, etc., established coined names which came to typify a product. Some such names have been admitted to the dictionary. They have become common names, though coined and exclusive.

Royal Baking Powder and Toasted Corn Flakes, on the other hand, when they pioneered their fields, left the way open to perpetual substitution. So did Horlick's Malted Milk.

The attitude of dealers must be considered. There is a growing inclination to limit lines, to avoid duplicate lines, to lessen inventories. If this applies to your line, how will dealers receive it? If there is opposition, how can we circumvent it?

The problems of distribution are important and enormous. To advertise something which few dealers supply is a waste of ammunition. Those problems will be considered in a separate chapter.

These are samples of the problems which advertising men must solve. These are some of the reasons why vast experience is necessary. One oversight may cost the client millions in the end.

One wrong piece of strategy may prohibit success. Things done in one way may be twice as easy, half as costly, as when done another way.

Advertising without this preparation is like a waterfall going to waste. The power may be there, but it is not made effective. We must center the force and direct it in a practical direction.

Advertising often looks very simple. Thousands of men claim ability to do it. And there still is a wide impression that many men can. As a result, much advertising goes by favor. But the men who know realize that the problems are as many and as important as the problems in building a skyscraper. And many of them lie in the foundations.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN ☈

Use of Samples

The product itself should be its own best salesman. Not the product alone, but the product plus a mental impression, and atmosphere, which you place around it. That being so, samples are of prime importance. However expensive, they usually form the cheapest selling method. A salesman might as well go out without his sample case as an advertiser.

Sampling does not apply to little things alone, like foods or proprietaries. It can be applied in some way to almost anything. We have sampled clothing. We are now sampling phonograph records.

Samples serve numerous valuable purposes. They enable one to use the word "Free" in ads. That often multiplies the readers. Most people want to learn about any offered gift. Tests often show that samples pay for themselves – perhaps several times over – in multiplying the readers of your ads without additional cost of space.

A sample gets action. The reader of your ad may not be convinced to the point of buying. But he is ready to learn more about the product that you offer. So he cuts out a coupon, lays it aside, and later mails it or presents it (see Fig. 13-1). Without that coupon he would soon forget.

Then you have the name and address of an interested prospect. You can start him using your product. You can give him fuller information. You can follow him up.

That reader might not again read one of your ads in six months. Your impression would be lost. But when he writes you, you have a chance to complete with that prospect all that can be done. In that saving of waste the sample pays for itself.

Sometimes a small sample is not a fair test. Then we may send an order on the dealer for a full-size package. Or we may make the coupon good for a package at the store. Thus we get a longer test.

You say that is expensive. So is it expensive to gain a prospect's interest? It may cost you 5 cents to get the person to the point of writing for a sample. Don't stop at 15 cents additional to make that interest valuable.

Another way in which samples pay is by keying your advertisements. They register the interest you create. Thus you can compare one with another ad, headline, plan and method.

That means in any line an enormous saving. The wisest, most experienced man cannot tell what will most appeal in any line of copy. Without a key to guide you, your returns are very apt to cost you twice what they need cost. And we know that some ads on the same product will cost ten times what others cost. A sample may pay for itself several times over by giving you an accurate check.

Again samples enable you to refer customers where they can be supplied. This is important before you attain general distribution.

Many advertisers lose much by being penny-wise. They are afraid of imposition, or they try to save pennies. That is why they ask ten cents for a sample, or a stamp or two. Getting that dime may cost them from 40 cents to \$1. That is, it may add that to the cost of the replies. But it is remarkable how many will pay that addition rather than offer a sample free.

Putting a price on a sample greatly retards replies. Then it prohibits you from using the word "Free" in your ads. And that word "Free," as we have stated, will generally more than pay for your samples.

For the same reason some advertisers say, "You buy one package, we will buy the other." Or they make a coupon good for part of the purchase price. Any keyed returns will clearly prove that such offers do not pay. Before a prospect is converted, it is approximately as hard to get half price for your article as to get the full price for it.

Bear in mind that you are the seller. You are the one courting interest. Then don't make it difficult to exhibit that interest. Don't ask your prospects to pay for your selling efforts. Three in four will refuse to pay – perhaps nine in ten.

Cost of requests for samples differ in every line. It depends on your breadth of appeal; some things appeal to everybody, some to a small percentage. One issue of the papers in Greater New York brought 1,460,000 requests for a can of evaporated milk. On a chocolated drink, one-fifth the coupons published are presented. Another line not widely used may bring a fraction of that number.

But the cost of inquiries is usually enough to be important. Then don't neglect them. Don't stint your efforts with those you have half sold. An inquiry means that a prospect has read your story and is interested. He or she would like to try your product and learn more about it. Do what you would do if that prospect stood before you.

Cost of inquiries depends largely on how they come. Asking people to mail the coupon brings minimum returns. Often four times as many will present that coupon for a sample at the store.

On a line before the writer now, sample inquiries obtained by mail average 70 cents each. The same ad brings inquiries at from 18 cents to 22 cents each when the coupons are presented at a local store.

Most people write few letters. Writing is an effort. Perhaps they have no stamps in the house. Most people will pay carfare to get a sample rather than two cents postage. Therefore, it is always best, where possible, to have samples delivered locally.

On one line three methods were offered. The woman could write for a sample, or telephone, or call at a store. Seventy percent of the inquiries came by telephone. The use of the telephone is more common and convenient than the use of stamps.

Sometimes it is not possible to supply all dealers with samples. Then we refer people to some central stores. These stores are glad to have many people come there. And other dealers do not generally object so long as they share in the sales.

It is important to have these dealers send you the coupons promptly. Then you can follow up the inquiries while their interest is fresh.

It is said that sample users repeat. They do to some extent. But repeaters form a small percentage. Figure it in your cost.

Say to the woman, "Only one sample to a home" and few women will try to get more of them. And the few who cheat you are not generally people who would buy. So you are not losing purchasers, but the samples only.

On numerous lines we have long offered full-size packages free. The packages were priced at from 10 cents to 50 cents each. In certain territories for a time we have checked up on repeaters. And we found the loss much less than the cost of checking.

In some lines samples would be wasted on children, and they are most apt to get them. Then say in your coupon "adults only." Children will not present such coupons, and they will rarely mail them.

But one must be careful about publishing coupons good for a full-size package at any store. Some people, and even dealers, may buy up many papers. We do not announce the date of such offers. And we insert them in Sunday papers, not so easily bought up.

But we do not advocate samples given out promiscuously. Samples distributed to homes, like waifs on the doorsteps, probably never pay. Many of them never reach the housewife. When they do, there is no predilection for them. The product is cheapened. It is not introduced in a favorable way.

So with demonstrations in stores. There is always a way to get the same results at a fraction of the cost.

Many advertisers do not understand this. They supply thousands of samples to dealers to be handed out as they will. Could a trace be placed on the cost of returns, the advertiser would be stunned. Give samples to interested people only. Give them only to people who exhibit that interest by

some effort. Give them only to people to whom you have told your story. First create an atmosphere of respect, a desire, an expectation. When people are in that mood, your sample will usually confirm the qualities you claim.

Here again comes the advantage of figuring cost per customer. That is the only way to gauge advertising. Samples sometimes seem to double advertising cost. They often cost more than the advertising. Yet, rightly used, they almost invariably form the cheapest way to get customers. And that is what you want.

The arguments against samples are usually biased. They may come from advertising agents who like to see all the advertising money spent in print. Answer such arguments by tests. Try some towns with them, some without them. Where samples are effectively employed, we rarely find a line where they do not lessen the cost per customer.

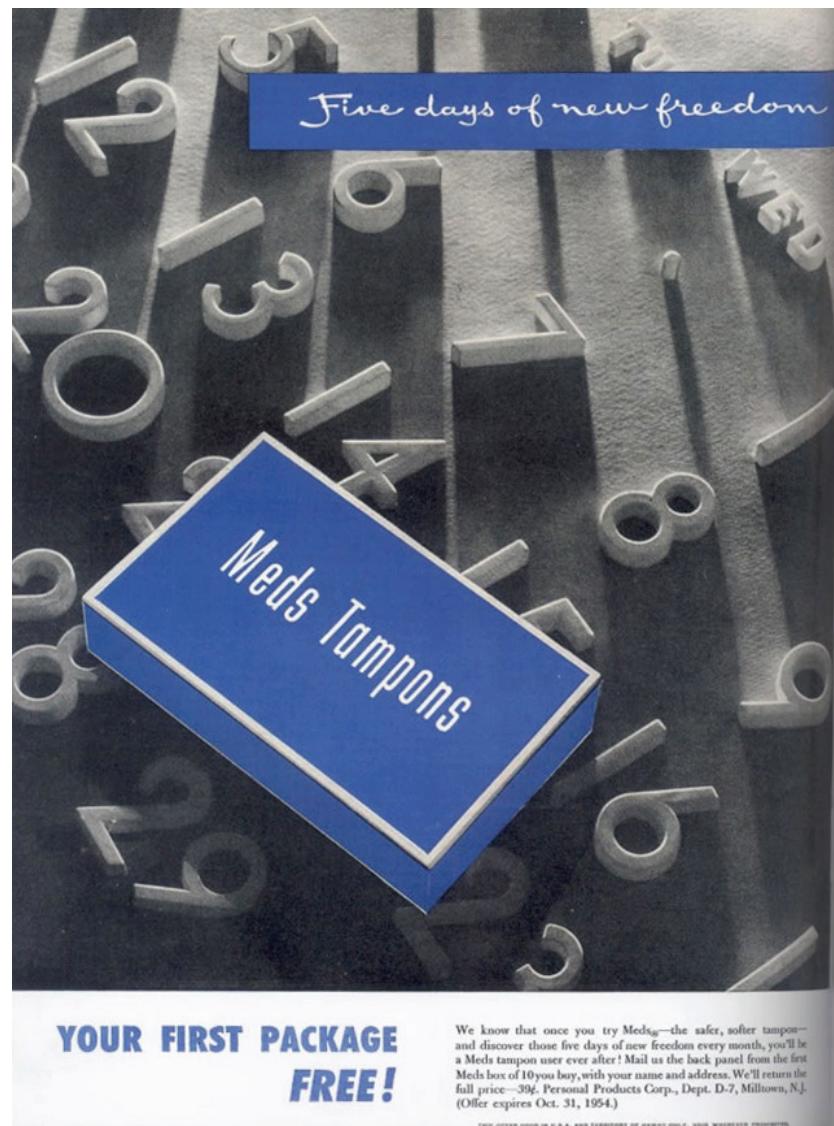


Fig. 13-1. Ad offering a free product sample.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN ☈

Getting Distribution

Most advertisers are confronted with the problem of getting distribution. National advertising is unthinkable without that. A venture cannot be profitable if nine in ten of the converts fail to find the goods.

To force dealers to stock by bringing repeated demands may be enormously expensive. To cover the country with a selling force is usually impossible. To get dealers to stock an unknown line on promise of advertising is not easy. They have seen too many efforts fail, too many promises rescinded.

We cannot discuss all plans for getting distribution. There are scores of ways employed, according to the enterprise. Some start by soliciting direct sales - mail orders - until the volume of demand forces dealers to supply.

Some get into touch with prospects by a sample or other offer, then refer them to certain dealers who are stocked.

Some well-known makers can get a large percentage of dealers to stock in advance under guarantee of sale. Some consign goods to jobbers so dealers can easily order. Some name certain dealers in their ads until dealers, in general, stock.

The problems in this line are numberless. The successful methods are many. But most of them apply to lines too few to be worthy of discussion in a book like this.

We shall deal here with articles of wide appeal and repeated sales, like foods or proprietary articles.

We usually start with local advertising, even though magazine advertising is best adapted to the article. We get our distribution town by town, then change to national advertising.

Sometimes we name the dealers who are stocked. As others stock, we add their names. When a local campaign is proposed, naming certain dealers, the average dealer wants to be included. It is often possible to get most of them by offering to name them in the first few ads.

Whether you advertise few or many dealers, the others will stock in very short order if the advertising is successful. Then the trade is referred to all dealers.

The sample plans dealt with in the previous chapter aid quick distribution. They often pay for themselves in this way alone.

If the samples are distributed locally, the coupon names the stores. The prospects who go there to get samples know that those stores are supplied, if a nearer dealer is not. Thus little trade is lost.

When sample inquiries come to the advertiser, inquirers are referred to certain dealers at the start. Enough demand is centered there to force those dealers to supply it.

Sometimes most stores are supplied with samples, but on the requirement of a certain purchase.

You supply a dozen samples with a dozen packages, for instance. Then inquirers for samples are referred to all stores. This quickly forces general distribution. Dealers don't like to have their customers go to competitors even for a sample.

Where a coupon is used, good at any store for a full-size package, the problem of distribution becomes simple. Mail to dealers proofs of the ad which will contain the coupon. Point out to each that many of his customers are bound to present that coupon. Each coupon means a cash sale at full profit. No average dealer will let those customers go elsewhere.

Such a free-package offer often pays for itself in this way. It forms the cheapest way of getting general distribution.

Some of the most successful advertisers have done this in a national way. They have inserted coupon ads in magazines, each coupon good at any store for a full-size package. A proof of the ad is sent to dealers in advance, with a list of the magazines to be used, and their circulation.

In this way, in one week sometimes, makers attain a reasonable national distribution. And the coupon ad, when it appears, completes it. Here again the free packages cost less than other ways of forcing distribution. And they start thousands of users besides. Palmolive Soap and Puffed Grains are among the products which attained their distribution in that way.

Half the circulation of a newspaper may go to outside towns. That half may be wasted if you offer a sample at local stores. Say in your coupon that outside people should write you for a sample. When they write, do not mail the sample. Send the samples to a local store, and refer inquirers to that store. Mailing a sample may make a convert who cannot be supplied. But the store which supplies the sample will usually supply demand.

In these ways, many advertisers get national distribution without employing a single salesman. They get it immediately. And they get it at far lower cost than by any other method.

There are advertisers who, in starting, send every dealer a few packages as a gift. That is better, perhaps, than losing customers created.

But it is very expensive. Those free packages must be sold by advertising. Figure their cost at your selling price, and you will see that you are paying a high cost per dealer. A salesman might sell these small stocks at a lower cost. And other methods may be vastly cheaper.

Sending stocks on consignment to retailers is not widely favored. Many dealers resent it. Collections are difficult. And unbusiness-like methods do not win dealer respect.

The plans advocated here are the best plans yet discovered for the lines to which they apply.

Other lines require different methods. The ramifications are too many to discuss in a book like this.

But don't start advertising without distribution. Don't get distribution by methods too expensive. Or by slow, old-fashioned methods. The loss of time may cost you enormously in sales. And it may enable energetic rivals to get ahead of you.

Go to men who know by countless experiences the best plan to apply to your line.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN ☈

Test Campaigns

Almost any question can be answered, cheaply, quickly and finally, by a test campaign. And that's the way to answer them – not by arguments around a table. Go to the court of last resort – the buyers of your product (see Fig. 15-1).

On every new project there comes up the question of selling that article profitably. You and your friends may like it, but the majority may not. Some rival product may be better liked or cheaper. It may be strongly entrenched. The users won away from it may cost too much to get.

People may buy and not repeat. The article may last too long. It may appeal to a small percentage, so most of your advertising goes to waste.

There are many surprises in advertising. A project you will laugh at may make a great success. A project you are sure of may fall down. All because tastes differ so. None of us know enough people's desires to get an average viewpoint.

In the old days, advertisers ventured on their own opinions. The few guessed right, the many wrong. Those were the times of advertising disasters. Even those who succeeded came close to the verge before the tide was turned. They did not know their cost per customer or their sale per customer. The cost of selling might take long to come back. Often it never came back.

Now we let the thousands decide what the millions will do. We make a small venture, and watch cost and result. When we learn what a thousand customers cost, we know almost exactly what a million will cost. When we learn what they buy, we know what a million will buy.

We establish averages on a small scale, and those averages always hold. We know our cost, we know our sale, we know our profit or our loss. We know how soon our cost comes back. Before we spread out, we prove our undertaking absolutely safe. So there are today no advertising disasters piloted by men who know.

Perhaps we try out our project in four or five towns. We may use a sample offer or a free package to get users started quickly. We learn in this way the cost per customer started. Then we wait and see if users buy those samples. If they do, will they continue? How much will they buy? How long does it take for the profit to return our cost of selling?

A test like this may cost \$3,000 to \$5,000. It is not all lost, even when the product proves

unpopular. Some sales are made. Nearly every test will in time bring back the entire cost.

Sometimes we find that the cost of the advertising comes back before the bills are due. That means that the product can be advertised without investment. Many a great advertiser has been built up without any cost whatever beyond immediate receipts. That is an ideal situation.

On another product it may take three months to bring back the cost with a profit. But one is sure of his profit in that time. When he spreads out he must finance accordingly.

Think what this means. A man has what he considers an advertising possibility. But national advertising looks so big and expensive that he dare not undertake it.

Now he presents it in a few average towns, at a very modest cost. With almost no risk whatever. From the few thousands he learns what the millions will do. Then he acts accordingly. If he then branches out he knows to a certainty just what his results will be.

He is playing on the safe side of a hundred to one shot. If the article is successful, it may make him millions. If he is mistaken about it, the loss is a trifle.

These are facts we desire to emphasize and spread. All our largest accounts are now built in this way, from very small beginnings. When business men realize that this can be done, hundreds of others will do it. For countless fortune-earners now lie dormant.

The largest advertiser in the world makes a business of starting such projects. One by one he finds out winners. Now he has twenty-six, and together they earn many millions yearly. These test campaigns have other purposes. They answer countless questions which arise in business.

A large food advertiser felt that his product would be more popular in another form. He and all his advisers were certain about it. They were willing to act on this supposition without consulting the consumers, but wiser advice prevailed.

He inserted an ad in a few towns with a coupon, good at any store for a package of the new-style product. Then he wrote to the users about it. They were almost unanimous in their disapproval.

Later the same product was suggested in still another form. The previous verdict made the change look dubious. The advertiser hardly thought a test worth-while. But he submitted the question to a few thousand women in a similar way and 91 percent voted for it. Now he has a unique product which promises to largely increase his sales.

These tests cost about \$1,000 each. The first one saved him a very costly mistake. The second will probably bring him large profits.

Then we use test campaigns to try our new methods on advertising already successful. Thus we constantly seek for better methods, without interrupting plans already proved out.

In five years for one food advertiser we tried out over fifty separate plans. Every little while we found an improvement, so the results of our advertising constantly grew. At the end of five years we found the best plan of all. It reduced our cost of selling by 75 percent. That is, it was four times more effective than the best plan used before.

That is what mail order advertisers do – try out plan after plan to constantly reduce the cost. Why should any general advertiser be less business-like and careful?

Another service of the test campaign is this:

An advertiser is doing mediocre advertising. A skilled advertising agent feels that he can greatly increase results. The advertiser is doubtful. He is doing fairly well. He has alliances which he hesitates to break. So he is inclined to let well enough alone.

Now the question can be submitted to the verdict of a test. The new agent may take a few towns, without interfering with the general campaign. Then compare his results with the general results and prove his greater skill.

Plausible arguments are easy in this line. One man after another comes to an advertiser to claim superior knowledge or ability. It is hard to decide, and decisions may be wrong.

Now actual figures gained at a small cost can settle the question definitely. The advertiser makes no commitment. It is like saying to a salesman, "Go out for a week and prove." A large percentage of all the advertising done would change hands if this method were applied.

Again we come back to scientific advertising. Suppose a chemist would say in an arbitrary way that this compound was best, or that better. You would little respect his opinion. He makes tests – sometimes hundreds of tests – to actually know which is best. He will never state a supposition before he has proved it. How long before advertisers in general will apply that exactness to advertising?

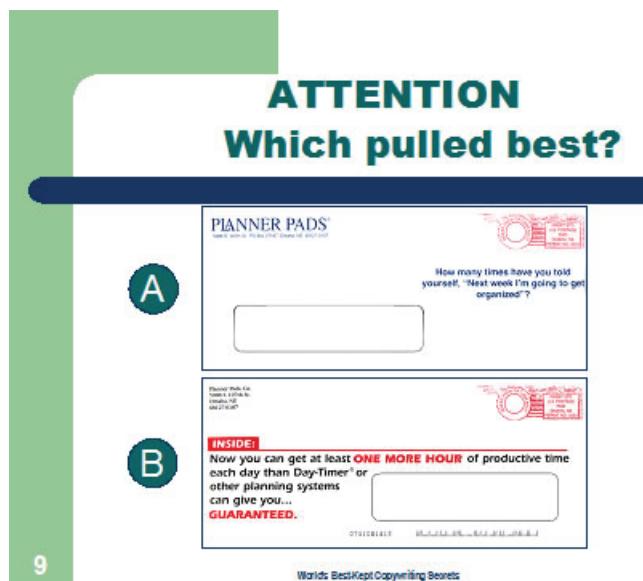


Fig. 15-1. Which mailing pulled best?
In a test, B outpulled A by 50%.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN ☈

Leaning on Dealers

We cannot depend much in most lines on the active help of jobbers or of dealers. They are busy. They have many lines to consider. The profit on advertised lines is not generally large. And an advertised article is apt to be sold at cut prices.

The average dealer does what you would do. He exerts himself on brands of his own, if at all. Not on another man's brand.

The dealer will often try to make you think otherwise. He will ask some aid or concession on the ground of extra effort. Advertisers often give extra discounts. Or they make loading offers – perhaps one case free in ten – in the belief that loaded dealers will make extra efforts.

This may be so on rare lines, but not generally. And efforts if made do not usually increase the total sales. They merely swing trade from one store to another.

On most lines, making a sale without making a convert does not count for much. Sales made by conviction – by advertising – are likely to bring permanent customers. People who buy through casual recommendations do not often stick. Next time someone else gives other advice.

Revenue which belongs to the advertiser is often given away without adequate return. These discounts and gifts could be far better spent in securing new consumers.

Free goods must be sold, and by your own efforts usually. One extra case with ten means that advertising must sell 10 percent more to bring you the same return. The dealer would probably buy just as much if you let him buy as convenient.

Much money is often frittered away on other forms of dealer help. Perhaps on window or store displays. A window display, acting as a reminder, may bring to one dealer a lion's share of the trade. Yet it may not increase your total sales at all.

Those are facts to find out. Try one town in one way, one in another. Compare total sales in those towns. In many lines such tests will show that costly displays are worthless. A growing number of experienced advertisers spend no money on displays.

This is all in line of general publicity, so popular long ago. Casting bread upon the waters and hoping for its return. Most advertising was of that sort twenty years ago.

Now we put things to the test. We compare cost and result on every form of expenditure. It is easily done. Very many costly wastes are eliminated by this modern process.

Scientific advertising has altered many old plans and conceptions. It has proved many long-established methods to be folly. And why should we not apply to these things the same criteria we apply to other forms of selling? Or to manufacturing costs?

Your object in all advertising is to buy new customers at a price which pays a profit. You have no interest in centering trade at any particular store. Learn what your consumers cost and what they buy. If they cost you one dollar each, figure that every wasted dollar costs you a possible customer.

Your business will be built in that way, not by dealer help. You must do your own selling, make your own success. Be content if dealers fill the orders that you bring. Eliminate your wastes. Spend all your ammunition where it counts most.

IN A CIGARETTE

THE SMOKE'S THE THING!

THE SMOKE OF SLOWER-BURNING CAMELS GIVES YOU
EXTRA MILDNESS, EXTRA COOLNESS, EXTRA FLAVOR, AND ...

28% LESS NICOTINE

than the average of the 4 other of the
largest-selling cigarettes tested...less
than any of them...according to indepen-
dent scientific tests of the smoke itself

By burning
25% slower

than the average of the 4
other largest-selling brands
tested...less than any of
them...Camels also give
you a smoking plus equal,
on the average, to

5 EXTRA SMOKES PER PACK!

WHEN you get right down to it, a cigarette is only as flavorful—only as cool—only as mild—as it smokes. That's the 'thing'. One of the most important because what you get in the smoke of your cigarette depends so much on the way your cigarette burns.

Science has proved now that Camels are definitely slower-burning (see left). That means a smoke with more mildness, more coolness, and more flavor.

Now, Science confirms another important advantage of slower burning...of Camels.

Less nicotine—in the smoke! Less than any of the 4 other largest-selling brands tested—28% less than the average.

Take a Camel, a slow-burning Camel...and smoke out the facts for yourself. The smoke's the thing!

"SMOKING OUT" THE FACTS about nicotine.
Experts, chemists analyze the smoke of 5 of the
largest-selling brands...find that the smoke of
slower-burning Camel contains less nicotine
than any of the other four brands tested.

© J. W. Player & Sons, Ltd., London, W.C.2

CAMEL - THE SLOWER-BURNING CIGARETTE -

Fig. 16-1. A specific claim backed up by specific proof.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN &

Individuality

A person who desires to make an impression must stand out in some way from the masses. And in a pleasing way. Being eccentric, being abnormal is not a distinction to covet. But doing admirable things in a different way gives one a great advantage.

So with salesmen, in person or in print. There is uniqueness which belittles and arouses resentment. There is refreshing uniqueness which enhances, which we welcome and remember. Fortunate is the salesman who has it.

We try to give each advertiser a becoming style. We make him distinctive, perhaps not in appearance, but in manner and in tone. He is given an individuality best suited to the people he addresses.

One man appears rugged and honest in a line where rugged honesty counts. One may be a good fellow where choice is a matter of favor. In other lines the man stands out by impressing himself as an authority.

We have already cited a case where a woman made a great success in selling clothing to girls, solely through a created personality which won.

That's why we have signed ads sometimes – to give them a personal authority. A man is talking – a man who takes pride in his accomplishments – not a "soul-less corporation."

Whenever possible we introduce a personality into our ads (see Fig. 17-1). By making a man famous we make his product famous. When we claim an improvement, naming the man who made it adds effect.

Then we take care not to change an individuality which has proved appealing. Before a man writes a new ad on that line, he gets into the spirit adopted by the advertiser. He plays a part as an actor plays it.

In successful advertising great pains are taken to never change our tone. That which won so many is probably the best way to win others. Then people come to know us. We build on that acquaintance rather than introduce a stranger in strange guise. People do not know us by name alone, but by looks and mannerisms. Appearing different every time we meet never builds up confidence.

Then we don't want people to think that salesmanship is made to order. That our appeals are created, studied, artificial. They must seem to come from the heart, and the same heart always, save where a wrong tack forces a complete change.

There are winning personalities in ads as well as people. To some we are glad to listen, others bore us. Some are refreshing, some commonplace. Some inspire confidence, some caution.

To create the right individuality is a supreme accomplishment. Then an advertiser's growing reputation on that line brings him ever-increasing prestige. Never weary of that part. Remember that a change in our characteristics would compel our best friends to get acquainted all over.



Fig. 17-1. One way to inject a personality into advertising is to create a character, like the Pillsbury Doughboy or the Jolly Green Giant.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN ☈

Negative Advertising

To attack a rival is never good advertising. Don't point out others' faults. It is not permitted in the best mediums. It is never good policy. The selfish purpose is apparent. It looks unfair, not sporting. If you abhor knockers, always appear a good fellow.

Show the bright side, the happy and attractive side, not the dark and uninviting side of things.

Show beauty, not homeliness; health, not sickness. Don't show the wrinkles you propose to remove, but the face as it will appear. Your customers know all about the wrinkles.

In advertising a dentifrice, show pretty teeth, not bad teeth. Talk of coming good conditions, not conditions which exist. In advertising clothes, picture well-dressed people, not the shabby.

Picture successful men, not failures, when you advertise a business course. Picture what others wish to be, not what they may be now.

We are attracted by sunshine, beauty, happiness, health, success. Then point the way to them, not the way out of the opposite.

Picture envied people, not the envious.

Tell people what to do, not what to avoid.

Make your every ad breathe good cheer. We always dodge a Lugubrious Blue.

Assume that people will do what you ask. Say, "Send now for this sample." Don't say, "Why do you neglect this offer?" That suggests that people are neglecting. Invite them to follow the crowd.

Compare the results of two ads, one negative, one positive. One presenting the dark side, one the bright side. One warning, the other inviting. You will be surprised. You will find that the positive ad outpulls the other four to one, if you have our experience.

The "Before and after taking" ads are follies of the past. They never had a place save with the afflicted. Never let their memory lead you to picture the gloomy side of things.

CHAPTER NINETEEN ☈ Letter Writing

This is another phase of advertising which all of us have to consider. It enters, or should enter, into nearly all campaigns. Every business man receives a large number of circular letters. Most of them go direct to the waste basket. But he acts on others, and others are filed for reference.

Analyze those letters. The ones you act on or the ones you keep have a headline which attracted your interest. At a glance they offer something that you want, something you may wish to know. Remember that point in all advertising.

A certain buyer spends \$50,000 per year. Every letter, every circular which comes to his desk gets its deserved attention. He wants information on the lines he buys.

But we have often watched him. In one minute a score of letters may drop into the waste basket. Then one is laid aside. That is something to consider at once. Another is filed under the heading "Varnish." And later when he buys varnish that letter will turn up.

That buyer won several prizes by articles on good buying. His articles were based on information. Yet the great masses of matter which came to him never got more than a glance.

The same principles apply to all advertising. Letter writers overlook them just as advertisers do. They fail to get the right attention. They fail to tell what buyers wish to know.

One magazine sends out millions of letters annually. Some to get subscriptions, some to sell books. Before the publisher sends out five million letters he puts a few thousands to test. He may try twenty-five letters, each with a thousand prospects. He learns what results will cost.

Perhaps the plan is abandoned because it appears unprofitable. If not, the letter which pays best is the letter that he uses.

Just as men are doing now in all scientific advertising.

Mail order advertisers do likewise. They test their letters as they test their ads. A general letter is never used until it proves itself best among many by actual returns.

Letter writing has much to do with advertising. Letters to inquirers, follow-up letters. Wherever possible they should be tested. Where that is not possible, they should be based on knowledge gained by tests.

We find the same difference in letters as in ads. Some get action, some do not. Some complete a sale, some forfeit the impression gained. These letters, going usually to half-made converts, are tremendously important.

Experience generally shows that a two-cent letter gets no more attention than a one-cent letter. Fine stationery no more than poor stationery. The whole appeal lies in the matter.

It has been found that fine stationery and pamphlets lessen the effect. They indicate an effort to sell on other lines than merit. That has the same effect in letters as in ads.

A letter which goes to an inquirer is like a salesman going to an interested prospect. You know what created that interest. Then follow it up along that line, not on some different argument.

Complete the impression already created. Don't undertake another on a guess.

In a letter as in ads, the great point is to get immediate action. People are naturally dilatory. They postpone, and a postponed action is too often forgotten.

Do something if possible to get immediate action. Offer some inducement for it. Or tell what delay may cost. Note how many successful selling letters place a limit on an offer. It expires on a certain date. That is all done to get a prompt decision, to overcome the tendency to delay.

A mail order advertiser offered a catalog. The inquirer might send for three or four similar catalogs. He had that competition in making a sale.

So he wrote a letter when he sent his catalog, and enclosed a personal card. He said, "You are a new customer, and we want to make you welcome. So when you send your order please enclose this card. The writer wants to see that you get a gift with the order - something you can keep."

With an old customer he gave some other reason for the gift. The offer aroused curiosity. It gave preference to his catalog. Without some compelling reason for ordering elsewhere, the woman sent the order to him. The gift paid for itself several times over by bringing larger sales per catalog.

The ways for getting action are many. Rarely can one way be applied to two lines. But the principles are universal. Strike while the iron is hot. Get a decision then. Have it followed by prompt action when you can.

You can afford to pay for prompt action rather than lose by delay. One advertiser induced hundreds of thousands of women to buy six packages of his product and send him the trademarks, to secure a premium offer good only for one week.

THE AIDA FORMULA FOR WRITING SALES LETTERS

HOW TO WRITE BUSINESS LETTERS THAT GET RESULTS

A simple formula lets you cut through jargon and messy language to create straightforward writing that works

A recent TV commercial informed viewers that the U.S. Post Office handles 300 million pieces of mail every day. That's a lot of letters. And letters are an important part of communicating with your customers, coworkers, and colleagues.

But how many letters actually get their messages across and motivate the reader? Surprisingly few. In direct-mail marketing, for example, a 2 percent response rate is exceptionally high. So a manufacturer mailing 1,000 sales letters expects that fewer than 20 people will respond to the pitch. If high-powered letters written by ad-agency copywriters produce such a limited response, you can see why letters written by busy business executives (who are not professional writers) may not always accomplish their objectives.

Failure to get to the point, technical jargon, pompous language, misreading the reader these are the poor stylistic habits that cause others to ignore the letters we send. Part of the problem is that many managers and support staff don't know how to write persuasively. There is a solution, stated as a formula first discovered by advertising writers, and it's called "AIDA." AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Demand, and Action a sequence of psychological reactions that happen in the mind of the reader as he is sold on your idea. Briefly, here's how it works.

First, the letter gets the reader's attention with a hard-hitting lead paragraph that goes straight to the point or offers an element of intrigue.

Then, the letter hooks the reader's interest: The hook is often a clear statement of the reader's problems, needs, or wants. For example, if you are writing to a customer who received damaged goods, acknowledge the problem and then offer a solution.

Next, create demand. Your letter is an offer of something a service, a product, goodwill, an agreement, a contract, a compromise, a consultation. Tell the reader how he or she will benefit from your offering. That creates a demand for your product.

Finally, call for action. Ask for the order, the signature, the donation, the assignment.

What follows are actual examples of how each of these steps has been used in business letters.

Attention.

Getting the reader's attention is a tough job. If your letter is boring, pompous, or says nothing of interest, you'll lose the reader. Fast!

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

THE AIDA FORMULA FOR WRITING SALES LETTERS (CONTINUED)

One attention getting technique used by successful writers is to open with an intriguing question or statement a “teaser” that grabs the reader’s attention and compels him to read on. Here’s an opening teaser from a letter written by a freelance public relations writer to the head of a large PR firm:

Is freelance a dirty word to you?

Even if you hate freelancers, you can’t help but be curious about what follows. And what follows is a convincing argument to hire the writer:

Is freelance a dirty word to you?

It really shouldn’t be, because in public relations, with its crisis-lull-crisis rhythm, really good freelancers can save you money and headaches. Use them when you need them. When you don’t, they don’t cost you a cent.

Use me. I am a public-relations specialist with more than 20 years’ experience in all phases of the profession. MY SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU ON A FREELANCE BASIS

Another freelance writer succeeded with a more straightforward approach:

Dear Mr. Mann:

Congratulations on your new business. May you have great success and pleasure from it. I offer my services as a freelance public relations writer specializing in medical and technical subjects ...

Here, the writer gets attention by opening with a subject that has a built in appeal to the reader namely, the reader’s own business. Most of us like to read about ourselves. And just about everybody would react favorably to the good wishes expressed in the second sentence

Interest. Once you get the reader’s attention, you’ve got to provide a “hook” to create real interest in your subject and keep him reading. This hook is a promise a promise to solve problems, answer questions, or satisfy needs. The hook is often written in a two paragraph format: The first paragraph is a clear statement of the reader’s needs, while the second shows how the writer can satisfy these needs. Here’s the hook from a letter written by a job seeker to the vice president of one of the television networks:

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

THE AIDA FORMULA FOR WRITING SALES LETTERS (CONTINUED)

To stay ahead, you need aggressive people willing to take chances. People who are confident, flexible, dedicated. People who want to learn who are not afraid to ask questions.

I am one of those people one of the people you should have on your staff. Let me prove it. Start by reading my resume. It shows I can take any challenge and succeed.

What better way to hold someone's interest than to promise to solve his problems for him?

A principal rule of persuasive writing is: Remember that the reader isn't interested in you. The reader is interested in the reader. And because we want to hear about ourselves, the following letter was particularly effective in gaining and holding my interest:

As you may already know, we have been doing some work for people who have the same last name as you do. Finally, after months of work, my new book, THE AMAZING STORY OF THE BLYS IN AMERICA, is ready for printing and you are in it!

The Bly name is very rare and our research has shown that less than two one thousandths of one percent of the people in America share the Bly name ...

Desire. Get attention. Hook the reader's interest. Then create the desire to buy what you're selling. This is the step where many business people falter. Their corporate backgrounds condition them to write business letters in "corporatese," so they fill paragraphs with pompous phrases, jargon, clichés, and windy sentences. Here's a real life example from a major investment firm:

All of the bonds in the above described account having been heretofore disposed of, we are this day terminating same. We accordingly enclose herein check in the amount of \$22,000 same being your share realized therein, as per statement attached. Not notwithstanding the distribution to you of the described amount, you shall remain liable for your proportionate share .

Don't write to impress – write to express. State the facts, the features, the benefits of your offer in plain, simple English. Give the reader reasons why he or she should buy your product, give you the job, sign the contract, or approve the budget. Create a desire for what you're offering. Here's how the manager in charge of manufacturing persuaded the president to sign a purchase order for a \$20,000 machine.

I've enclosed a copy of my report, which precludes an executive summary.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

THE AIDA FORMULA FOR WRITING SALES LETTERS (CONTINUED)

As you can see, even at the low levels of production we've experienced recently, the T-1000 Automatic Wire-Wrap Machine can cut production time by 15 percent. At this rate, the machine will pay for itself within 14 months including its purchase price plus the cost of training operators.

We've already discussed the employees' resistance to automation in the plant. As you know, we've held discussion groups on this subject over the past three months. And, an informal survey shows that 80 percent of our technicians dislike manual wire-wrap and would welcome automation in that area.

Benefits are spelled out. Anxieties are eliminated. The reader is given the reasons why the company should buy a T-1000. (And the president signed the order.)

Action. If you're carried AIDA this far, you've gained attention, created interest, and turned that interest into desire. The reader wants what you're selling, or at least has been persuaded to see your point of view. Now comes the last step asking for action.

If you're selling consulting services, ask for a contract. If you want an interview, ask for it. If you're writing a fund raising letter, include a reply envelope and ask for a donation. In short, if you want your letter to get results, you have to ask for them.

Here's a letter from a customer who purchased a defective can of spray paint. Instead of just complaining or venting anger, she explains the problem and asks for a response:

Recently, I purchased a can of your Permaspray spray paint. But when I tried using it, the nozzle broke off. I cannot reattach this nozzle, and the can, though full, will have to be thrown away.

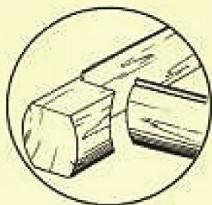
I am sure your product is generally well packaged; my can was probably a one in a million defect. Would you please send a replacement can of white Permaspray? I would greatly appreciate it.

An exchange of business letters is usually an action-reaction situation. To move things along, determine the action you want your letter to generate and tell the reader about it.

Formulas have their limitations, and you can't force fit every letter or memo into the AIDA framework. Short interoffice memos, for example, seldom require this degree of persuasiveness. But when you're faced with more sophisticated writing tasks a memo to motivate the sales force a mailer to bring in orders, a letter to collect bad debts AIDA can help. Get attention. Hook the reader's interest. Create a desire. Ask for action. And your letters will get better results.

Robert W. Bly is a copywriter and consultant specializing in industrial advertising and promotion.

Fig. 19-1. This sales letter offers an incentive to respond: a free kit on how to turn your home into a rustic log cabin.



**MODULOG
INDUSTRIES, INC.
CEDAR LOG SIDING**

Transform your home into a beautiful and distinctive "log cabin" in just a few days ...

...at a tiny fraction of what it would cost to buy and move into a new log home in your area! Get our FREE "Modulog Conversion Kit" for the exciting details.

Dear lover of country living:

Have you ever dreamed of living in a rustic log home...only to ultimately reject the idea, either because you don't want to move -- or the cost of buying a log home was too high?

Well, now you can make your dream of log home living come true...at a tiny fraction of what others have paid for the privilege!

How?

By converting your existing home INTO a "log home" with the Modulog Siding System.

Modulog - our best-selling, top-quality, cedar log siding system - is quick, easy and affordable.

It goes on your house just like ordinary siding...but that's where the similarity ends.

As the pictures in the enclosed brochure show you, once Modulog siding is installed, your home looks exactly like a traditional log cabin.

So you can enjoy the beautiful and natural appearance of genuine cedar logs...without having to abandon your present home!

As an added bonus, this sturdy, durable cedar log siding is virtually maintenance-free - no painting or washing required. And, it provides added insulation to cut your energy bills.

Plus, Modulog's cedar log siding system comes with Modulog Industries LIFETIME WARRANTY - good for as long as you own your home.

- more

P.O. BOX 20276 • PORTLAND, OR 97294 • (503) 253-3533 • (800) 537-8606 • FAX (503) 254-3786
www.modulog.com

Now, thanks to Modulog siding, the natural beauty of rustic log home living can be yours at a much lower cost than you might imagine

Buying a new log home could run you anywhere from \$200,000 to \$1 million or more depending on the size of the house you want and the area of the country in which you live.

But with Modulog, you get that same log home look...for the low price of new siding!

Best of all, the Modulog Siding System goes up smoothly -- quick as a wink. You literally could be living in the "log home" of your dreams next week!

So, what's the next step? With your permission, I want to send you a FREE, informative "Log Home Conversion Kit" that gives you the fascinating facts on the Modulog Siding System...including a DVD that shows an actual Modulog transformation in progress!

You'll discover the unique features that make Modulog the #1 cedar log siding system in the U.S. today - including our patented corners that give you the authentic look and feel of solid logs.

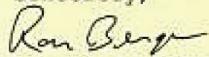
We'll even show you how to save thousands of dollars by "doing it yourself" - if that's your preference.

(If not, any competent contractor in your town can put up our cedar siding for you in just a few days.)

To request your FREE Modulog "Log Home Conversion Kit" and DVD, just complete and mail the card enclosed.

Or call toll-free **800-537-8606** today. This valuable Kit is yours FREE! And there's no obligation of any kind.

Sincerely,



Ron Berge, President
Modulog Industries, Inc.

P.S. For a limited time only, we're offering you a 10% discount on a Modulog siding package. That's because the peak installation period - the summer - is over, and we need to use up the large inventory of cedar we have already in stock.

CHAPTER TWENTY &

A Name That Helps

There is great advantage in a name that tells a story. The name is usually prominently displayed.

To justify the space it occupies, it should aid the advertising. Some such names are almost complete advertisements in themselves. May Breath is such a name. Cream of Wheat is another.

That name alone has been worth a fortune. Other examples are Dutch Cleanser, Cuticura, Dyanshine, Minute Tapioca, 3-in-One Oil, Holeproof, Alcorub, etc.

Such names may be protected, yet the name itself describes the product, so it makes a valuable display.

Other coined names are meaningless. Some examples are Kodak, Karo, Mazda, Sapolio, Vaseline, Kotex, Lux, Postum, etc. They can be protected, and long-continued advertising may give them a meaning. When this is accomplished they become very valuable. But the great majority of them never attain that status (see Fig. 20-1).

Such names do not aid the advertising. It is very doubtful if they justify display. The service of the product, not the name, is the important thing in advertising. A vast amount of space is wasted in displaying names and pictures which tell no selling story. The tendency of modern advertising is to eliminate this waste.

Other coined names signify ingredients which anyone may use.

Examples are Syrup of Figs, Coconut Oil Shampoo, Tar Soap, Palmolive Soap, etc.

Such products may dominate a market if the price is reasonable, but they must to a degree meet competition. They invite substitution. They are naturally classified with other products which have like ingredients, so the price must remain in that class.

Toasted Corn Flakes and Malted Milk are examples of unfortunate names. In each of those cases one advertiser created a new demand. When the demand was created, others shared it because they could use the name. The originators depended only on a brand. It is interesting to speculate on how much more profitable a coined name might have been.

On a patented product it must be remembered that the right to a name expires with the patent.

Names like Castoria, Aspirin, Shredded Wheat Biscuit, etc., have become common property.

This is a very serious point to consider. It often makes a patent an undesirable protection.

Another serious fault in coined names is frivolity. In seeking uniqueness one gets something trivial. And that is a fatal handicap in a serious product. It almost prohibits respect.

When a product must be called by a common name, the best auxiliary name is a man's name. It is much better than a coined name, for it shows that some man is proud of his creation.

Thus the question of a name is of serious importance in laying the foundations of a new undertaking. Some names have become the chief factors in success. Some have lost for their originators four-fifths of the trade they developed.

Memory in the millions ...

Now—
"SINGLE STEP"
DATA PROCESSING
FOR SMALLER
BUSINESSES with
IBM's RAMAC
(Random Access Memory Accounting)

With these whirling magnetic disks, RAMAC gives you a 5-million character memory . . . an unprecedented system whereby your millions of business facts and figures can be stored economically, in a random manner, and yet be *immediately* accessible!

RAMAC is the *first* all-purpose, electronic accounting system designed compactly in one unit... *first* to make "single step" data processing available to the smaller business! By single step processing we mean RAMAC's ability to process transactions *as they occur*, while *at the same time* updating all related sales, inventory and billing records. With RAMAC your facts-on-file are forever current!

For all its compact, cost-saving size, RAMAC easily handles your many accounting, record-keeping and manufacturing control problems.

Learn the many ways IBM's new RAMAC can profit *your* company. Just call your local IBM representative.

IBM DATA PROCESSING
 International Business Machines Corporation
 590 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.
 DATA PROCESSING • ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER
 TIME EQUIPMENT • MILITARY PRODUCTS

Fig. 20-1. How would Hopkins have rated the name "RAMAC"—good, bad, or terrible?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE ☈

Good Business

A rapid stream ran by the writer's boyhood home. The stream turned a wooden wheel and the wheel ran a mill. Under that primitive method, all but a fraction of the stream's potentiality went to waste.

Then someone applied scientific methods to that stream – put in a turbine and dynamos. Now, with no more water, no more power, it runs a large manufacturing plant.

We think of that stream when we see wasted advertising power. And we see it everywhere – hundreds of examples. Enormous potentialities – millions of circulation – used to turn a mill-wheel. While others use that same power with manifold effect.

We see countless ads running year after year which we know to be unprofitable. Men spending five dollars to do what one dollar might do. Men getting back 30 percent of their cost when they might get 150 percent. And the facts could be easily proved.

We see wasted space, frivolity, clever conceits, entertainment. Costly pages filled with palaver which, if employed by a salesman, would reflect on his sanity. But those ads are always unkeyed. The money is spent blindly, merely to satisfy some advertising whim.

Not new advertisers only. Many an old advertiser has little or no idea of his advertising results. The business is growing through many efforts combined, and advertising is given its share of the credit.

An advertiser of many years' standing, spending as high as \$700,000 per year, told the writer he did not know whether his advertising was worth anything or not. Sometimes he thought that his business would be just as large without it.

The writer replied, "I do know. Your advertising is utterly unprofitable, and I could prove it to you in one week. End an ad with an offer to pay five dollars to anyone who writes you that he read the ad through. The scarcity of replies will amaze you."

Think what a confession – that millions of dollars are being spent without knowledge of results. Such a policy applied to all factors in a business would bring ruin in short order.

You see other ads which you may not like as well. They may seem crowded or verbose. They are

not attractive to you, for you are seeking something to admire, something to entertain. But you will note that those ads are keyed. The advertiser knows that they pay. The probability is that out of scores of traced ads the type which you see has paid best.

Many other ads which are not keyed now were keyed at the beginning. They are based on known statistics. They won on a small scale before they ever ran on a large scale. Those advertisers are utilizing their enormous powers in full.

Advertising is *prima facie* evidence that the man who pays believes that advertising is good. It has brought great results to others, it must be good for him. So he takes it like some secret tonic which others have endorsed. If the business thrives, the tonic gets the credit. Otherwise, the failure is due to fate.

That seems almost unbelievable. Even a storekeeper who inserts a twenty-dollar ad knows whether it pays or not. Every line of a big store's ad is charged to the proper department. And every inch used must the next day justify its cost.

Yet most national advertising is done without justification. It is merely presumed to pay. A little test might show a way to multiply returns.

Such methods, still so prevalent, are not very far from their end.

The advertising men who practice them see the writing on the wall. The time is fast coming when men who spend money are going to know what they get. Good business and efficiency will be applied to advertising. Men and methods will be measured by the known returns, and only competent men can survive.

Only one hour ago an old advertising man said to the writer, "The day for our type is done. Bunk has lost its power. Sophistry is being displaced by actuality. And I tremble at the trend."

So do hundreds tremble. Enormous advertising is being done along scientific lines. Its success is common knowledge. Advertisers along other lines will not much longer be content.

We who can meet the test welcome these changed conditions. Advertisers will multiply when they see that advertising can be safe and sure. Small expenditures made on a guess will grow to big ones on a certainty. Our line of business will be finer, cleaner, when the gamble is removed.

And we shall be prouder of it when we are judged on merit.

Appendix A: The 8 Principles of Persuasive Copywriting

What are the characteristics that make copy effective? Why does one ad make a lasting impression and sell merchandise, while another falls flat and doesn't generate enough revenue to pay its own cost?

Virtually all persuasive copy contains the eight elements described in this article. The successful ad:

1. Gains attention
2. Focuses on the customer
3. Stresses benefits
4. Differentiates you from the competition
5. Proves its case
6. Establishes credibility
7. Builds value
8. Closes with a call to action

All ads do not have all eight characteristics in equal proportions. Depending on the product, some of these elements will be dominant in your ad; others subordinate.

Let's take telephone service as an example. If you are AT&T, MCI, or Sprint, you have a long track record of success and a well-established reputation. Therefore, you will be naturally strong in elements five and six (proving your case and establishing your credibility).

A new telephone services provider, on the other hand, does not have a track record or reputation; therefore, these two elements will not be the dominant themes in the copy. Instead, the strongest element might be number three (benefits the service offers customers) or perhaps number four (differentiation in service resulting from superior technology).

Each product or service has natural strengths and weaknesses. The strengths are emphasized and the weaknesses de-emphasized. But all eight elements must be present to some degree, or the ad won't work.

Here are the eight elements of persuasion discussed in a bit more detail, with examples of how to achieve each in your copy.

Element #1: Gain attention.

If an ad fails to gain attention, it fails totally. Unless you gain the prospect's attention, he or she won't read any of your copy. And if the prospect doesn't read your copy, he or she won't receive the persuasive message you've so carefully crafted.

There are numerous ways to gain attention. Sex certainly is one of them. Look at the number of products – abdominal exercises, health clubs, cars, Club Med, clothes, beer, soft drinks, chewing gum – that feature attractive bodies in their ads and commercials. It may be sexist or base, but it works.

Similarly, you can use visuals to get prospects to pay attention. Parents (and almost everyone else) are attracted to pictures of babies and young children. Puppies and kittens also strike a chord in our hearts. Appealing visuals can get your ad noticed.

Since so much advertising is vague and general, being specific in your copy sets it apart from other ads and creates interest. A letter promoting collection services to dental practices begins as follows:

"How we collected over \$20 million in unpaid bills over the past 2 years for thousands of dentists nationwide"

Dear Dentist:

It's true.

In the past 2 years alone, IC Systems has collected more than \$20 million in outstanding debt for dental practices nationwide.

That's \$20 million these dentists might not otherwise have seen if they had not hired IC Systems to collect their past-due bills for them.

What gains your attention is the specific figure of \$20 million dollars. Every collection agency promises to collect money. But saying that you have gotten \$20 million in results is specific, credible, and memorable.

Featuring an offer that is free, low in price, or unusually attractive is also an effective attention-getter. A full-page newspaper ad from Guaranteed Term Life Insurance announces, "NOW ... \$1 a week buys Guaranteed Term Life Insurance for New Yorkers over 50." Not only does the \$1 offer draw you in, but the headline also gains attention by targeting a specific group of buyers (New Yorkers over 50).

You know that in public speaking, you can gain attention by shouting or talking loudly. This direct approach can work in copy, especially in retail advertising. An ad for Lord & Taylor department store proclaims in large, bold type: STARTS TODAY ... ADDITIONAL 40% OFF WINTER FASHIONS." Not clever or fancy, but of interest to shoppers looking to save money.

Another method of engaging the prospect's attention is to ask a provocative question. Bits & Pieces, a management magazine, begins its subscription mailing with this headline: "What do Japanese managers have that American managers sometimes lack?" Don't you want to at least read the next sentence to find the answer?

A mailing for a book club has this headline on the outer envelope:

Why is the McGraw-Hill Chemical Engineers' Book Club giving away – practically for FREE – this special 50th Anniversary Edition of PERRY'S CHEMICAL ENGINEERS' HANDBOOK?

To chemical engineers, who know that Perry's costs about \$125 per copy, the fact that someone would give it away is indeed a curiosity – and engineers, being curious people, want to get the answer.

Injecting news into copy, or announcing something that is new or improved, is also a proven technique for getting attention. A mailing offering subscriptions to the newsletter Dr. Atkins's Health Revelations has this headline on the cover:

"Here Are Astonishing Nutritional Therapies and Alternative Treatments You'll Never Hear About From the Medical Establishment, the FDA, Drug Companies or Even Your Doctor ..."

3 decades of medical research breakthroughs from the Atkins Center for Complementary Medicine ... revealed at last!

The traditional Madison Avenue approach to copy – subtle word play and cleverness – often fails to get attention because many people reading the ad either don't get it, or if they do get it, they don't think it's that funny (or they think it's funny but that doesn't compel them to read the ad or buy the product). A newspaper ad for a New Jersey hospital, promoting its facilities for treating kidney stones without surgery (ultrasonic sound waves are used to painlessly break up and dissolve the stone), carried this headline:

The End of the Stone Age.

Clever? Yes. But as former kidney stone patients, we can tell you that having kidney stones is not a fun, playful subject, and this headline misses the mark. The kidney stone sufferer wants to know he can go to his local hospital, get fast treatment, avoid an operation and a hospital stay, have the procedure be painless, and get rid of the kidney stones that are causing his current discomfort. Therefore, the headline,

Get Rid of Painless Kidney Stones – Without Surgery!

while less clever, is more direct, and works better with this topic and this audience.

Element #2: Focus on the customer.

When writing copy, start with the prospect, not with the product. Your prospects are interested primarily in themselves – their goals, their problems, their needs, their hopes, their fears, their dreams and aspirations. Your product or service is of secondary importance, the degree of concern being determined by the potential for the product or service to address one of the prospect's wants or needs, or solve one of their problems.

Effective copy speaks directly to a specific audience and identifies their preferences, quirks, behavior, attitudes, needs, or requirements. A recruitment brochure for a computer consultant firm, for example, has this headline on the cover:

Introducing a unique career opportunity only a few dozen computer professionals in the country will be able to take advantage of this year.

The headline is effective because it focuses on the prospects (Information Systems professionals) and one of their main concerns in life (their career), rather than the consulting firm and its history, as most such brochures do.

Write from the customer's point of view - e.g., not "our," "Introducing our Guarda-Health Employee Benefit Program" but "At last you can combat the huge health insurance premiums threatening to put your small business out of business."

WEKA Publishing, in a direct mail package promoting the *Electronics Repair Manual*, a do-it-yourself guide for hobbyists and others who want to repair their own home and office electronics, uses copy that speaks directly to the personality type of the potential buyer:

If you're handy ... fascinated by electronics and the world of high-tech ... are happiest with a tool in your hand ... and respond to household problems and broken appliances with a defiant, "I'll do it myself" ...

... then fun, excitement, the thrill of discovery, time and money saved, and the satisfaction of a job well done await you when you preview our newly updated *Electronics Repair Manual* at no risk for a full 30 days.

A good way to ensure that you are focusing on the prospects, and not yourself or your product or your company, is to address the prospect directly in the copy as "you." For example:

Dear Health Care Administrator:

You know how tough it is to make a decent profit margin in today's world of managed care ... and how the HMOs and other plans are putting even more of a squeeze on your margins to fill their own already-swelling coffers.

But what you may not be aware of is the techniques health care providers nationwide are using to fight back ... and get paid every dollar they deserve for the important work they do.

This direct mail copy, which successfully launched a new publication, works because it focuses on the prospects and their problems (making money from their health care business), and not on the publication, its editors, or its features or columns.

Copy that fails to focus on the prospect often does so because the copywriter does not understand the prospect. If you are writing to metal shop managers, attend a metalworking trade show, read a few issues of the trade publications they subscribe to, and interview some of these prospects in person or over the phone. Study focus group transcripts, attend live focus group sessions, or even accompany salespeople on sales calls to these prospects. The better you understand your target audience, the more you have a feel for the way they think and what they think about, the more effectively you can target copy that speaks to those concerns.

Element #3: Stress benefits.

Although, depending on your audience, your prospects may be interested both in the features and the benefits of your product or service, it is almost never sufficient to discuss features only.

Virtually all successful copy discusses benefits. Copy aimed at a lay audience would primarily stress benefits, mentioning features mainly to convince the prospects that the product can in fact deliver the benefits promised in the ad.

Copy aimed at specialists often gives equal play to features and benefits, or may even primarily stress features. But whenever a feature is described, it must be linked to a customer benefit it provides. Buyers not only want to know what the product is and what it does; they want to know how it can help them achieve the benefits they want – such as saving money, saving time, making money, being happier, looking better, or feeling fitter.

In copy for technical products, clearly explaining the feature makes the benefit more believable. Don't just say a product has greater capacity; explain what feature of the product allows it to deliver this increased capacity. A brochure for Lucent Technologies wireless CDMA technology explains,

"CDMA gives you up to 10 times the capacity of analog cellular with more efficient use of spectrum. Use of a wideband block of radio frequency (RF) spectrum for transmission (1.25 MHz) enables CDMA to support up to 60 or more simultaneous conversations on a given frequency allocation."

A brochure for a computer consulting firm tells corporate Information Systems (IS) managers how working with outside consultants can be more cost-effective than hiring staff, thus saving money:

When you augment your IS department with our staff consultants, you pay our staff consultants only when they work for you. If the need ends tomorrow, so does the billing. In addition, various studies estimate the cost of hiring a new staff member at 30 to 60 percent or more of the annual salary (an executive search firm's fee alone can be 30 percent of the base pay). These expenditures are 100% eliminated when you staff through EJR.

In an ad for a software package that creates letterhead using a PC and a laser printer, the copy stresses the benefits of ease, convenience, and cost savings vs. having to order stationery from a printer:

Now save thousands of dollars on stationery printing costs

Every day, law firms struggle with the expense and inconvenience of engraved and preprinted stationery.

Now, in a sweeping trend to cut costs without sacrificing prestige, many are trading in their engraved letterhead for Instant Stationery desktop software from Design Forward Technologies.

With Instant Stationery, you can laser-print your WordPerfect documents and letterhead together on whatever grade of blank bond paper you choose. Envelopes, too. Which means you never have

to suffer the cost of expensive preprinted letterhead – or the inconvenience of loading stationery into your desktop printer – ever again.

Element #4: Differentiate yourself from the competition.

Today your customer has more products and services to choose from than ever. For example, a customer walking into a supermarket can choose from more than XX different brands of cereal, XX different brands of shampoo, and XX different flavors and brands of soft drink.

Therefore, to make our product stand out in the buyer's mind, and convince him or her that it is better and different than the competition, you must differentiate it from those other products in your copy. Crispix cereal, for example, was advertised as the cereal that "stays crisp in milk." Post Raisin Bran was advertised as the only raisin bran having "two scoops of raisins" in each box of cereal. A cookie maker recently ran a campaign promoting "100 chips" in every bag of chocolate chip cookies.

Companies that make a commodity product often differentiate themselves on the basis of service, expertise, or some other intangible. BOC Gases, for example, promotes itself as a superior vendor not because their product is better (they sell oxygen, and one oxygen molecule is basically the same as another), but in their ability to use oxygen and technology to benefit the customer's business. Here is copy from a brochure aimed at steel makers:

An oxygen supplier who knows oxygen and EAF steel-making can be the strategic partner who gives you a sustainable competitive advantage in today's metals markets. And that's where BOC Gases can help.

If your product is unique within its market niche, stress this in your copy. For example, there are dozens of stock market newsletters. But *IPO Insider* claims to be the only IPO bulletin aimed at the consumer (there are other IPO information services, but these target professional investors and money managers). In their subscription promotion the *IPO Insider* says:

IPO Insider is the only independent research and analysis service in the country designed to help the individual investor generate greater-than-average stock market profits in select recommended IPOs.

Lucent Technologies, the AT&T spin-off, competes with many other companies that manufacture telecommunications network equipment. They differentiate themselves by stressing the tested reliability of their switch, which has been documented as superior to other switches in the industry. One brochure explains:

The 5ESS-2000 Switch is one of the most reliable digital switches available for wireless systems today. According to the U.S. Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) ARMIS report, the 5ESS-2000 Switch has the least down-time of any switch used in U.S. networks, exceeding Bellcore's reliability standards by 200%. With an installed base of more than 2,300 switches, the 5ESS-2000 Switch currently serves over 72 million lines in 49 countries.

Element #5: Prove your case.

Element #4, just discussed, claims product differentiation. Element #3 claims substantial benefits

to product purchasers. The reason why these elements cannot stand alone is precisely that they are claims – claims made in a paid advertisement, by the advertiser. Therefore, skeptical consumers do not usually accept them at face value. If you say you are better, faster, or cheaper, and you do not back up your claims with proof, people won't believe you.

ICS convinces dentists it is qualified to handle their collections by presenting facts and statistics as follows:

The nationwide leader in dental-practice collections, IC Systems has collected past-due accounts receivables for 45,717 dental practices since 1963. Over 20 state dental associations recommend our services to their members.

IC Systems can collect more of the money your patients owe you. Our overall recovery rate for dental collections is 12.4% higher than the American Collectors' Association national average of 33.63%. (For many dental practices, we have achieved recovery rates even higher!)

BOC Gases tells customers that the gas mixtures they sell in cylinders are accurately blended, and therefore that the composition listed on the label is what the buyer will find inside the container. They make this argument credible by explaining their blending and weighing methodology:

Each mixture component is weighed into the cylinder on a high-capacity, high-sensitivity equal-arm balance having a typical precision of +10 mg at 95 percent confidence. Balance accuracy is confirmed prior to weighing by calibration with NIST-traceable Class S weights. Electronic integration of the precision balance with an automated filling system provides extremely accurate mixtures with tight blend tolerances.

Many stock market newsletters promise big winners that will make the reader rich if he or she subscribes. Since everyone says it, the statement is usually greeted with skepticism. The newsletter Gold Stocks Advisory combats this skepticism by putting their recent successes right on the outer envelope and at the top of page one of their sales letter:

A sample of Paul Sarnoff's recent high-profit gold stock picks:

<u>Company:</u>	<u>Purchase Price:</u>	<u>Year High:</u>	<u>% Increase/Time frame:</u>	<u>Potential profit* on 10,000 shares:</u>
Gold Canyon	C70 cents	C\$10.50	2793% in 14 months	C\$195,500
Coral Gold	C\$1.20	C\$6.45	438% in 8 months	C\$52,500
Bema Gold	C\$2.20	C\$13.05	439% in 20 months	C\$108,500
Jordex	C70 cents	C\$3.75	435% in 6 months	C\$26,300
Glamis Gold	US\$1	US\$8.88	788% in 84 months	US\$78,800
Barrick Gold	US\$4.81	US\$32.88	584% in 96 months	US\$280,700

The most powerful tool for proving your case is to demonstrate a good track record in your field, showing that your product or service is successful in delivering the benefits and other results you

promise. One way to create the perception of a favorable track record is to include case histories and success stories in your copy. Testimonials from satisfied customers are another technique for convincing prospects that you can do what you say you can do. You can also impress prospects by showing them a full or partial list of your customers.

Share with readers any results your firm has achieved for an individual customer or group of customers. IC Systems, for example, impressed dentists by telling them that the company has collected \$20 million in past due bills over the past 2 years alone – a number which creates the perception of a service that works.

Element #6: Establish credibility.

In addition to the benefits you offer, the products and services you deliver that offer these benefits, and the results you have achieved, prospective buyers will ask the question, “Who are you?”

In terms of persuasion, of the three major topics you discuss in your ad – the prospect, the product, and the product vendor – the “corporate” story is usually the least important. The prospect is primarily interested in himself and his problems and needs, and interested in your product or service only as a means of solving those problems or filling those needs. The prospect is interested in your company only as it relates to your ability to reliably make, deliver, install, and service the product he buys from you.

Yet, the source of the product or service – the company – still is a factor in influencing purchase decisions. In the early days of personal computing, IBM was the preferred brand – not because IBM necessarily made a superior computer at a better price, but because if something went wrong, IBM could be counted on for fast, reliable, effective service and support. As PCs became more of a commodity and local computer resellers and stores offered better service, the service and support reputation of IBM became less of an advantage, and their PC sales declined.

Here are some examples of copy in which the vendor gives credentials designed to make the consumer feel more comfortable in doing business with them and choosing them over other suppliers advertising similar products and services:

We guarantee the best technical service and support. I was a compressor service technician at Ingersoll Rand, and in the last 20 years have personally serviced more than 250 compressors at over 80 companies.

For nearly 100 years, BOC Gases has provided innovative gas technology solutions to meet process and production needs. We have supplied more than 20,000 different gases and gas mixtures – in purities up to 99.99999 percent – to 2 million customers worldwide.

Lion Technology is different. For nearly two decades, we have dedicated ourselves 100% to training managers, engineers, and others in environmental compliance-related subjects. Since 1989, our firm has conducted more than 1,400 workshops nationwide on these topics.

You'll find some of Paul's fundamental research in precious metals summed up in his more than 60 best-selling books including *Silver Bulls* and *Trading with Gold*. Paul's unique blending of solid

research, combined with an unprecedented record of success in picking gold stocks, may have been what moved one New York Times reporter to dub him "the dean of commodities researchers."

Credentials you can list in your copy include year founded, number of years in business, number of employees, annual revenues, number of locations, number of units sold, patents and product innovations, awards, commendations, publications, membership and participation in professional societies, seals of approval, agency ratings, independent survey results, media coverage, number of customers, and in-house resources (financial, technological, and human).

Element #7: Build value.

It's not enough to convince prospects you have a great product or a superior service. You must also show them that the value of your offer far exceeds the price you are asking for it. You may have the best widget in the \$100 to \$200 price range of medium-size widgets, but why should the prospect pay \$200 for your widget when they can get another brand for half the price? One argument might be lower total cost of ownership. Although your widget costs more to buy, its greater reliability and performance save and make your firm money that, over the long run, far exceeds the difference in price between you and brand X.

Stress cost of ownership vs. cost of purchase. The purchase price is not the only cost of owning something. There is the cost of maintenance, support, repair, refurbishment, operation, and, when something wears out, replacement. Therefore the product that costs the least to buy may not actually cost the least to own; oftentimes, it is the most expensive to own!

Example: Several companies are now selling artificial bone substitutes for orthopedic surgeons to use in bone graft operations. As of this writing, a small container of the artificial bone substitute, containing enough material for one spine surgery, can cost \$500 to \$800.

The short-sighted buyer sees this as expensive, especially since bone graft can be taken from other sites in the patient's own body, and there is no cost for this material.

But is there really no cost? Collecting bone graft from the patient's own body adds about an hour to the surgical procedure. With operating room time at about \$1,000 an hour, it makes sense to pay \$750 for bone material and eliminate this extra hour in the OR.

That's not all. Often removing the bone from a donor site causes problems that can result in an extra day's stay in the hospital. That's another \$1,000 down the tubes. And the removal of bone from the donor site can cause infection, which must be treated with costly antibiotics. Also, the removal process can cause pain; how do you measure the cost of the patient's added suffering? So while \$750 for a small vial of artificial bone may seem initially expensive, it is in fact a bargain when compared with the alternative (which, on the surface, appears to have zero cost).

Here's a simpler example. You need to buy a photocopier for your home office. Copier A costs \$900. Copier B costs \$1,200. The features are essentially the same, and the reputations of the brands are comparable. Both have an expected lifetime of 120,000 copies. Most people would say, "Everything's the same except price, so buy copier A and save \$300." Copier A compares itself

feature for feature with Copier B, and runs an ad with the headline, "Copier A vs. Our Competition ... We Can Do Everything They Can Do ... at 25% Off the Price."

But you are the copywriter for the makers of Copier B. You ask them what it costs to make a copy. Their cost per copy is 2 cents. You investigate Copier A, and find out that the toner cartridges are more expensive, so that the cost per copy is 4 cents. You can now advertise copies at "half the cost of our competitor."

What's more, a simple calculation shows that if Copier B is 2 cents a copy cheaper, and you use the machine to make 120,000 copies, your savings over the life of the machine is \$2,400.

Therefore, an investment in Copier B pays you back eight times the extra \$300 it cost to buy. This is additional ammunition you can use in your copier ad to establish that purchase price is not the ultimate factor determining buying decisions, and that Copier B offers a greater overall value to the buyer.

If your product costs slightly more up front but actually saves money in the long run, stress this in your sales talk. Everyone knows that the cheapest product is not automatically the best buy; corporate buyers are becoming especially concerned with this cost of ownership concept. Only government business, which is awarded based on sealed proposals and bids, seems to still focus solely on the lowest price. And even that is slowly changing.

The key to establishing value is to convince the prospects that the price you ask is "a drop in the bucket" compared with the money your product will make or save them, or the other benefits it delivers. Some examples:

What would you do if the EPA assessed a \$685,000 fine against your company for noncompliance with environmental regulations you *weren't even aware existed?*

Now get the special 50th Anniversary Edition of
PERRY'S CHEMICAL ENGINEERS' HANDBOOK ...
... for only \$4.97 (list price: \$129.50)
with your No-Risk Trial Membership in McGraw-Hill's
Chemical Engineers' Book Club

Another way to establish value is to compare the cost of your product with more expensive products or services that address the same basic need:

The cost of *The Novell Companion*, including the 800+ page reference binder and NetWare utilities on diskette, is normally \$89 plus \$6.50 for shipping and handling. This is less than a NetWare consultant would charge to advise you for just one hour ... yet *The Novell Companion* is there to help you administer and manage your network, year after year.

If your product or service is used over a period of time, as most are, you can reduce the "sticker shock" that comes with quoting a high up-front price by showing the cost over the extended usage period. For instance, a life insurance policy with an annual premium of \$200 "gives your loved ones protection for just 55 cents a day." The latter seems more affordable, although the two prices are equivalent.

Element #8: Close with a call to action.

Copy is written to bring about a change – that is, to cause prospects to change their opinion, attitude, beliefs, purchasing plans, brand preferences, or immediate buying actions.

To effect this change, your copy must be specific about the action the prospect should take if they are interested in what you've said and want to take advantage of your offer or at least find out more. Tell them to clip and mail the coupon, call the toll free phone number, visit your Web site, come to your store, request a free estimate, or whatever. Specify the next step directly in your copy, or else few people will take it. Some examples:

When you call, be sure to ask how you can get a FREE copy of our new audio cassette, "How to Get Better Results From Your Collection Efforts." In just 7 minutes listening time, you'll discover at least half a dozen of the techniques IC Systems uses – and you can use, too – to get more people to pay what they owe you.

For a complementary copy of the SECRETS OF BUILDING A WORLD-CLASS WEB SITE audio cassette, complete and mail the survey enclosed or fax it today to 1 888 FAX 2IBM (1 888 329 2426).

Put BOC's quality gas solutions to work in your plant – starting today.

Think it's time to talk with a gas supplier that really knows your business and has real solutions to your problems? Call your BOC Gases representative today. Or visit our Web site at <http://www.boc.com>.

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