

**Discover how I earn between \$100 and \$400
from every 20 visitors to my websites.
A step by step, high response copywriting course**

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Chapter

1

An Introduction

Welcome To The Course

Before we even get into the sales letter writing, I want to give you a bit of a background into who we are, what we do, why we're writing this, why should you listen to us and what we're about to tell you when there are literally hundreds of other books out there on this subject.

Ok, I'm going to give it to you straight. Me and my partner in this business have had a combined 16+ years experience writing sales material online, and before that, writing to sell in the offline world for commissions even before we'd finished our school years. I can't count the number of websites we've put up, sold out, taken down, replaced with new products, sold out again, and you know what? If you really want to sell your product out like we did our last product in just 9 days, there's one big aspect you have to get right, or you're dead in the water.

That's the writing of sales letters. If you've ever been told by someone that the ramifications of having a bad sales letter is that you won't sell as many products, stay tuned, because in the very first section of this course (when we get started in a moment) I'm going to show you how devastating this can be, not just to your direct sales, but how it can be the difference between that ten or twenty thousand dollar monthly income you're after, and making a loss.

Ok, we've just started and I'm already talking about doom, gloom and the type of mistakes people make. There's plenty of time for that later, but for now, let me tell you (and show you) exactly why you should ditch those other books for now and have at least a flick through this one and actually go ahead and attempt to write a sales letter from what I'm about to teach you, even if you've never written one before.

Now this may sound a little rude, but either way, if it's going to give you the confidence to use what you're about to read, then I'm going to say it. I already have your money. There, I said it. The reason I mention that is I could run off into the sunset now, say thank you very much, goodnight, and go buy myself a nice new apartment from all these sales, and in exchange hand you and all the other people who bought this a bunch of other people a 5 page document containing something I made up on the spot.

As you probably noticed already, that's not what I did, mainly because I don't need to. What I'm about to teach you is real, it's 16 years+ of experience with writing to sell. No one teaches what I'm about to show you at university, or college. I used my own savings to find out what really happens in the real world and how to sell in these situations for maximum effect.

So was the result worth it? This is what I want to show you now...

Chapter

2

The Proof.

PayPal statement. February 20 2006 to February 28 2006

Date	Number of Payments Received	Value of Payments Received	Number of Payments Sent	Value of Payments Sent	Fees	Other Credits	Other Debits	Net
20 Feb. 2006	112	10,906.51	1	-2.00	-447.23	163.53	0.00	10,620.81
21 Feb. 2006	52	5,110.00	3	-870.00	-211.87	0.00	-12,598.04	-8,569.91
22 Feb. 2006	34	3,243.01	1	-98.50	-134.37	0.00	0.00	3,010.14
23 Feb. 2006	30	2,863.00	0	0.00	-118.17	0.00	0.00	2,744.83
24 Feb. 2006	12	1,180.00	3	-10,657.77	-47.16	6,299.02	0.00	-3,225.91
25 Feb. 2006	22	2,159.50	0	0.00	-89.32	0.00	0.00	2,070.18
26 Feb. 2006	17	1,572.05	0	0.00	-65.64	0.00	0.00	1,506.41
27 Feb. 2006	29	2,850.50	0	0.00	-117.37	0.00	-4,138.75	-1,405.62
28 Feb. 2006	48	4,791.00	0	0.00	-198.60	0.00	0.00	4,592.40
Totals	356	34,675.57	8	-11,628.27	-1,429.73	6,462.55	-16,736.79	11,343.33

For a copy of PayPal's error resolution notice, [click here](#).

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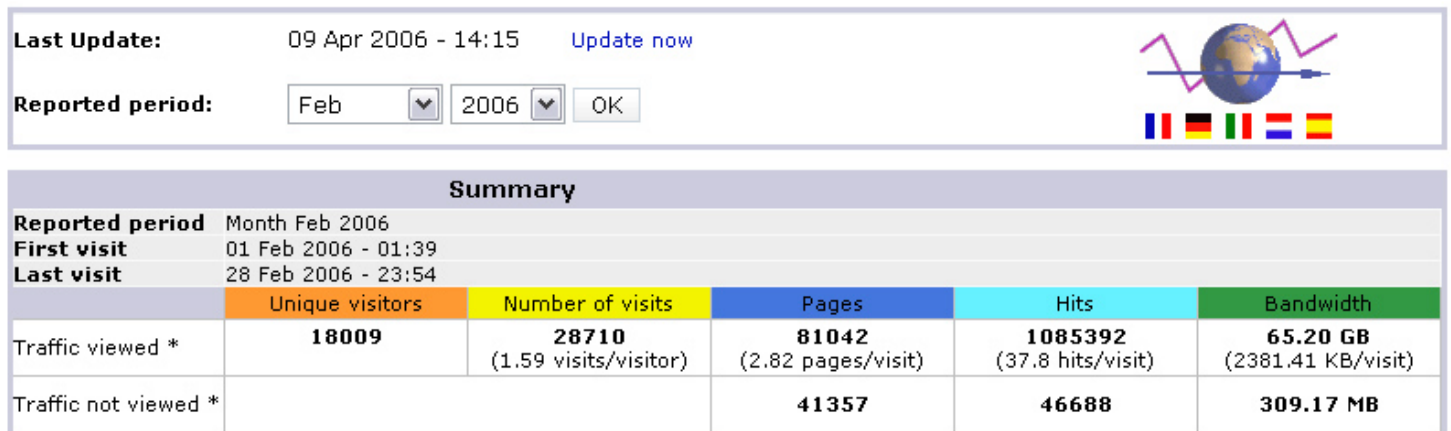
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 [Contact Us](#) |
 [User Agreement](#) |
 [Developers](#) |
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[Buyer Protection](#) |
 [Seller Protection](#)

(The withdrawals are to my bank account – above is after affiliate payments)

Now of course, there's a whole bunch of people going on about how much they earn and why you should listen to them, and I have no problem with that. In this case however, how much earned means absolutely nothing unless it's put alongside number of unique hits to the site. Now what I'm about to show you is exactly that for the dates above.

Understand, this isn't anything to do with boasting or saying 'ooo look at how much I earn', the whole idea is that I'm showing you that the methods you're about to learn do indeed work and work very well in regards to sales letters and writing them. I wouldn't dream of teaching anyone about a subject without first proving that the methods work. That's exactly what's going on here. So here it is. The web stats lifted straight from the server for the days in the statement.

Figure 1: AWStats, February 2006



* Not viewed traffic includes traffic generated by robots, worms, or replies with special HTTP status codes.

So here we are. These are stats from the program AWStats on my domain, hosted by ThirdSphere.com. Lets take a look and match them up from the PayPal sales stats to decipher how effective the sales letter really was:

As you can see there were 28,710 visits and 18,009 unique visits in February 2006 for the site. In a moment, we can work out a few of the most important

statistics to any copywriter or web marketer, and that's their visit to sales ratio (i.e. how many visitors you get per sale) and secondly, how much each visitor is worth.

Before we do that though, I just want to give you a quick stats shot of the number of visits (not unique visits) so that you can see we didn't start promoting until February 20 2006 and didn't fiddle the stats to make them look better in or any cowboy stuff like that.

Figure 2: AWStats showing site promotion started on February 20 2006

Day	Number of visits	Pages	Hits	Bandwidth
01 Feb 2006	20	38	75	2.62 MB
02 Feb 2006	18	30	57	747.92 KB
03 Feb 2006	20	1457	1542	110.06 MB
04 Feb 2006	17	44	87	2.59 MB
05 Feb 2006	11	13	19	136.98 KB
06 Feb 2006	13	116	201	2.67 MB
07 Feb 2006	8	9	15	196.53 KB
08 Feb 2006	8	11	19	110.41 KB
09 Feb 2006	12	155	189	3.04 MB
10 Feb 2006	20	349	711	6.43 MB
11 Feb 2006	24	67	998	20.93 MB
12 Feb 2006	28	1160	2868	27.55 MB
13 Feb 2006	15	641	3284	32.52 MB
14 Feb 2006	18	138	514	41.38 MB
15 Feb 2006	19	173	525	139.81 MB
16 Feb 2006	64	610	3094	1.04 GB
17 Feb 2006	44	303	1453	989.64 MB
18 Feb 2006	26	71	631	17.39 MB
19 Feb 2006	310	903	11965	1.58 GB
20 Feb 2006	8564	18508	365328	31.14 GB
21 Feb 2006	2657	5037	97158	4.35 GB
22 Feb 2006	4286	8136	146646	6.18 GB
23 Feb 2006	1824	6091	62345	2.95 GB
24 Feb 2006	1975	6379	64861	2.89 GB
25 Feb 2006	2172	7277	81263	3.32 GB
26 Feb 2006	2547	8133	91804	3.53 GB
27 Feb 2006	2920	11244	110810	5.02 GB
28 Feb 2006	1070	3949	36930	1.84 GB
Average	1025.36	2894.36	38764.00	2.33 GB
Total	28710	81042	1085392	65.20 GB

As you can see the total number of visits (not unique visits) matches the other screenshot and the sales statistics showing the start of promotion on February 20 2006.

Ok now that's out of the way and we've substantiated the info relating to the sale of the product, let's jump ahead, because this is becoming a little longer than I would have liked to demonstrate a single point.

Lets wrap this up then so we can get on to the good stuff (and get you writing) Looking at the above diagrams we'll take the unique hits for February, the number of sales and work out a few quick sums.

Feb 2006 unique hits – 18009

Feb 2006 number of sales – 356

Feb 2006 net profit - \$34,675.57 (after 50% went to affiliates)

That gives us a visitor to sales ratio of 50.5 : 1. So one sale every 50 and a half visitors. Not bad at all considering the majority of our sales were made up entirely of new customers that have never bought from us before or experienced our products. The confidence and trust was built from scratch in a few screens full of sales letter. And that's handy, because that's what this manual is all about. In addition to this to get an accurate representation of what was going on, you should know the product price wasn't all that low either. Between \$197 and \$397 depending on the package they bought. If this was a \$100 product, I'd fully expect to see conversions double and more. We also saw several marketers with ratios as effective as 1 in 20 and some with non after 1000 visits. Turns out we had some using questionable marketing methods as far as effectiveness is concerned, so this brought the stats down further.

This however is totally real, and there is no way to not land in a similar situation without restricting promotion to the top affiliates only. It's easy to get 1 in 20 non-stop as many others claim. They sure aren't selling \$400 products though.

So what you have here is effectively a refreshingly realistic result. What's more it's very achievable even if you've never written to sell before.

Alright, before we move on to the next section, one final statistic for you, and that's the value per unique visitor, i.e. how much each person that landed on our site was worth in terms of sales. This is the most important statistic - A quick number crunch on my calculator and I can see that each unique visitor is worth \$1.92 net, \$3.84 before affiliate commissions and \$4.40 gross. This tells us so many things and stats like this can show you how much to safely spend on a PPC Ad campaign for example.

That's a very useful statistic indeed, and that is just the tip of the iceberg. We haven't taken into account future sales, future referrals, previous trust built, regular customers, the list goes on and you should never run out of things to test and track.

Tracking and testing is one whole subject in itself. I think this section has done its job now and the images spoke for themselves, so lets move on and get started with the introduction to the course.

Chapter

3

Final Introductory Notes Before We Get Practical. The What's and Why's.

There's a few details that I'd like to get out of the way before we get practical with this so that you can fully understand where I'm coming from and why I'm saying what I'm saying. First up, most importantly are the questions I'll be asking and answering. You're going to find two big questions that come up time and time again. The first is why?

Throughout the whole course you're going to see this pattern. It'll always start with why, and throughout the writing of your sales letter when we get to that point I want you to keep this in mind. I always do this, in every report I write, and when people ask me what the whole idea of this why thing is, this is what I tell them.

It's no good me sitting here and blabbing about what I've learned if you don't know why. because at the end of the day you'll have to come back to me again, or even go to someone else to get more information when things change, and believe me things change fast. As techniques begin to get used more and more, they tend to get overused, so much so in some cases that you'll find yourself visiting ten different websites throughout the day and they all have pretty much the same phrases, the same hooks, the same headlines, the same introductions and so on.

It's no good trying to sell a product if you don't stand out from the crowd. It's easy to do this in the short term, but if you want to continue to stand out from the crowd you need to adapt. And to adapt effectively and change your methods knowledgeably (and not blindly as many do) and still be confident that they're going to work, you need to know why something works, not just how.

Don't get me wrong, what I'm not saying is you have to be completely and utterly different to everyone else. Quite to the contrary in fact, because if you see someone successful using a technique long term, it's likely that it works

and you should use that.

Don't worry too much about this for now. If this isn't your usual method of question asking, you'll be very familiar with it by the end of the course and you'll find yourself asking why more often as you go about your sales letter writing, adapting for the future and especially as you go about your testing. All that is to come though, so long as you know in advance that when I go on about the why's of the situation, it's purely for your benefit.

Next up, is another question, this one however is more specific, and that's what? Again, another very useful question, but when we ask what? There can only be one single factual answer. It has no relevance to adapting to the future, because knowing the answer to this won't give us the reasons that things happen, but is very useful to talking about the present tense. What works now, what you can use now. What techniques you can integrate into your sales letter writing now. What is a clichéd headline? What is the role of a specific part of a sales letter? And so on.

Have you written sales letters before?

If you have, excellent. Especially if you've been getting good results from them. If you have been getting some good results, take a look through this at least and see if you can pick up any additional tips, tricks and hints that might help your response rates to improve further. Bear in mind though that not a word of this is made up. It's all taken from personal experience, and every single little piece of information that you're going to be getting from me is taken from charts similar to what you saw in the proof section earlier on. Entirely fact based knowledge.

If you have written before and your results have been less than desirable, I would suggest that you ditch all the information you have learned so far. That's pretty much my business motto and something I practice daily. If it doesn't work, throw it away or store it for later when the situation changes. Nothing will change if you keep using the same techniques over and over

again. Head through this report, follow it to the end, get your own sales letter written and then try it out. Once you've done that, take any old methods you've learned and begin to merge the two together slowly in between testing. We'll talk more about this later, but that would be my angle of attack if I were in this situation.

Finally, if you've never written before, good news. You're in good hands as you can see from the above stats (and more to come later too). Let me reassure you now; you don't need to go on any expensive writing course, you don't need a degree in anything. If you have one, great, use it, but if you don't, experience will get you through. Also, I'm going to write as if I were talking to a friend who'd never written before. I definitely won't be skimpy on any technical or advanced methods, so don't worry about that. What I won't be doing however is giving anything fancy names, or throwing an idea at you and moving on without explaining it properly.

So there we have it. Whatever your experience level might be, from complete beginner to complete pro, there's something here for you. We won't be missing anything out, and every method has been fully tested, jargon busted and expressed to you as is, straight from fact-based experience.

The layout, sections, and the approach.

So there is one last little bit of information I'd like to give you before we move on from the introductory sections and start physically delving into sales letters. This won't take a moment, but all I want to do really is give you a heads up about what you're about to experience to assist you with any preparation you might want to do before getting started.

Knowledge Base Sections: This is the main body of the course itself. All of our knowledge, all of our testing, facts and statistics we've gathered will go here. We'll be looking at each individual section of a sales letter, discussing the primary roles of each segment, and how best to fulfil those at the same time. We'll also be looking at examples, and answering those all-important

what and why questions. The course is approximately 85% knowledge base and it will form the main body of your experience and learning with us. In addition, you'll be hearing about some of the real life examples of the good, the bad and the terrible sales letters out there.

Critique Section

At this stage I'm going to be giving you a sales letter to play with. At the end of the course you can take everything you've learned and put it into action by tearing apart one of my early sales letters. If all goes well, but the time we get to this point, you'll be floating around the internet and writing your own sales letters, only to have to keep stopping and thinking to correct yourself. To get this effect, we'll be concentrating very heavily on the negatives and the wrongs in this course. You'll see my reasoning when you reach the end.

Now unfortunately, all sales letters are copyrighted and can't be reproduced without permission, and you can imagine the response to my writing an e-mail saying 'Your sales letter is terrible, can I use it in a case study so my customers and students can pull them apart and spot the mistakes?'

Yeah, I can't see that working too well either, so I've done the next best thing. I've written all the sales letters myself. The good parts will follow the rules that I've experienced and know for a fact are currently working to increase sales and response rates. The bad parts won't just deviate from these rules, but they'll actually use methods that from testing I know do not work, or go towards actually decreasing sales. This way, there's a clear right and clear wrong, and no in between guesswork and all you go away with is pure facts. I'll also be sticking as close to the line as best I can without breaching any copyrights, so you'll actually be getting real life examples at the same time.

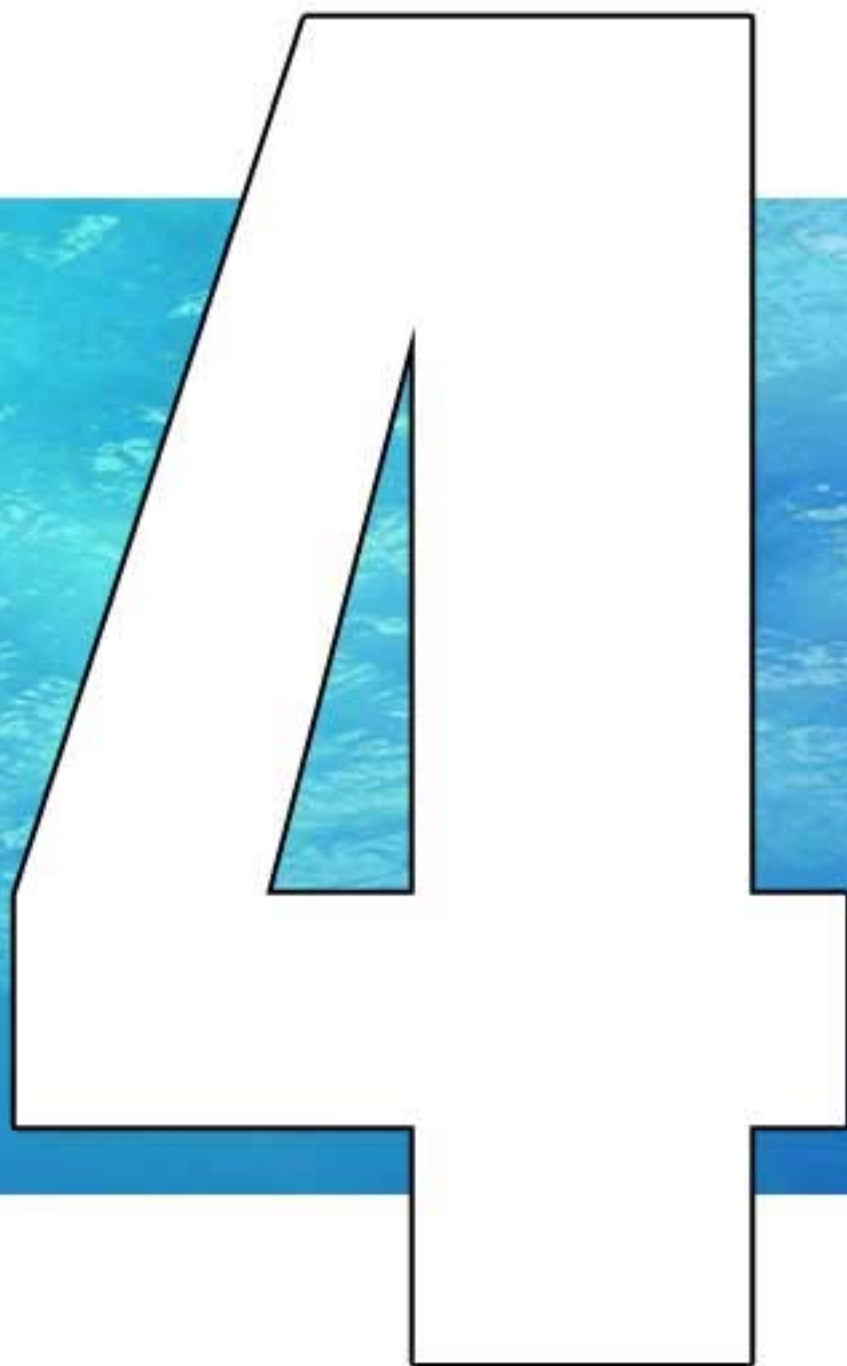
Hot Tips: During each knowledge base section, there may be snippets of information that are related, but don't quite fit into the topic that we're currently discussing. This is where the hot tips come in. Watch out for them, because often the main topic or method being taught won't work to its full potential without taking this information into account.

Alright, finally, remember to take your time. There's no rush, no one for you to race. The longer you take to watch and learn, and the more attention each section gets from you, the faster and more efficiently you'll pick this up and the more it'll fill your pockets when you put it into practice.

When you're ready, let's begin.

Chapter

4

A large, stylized white number '4' with a black outline is centered on the page. The background is a horizontal band of blue water with white ripples, spanning the width of the page and partially obscured by the number.

Introducing The Sales Letter.

The Importance Of Copywriting

So why am I sitting here right now, talking to you about sales letters, when I could have chosen to write about promotion, or about joint ventures, pay per click ad campaigns or any number of the hundreds of other subjects out there relating to successful sales in the online world?

Most people at this point in their courses would say 'Well, because if you can't create a sales letter, then you won't be able to sell your products'. In a way they're right. The website and the sales page is your first contact with your customers. It's your storefront, something I'm sure you've heard before. It has to be the best work you've ever produced because you have no sales-force. No one is there to steer your customers in the right direction. All that there is, are words on a page, a page that can be closed in an instant. It's your job to catch their attention straight away without scaring the heck out of them, blinding, deafening or confusing them. It's about knowing what they want before they get there, and only spending money to get the right people to see your sales letter.

So yes, it is important, but what happens if your sales letter isn't up to scratch? You lose sales right? True, but let's put this into perspective, because that's only half of the story. So you can't sell. Your ads are going to waste, your PPC campaigns are losing you money instead of making you money. Let's not forget that you're losing out on your leads. The whole reason that people spend upwards of \$5, \$10, and even more in some situations is that grabbing a customers' details is going to mean multiple sales in the future.

Remember back to the examples when I showed you how much each visitor was worth? Imagine what that would look like if I gave you the same stats for the same customers over a year. Their value could go up ten, twenty, thirty or more times. This goes far beyond the scope of this sales letter course but it's something I'd like to get across. Do you see how falling at the first hurdle,

won't just lose you that \$4 value per visitor, but could potentially be losing years worth of a relationship with a customer, multiple product purchases and masses of profit. Some visitors can potentially end up being worth \$10,000 or more depending on your business and what you're selling them.

So now it starts to become clear that losing just one customer through a poorly written sales letter isn't an 'Oh dear, we lost a customer, never mind, we'll get more'. If that doesn't highlight the importance of this enough, there's more. There's much more.

What about your affiliates? Put yourself in their shoes. Good stats and visitor to sales ratios encourage affiliates to promote and inspire confidence. What if you'd just sent out an ad to your list or fired off a PPC campaign at a cost to yourself, only to find out that very few of your visitors were converted? It's not just a case of losing the affiliate for one of your products.

You'd be amazed at the records people keep and what they remember, especially when it's not a particularly positive point. Say goodbye to your affiliate and potential promotion for many products in the future. This isn't just a single sale or a single customer we're talking about anymore. We could be talking several hundred plus. If one long-term customer can potentially be worth \$10,000 you can see the damage being done by a bad sales letter already.

It gets worse though. I haven't even mentioned the most powerful marketing tactic yet. Joint ventures. It's hard enough to get some good joint ventures going when the competition is so fierce. If their experience is bad, you lose future contacts, you lose the JV you worked hard to get, and on the most basic level you could lose access to potentially an endless supply of customers.

Remember, writing to sell isn't just about sales. It's about contacts, it's about future leads, long term relationships, new deals, follow-up and the future.

Forget short term profit for now. Get this right and you won't have to worry about short term profit again.

This is why I want to talk to you about sales letters more than any other subject today. Get it wrong and you'll find you could well be losing tens of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of dollars per year, and more. Get it right, and you could well be on the way to the big success that's been winging its way to you for a while.

“ Everything has repercussions and knock-on effects. A loss of one sale is rarely just a sale, it could potentially be your new house, your new apartment, your new car, or the million dollar business you're after. Learn to think like this and you will prosper.”

Defining The Role Of The Sales Letter

Alright, before we even start talking about how to write, we need get back to basics. The first thing I want to talk to you about is the role of your sales letter. What is the role of a sales letter? Keep this in mind, nothing should get in the way of this. Your sales letter is there to sell. Simple right?

Of course, you don't necessarily have to be looking at immediate profit. Far from it. You could be looking at lead generation, building your brand, customer service, building contacts and generating joint ventures and deals, but the underlying role of the sales letter is always just that. To sell.

We're going to be talking about sub-roles later, especially when we get into looking at specific parts of the letter itself, such as building trust, proving your knowledge, cementing yourself in your customers mind. So here we are, and I'm pointing out probably the most obvious point that exists on this subject. What's the point?

It never ceases to amaze me that number of people that forget this. They start with the intention to sell, then go off on all sorts of tangents, and by the time they've finished, anyone coming along and reading loves the reader. They

love the content and useful information they've got. They may even be impressed by the proof and the earnings the writer conveyed, but wait, what's this?

They still leave the page without buying a product or giving away their details. Sure they might have a big smile on their face. Sure you made them happy or changed their mood or outlook on a subject in some way, and they might remember you for a few minutes, or stumble on your site again later and that's not a problem, but the customer still leaves without buying. If you want to get their details or sell them something, it's going to cost you again to get them back to your site.

Your sales letter failed to do its job, and you just lost money because you forgot you were selling. You'll see exactly what I mean later when we get down to the specifics. Trust me for now though, this has to be said. No matter how simple or obvious, this has to be at the front of your mind from this moment right to the end of the course. Write it on your hand, stick it to your fridge, or your computer monitor, do anything you want with it, aside from forget.

Do you know what your visitors want?

Before you even try to begin selling in any way, sales letter or not, let me ask you a few questions. First up, do you know what your visitors want? Let me put this as bluntly as I can. What I'm not going to be showing you here is how to have a website populated with a selection of products. That's too expensive as far as new customer conversions are concerned, and with the meagre difference between long-term profit and long-term loss for us small business owners in the online world, that's not what we'll be focussing on at all. The fact of the matter is, no matter how good your sales letter is, if you don't know what your visitors want and get it to them ASAP you're dead in the water. This is fact.

This is where targeting comes in also. I don't want anyone coming back to me and trying to tell me the techniques being taught here don't work, only to tell me they've been trying to sell ten unrelated products on the same site, each with their own individual sales letters, and they don't know anything about the quality of their traffic. Simply put, if you're not targeting, you won't sell enough volume to make money.

Think about it. If you have ten products on a single website, how can you be sure if the people you're sending there will spend the time looking through the nine products they don't want to find the one they do? Bundles and packages are great. 10 individual and distinct products however are not. From my own testing I can tell you straight up that they won't do that. You have literally seconds to capture their imagination and get their attention. Unfortunately we don't have the budget of the dot com superstores to target and cater to anyone and everyone at the same time. We definitely don't have the budget to carry out any real tracking and testing over many products and many sales letters in one go, but I guess that fact doesn't come in to play seeing as we can't afford to target so many people in the first place.

One ad campaign is enough for now, so let's stay focused. Let's concentrate on one product or one product package at a time and get a sales letter written for that, get sending targeted visitors and tracking those statistics and sales, getting some experience and making some cash.

In addition to the above point remember if you find your sales letter isn't selling it's not necessarily the fault of your sales letter at all.

The scope of this course is way too focused to be talking about this now, and it's something I've written whole books on before, so I'm not going to do it again here. Just keep an open mind, and don't always jump to the harsh conclusion that your writing is at fault.

Testing A Heads Up

How do people get so good at writing sales letters? What's the difference between those who's visitors are worth \$4 each and those who's visitors are worth 4 cents each? Tracking and testing, pure and simple. The only way to get good at anything is to test it out, see if it works, if it does keep it, and if it doesn't scrap it. The same goes for sales letters.

There are a couple of problems that come with the territory of tracking and testing in business however. Compared to any other activity of testing to find out what works best, this costs money. It costs money to get people to come to your site in the first place. It's going to cost you if you miss out on sales that you would have otherwise got if you left things as they were and not tried to improve things. It's going to cost you in the long run too. Remember how we talked already about the importance of sales letters, and how losing a customer isn't really losing a single sale, but potentially losing tens of thousands of dollars worth of sales? Over a long period of time, you could actually be losing houses and cars if you want to look at things that way. Thankfully, this is solvable to an extent.

Of course the first thing you head out and do if you don't want to spend time and money on something to find out what works is to go out and buy yourself a course. What you're often paying for is actually someone else's experience. The good news is though, that's exactly what you have in your hands now, so that's out of the way to start with.

The second biggest problem is things vary from business to business. You know what I'm telling you here is all based on my previous experience. I can tell you confidently that every single aspect of this course works... for me. Don't be discouraged though, you'll likely find most if not all of it works for your business also, but there are many things to keep in mind when reading and writing your letter. Always have a broad view of your business in the back of your mind. If you're reading along and think 'Uh.. this point won't work for my business' you could well be right. Track it and test it to find out. It's the only way to be 100% sure of anything here.

What to test

I remember listing off a bunch of things that you can test in a previous sales copy report, and I think it pretty much summed it up in the most long winded way possible. This time however, I'm going to do things the quick way to save you some time.

What parts of your sales letter can you track and test? The answer is everything. Every single color, every single picture, every single word, phrase and layout. You see, every time you make a decision while writing your sales letter, there's some reasoning behind that. You can't make a single mark on that plain white page without a reason. Behind every reason lies a theory. The problem is you don't know that theory is fact until you get your sales letter live and start tracking and testing. There's only so much reports like this can do for you. If you're not up for tracking and testing, then things won't go very well. There's only so many times you can get lucky without the facts in your hands.

Think about it, your headline for example. You're about to get your hands on 23 pages of rapid-fire headline talk (excluding graphics examples and questions) point after point after point after point. That's already at least 50 things you can track and test, from color, to layout, to wording, presentation, audio, multimedia, language, specifics and many others. Of course this manual has been designed to make things easier for you and learn the basis of your headline writing from the ground up, telling you why everything is happening, so your life is made easy in that respect. It should save you around 14 years of testing. 50 aspects however could take anything up to a year to confirm as fact, even if your site gets thousands of visits per day. And that's just the first four lines of your sales letter.

So here's the bottom line. If you ever run out of sales copy to track and test, then something isn't right. There's always something to test, always something new to try. There's no doubt in my mind that you could well come up with your own methods after putting these into use, or adapt the ones we have here to better suit your needs. It really is impossible to run out of things

to test in this respect.

How to test

The best way to test a sales letter scientifically is to run split run tests. If you don't know what a split run test is, it's simple a script that generates a link to two or more separate sales letters, each one with a distinct difference. When the link is clicked, it selects which sales letter to send the visitor to, and when the visitor signs up, your sales letter scores one. At the end of the testing period, you tally up the scores for each letter, compare them to hits and express them as a ratio (hits to sales, and unique hits to sales) and if one wins over another by a significant margin, you can be confident you have yourself a winner.

I think it's important to point out here, that I never endorse methods of tracking that change more than one aspect per sales letter. Even a few words can have a profound effect on sales, in headlines and attention grabbing titles especially. You can track three, four or even five different sales letters at the same time, that's no problem, but make sure that you're only changing one aspect per letter, or you'll be in for some really bendy results, and applying bad results to the rest of your business can be a devastating hit to your pocket over multiple products.

Also, what I want you to get into the habit of doing is predicting the result. This is a great confidence builder. After many years of doing this I've found that I can pretty much predict the result of a sales letter change to a degree of about 90% accuracy. That's pretty darn good when you consider how many aspects to a sales letter there are, and how one word can have a profound impact on the whole process.

I'd also like to point out that this came with practice. When I began doing this I was correct less than 20% of the time. As you can see, the more you do this, the more you understand websites, reader behaviour and your market the more efficient you get, the less time it takes, and the more profitable your

sales copy becomes. I can assure you, our fellow web browsers have some pretty strange habits that I would never have guessed without tracking and testing.

I think this really gets across the importance of doing this. Imagine if you'd been me, and you decided that you didn't want to track and test. Unbeknownst to you, you only have a 20% chance of making a positive change to your sales process. That would mean that every time you changed your sales letter, you only had a 1 in 5 chance of increasing your sales. In fact, 80% of the time you could have actually been reducing your sales. Getting worse instead of better the majority of the time.

Now what happens if you had five products and you changed the sales letter for each one ten times in a year to try and increase your sales? That's a pretty devastating effect. You've just reduced the effectiveness of your sales **200 times** in the space of a year. Trust me on this one, track and test, always, at least for the first two years of your career.

The most useful statistics

Alright, finally before we move on from this section, let's look at some of the most useful results that you need to get for your tracking and testing to be effective. These are also what I use to take a look at how my websites are performing. Many are overlooked strangely enough. A lot of web hosting companies nowadays have basic but useful statistics that you can use like I showed you in the earlier example. Standard visitors and sales alone just don't cut it anymore. Here's what you need:

Number of visitors

Number of unique visitors

Number of sales

Average time visitor stays on the page

Where they came from

What they clicked while they were they on your site

The value of the items they bought

The percentage signing up to your list

How much it cost to get them to your site (per click or per campaign)

Any standard ad tracking and split run testing software should be able to do this for you. Do your best to get your hands on at least these statistics because they allow you work out all sorts of handy percentages and ratios.

For example:

Visitor to sales ratio, unique visitor to sales ratio - Handy for checking the impact your changes have on sales compared to the number of visitors.

ROI Return on Investment – Was that Pay Per Click or E-zine campaign worth your money? If not, then refine your sales methods, or there's no need to waste your cash there anymore.

Value Per Visitor – Extremely handy in Pay Per Click campaigns especially. This can show you exactly how much each visitor is worth in the short term, which means you can raise or lower your bid per click to suit your budget.

LTV Long Term Value – Similar to value per visitor, you can factor in the size of your list, and tracking from follow-up you send. Ever wondered how people pay \$5, \$10, \$20 and even more per click? Recycled traffic is the key. You could be underbidding on keywords because you're not taking into account what your subscribers buy from you at a later date.

The fact of the matter is there is an immense number of useful tracking information out there, from browser type, number of times revisited, all the way through to sales, backend sales, subscriptions and future payments.

The more you can track the better your results will be. The better your results

get, in my experience, the better you get at spotting changes and trends, and not mistaking them for anomalies, and the quicker and more efficiently you'll be able to adapt not just your sales process, but your whole business to an always changing, fast paced business world.

Which brings us nicely onto the final tracking point.

Things change. Adapt or die (not literally, just your business)

Finally, keep a diary of all the tracking and testing that you carry out. Things change in the online world, methods come into play that weren't previously viable, methods go out of fashion, stop working, or become overused and cliché. If your tracking tells you something has stopped working, it probably has. Go back and track again. Things change, and they change fast. Learn to spot this and build it into your sales copy, and in fact all aspects of your business and you will survive.

Surviving is the first step to making a profit.

Ok, now we've covered pretty much every generalisation and rule that I wanted to cover. As long as you keep those in mind it should give you a very good starting point for a quality sales letter. Of course there's room for improvement and that's where these next sections come in. You've already seen examples of sales letters that do work, but I'm going to change things slightly now.

Instead of giving you a 30 page sales letter every time I want to demonstrate a point I'm going to take you through each element of sales letter following the general rules we outlined earlier. In this very focused one product format, I'm going to take you right from your attention grabbing headline all the way through to the PS points. Don't write your sales letter just yet though, because I've got some Q&A's coming up for you that will test you on what you've

learned to make doubly sure nothing has been misunderstood, and it's all sunk in.

Instead, what I'll ask you to do is to take part in the exercises I've put together for you. It's nothing strenuous. All that will happen is that I'll teach you what I know about a specific point, give you examples and then ask you to either write your own, or spot the good and bad out of a list and to say why. I'll make sure to give the answers at the end too so that you're not left wondering if you're right or wrong.

This is the start of a brand new section now, so take into account what I said earlier about taking breaks and only doing this when you're in the mood to write. If you're not in the mood and try to force it, this won't work. When you are in the mood however, you'll know it, and the words will flow into the page nicely, and you'll wake up in the morning wondering if it was really you who wrote the ravishing sales letter sitting in front of you,

Chapter

5

Taking it from the top

The role of the headline.

Before we even start discussing the headline itself, I want to clearly get across to you what this very misunderstood, but very powerful segment of your sales letter is supposed to be about, because quite frankly, most people either only have half the story, or they get it wrong entirely, and while it might look good on the outside, from what my tracking and testing tells me, that's not the case at all.

The fact of the matter is if we don't get this right straight away, you won't be able to sell full stop. Harsh words, but as with all aspects of serious online marketing, and something that I always talk about a lot, things are rarely what they seem. In this case, look at it this way. If your headline doesn't work like it's supposed to, you're not losing 10% of your sales because 10% of your sales letter is bad, you're losing closer to all of your sales.

The example above is why there is no space for anything sub standard in your sales letter. No one part can fail or the whole system goes down. You can't have a weakest link of the chain, or you're finished. Think of it as a bridge. Your customers are walking over it ready to hand you their cash. If there's a dirty great hole anywhere from the entry ramp to the exit ramp, a majority of them would fall through or turn back. No money for you.

Role Number One: Attract Attention

With that picture clearly at the front of your mind, let's get back to the headline. Ok, so role number one of the headline is to attract attention. It's the first thing people see when they land on the page, and is ultimately designed to catch their eye and sell them on reading the next part of your sales letter exactly like a newspaper headline is designed to grab your attention and make you read further into the article.

Don't misunderstand this however as having to have the biggest, boldest brightest piece of prettified text that you can possibly create is not what it's about. Think beyond that now. We're talking about your words as well as your layout and presentation.

There's good and bad ways of attracting attention however. Something you'll see a little later in this section when we start to show you examples. We're going to ignore that for now though, and keep it simple to start with as each one of these points is going to have a proviso.

Role Number Two: Interest The Reader

Here we go, a second rule. Something people seem to miss. A pretty standard reaction I get when I mention anything about multiple roles for specific parts of sales letter is "Butt no, that's not right, the headline is there to attract attention. Leave the other jobs of a sales letter to the other segments. All you have to do is attract their attention." Well, according to my tracking that's incorrect. In fact it suggests that if you don't specifically interest the reader, say goodbye to your potential customer because they'll be off in a flash whether you get their attention or not.

Role Number Three: To Educate The Reader

A third role that often surprises people when I tell them that it doubled the number of people staying on my site for more than 30 seconds is to educate them about what you're selling. They often gasp at me and say "But if I tell them what I'm selling, I've just given them the whole story, and they decide there and then whether they want the product or not, and the rest of the sales letter is irrelevant." Some people are even convinced that it's a better sales technique to actually hide the exact product for as long as possible. I've never heard more piffle in my life, and the opposite has been true in every single sales situation that I've got into myself and every single sales situation I've ever seen anyone get in to.

Hot Tip: Watch the successful. If someone has something you want, the fact of the matter is something they did got them that. You can't always ask what they did of course, at least not without being charged for it, but there's nothing stopping you watching them. The best thing about this is, people love to blow their own trumpets, often not from an ego point of view, but for proof, or to inspire confidence and to stamp their authority on a subject. Keep your eye on the pulse in your chosen field of expertise. If you see someone revealing and proving that something went exceptionally well, you know exactly where to go to get a sneaky peak at what they've been doing.

Want to know how someone keeps such a responsive and profitable list? Get on that list and find out what they're doing and what you can learn from them. Want to know why everyone's raving about a product, giving it five stars and the creator a massive reputation and publicity boost? Go ahead and buy their products. What can you learn from them? The same goes for sales letters. Watch out for tell tale signs and especially proof of top performing letters, jump on them, analyse them, and learn from them.

Role Number Three: To Educate The Reader Continued

So here's the deal. Tell the reader what your product is. Of course you have to put forward it's biggest benefit at the same time, as it's a well known fact now that features don't sell, benefits sell. Seeing as your headline has to be so short and to the point, you'll only have room for one big benefit.

Contrary to what seems to be becoming popular belief, this does far more for your case than hiding your motives or trying to hide information about the product you're creating until further down the letter. Let's get this out of the way right now with one simple sentence.

"If you feel that you have misguide, withhold information or misdirect people with over-intriguing or confusing headlines to get them to read your sales letter, your marketing is failing."

Remember, the people that are landing on your site are already interested in your type of product if you got your targeting right. The only thing you're doing by not immediately educating the reader about exactly what your product is, you're attracting a few that wouldn't normally read on (which doesn't help if they have absolutely no interest in your product) and those that do want it, will miss it. It didn't grab their attention because it wasn't something that they would be interested in. Of course it may well have been something they were interested in, but if your headline didn't tell them that, why else would they read on? See role four for the answer.

Role Number Four: To Intrigue

Because they're intrigued will be the answer many would and have given me face to face when I'm trying to argue this point. But I have news. It's far easier to intrigue people with information about a subject they're interested in compared to random headlines that mean nothing to them. So, let me prove my point with a couple of questions.

How often do you find yourself glancing at an advert, or a TV programme, or listening to the news or the radio because you've heard a quick snippet relating to something that intrigues you? Pretty often I'd imagine, this happens to me extremely often, on an hourly basis at least unless I'm locked in my white walled plain study with only my writing in front of me and nothing else trying to grab my eye.

So, let me ask you another question. These little snippets of information that grab your attention and leave you wanting to find out more. Do they mean something to you? Do they evoke some emotion, opinion or desire to know more? If so, take a closer look. It's almost guaranteed to be talking about something that affects you, your lifestyle or someone you care about. If it affects you, you're going to be interested in it. Simple as that. If it didn't affect you, would you even care? Would you be intrigued to know more?

I can tell you now that you wouldn't be, but next time you catch a snippet of information like this and find yourself delving for more information, I want you to stop, and think. Ask yourself, does this mean something to me? Does it affect me, someone close to me or my lifestyle in any way? Try and list the amount of times you find yourself digging deep for more information or reading up on a subject about something that doesn't interest or affect you. Doesn't it sound so obvious when put like that? Imagine yourself looking for more information on something that you don't care about. It's almost a contradiction in itself, so how people can argue with me when I tell them you can't intrigue someone about something that doesn't affect them is beyond me.

"Intriguing is easy, but intriguing and creating interest and educating at the same time go hand in hand. You can't split them up or you're going to be slashing your readership and effectiveness of the headline, and ultimately the whole sales letter entirely."

So there we have it. The roles of headline. To attract attention, to interest, to educate and to intrigue. Keep these in mind when creating your headline and you'll have a huge jump start to everyone else who thinks the headline is just to attract attention. The great thing about this is, the only people that know this are those that have the money and expertise to write a sales letter already that have spent their cash tracking and testing to find this out, and you and anyone else reading and taking note of this.

Hot Tip: Don't take advice from anyone on sales letter writing especially that can't first prove to you that they are successful. This only leads to misinformation and even worse, people who don't know the facts teaching other people half truths, who then go on to teach others. If people only taught what they know is fact, the internet would be a far richer place. It doesn't matter how good they are at writing to sell, it doesn't matter how many technical names they used, if they haven't actually carried this out in the real world, it means nothing.

One final note before we start to get specific. Remember we're talking about sales letters here. Sales letters that have the potential to reach many thousands of customers and customers to be that haven't heard your name before. These rules do not apply in the same sense if you're marketing to regular customers, or your list for example. I would go as far to say some of the rules are completely backward when looking at e-mail marketing and private lists especially. Be very careful not to get anything confused or to assume that just because we're writing to sell, you can use the same methods across all of your marketing as this is not the case.

Common Mistakes

Ok we're going to get practical at the end of this section, but before we go ahead and do that, I want to give you some do not's and show you exactly how not to do things in the way of headlines. Now, a lot of people don't like to talk about how not to do something, and I have no problem with that, but if you're here to get the whole story, we need to talk about the do not's. Just because your headline has good elements in it, and just because you've done all the right things, it doesn't mean that you haven't accidentally slipped some bad points in there that could quite easily cancel out or completely ruin all your good work (much like the customers falling through the hole in the bridge example I gave you earlier on). You need to know how to avoid the bad and put the good to your advantage, so we're going to do all of that by showing you the wrong way, then the right way including some examples. Let's get started.

Mistake 1 - The Clichéd Headline

This is a tough one so we'll start here. The clichéd headline is the headline that you might hear ten times a day, or something you'll laugh and cringe at every time you hear it. It's a particular phrase or group of words that are repeated over and over again and have become overused to the point that they are associated with a specific group of people or activity. It's often something that was fashionable to use, but went out of fashion a while ago.

You can pretty much tell if you found yourself a stuck with a cliché headline if you write out only half of the sentence and send it to someone in your field of expertise and ask them to finish it off for you.

The whole cliché in online marketing is a bit of a problem area for some people, because not only are some of them terrible at getting the job done and actually selling something, but even those that aren't have lost their meaning. When you mention anything about a cliché people don't think about what it means anymore. The whole idea of your sales letter is to get people thinking, to get them feeling. If you suddenly say something really corny, they don't react by thinking about what you just said. All they see is the cliché. The words mean nothing.

The Cliché In Action.

Let me prove it to you now through a couple of examples. You'll see exactly what I mean through these two passages here. I'm going to ask you to imagine yourself in a particular situation, and I want you to really do this or the effect will be lost. This is a really quick way for me to demonstrate how you're torn out of this kind of trance a sales letter is supposed to put the reader in the moment a cliché is mentioned. Note that this may not work if you haven't been in online marketing for a particularly long time as you may not have seen the big ones that pop up the most often, but still, you should recognize a couple of the more general ones.

"Ok, the first thing I want you to do is imagine you're in online marketing. You've been in online marketing for a year or so, and you're not doing too badly, however, the promise of that little extra income has now turned into something more. You don't want a couple of thousand dollars extra per month, you want tens of thousands of dollars per month. It's a real exciting thought to know that you could well be a couple of months from buying that new house or new car that you've been after for a while, in fact you can almost see the look on everyone's faces when you pull up in your brand new sports car in front of all those that doubted you could do it (which is pretty

much everybody around you).

So it's 8am in the morning, and with that thought in mind, full of renewed vigour, you decide to jump out of bed, and make today the day you go searching for the information that will ultimately help you explode your bank account. That sports car isn't all that far away now, you can feel it. Just a little hard work, and you won't be constrained by lack of income anymore. Time to do whatever you want, when you want. Now that's freedom."

Wow, that was severe. Had me giggling to myself a little bit when I read it out loud. Did you notice the cliché? Did you notice how you could picture the situation pretty well until you landed on the dreaded phrase, which just completely ruined the whole mood? It will have gone a little something like this in your mind: Feeling, imagining, feeling, imagining, cliché! Blank. This is devastating to anyone who wants to write a sales letter. Considering the idea is to suck the reader in, with a cliché, you're just spitting them right out again. (It was explode your bank account if you missed it)

Make your headlines specific and you can still sell a product such as a make money online course without coming across as a cliché. This is why I'm a big fan of presentation and planning products to have a specific angle before my pen touches the paper and I begin creating. Alright so you're selling a make money online product, but you don't have to say that. Why concentrate on tedious unspecific angles like 'How to make money online' and 'How to earn enough money to quit your job and be your own boss'? You don't have to settle for that anymore. How about 'Discover how I made \$100,000 in just 60 days from scratch'? Of course it doesn't have to be you, if people in your program are doing the same you could take it a step further 'Discover how my ten students have earned \$1000,000 in just 60 days from scratch simply by listening to what I told them'.

These aren't particularly original or ground breaking headlines, but that's fine at this stage, we'll improve further in later sections, as long as you can see what I mean when I say your product is only as good as your marketing. You

can still sell the ultimate cliché but turn it into something interesting, original and intriguing by leaving out the clichés and introducing some very strong specifics.

Mistake 2 – The Intriguing headline that means nothing.

We already talked about this one, so I'm not going to dwell but to re-iterate this most important point. If your headline is intriguing, that's great. Most people tend to tell you about the intriguing side but fail to mention the important factor of creating interest through education. Without educating the reader, they will have no idea what you're talking about, and more often than not, you will lose those you have the best chance of selling to, on the off chance that someone with a lot of time on their hands might carry on reading just through intrigue.

I already gave you some examples earlier on and told about those that argue their points that pure intrigue is the way to go, and how you can prove that's not possible simply through your own actions. If you're not interested in something, do you want to go and find out more about it? Not likely. I don't remember the last time I wanted to know more about something I wasn't interested in. Does it catch your eye and snap you out of your daily trance, and break down the barriers that go up that block out any feeling the moment you see a blatant attempt to get your money? Nope. Even for those that it does persuade to read along further without first interesting them, the moment they see what you're getting at, they'll be gone. Intrigue should be number 3 on your list after education and interest.

Yep, I said it again. And I'll most likely refer back to this in other sections, so keep it in mind, because in my eyes, it is the biggest mistake to make, and even the very early testing I carried out back in 2000 showed me that it destroys sales.

The Intriguing Headline That Means Nothing Examples.

Ok, I think I've talked enough about that. It's time for me to give you some examples that I've seen and some intriguing headlines that lack meaning. To give you some examples, my business partner was talking to me about a headline he saw a while back that read something along the lines of $1+4+2=7$. Now while that may be intriguing and leaving you wondering what the heck they're talking about, why would anybody read on to find out about something that doesn't interest them?

Another example I saw recently was something along the lines of 'Why is goats milk better for you than cows milk?' I mean come on - these are online marketing products now. Sure it might be intriguing, but why on earth would someone hard at work looking for a way to pass their driving tests, catch more fish, get better at golf, learn about the stock market or online business continue reading? Meaningless intrigue doesn't work as well as the complete opposite, specifically telling the reader what your product is about and how it will help them in your biggest, proudest benefit in a block of text at the top of the screen.

I know some of you out there may be the arty sort (which I am myself), but we need to keep this in check if you want to sell anything. It is not good practice to intrigue without reason. It just doesn't make money, so next time you come up with that great headline that you believe will sell your product in the millions and take your conversion rates through the roof, ask yourself, is it really conveying a) the biggest benefit of your product or b) providing a solution to a problem that you know that all your visitors have, or are you just trying to be cute and do something different for the sake of it?

Mistake 3 – The Interesting Headline That Doesn't Intrigue

I'm going to guess you have the whole educate, interest, intrigue thing down now, so I'm not going to repeat it. What I will say however is that there have been instances that I've spotted of headlines missing the intrigue, even though they have the education and interest thing going for them. This is a

much smaller mistake and far less widespread than the other way around, but it's worth mentioning all the same.

This is also the first instance in which I can talk to you about the positives and how to do things without just saying 'don't do this, don't do that'. Not to worry if that's what you were looking for in the previous examples. I'm being negative on purpose here because later on in the report, I'm going to go through those positives. We need some more information before being able to do that though, and I don't want to jump ahead or miss snippets of information, no matter how small, and have you wondering where I'm getting my wording from. It's important we continue to cover them fully, and in order. Let's continue.

The Interesting Headline That Doesn't Intrigue

Ok this one gets me every time, because it sticks out a million miles when I land on a web page, and it's probably one of the most common mistakes I've seen recently. The reason for this I think is the rise of anti marketing. Anti marketing and its harsh approach works really well, but when it's done badly, you're left with a statement. That's it really, just a statement. The idea behind anti-marketing is that you get under someone's skin so much with talk about how superior you are, or how superior your life or your skills are, but alas some people are just no good at this. Here's a couple that I've seen recently that should give you a clue about what I mean about random statements that attempt to be anti marketing, controversial or spark a reaction in the visitor and fail miserably.

'I made 1.5 million dollars in online marketing last year'. Cue tumbleweed. So what? Does that affect me in any way? It doesn't make me jealous or angry? It doesn't make me feel happy, sad, lonely, lost or that I'm missing any information or particularly want anything from you. What purpose does this statement have? It has none. Are you going to show me how you did it? Maybe, but you didn't tell me that. It's just a cold, blank statement that means nothing to me. If you'd made some attempt to either annoy the heck out of me by being a cocky idiot that looks down on me, I might have read on just to see

how I could take you down, pick holes in your argument and generally try to belittle you to make myself feel better and superior to you again. Now to some of you reading this might sound harsh, but I'll be honest, this is how most people react to such a situation. They won't stop reading they'll continue.

So let's forget anti marketing for a moment, because it's becoming a cliché far faster than any work at home stuff did. How about if instead of being a cocky idiot you chose to make that sentence mean something? Are you going to teach me how to do it too? Tell me that. How long is it going to take me? Tell me, I want to know. How easy is it? Is it guaranteed? Have you taught 20 other people that have each gone on to earn 1.5 million in a year? Tell me.

This is the kind of stuff I want to know. Proof comes later, concentrate on homing in on what I, as your target market wants the most right now to get me reading. Remember, I don't care what you did as much as I what I'm going to get and how quickly and easily I'm going to get. Don't get caught in the anti-marketing craze unless you know what you're doing or you'll end up with a random statement that means nothing and sells nothing like the examples above. I just listed the information you should be including in your headlines to garner a high response. Don't ignore that.

Mistake 4 – Clarity Vs Vague

Ok, we're moving on now from the whole educate, interest and intrigue thing now. We're going to talk about the vague headline. This is one of those little mistakes that kind of goes along with the cliché, as these seem to fit into both categories in many cases. Now, when I say vague headline, I'm not talking to the extent of the pure intrigue headlines. At least the vague headlines make an attempt to educate and interest. They don't quite make it though.

You see, when you plant a great block of text right in front of someone's face, just like any good story, if you want them to keep reading, they have to be able to visualize what you're talking about. They need to feel what you feel, and there has to be an almost immediate connection. Of course making sure

you're sending the right traffic is a bonus, and will go a long way towards creating this connection as you'll have something in common, and if you're attracting like-minded people, or people in the same business as you, it's likely you'll have a unique insight into what they want and what makes them tick, putting you in a prime position to sell successfully. That's not all there is to it though, if you can't get them on the same wavelength as you, and get them actually living and experiencing your words, then there's going to be problem.

Let me ask you this, the last time you met someone and didn't feel a connection while having a conversation, how did you feel? Can you remember thinking to yourself that you really don't care about what they're telling you, and zone out and listen in on background music, or another conversation? Maybe you tried to get out of the situation completely by making up an excuse and leaving? The fact of the matter is, if you didn't get that connection, you'd know it, because you don't care about what they're saying. You don't feel anything when they talk about something that they obviously feel strongly about. It's a strange, almost zoning out, blocking the words out and just agreeing feeling. Kind of like putting up a smoke screen that dulls the senses.

Now, let me ask you what happened the last time you were with one of your best friends. You talked, you laughed, you had a heck of a lot of fun, and you connected. Why did you connect? Because you have something in common. You got that warm glowing excited feeling when you held a conversation with them. You were eager to hear their opinions, you were eager to join in and express your own, or throw in a joke here and there. The connection was two way. The most important part of all of that is the following: When someone makes a connection with you, they're obviously talking about something that you're interested in, however, as they talk, you can imagine yourself in their shoes. You often find yourself getting lost in their short tales, stories and jokes and re-living them in your mind. You can actually see this stuff happening as you visualize.

So there we have the difference between someone you connect with and someone you don't. You've had years of experiences together no doubt, you know how each other works, thinks and does things. Sometimes you even know what they're thinking and you can say it before they do. That's all great, but what's my point? Well my point is this. As a visitor landing on my site, we don't have years of history. Chances are we've never met each other. We don't know each other and probably never will. All I know is through my marketing what you're interested in, and my site is selling something related to that. That's why you're here. But how can I get you to visualize, how can I get you to feel what I feel, see what I see, and experience what I experience? Simple. Through specifics.

Let me now ask you this, do you want to make money? How about this one. Do you want to know how I made a million dollars in my first year of online marketing? Or what about this; do you want to know how to keep your hair from falling out for longer? Or would you prefer to know how I stopped my receding hairline dead, and six months later had a full head of hair again?

Specifics are the 'Imagine' of headlines. Do you see how easy is to visualize and actually live the situation, and make that connection when you start to use specifics? There's a right and wrong way to do this however, and you can go way over the top. It's can get to the point where instead of provoking feeling and imagination from your reader, immediately getting them hooked into your sales process, it looks more like you're using statistics for the hell of using statistics. That's actually just recently become a cliché in itself. Remember what we said about the cliché, it doesn't sell because people don't think about, connect to, or imagine your point in any way. They don't give it any meaning, aside from associating it with a cliché, having a giggle and leaving. We'll look more at this later when we come to the big examples, but for now, I'm going to give you a short task.

The Vague Headline - Examples

You may have noticed I haven't given you much information yet on what constitutes a solid, meaningful, imagination-provoking headline that connects to the reader from the instant they begin to feel your words. That was my intention entirely. It's far easier to learn through this type of activity, and before long, you'll be surfing the net, shouting at headlines and point out their faults, what's wrong with them and how they can be improved (I sometimes get hooked on sales letter critique for hours, just for the fun of it, how cruel is that?). That's what I hope you'll be doing too.

Ok so what constitutes a vague headline? Well for a start, vagueness usually equals a cliché, but we've already talked about them. Work from home, be your own boss, make money online and so on. The reason is the that these were the most obvious starting points for headlines before online marketing evolved into what it became today. Back then, no one had to be particularly specific or original because there wasn't really all that much competition. Nowadays things are very different of course, and if you can be different to the masses as far as product presentation is concerned, then you should go for it. Once you're over that hurdle, you should have no problem with headlines.

So vagueness without re-covering any ground we've already moved from. When I see headlines like 'I've taught hundreds of people to make thousands of dollars online in the past year – and now I'm going to teach you' it really disturbs me. Ok so you've taught hundreds of people. Is that one hundred, seven hundred? Nineteen hundred? As a reader I need to know these things. How successful you are as a teacher is going to be really important to me as a reader. There's a big difference between two hundred and nineteen hundred.

The same goes for the thousands of dollars. So did they make \$2000 each in a year? That's pretty crappy if you ask me and that makes you a bad teacher. Or did they make \$500,000 in the past year? Now you have my attention, I might actually listen to what you have to say.

It goes further though, think about things from the point of view of your target market and your average visitor. So you let's say you changed your headline a little bit to read 'I taught 100 people to make \$500,000 so far this year, now I want to teach you'. That's still a disturbingly poor headline. So you taught them to make half a mill, did it only take them a year? How much were they earning previously? Did they all earn that, or is it an average? Did you just take the best result, help them promote and plaster it up as a headline?

There's so much that you can say in a headline without going on for paragraphs and paragraphs. For example, you could still tell me all this but in a much more specific and convincing way by telling me that on average, your 100 students earned in excess of \$500,000 in a single year from scratch with no previous business experience through your personal help and guidance. I want to know that average little old me is going to be able to achieve this also.

Don't leave it until your proof section and don't leave it until later down the letter when your testimonials come up. I'll be gone by then because you were too vague. I want you to be able to tell me as specifically as possible that you guarantee me that I will earn \$500,000 this year under your guidance. Of course it's impossible to say that if you don't want to get sued, but the more you can refine your headline, the more I can visualize it, and the closer you can get to saying 'I guarantee you will make half a million dollars in 12 months or less under my personal guidance' the better. The more vague you are, the more space you have to wriggle out of the deal and say 'actually that's not what I meant at all' or, oh that 500,000 was only an average, and I calculated my averages using the mean/mode/median, not the way you did.

This sounds petty, it sounds nit picky but I'll be honest with you, that's just how closed this generation is to ads. If I don't think that, the next person will. If you are not specific, people will not believe you and people will not read on, whether it's just for the reason I gave you above (about the mean, mode, median thing) or it's just a generic 'Yeah I don't believe that'. If there is any other meaning in your headline, your visitors will shrug you off as just another ad.

Think of it as sealing yourself in a corner as tightly as you can. Something people are way too worried about doing. If you have a good product, you shouldn't be afraid of that. If it says what you say it does, you should be quite happy in almost (almost) guaranteeing the results. If you have confidence in it, so will others. The more you cut your get out clauses, the more people will believe. Of course be sure to not seal yourself too tightly and actually guarantee anything or you'll probably be sued.

Now I don't want you to be put off either. I used the half a million dollars per year example as just that – an example. You don't have to be able to clam those things to sell your products, you don't even have to say you taught anyone else to do it yet (even though it helps immensely). Think about it. If you can get yourself some good testimonials from people using similar methods, do you have to say you taught them to earn \$500,000 in a year? No you don't. You can however now you have a testimonial from people seeing results from the methods you teach state exactly that - That your methods yield these results. This is a good way that many marketers use to get a good headline up on their site without actually selling a single product. Find others using similar methods and use that as the proof instead. Just because they didn't read your book yet, it doesn't mean they aren't using your methods to great levels of success does it?

This doesn't have to be about money either, so don't think that this is going to work if you can't prove you earn a million dollars every year. What else are marketers interested in? Maybe you pull in 60,000 subscribers every six months? We all know how powerful those subscribers are. What's more, this doesn't need to be long term either. So you pulled in 10,000 or 20,000 subscribers in a single week, or a single month and then you took a break and didn't get any for the six months you were away. Does that mean you can't sell a product showing people how you got 20,000 subs in a single month and show them how valuable that is? Nope it doesn't.

How about sales letters for example. Now I took this course and showed you an example over a week. Regardless of the fact I get results similar or superior to this for every single product launch I carry out, this was the most recent when I began writing. You bought this product on the basis of the worth of each visitor and the response rate to a mid/high ticket item. I've done this many times, but as far as you know I only did it once right? So what if you write a sales letter that had a \$10 value per visitor and your next one had a \$1 value per visitor. Does that mean you can't release a sales letter course showing people the inner workings of that \$10 per visitor letter? No it doesn't.

Lets take it further, what if you were selling a fishing product and you caught yourself a 30lb pike three weeks in a row at 3 different venues. Just because you didn't catch anything the next month, does that mean that you can't tell people about the methods you use the consistently catch the previous three months? No it doesn't. As long as your product works beyond a doubt, then you should have confidence in selling your best work with the best headlines selling your best results along with an earnings disclaimer.

One thing though – never ever lie or exaggerate. If you got a good, repeatable, provable and reliable result, then sell it in your products and your headline and show people how you got it by all means. This doesn't just got for online marketing either. If your results are none of the above, then it's back to the drawing board, because you can't sell something that doesn't work unless you want to alienate all your customers, get sued a lot and get yourself a bad name.

(Note: Specifics in words compared to the numbers that look like they were created for the sake of being statistical and factual, and look even worse, don't evoke any emotion, become cliché, remove their meaning and look false or like a lie at the same time)

Avoid instances where you come out with a headline that looks something like this: 'Discover how I made \$129,386.48 and gathered 45,690 subscribers in just 10 days with a budget of \$24.63 to spend on my 5 year, 3 months old business'. It's just too much. Be specific, back yourself into that corner, but don't overdo the numbers or they begin to lose their meaning. There's also far too much information that headline and it's presented incorrectly. We'll look at that now.

Mistake 5 – The Confusing Headline

The fifth mistake I'd like to talk to you about isn't complex, it doesn't have any major psychological equation behind it or anything like that. It's pretty simple really, so let me put it to you bluntly. Your headline should convey the single overall message of your sales letter, the biggest overall benefit of your product and nothing more. It's up to you to pick that overall benefit, the overall aim of your product or your unique angle or unique selling point before you even begin creating it. You cannot under any circumstances cram in three or four of them. Even two is too many. You need to grab attention and you need to do it quickly and efficiently. Focus is the name of the game here. What I've found to be true is the more you try to cram into your headline, the more of an influence it has on these two factors. The first is the confusion. If you confuse the heck out of someone they won't continue to read. Next, if you reveal everything and don't intrigue, they won't read on, and finally, if you have to reveal two things at a time in your headline, you run the risk of your target market thinking that it isn't relevant to them. Would you want to pay for someone that is only half of what you want, when you could get a fully specialized product elsewhere? Nope, you wouldn't, neither do I, and according to my tracking results, neither does anyone else.

The bottom line is if you try to cram more than that one single all powerful, all descriptive, but very specific selling point into your headline, you will push people away for one of the above reasons, so avoid it at all costs.

Notice when I talk about confusing, I'm not just talking about something that the reader doesn't understand in a literal form. You have to be very clear about what you're offering from the outset or they will misunderstand, lose interest quickly, think they're paying double for information that only half relates to them and more.

Hot Tip: Many of the decisions about your sales letter aren't made while you're writing it. It should actually be made while you're planning the creation of your product, long before a sales letter is even mentioned. It's important to know who you're targeting, what they want the most from you, the angle you're going to take, how you're going to present your product, your hook, and your unique selling points. If you can safely say you've done this at an early stage, congratulations, because half of your sales letter will already be written, and you won't need to try and cram more than necessary into your headline. If you find yourself unsure which point to place in your headline, and don't believe you have any of the above points, take that as a sign and head back and re-plan your products, even if they've already been created, after all, you can't write a headline to attract specific groups of people if you don't know what they want and don't have a unique angle on providing them with the solution to their problems. Of course, more to the point, if you don't know who you want to buy your product, not only won't you be able to keep them on your sales letter effectively when they finally arrive, your marketing will be far more expensive and less effective as you'll have trouble targeting the right groups of people. This is why I blab on about focus so much. It's important from the beginning of the pre-product creation phase. The sales letter actually comes very late in the day, just prior to the start of your marketing campaign.

The Confusing Headline Examples

A confusing headline is very easy to spot, because it does two things. Firstly, it usually goes over the top with specifics. We looked at that already. Secondly, it just has too much information in it. Your headline is there to get people reading either through solid and relevant intrigue, such as

‘10 reasons why you should quit online marketing right now’ or ‘5 online marketing lies you’re being told every day’ or it should convey only your biggest benefit such as ‘Discover how I made \$30,000 and gained 30,000 subscribers in just 60 days from scratch’ or ‘How a broke, uneducated and homeless 24 year old made \$1million in his first year online’. What you don’t want to be doing is cramming in benefit after benefit. This is my two sentences two ands rule. If you have two sentences or two or more ands in your headline, it’s too much.

I’ve seen all sorts of strange headlines that resemble something of this nature. ‘Discover how I made \$100,000 online last month and taught 50 people to do exactly the same and it only took them three months! Now I’m going to teach you do exactly the same and replicate these results and it’ll only take you 90 days or your money back! The proof of our success is below, so keep reading!’. Trust me when I say that’s one of the better ones. And this and that, it’s not needed.

What’s wrong with ‘I tutored 50 people last year – each one now makes in excess of \$100,000 month – I’m going to show you how they did it.’ It beats the original example by far. Why am I hearing about money back? I don’t even know what your product is yet. Why am I hearing about proof? Give the visitor a break, they just got there after all. You have plenty of time to prove things to them later. And this and that doesn’t work, it just blabs on too far. You have the whole sales letter to do that. Biggest intriguing point or biggest benefit. Capture your target market and take them into the sales letter quickly.

Mistake 6 - The Irrelevant Headline - Never forget what you're selling

Phew, ok, we’ve been through a lot so far. Lots to do, and lots to remember. Don’t worry, we’ll be going through it all again in the big practical sessions at the end of the course. Before we move on though, we’re going to look at one final mistake, and that’s the irrelevant headline.

We've already talked about the vague headlines, and the intrigue without meaning, but this is something different. One thing that never fails to stick out at me when I'm reading a sales letter for the first time is how the headline becomes less relevant. The big, unique selling point, the hook, the take and the twist you took and applied to your product got me to read your sales letter, but somewhere along the line, you forgot what you were selling, and began to sell me on to the same product, but with a different twist, which in my eyes due to the perception created at the start of the letter could well be a completely different product altogether. Suddenly it doesn't fulfil my needs anymore. Goodbye potential customer.

So keep this in mind. Stay consistent. If your headline is keeping people on the page and pushing them on to read the rest of the sales letter, then there's no need to change your angle half way through. Don't lose it while you're writing, or you'll put the very people off that you've just attracted. The people you attracted with your headline will leave half way through when the twist starts to differ from the headline, and those that would be attracted by your change of direction won't get that far because your headline doesn't interest them, a lose-lose situation. The amount of people I see sending potential customers to a sales letter that has an irrelevant headline, or changes tact half way through scaring those off that they do attract is staggering.

Hot Tip: So how do you figure out if you're scaring people off half way through your sales letter, and whether your headline is working as intended or not? Tracking software is one answer, but if you're on a very tight budget, your host should provide you with domain statistics. For example, at ThirdSphere.com (I get no money for that recommendation by the way) where my sites are hosted, I get the stats you saw in the examples at the start of the course, but in addition, I'm told how many people stay on the page for how long. When you have this information, it's unbelievably easy to begin to figure out what affect your changes are having, and where in your sales letter the fall-down points are.

Take it from me, if you don't have access to this stat already, get access to it if

you're serious about getting good at writing to sell. Whether you get it from your host, buy a membership to a tracking software site, or buy a script for yourself, get it, and use it. It's one of the most valuable statistics you can get your mitts on and will show you at a glance if your sales letter is working, and which parts need improving if it isn't doing what you planned. The timings per visitor are especially helpful for judging the effectiveness of headlines from the number of short stay durations, which is why I had to slip this hot tip in here.

Elements of an effective headline

Don't do this, don't do that. I'm sure you're fed up of hearing that from me by now, but the news is good. Since we've now finished looking at the most common mistakes, we're going to go on and look at exactly how to craft your headline using what you've learned so far.

Before you actually get crafting your headline though, I'm quickly going to zip through the elements of an effective headline. Now you know what not to do, let's talk about what to do. Once we're done there, I have a bit of a quiz for you, a little bit of 'spot the odd one out', and then you can start to write your own, confident about what you're writing and why you're writing it. This is going to be nice a short compared to the previous section, because we've already covered a lot there. We're concentrating on what you should do now. Let's get to it.

The biggest benefit of your product

First up, we have the biggest benefit of your product. We've established now that you have no reason to hide what you're selling. If your marketing is good, and you've targeted people who are interested in your product, you stand a far better chance of highlighting your biggest benefit (rather than trying to hide your product from them). The best thing about this is, it's really easy. What does your product do for the reader? Tell them – Intrigue, Interest, Educate.

The hook, angle, unique selling point

Something else that should be in with the biggest benefit of your product is the unique selling point, or your take on the project, or your angle if you prefer.

This is how you perceive the product while in use. Just because you've created a bit of ad tracking software for example, are you going to tell people about how effective it will make their ads when they use the software, and about all the little facts and figures they'll get to improve their sales letter writing, or are you going to go in the other direction? How about instead of selling the benefits of the software, you sell them on starting their own business using the software and selling it on the customers? See my point here, just because your product may be the same as everyone else's out there, it doesn't mean you can't come up with a unique angle and sell it to a fresh, new audience that you're more suited to tapping in to and where there's less competition.

It's as easy as that. Think outside the box. Of course, this angle should have been decided on before you got to the stage of writing your sales letter, but hey, things can change, and if you come up with a great idea just before launch, don't be afraid to change to it. So there we go, your twist or your angle. So you're gonna show me how to make money online, what makes you different to the other 100 sites I saw today telling me they know how to make money online and want to show me how if I pay them \$100? It has to be something, and it has to be quick, because if it's not the first thing I read, I'll just see you as another one of them, disappear, and go about my daily business. So there we have it. Your biggest benefit, and your twist or take on the product so far.

The specifics without going OTT

Ok, good. You have the main benefit down on paper. It's a good start. Most don't even seem to get that far. We're still a little way off a great headline though, but it's well on the way already. So the next step is to add in some detail. Remember we talked earlier about the mistakes people make when adding detail, the main one being they add too much of it, making it look like

statistics for statistics sake, and even less convincing when they first started.

Think back also to why we're doing this. It's about connecting to the customer, and having them visualize themselves in your position, or how much easier their life would be with your product. Like the descriptive text in a good story that sets the imagination off to do what it likes. This really gets your customer thinking and snaps them out of their daily trance when done correctly. So let's add some specifics now without going over the top and making it look fake by over doing the numbers.

Educate, Interest, Intrigue – In that order

Ah here we are again, the old educate, interest and intrigue. None of them are hard to do really, and we talked extensively about these earlier, so I won't blab on too much. All I'll say then is that your headline has to educate for a start. If you don't immediately educate those interested about your product, (which should be a vast majority of your visitors if your marketing is right) then you run the risk of losing your most important and potentially profitable visitors in exchange for intriguing the odd one that has a lot of time on their hands to look into something that doesn't particularly interest them. Your biggest benefit should have this taken care of already, especially if it's clear. Let's look at those examples again and spot the education bits of the headline we're after, and make any changes if relevant.

Good, ok, now interest. The great thing this is, if you have your biggest benefit in there already, you're sending people who are interested in your product to your site through your targeted marketing campaigns, you're there. See how easy this is? All of these intertwine in such a way that if you have yourself one really great part of a headline, the others just fall into place. This is why I'm always talking to you about starting with the basics, and going from the ground up.

Intrigue is a little different. You actively have to pursue this one a little, but that's a good thing in itself, because writing the intrigue parts are great

practice and will give you a good understanding of what works and what doesn't in terms of this. There's many ways to intrigue, incomplete information is obviously the main one.

You're about to show person x how you did y. Or you want person x to discover how they can get y. It doesn't even have to be about them. Discover how I got y also works well, although your margin for error is much smaller, and it's much better to actually talk about the reader without assuming too much. Don't patronize, or pretend you know something when you don't. We're trying to create a solid, positive image and connection from the start.

Clarity

Clarity is a little something I want to slip in here, because it's so important for the whole sales letter, including your headline of course. Be clear about things, don't confuse anyone, or use any long words. Avoid words that can't be readily found in the dictionary or slang that might be hard to understand for those that don't have English as their primary language too. It's not so bad in your sales letter, because people can skip over it, but your attention grabber has to be all things to everyone if you're going to see great successes.

Not trying to answer any questions or crush fears. That comes later.

Ok what you have so far is spot on if you've followed the what we've covered. This is a good thing. Remember earlier on we were talking about focus, and how some people try to cram too much into their sales headlines from the start. Crushing fears, providing proof of your expertise, introducing yourself, highlighting a bunch of your benefits and the like. Don't worry about that for now. Take it easy, take it slow. There's plenty of time for that later. If you've ever critiqued yourself or seen someone else reading one who happens to be the chatty type and comments about things out loud, you'll find questions will start to come to them later, after they're into the letter. There are means and methods to integrate your expertise into the headline, but it can sometimes be counter productive giving the impression that only someone with your

expertise can do what you're doing. In all occasions I've found it actually best to talk yourself down, talk about how little experience you had (note had, not have).

That's fine, there's no problem with doing that at all. From what my stats tell me however, I'll be honest in saying that it doesn't make a huge amount of difference whether you talk yourself down for this reason, as long as your big benefit is there to be seen, nice and confidently displayed for all visitors to see immediately. You see, once they're interested, they're hooked, and you did that earlier with the other aspects of the headline. It's important that you keep it clean, keep it sharp, to the point, and don't overcomplicate things or you may find your headline starts to over sell and sound pushy. That's one for you to test anyway. If you find a big difference between the two, that's perfect. Stick with it. If like me however you find that it has little if any affect, that's fine too, which handily brings me to the next point.

Test It Out

Test it out. Simple as that. We talked about how to test properly already, so I won't go on about it anymore in this section, so long as you promise to keep testing and to never have a sales letter up there unless you're tracking the stats and testing something at the same time. Your progress will be greatly enhanced in quality and speed. Most importantly, you'll be able to adapt to changing trends, spot overused words and phrases and maybe you'll be sitting where I am when you have your first \$70,000 week writing up your stats and findings for other marketers.

Alternative Headlines & Supplements

Ok, so we've been through the headline. As you can see that was a pretty hefty number of pages for just looking at a two to six line chunk of text at the top of your sales letter. The hard bit is now over, so you can relax. Many of the rules we talked about here will apply to other sections of the sales letter too, although of course, instead of attracting attention, the roles will be

different entirely. We'll look at this in full later. For now though, I just wanted to point out to you that there always exceptions. My tracking results may differ from others. Some may disagree with me and say you should innovate and create new, revolutionary headlines instead of just optimizing what you've been learning for the past seven years through a base knowledge and tracking. I say great, if you want to do that, go ahead, just be wary. Innovation is a costly tactic, although it can pay off big eventually if you get it right. Stick with what we know to be fact right now, and then later, once you begin to sell a bunch of your products, you can choose how much time and money you want to dedicate to innovation and new ideas.

There will always be alternatives and disagreements between marketers about what works and what doesn't, but all in all, take what they have to offer you, put it into action, test it and refine it to suit your needs. Seven years of online marketing later and that tactic hasn't failed me yet.

Chapter

6

The Sub Headline And Its Role

Alright, good. We've got the probably the most important part of your sales letter finished. That's your headline. Of course, every section has its place and can't function correctly without the rest, but the headline easily has the most to it in terms of testing and tactics to try.

Anyway, so here we are. We've moved on to the sub headline. The sub headline is a short, three sentence message that comes straight after your main headline. I call it a lead in line or a settle in line, because that's exactly what it's doing. Your visitor has just landed on the page and has been presented with a dirty great load of text that crammed in the biggest benefit of the product as quickly as possible to grab their attention. Now it's done that successfully, we need to start calming things down nicely, hence the settle in line or we're going to scare our visitors away pretty quickly.

There are ultimately three things that you can do with your sub headline. Bear in mind now though, that as far as I'm concerned this is as important as the headline itself as it makes the transition between the loud attention grabber and the normal sales letter itself. It's unfortunately the underestimated headline, and it isn't tracked and tested nearly enough, so be sure to actually get out there and start testing as soon as you possibly can with this.

Alright, so what do we actually put in the sub headline? Well, you have a choice of three different methods or you can go with a combination of the three. All of them work really well together, and in all honesty as long as you have one of them, it doesn't seem to make much difference. In fact as far as my tracking is concerned, I couldn't see a difference at all, even over several tests for several products. Saying that however, there are clear rights and wrongs, but we'll get to the wrongs later. Lets start with the rights for a bit of a refreshing change.

Make the benefit bolder

The first thing you should think about doing is making your benefit bolder. Expanding on what your headline said is fine. Re-iterating what your headline has said already. It's real important that when you're doing this however that you're not going too far. The same rules apply here as we talked about for your headline.

One benefit. One benefit only. The biggest benefit of your product without going overboard. Think back to the previous section when we were talking about how the people you've sent to your site shouldn't be kept waiting when they land on that page. There's no reason to hide what you're about, and the same is true here.

The reason I say it has to be your biggest, all encompassing benefit that wraps up your product, is because if you start to split them up, have one benefit in your headline, and a different one in your sub headline, you begin to lose the focus. Those interested in your headline benefit may not be interested in your sub-headline. Although it is possible, It's a lot harder to make two benefits relevant to the same people in all cases, even if they're relevant to the same product.

Intrigue further

The second aspect of a good sub headline is to intrigue further. I won't go on about this too much, because you likely remember the whole section we did about intrigue and education when we talked about headlines. Intrigue further is the key with this as is every section. We want the visitor and potential customer to want to know what we know, by either revealing partial information, or suggesting we know how to help them improve further in a short space of time. We'll leave it at that for now.

Second benefit

Ok this one is a little more complex. The most important thing to keep in mind if you do attempt to add a completely different benefit it has to be related to the original benefit in your headline. I would suggest staying away from this one to be honest, because it's a little risky.

All the same, if you do want to go ahead and give it a shot, make sure your tracking and testing is running properly because if you get it wrong by attracting people by saying one thing, and your sub headline goes off on a tangent and starts talking about something that they aren't so interested in, you will start to see problems.

Create Urgency & Reasons to read on.

So here we are, the fourth aspect of a successful sub headline. Creating urgency and reasons to read on is something that you can do effectively without too much hassle. Whether it's limited numbers, a time limit, or a one-time offer, make sure your numbers are real. If they're not, your visitors will notice, and rather than getting more people to buy your products, what actually happens if you get this wrong is that your visitor to sales ratio will plummet, and your efforts will have the opposite effect.

Something that I want you to keep in mind at all times is that your sub headline, while not as important as your main headline is as read. In my experience, less than five percent of the people that land on your page will take note of your headline without taking note of your sub headline.

This is why I emphasize so much importance here. While you'll notice the rules are much the same as the headline, as are the examples, one final point to keep in mind is that they shouldn't be the same. They can convey the same point, the same benefit, but in a different way. This is your chance now to give your headline double the emphasis and cover more bases as far as catering to your target market, which leads me on to my next points: The biggest mistakes that you can make when writing your sub headline. Once we're done

with this, I'll put our headlines together with sub headlines and show you exactly what I mean by every point we've covered so far. So let's get to it.

Substituting Information

Alright, I'm going to keep these short for you, because many of these apply to standard headlines too. Let's begin with substituting information. This is the biggest mistake I see made in sub headlines, and this involves removing, or omitting information from your headline so you can continue your sentence or complete the information in your sub headline.

Don't make this mistake, because you'll see a downturn in your visitor to sales ratios. Your headline is there for a reason, and that's to immediately glue your visitors to the page by educating them, intriguing them and spurring them on to read further, all done with just a few lines of text. If you split things up and start leaving information out until later, you're going to be breaking at least one of the successful headline rules, spreading your information too thin, and ultimately defeating the object of having a headline in the first place.

So there we have it. Rule number one. Don't leave anything out of your main headline for the sake of having a sub headline. In my experience it's actually better to have a full-bodied headline and no sub headline than do this. (It actually took me a while to figure out what was going on when I was testing and tracking this, but it turns out splitting up the information really hurts read through rates, and the average amount of time people were spending on my sales letter fell to unacceptable levels).

Leaving it late.

Mistake number two is what I'd describe as leaving it late. I won't dwell on this too much because it's similar to the previous point, but for a different part of the sales letter.

So here's the deal. Make sure your sub headline does exactly what your headline does. Don't leave it until later or further down the sales letter. The moment the visitor knows what your product is (which should be the moment they finish reading your headline) questions will begin to pop into their head about all sorts of things. While you can't cram everything into your sub headline, I'll repeat what I said about your headline. Its job is to educate, interest and intrigue.

Every single part of your sales letter has a different role, but all in all, each section has the overall goal of getting your readers to continue reading. This goes for the every part of a sales letter. Don't cram too much in there and try to go beyond the role of the section, but at the same time, don't spread your information too thin or your readers won't flow. Considering the role of the sub headline, or settle in line as I like to call it is to make the transition from the headlines all out bluntness, into the much more subtle main sales letter, if it doesn't spur people to read on by at least giving them something new without giving them everything, they simply won't read on.

Slow Down

Something that I see going on a lot, is a huge long paragraph of text expanding on the couple of lines that the sub headline should hold. One thing I want you to remember overall is kind of a checklist. Always ask yourself, what have I done so far? What questions have I answered that would be on my customers mind? And most importantly, am I doing things in the right order? If you're wondering how you tell you're doing things in the wrong order, it's really easy to spot.

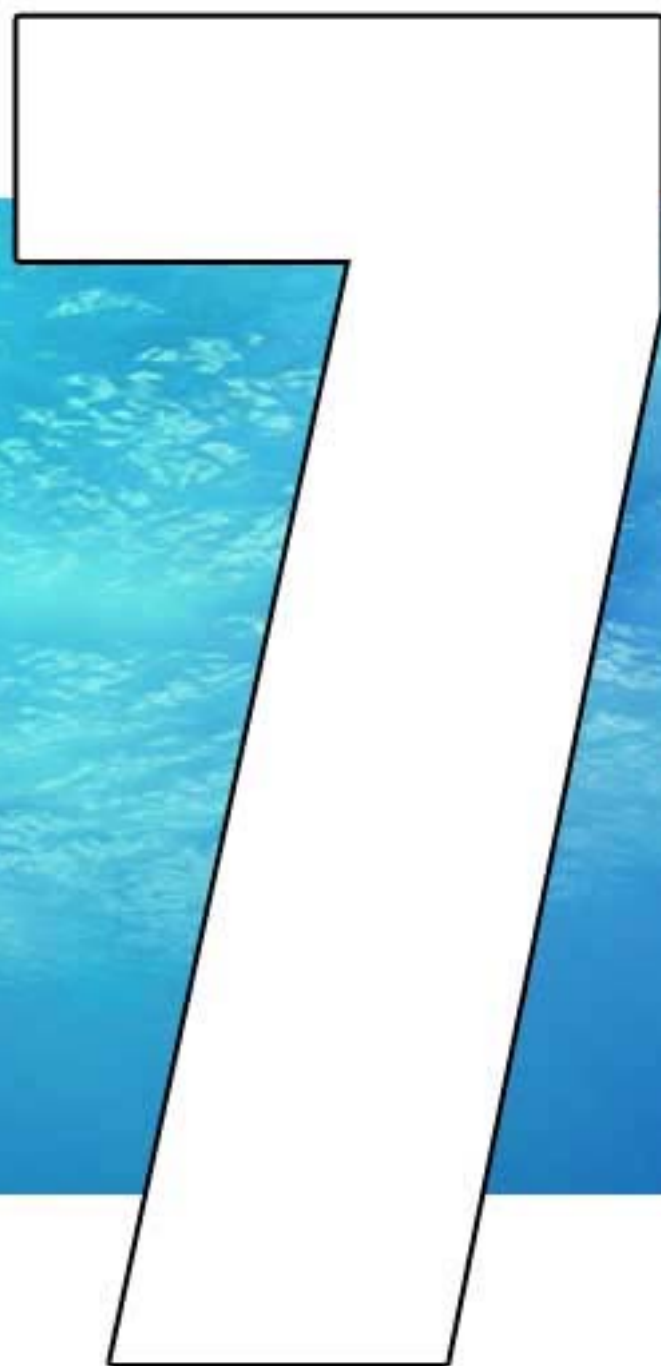
Think about it this way. Are you trying to persuade someone that you're like them before you even introduce yourself? Making that connection is impossible without first saying hey, telling people your name, where you're from and why you're there.

Are you trying to answer questions in your customers' minds before they even appear? For example, I've seen a great many sites try and crush fears before they've even introduced their product, and when they finally get around to it, they have to start all over again trying to answer those question in their prospects mind. Total disaster. I don't want to hear about money back, refunds, guarantees or see proof that the product works without fully understand what it is and does first. Neither will your visitors so save all of that for later in your letter.

My point is this; your sub headline has the same role as your main headline. All aspects of your sales letter give the potential customer reason to read on but not before their time. Your sub headline is no different, so slow down, take a deep breath and think about ever word that you write.

Chapter

7

A large, stylized white number '7' with a black outline is centered on the page. The number is positioned over a background of blue water with ripples, which occupies the middle section of the page. The top and bottom sections of the page are white.

Introduce Yourself

The short introduction

We've sorted out the very top of your sales letter and your attention grabbers already. Now comes the start of your main sales letter. You'll start to see the pattern we talked about earlier here, and the reason that I told you not to try and answer any questions or crush problems or fears in your readers minds at the start because we have the whole rest of the sales letter to do that, and it starts right here with your introduction.

The big introduction itself we'll talk about later, what we're talking about here is your personal introduction. This is your first real connection to the reader. They're going to find out:

Who you are –Remember that you've given them a headline and a sub headline at this point. If you've followed this correctly, they know what you're offering them already, and how you're offering to improve their lives. The bad part is they likely have it in the back of their mind that you're selling something and that you want their money. Your job is to now remove the hard sell aspect, but leave in the product, its benefits, and still ask for the money at the end of the letter. Not an easy thing to do without making a connection. Would you buy something created by a faceless nobody that you know nothing about, or a friend that recommends you something? There's much more of this to come, but this is the first point at which you start to become their friend. Tell them your name. An introduction. It's as simple as that. Connection made, congrats, you're no longer a stranger.

Where you're from – Where you're from is the next step. Think about real world conversations and how they progress. The next step in any conversation is where are you from? It's the natural connection making introductory process, so go with it. It works nicely as a little addition. Sometimes the most effective lessons are right are under our noses.

What you're doing here – A simple, straight forward question in the flow of things. The great thing about this is, compared to a normal conversation, you can immediately tell people what you know they want to hear, and what you know they'll be interested in. Are you an online marketer? Great, you know they'll be interested because you targeted online marketers in your campaigns. Are you an angler? Good news, so are they. Instant connection, and the first of many things your reader will find they have in common with you further down the letter.

How recent your website is – Ever land on one of those websites and find yourself reading an interesting article or something, and as you scan the page, you suddenly start to find things that don't make sense. It becomes obvious when you spot the little copyrighted 1998-2001 stamp at the bottom. It's out of date by years. Now if you're reading something of interest that's not a problem, but if you're reading and find yourself wanting to buy the product, would you have second thoughts if you were led to believe through insufficient date stamping that the site was out of date? What about the product, will it end up being out of date too? What about the techniques it teaches? More questions. We're here to answer questions, squash fears, worries, doubts and other negative feelings not to create more. Make sure your website is stamped with a date from this year. In fact, next time you're about on the net and land on a site date stamped recently, stop for a second, how do you feel about that compared to one that isn't date stamped? The first feels like a friendly populated atmosphere, the second feels like an empty store.

Why they should listen to you – So why should they listen to you? Are you the designer of the software, the owner of a business? Or are you an authority for another reason, such as a record holder or an award winner? No ones going to listen to you unless they think they can learn something from you or get something they don't have. Stamp your authority on the matter immediately.

That may sound a lot, but all we're talking about here is two to three lines and thirty seconds of audio at most. If you've been in online marketing for longer than a few days and have your hands on this product, then in all actuality you've seen this already, there's no doubt in my mind. You probably just took it at face value, and said yeah ok, that's the guys name, that's his job, that's today's date. A lot more was happening at the same time though, as you can see above. The great thing about it is it's so similar to real life. Don't be afraid to use that as a guide.

Hot Tip: Ever heard an online marketer talk about how different everything is online compared to offline? That's not true in all cases, especially this one. How would you make a connection to someone in real life? You'd walk up, say hey, tell them your name, ask for theirs, talk about where you're from and things progress from there. The medium is different, the tools and presentation is different, but the underlying methods are the same. People tend to overcomplicate in the online world, or miss the obvious. Keeping that in mind now, let me ask you something else.

Let's say you're in a real life situation. Your friend wants to be taught something, and that something just happens to be your speciality. The catch is they don't know that. How do you persuade them that you can teach them what they want to know better than some course that they could easily go and sign up for? We're all masters at this. Ever mentioned that you want to learn how to do something and one of your friends jumps in 'Ooo ooo, I'll teach you' and you had no idea they even knew how to do it. Not only that but you've never seen them actually doing this activity that they want to teach you about, yet somehow, they manage to persuade you that they're right for the job, and you end up shunning world class professionals for friendly advice from someone who, maintaining all reason, probably doesn't know that much.

Strange huh? Watch that effect, and listen to the tactics people use to successfully persuade others in real life. How can you adapt that to the web? This is something that will put you ahead of these thinking purely in online

terms and ignoring the offline, not just for sales letters either, but for all walks of business, both online and off. Listen closely the next time you hear this happening, pick up on it, recognize it, and see what you can learn from it.

Common Mistakes

As you can imagine, as this is such a simple and quick addition to your sales letter, even though there's a lot of optional information that you can add as we discussed already, there are very few mistakes that can be made. The biggest one of all is not adding an introduction. If you haven't got one at all, you can't make that all important connection and have the reader see you as a friend or impartial third party rather than a pure sales person. For that reason I'm not going to go on for too long here, but there are a couple of quick notes I'd like to put to you.

Wrong Role

Make sure your role is relevant to your product. It sounds simple, but I've seen people introduce themselves as the webmaster when trying to sell their products. What does a webmaster know about making money online, or about fishing, or about how to lose weight? They know nothing at all as far as I'm concerned. All a webmaster does is maintains the site itself. Often they do more of course, but it's all about perception.

Here's another example for you. Take the CEO or owner of the business. That's great if you're selling something related to business, such as opportunities, business training and the like, but not so great if your actual product isn't related. Dating tips for example, how to read peoples body language, a fishing course, weight loss products and the like. So what if you're the owner? Does that really qualify you to be teaching people about these subjects? Probably not.

In summary, above all, make sure you introduce yourself in an authoritative role that's relevant to your product, or people just won't listen to you.

Elements Of an effective introduction

So there we have it. The introduction. Now you know how not to do things, let put together a little checklist of aspects that are behind a successful introduction by means of a small summary.

- Can never have too much info about yourself.

Simple really, the more you and the reader have in common, the more they're going to be interested in what you have to say and take it seriously. You can never have too much information about yourself packed into these two lines but only (and this is imperative) only if it's using an aspect of the introduction, where your name, your location, your position and what qualifies you to write, and of course, the time and date of writing, and any awards or distinguishing features or aspects that may place you as an authority on the matter. If it doesn't fit into any of those categories, you can leave it out. We'll deal with the rest later.

- Build connection is all.

Building that all-important connection to your visitor is all we're trying to do here, nothing more and nothing less. I've seen people try and sell their whole product in just these two lines and a bit of audio. Take a deep breath and keep each section relevant and confine them to their specific roles, or you'll scare your visitors away. Build your connection, introduce, stamp your authority, date it and move on.

Adding Audio.

Ok, finally for this section, let's talk about adding audio to your page. What I will say to start with is make it short and to the point. Some people like to read the whole sales letter out, but I find that actually detracts from the experience and the natural flow of things. While it seems people will stay on the page for the same amount of time, and it doesn't affect that, the number of people that actually click the order link seems to go down. Whether it's because they

fiddle while listening, and the site doesn't require their full attention anymore or what, my results show me that it's actually best to have an introduction no longer than 30 seconds long.

The great thing about audio is it makes things nice and personal again. It's almost like talking to a real person, and you're no longer just sending your visitors to a faceless block of text. So without further ado, here's a short roundup of what you should be thinking about when creating your audio introduction.

Use Your Headline

Your audio introduction should contain a couple of points. First up is your introduction, which we've just talked about at length. Secondly, re-iterate the biggest benefit that you already mentioned in your headline and your lead in or sub headline. It's kind of like the whole top section of your sales letter done in a more personable way, for that reason and that reason only, to put a friendly voice to the product. Don't try to cram everything in here. Don't worry right now about any reservations the customer has, don't worry about proving yourself, don't worry about trying to get them to order straight away, just introduce, and let the rest of your sales letter do it's job when it comes to that.

Don't Hard Sell

The number one piece of advice I would give someone creating audio for the top of their sales letter is don't hard sell. This is the first thing that people are going to hear when they land on your page. They want to hear a real person speaking honestly about something that interests them. If that's what they hear, they're going to move down your sales letter, keep reading, and ultimately have a bigger chance of actually buying your product. If you hard sell now, they're going to be gone. I get pitched to hundreds of times a day when I'm surfing the net, and I don't want to be pitched to like the moment I land on your site otherwise you know what I'm going to do right?

I'll close it like it was a dirty popup that just violated my space and interrupted me when I was looking for legitimate information or a product that meets my needs.

Hot Tip – Rush selling is a big problem online. Going for shorter copy because you don't think they'll have the time to read long copy, trying to make them buy with just a few sentences and pushing them to the order link as quickly as you can. Just two examples of rush selling that doesn't work. The reason it doesn't work is all those questions haven't been answered yet. You can't possibly put forward the biggest benefits of your product, a seductive headline, make yourself an authority on the subject, provide proof that it works and testimonials from other customers, call the user to action, make a connection to the customers, put yourself forward as an impartial third party all in a screen-full of text. We have ways and means of catering to those short on time which we'll deal with later. More often than not, most visitors won't even read your whole sales letter, but skip down to the well marked titles that interest them the most. You can never provide too much information on a sales letter. Let the user decide when they've heard enough, don't restrict them yourself by rush selling.

A Final Word

Well, I think that about wraps it up for your introduction. That's quite a few pages for something that will ultimately only take up a couple of lines on your sales letter, but still, I'm glad we have it covered.

In all honesty, the only thing that you could do wrong is not include one at all. The rest is all optimizations and tweaks, but hey, I think you'll agree, seven pages of optimization and tweaks from real life data is worth it if you're going to sell more of your products.

Chapter

8

The Big Introduction

The Story Behind Your Product & Its Role

We've talked a fair bit already about tips, tactics and techniques, and we only have a max of about twenty lines written so far. That's not a problem though, because the hardest parts are out of the way. What you're now going to be seeing are several tips and techniques that apply to one big block of text, not just a couple of lines.

So let's get started on the introduction to your sales letter. You've already introduced yourself, and your visitors know exactly who you are, and what your product claims to solve for them. We need to take that further now and create a further connection to your reader through an introduction.

They Are Important

One thing I do want to get out of way first is to assure you that your introductions if created properly are read and do contain important trust building information for the reader. A common misconception among new marketers that haven't managed to get enough traffic to actually test their sales letters properly yet, is that introductions are a waste of space, they're never read, they don't hold any important information, and it's ok to just jump in and start listing the features and benefits of the product. This couldn't be further from the truth.

So before we actually get writing your introduction, let's look at its roles, because it has plenty of them. We want to keep everything structured though, like building blocks that fit nicely together, so we're not going to chuck everything in there from the start.

Using your introduction to introduce yourself further.

The biggest role of your introduction is to further reiterate what relation you have to the product and why you created it. Was it because the competition

wasn't doing its job? Was it because you felt no one was telling the whole truth? Was it because you discovered something new and wanted to tell people about it? Was it an accident, or as a result of a conversation you had between you and a friend about how they wished something existed to help them do a job? All of these are legitimate, and we'll look at them specifically in a moment because that's only one of the roles of a sales letters introduction.

Using Your Introduction To Connect & Empathise

Role number two is to empathise with the reader, or rather have them empathise with you. Remember, this product you created was for something you're interested in, something that affected you in some way. There was a reason that you created it. That reason is always connected to your target market, and that's great! You know why that's great? Because if you are the target market, and you created the product to help you in some way, then you know what they want already.

Let's face it. People love to fit in and feel a connection to others when it comes to solving problems. They like to be told they're not the only one having this problem. As soon as you put something down in front of them and talk about why you created this product, if you really have targeted your market well, your visitors are going to be saying 'Wow, yeah, I had that problem too!' Instant connection, and you've likely won them over from the start and they will keep reading on the basis that you both have something in common.

So there we have it. Create a connection, something in common that you both have. That shouldn't be in the slightest bit difficult if you know what your target market wants. Seeing as there's no way you can create a product without first knowing about your target market and what floats their boat, it's safe to assume that you know how to do this already. Make them say 'Yeah! I know exactly what he means when he says that!'

Problems At The Front Of Their Mind

Ok next up, what else is your introduction here for aside from to create a connection and point out that you and the reader have something in common? Well, next on my list is to show the reader that they have a problem in the first place. Again, that shouldn't be difficult in the slightest if you know your market and why you created the product in the first place.

You see, the whole idea of a sales letter is to first bring a problem to the front of someone's mind, show them why it's so devastating and holding them back from success in whatever they're trying to achieve, show them that there is a solution, show them that it worked for you, show them that it worked for others, tell them that it can work for them too, and then take the payment and deliver the product. It's as simple as that, nothing more, nothing less.

The problem is, a lot of people don't even know they have a problem, and if they don't know what the problem is, they're not looking for a solution, which is why it's so important that your targeting is right and your headline tells them what they're looking at immediately. Let me let you into a little secret here. At least half the people I surveyed that visited my site back in 1999, 2000 and later in 2005 when I repeated the questions actually visited because they were interested, but not because they had a problem to solve. So all in all, it was down to me to be making sure that they knew a problem existed.

In general, people love to fulfil their potential, so you don't actually have to create new problems entirely, and in fact, I'd advise that you don't. Just expand on the ones that they have already. They don't have to get something completely new for it to fulfil them, but they can always improve what they have.

Hot Tip: Let me ask you a quick question here. When was the last time you wanted to try and achieve something new? Take up a new hobby, or break into a new business, or go somewhere that you haven't been before? Now think back, how often do you do this every year? Ok, we don't need an exact number as such, but keep that at the front of your mind.

Now let me ask you this. When was the last time you looked in the mirror and thought 'Hmm yeah, I want to change <insert any feature of your life here>'. So you see my point? You'll do far better catering to what people already do and trying to improve that than trying to attract them to try something totally new. Your marketing will flourish in general if you keep this in mind, because it doesn't only apply writing sales letter introductions.

People are always out to fulfil themselves or to improve something about them. Remember it, and profit from it. I don't know any successful marketers that don't.

Telling A Good Story Is Easy

Let's move on from the fulfilment and improvement factors now. The next role of your introduction is to tell a good story. Yep, you heard me right. So why do we want to tell someone a story when all we really want to do is sell them something? The answer is twofold. First of all, here we are creating that connection again. Everyone has good stories to tell whether they know it or not. The main worry that most people have about telling stories is the one about not interesting anybody with it, or worse still sending them to sleep.

Let me assure you right now. That's almost impossible to do, and I know for a fact, that if you can write, you can interest people with your story. How do I know this? Well, ok I cheated a little here, and the only reason I know this is because of your subject matter, not your writing skills. You're sending people interested in your product to your site, and you're writing about a subject these visitors in your target market are interested in and can empathise with, because you targeted them before. How can someone not be interested in your views if what you're saying affects them and something they're interested in?

So there we have it, you don't need to worry about that. That's also why people without a degree in English or psychology and such like can sell.

Because they're sending the right people to the site in the first place, and talking about things that interest the pre-qualified visitors.

The second reason we're telling a good story here, is because it sucks people in. How often do you enjoy reading blatant hyped ads? Not very often I'd imagine, that is unless they're entertaining, funny and tell a story. How often do you enjoy reading a book or a magazine article, or any text at all for that matter that tells a story? Pretty often I'd say. But hey, we can take this even further. How often do you enjoy reading a book or magazine article, or any text that affects you or something you do, and tells a story at the same time?

You see all we're doing here is piling on more and more good things that are going to glue your reader to your page and keep them interested (that's the key word here). We have a massive advantage in that just like a writer knows how to tap into their target audiences wants, needs, desires and fantasies, we know how to do the same to our target market, because we are our target market. We couldn't have created the product without that fact being in place. Don't miss an introduction out and pass up this potential just because you think you can't tell a good story and nobody cares. If it affects them, it interests them. If it interests them, I assure you, they care. If they're having a particularly bad day and don't want to read a ream of personalized and targeted text, what will they do? Skip down until they're caught by another title. The only reason they'd leave at this point is if your headline didn't do its job or if they weren't interested in your product in the first place. In summary, personal introductions attract far more sales than they put off according to my tracking results.

Introductions To Belittle The Competition

The next great thing I love about introductions is that you can tear the competition apart without naming any names directly. You can say you've tried them all and talk about your results, why it didn't work and how much money you lost testing them out. You can advise the reader against trying specific methods because you've been there, done that, lost your life savings

or wasted your time all just to have some sleazy salesman with a crappy product spend your money on a new luxury boat or something.

Let me be blunt about this one. It is scare mongering full stop. The fact is you don't want your potential customer to go shopping around. You can't name the competition and talk about how terrible they were, or you'll likely end up in court, but you can generalize. The moment you hear from someone you trust that other people trying to sell similar solutions are sleazy money grabbing salesman with crappy products that don't work, have bad customer service, take your money and run, charge too much, and could cost you your life savings or years of your time, or any and all of the above, are you going to leave the page to check out the competition? I doubt it very much. Remember we've already connected, we're in the same job, we do the same for a living here, we both want the same thing, and I've just given you some free tips and advice to help you. I'm entertaining you too, I'm letting you into my day to day life and I'm about to stop you from making a huge mistake, or solve a huge problem that you have and help you improve yourself.

See where I'm coming from? All of this is to keep the reader on the page, and while most go for statistic based methods, talking about how much cheaper they are compared to everyone else, you have much more power in an introduction to stop your visitor from bothering to look at anyone else because of the connection you made, and because of the interest you generated through your story. You can immediately see how someone without an introduction is at a major disadvantage here.

Ok, I can see you giving me that evil look out the corner of your eye. Isn't that unethical you ask? Putting fear into the minds of the very people you're gaining trust from? Well yeah, under normal circumstances it probably would be, but I have no problem doing it, and I'll tell you why. It's true. Think about it. Why would you have created this product if it wasn't true? You wouldn't have. The competition couldn't give you what you wanted, so you went ahead and made your own, or in the case of an info product, that you have something to say that they don't or you know something they don't.

Sure you might argue, but you're here to make money out of selling it, that's why you created the product, but the fact is, if you're creating the product, you should have a unique hook. It should do something that the competition doesn't. It should be better, bigger, brighter, more efficient and more competent at the job.

It should be faster, look better, feel better, taste better and so on. So all in all, you are telling the truth. If you're lying, there's something wrong with your product and you need to go back and take another look, plan properly and look at what makes you different and superior to your competition.

Hot Tip: Every time you create a product, it should have a hook or be presented in a unique way. That's the only way you're going to be noticed among a plethora of competing sites. If you haven't picked a niche market to get into that's fine, but make sure your product and presentation sticks out like a sore thumb, because otherwise you're going to be trounced by competition with the contacts and a big budget.

Introductions To Build Trust

Ok moving on now to something a little more positive, and that's building trust in your introductions. There's several ways to do this, but all of them involve at least one of the following.

- A) Giving free advice to help the reader improve/avoid/get something.
- B) Creating a trustworthy impartial picture of yourself
- C) Entertaining the reader with stories that will interest them

You probably noticed in the previous section when I was talking about the competition that I mentioned trust already. There's not a huge amount more to say about the issue. The fact that you've made the connection to the reader already and you're both interested in the same thing works well for a starting point. Taking things further is as simple as educating the reader. What have

you learned from your experiences that will really help them to improve themselves? So you see, using introductions to build trust pretty much comes naturally. It takes very little work to carry out successfully other than talking to the reader as if they were a friend about things they care about that will help them improve.

Common Introduction Mistakes

Before we move onto the practical for this section, let's move on from how to actually write your introduction, and take a look at some of the mistakes people make when writing theirs. Let me assure you also, what you're about to read (and have been reading throughout this course) is fact taken directly from my results. I've been tracking since my first site launched in 1999, and these are the results. I have to admit also, that every mistake, no matter how obvious you see here even though I'm almost embarrassed to admit it, I tested too.

Introduction Mistake Number One – No Introduction

I can't for the life of me see how anyone could go ahead and create a sales letter without this type of introduction and expect to sell anything. It's almost like the blurb on the back of a book. Would you buy a book just by its title, without first hearing about the author and a rundown of how the story came to be, where it's set and the like?

Notice I used books as an example a lot here, and the reason is people enjoy reading them and it's the most basic form of a story. Computer games can have good stories, so can radio, TV, magazines, word of mouth direct from friends, even smart commercials nowadays tell a story. It's all done for a reason. We're selling without selling. Hooking the reader into the sales letter without hard selling them, but entertaining them instead. We get to create a connection, build trust, educate the reader, keep them reading, capture their interests, hopes for the future, their imaginations and more, simply by telling a story.

The only arguments I can think of against including a story like introduction of this type are firstly, the writer is worried they won't be interesting enough to hold the attention of the visitor, so instead they leave it out and jump straight into a hard sell.

We already talked about this one however, and the fact that the reader has been targeted through your marketing and sent to your site because they're interested in the product in the first place, they will be interested. Why? Because it affects them and their life. Much of the work is done for you.

The second argument that I've heard is this: 'Oh, I'm just selling to business owners, they won't be interested to hear stories, they just want to know about the product'. Here's some news for anyone who says that, they may be business owners, they may be buying a professional product or service, but whoever is reading your sales letter still has emotions, they can still visualize and be affected by trust building and the connection you take. Business owners especially will want the best for their business, so that isn't really an argument. I've sold scripts and programming work that go direct to businesses many times throughout my career, and I'm doing it again with a new business as you read this, and I can assure you, they do read these introductions and are affected by them.

Introduction Mistake 2 – Irrelevant Story

Now as far as I know, the only reason anyone could possibly have an irrelevant story that the reader just doesn't care about is if they talk about something that isn't related to their product, or if they are sending visitors to their site that don't care about the product. Both are fatal marketing mistakes, very obvious ones in fact. I'll be honest, I've never even bothered to test the first one. Why would I talk about something irrelevant to my product when my websites are focused, one product per site jobs? This is why I always rave about focused sites and not multi-product ones because this can't happen.

As for the second point about not sending the right people to your site, I have done this before. Not intentionally of course, I just had no idea about targeting. Safe to say I learned that lesson quickly, or I doubt I'd be here otherwise.

Introduction Mistake 3 - Too Short

If there's one thing that really gets me about a lot of introductions out there, it's that they are way too short. Three or four lines doesn't cut it. You can't do everything that we've mentioned in that space. The reason I get when I ask about why someone has created a three line introduction is the old 'I don't think people will be interested in it, and I just want to get them on to hearing about my product'.

Remember that bridge example I used earlier in the course, about people walking from one end to the other and if they fall through you don't get your money when they emerge successfully? Well, this is like taking the first slat right out of the floor.

Let me tell you a little secret that I don't often share.

Some of the best sales letters that I've ever read have had introductions that span up to five or six screens, or even more. They stick in my mind for years and I see the owners talking about how much it made them and how high the response rates are. These long sales letters with big introductions always seem to be the most popular. They sell the most, they make the most money, they're heavily promoted and praised as 'amazingly written' and the like. I still remember three from my first year in marketing back in 1999. I remember the words they used, what they talked about, how long they were, and which sentences touched me the most. That's a pretty scary thought considering yesterday I read through no less than ten sales letters and not one of them has stuck in my mind today.

So what etched that image in my head? Was it the layout? Nope. Was it the colors? Nope, it wasn't that either. It was the preciseness of the words. They made me feel. They didn't use any special technique or method to do this. All they did was know their market well. They knew what I wanted as a visiting online marketer looking for success.

Nowadays the most you usually get is a little line about how hard it is for online marketers to succeed. That's nothing. These sales letters went on for pages, talking about exactly how I felt, describing frustrating situations, how they'd been led astray, scammed, ripped off, told wrong information and how they fixed it. There was a story and some education behind each one too. The biggest one I believe took me almost an hour and a half of reading to get to the product, but you know what? I enjoyed it because they empathised so well, and judging by how many times from how many big marketers sent ads about it to my inbox, and the fact these very people are now some of the most successful online marketers tells me it works, which is why I use a long introduction for all of my websites unless I'm testing something specific.

In summary - Don't cut yourself short. Don't be fooled into thinking people won't have the time, or they won't be interested. If you're sending the right people to your site in the first place, and you know how they feel and what they want, you can interest them. If you can interest them, they will read on.

Introduction Mistake 4 - Badly Headed

This is a theme that will be present throughout your sales letter and something that I should probably warn you in advance, we'll be talking about a heck of a lot. It's about headings. You know your headline is there to grab attention, but what happens if someone reading your sales letter loses their place for a moment, or is distracted by something for a few seconds, or even more likely, sees something they're not interested in or already know?

That's a big problem for you, because you've paid to get them there. That's your money being wasted now by your visitors looking away and losing their

place or not being interested in something that you're writing. Here's another tip for you. If you didn't know already, people will rarely read the whole of your sales letter. That's another reason why you can be confident at making it hugely long. The only wrong way to do this is to not give enough information. They'll jump around and skip about as they please.

How do I know this? Well, judging by my stats, let's take the most recent sale for example, 35% of the people that made a purchase were on the page less than five minutes before purchasing. These are unique visitors. People that had never seen the site before and people that had never heard of me before. With a 36 screen sales letter in a 1680x1050 resolution with a size 12 font, there is absolutely no way that they could have read even half of it in that time. There were a further 40% of visitors on the page for questionably short amounts of time too. That's 75% of the visitors that were successfully tracked that I can be confident in saying they read less than half of the sales letter.

So what's my point? Head it properly. You should never have a block of text longer than about half a screen to a maximum of a full screen without a header of some sort. This goes for your introduction too. Eye catching headers that intrigue and catch peoples eye if they're not reading word for word. I like to mix these up two. Half intrigue only, half intrigue and educate. That does indeed break the rule of the main headline, but don't forget that they know why they're here already. They know what you're about.

So there we have it.

We're all done now for the introduction. It's a lot to take in I know, so take a break if you want, and I'd advise not trying to do the whole course at once, especially if it's your first time writing a sales letter, or you're not confident in what you're producing yet. You'll be glad to know, as any marketer will tell you, once you've done it once, it gets faster, more efficient and more profitable every single time.

Chapter

9

Introducing Your Product Through Strong Titles And Bullets.

Alright, we're looking good so far. The hard part is out of the way, but now comes probably the most important part of your sales letter, and that's introducing your product. This is the section of a sales letter that everyone has, even if they don't have the first clue about writing a full effective sales letter, yet, even those who do know a thing or two, still get this wrong for several reasons. We're going to skip the biggest mistakes for this segment, and concentrate more on the successful elements, mainly because both of them are the same, but opposite ends of the scale. I much prefer to look at positives instead of negatives, and it makes things a bit more enjoyable for you to read too. So let's get started now and discuss what's probably the longest section of your sales letter.

The Role Of Your Introduction & Bullets – To Inform and Educate.

Let's deal with the obvious first. The number one role of your introduction and bullets is to inform the reader about your product and educate them about what your product is going to do for them. While that may sound similar, they're two very different points. It's all very well running through a list of points about your product, in fact it's essential, but you know what? No one actually cares. People care about what it's going to do for them, not the product itself. This should be carried out in a specific way that we'll talk about in a moment. When done correctly however, you'll successfully fulfill yet another role of your bullet points and product introduction/description. And that brings us nicely on to number two.

The Role Of Your Introduction & Bullets – To Interest & Present.

The second often forgotten role of your bullets is to interest and present your products effectively. Features and benefits are great, but when you begin to present your products in such a way that people can imagine themselves in your position and using your product, you're on to a winner.

Now many might say, well isn't that just a benefit? Well in a way yes, but let me explain myself. Many writers when looking at creating their benefits talk in terms of time saving, money saving, pain avoiding, and entertaining. Something you'll no doubt have seen in countless other sales letter writing guides and reports. That's not enough anymore though. What you'll notice now is top marketers leaving the rest of the bunch behind by being very specific and describing how a feature benefits them in detail.

For example, saving you countless hours at your computer is a benefit, but it's presented poorly. Saving you countless hours sitting in front of your computer, slaving away while your friends and family are asleep at 3am when a piece of software can do the work for you however, is a different matter entirely. Imagine how that would feel. Waking up to find all your work already done for you. Pretty neat huh?

Do you see the difference here between a standard benefit and a benefit people can actually relate to effectively? It's all about the way you present. Simple features and benefits don't cut it anymore. It's about how you create interest by presenting your benefits properly. We'll talk through this in detail in a moment, because there's many ways to make benefits far more interesting than 'This will save you time' or 'This will make you a bunch of money', which is in all honesty is sending your reader to sleep and making your product look dull and vague.

The Role Of Your Introduction & Bullets – To Grab Attention.

Next up, to grab attention. Every single part of your sales letter should be designed to grab attention, simply because people will rarely actually be reading it. Something I noticed when I created my first site is that the average time people spent on a sixteen screen sales letter was a minute or two. No way could they have read it all.

On watching myself read through sales letters, I find I don't read it all either. I kind of scroll down a bit, read a line, skip a line here and there when I think I've heard it all before and the like. We'll have more on this specific point in a moment when we look at the practical aspects of crafting this section of your sales letter. Let's move on to that now.

Elements of successful product intros and bullets – Feature, Benefit.

Alright, let's take it from the top, starting with the layout of your features and benefits. If you haven't heard this anywhere else before, the first thing I'd like you to note is that no matter who you're targeting with what product, unless they don't much care about what they're buying, benefits do indeed work. I've tested this extensively, long copy Vs short copy, and feature lists Vs features and benefits. Without benefits, sales flop.

The great thing about this is, many markets outside of the online marketing 'how to' world really don't know how to sell single products online. Just because no one else is doing it, don't hesitate to take advantage of this, because it's highly likely you'll outsell them.

Hot Tip: This is something I'm currently doing with some software I had designed for my business. The competition lists features and that's it. No sign of a solid sales letter anywhere, so guess who came along and made a mint from their potential customers taking advantage of their poor sales material. I plan to do the same with several other markets this year, and I have to say the results have been very encouraging. Feel free to explore other options too, as there's a lot of money to be made outside the how to be successful in online business market. Take a browse around and you'll see exactly what I mean.

Elements of successful product intro's and bullets – Feature, Benefit 2

There's several ways to do this, all three work almost as well as each other, one however, seems to have a slight edge. Method one is to bullet point each feature, and in front of each bullet point, write an attractive sentence that contains both the feature and benefit. One feature per point at this stage, we want to keep things organized, because it's far easier to read, and for another reason I'll reveal later. Once you're done, go through and highlight the main feature and the main benefit.

Method 2 is very similar to method one, in that this time, you place the feature and the benefit highlighted on the same line, and then elaborate your benefit in un-highlighted text for the next line or two. The great thing about method 2 over method 1 is it grabs attention. Remember I mentioned earlier grabbing attention as one of the roles for features and benefits? Because people will be scrolling through your site without reading the whole sales letter, it's far easier to pick them up again, stop them scrolling and get them reading with highlighted subtitles instead of simple highlighted words in a big long sentence.

Method 3 beats both of the above. A short punchy highlighted feature, followed by an expanded benefit. My original thought when trying this out was that people would just read through the features, and ignore the biggest selling points and all the positive aspects of benefits. Turns out my guesstimate was wrong. No benefits dropped sales like a stone, so it wasn't the fact my benefits weren't working. Benefits with highlighted features turned out to be the best of the bunch.

But then... I had a brainwave.

Why is it everyone is always looking for the one best, the one right answer or the one answer to their questions? I can understand the need to be specific when there are very few parameters involved, but what happens when everyone visiting your site is different? I'll tell you - If you do one thing, you risk turning a group of people off. If you do another, you risk doing the same to

a different group of people. Usually, you'd pick the biggest group and the biggest spenders, get your best results and go with that approach. The difference here is that the choices were so similar results wise, with less and 5% of a difference between all three of them, there really isn't a clear best.

My deduction was this: Different things turn different people on. There is no best, so lets please them all. Let's mix and match. So I went ahead and tried it (as you can see with the enclosed sales letter you saw at the end of the course). I took a different approach for each product. Sales rose over 12% from the moment that was implemented. Why? Simple. It's a long sales letter, people are skipping lines here and there, flying through it according the visit times of the people who signed up. Different approaches caught the attention of different people. It's as simple as that.

Of course one test on one sales letter wasn't enough, so the next day I made my changes to our one time offer too (another sales letter presented during the signup process). What happened? Upgrades for purchasers went from 30% to over 40%. So here's the deal. Mix and match. Don't make it striped or you'll likely confuse the heck out of your visitor or give them a headache. Pick several segments of your letter where you're talking about features and benefits, split them up, and have five or six bullets for each section, each using a different method.

It worked real well for me, but always test and track at the same time if you're unsure or want to see the results for yourself. Cater to everybody. I would never teach anything but focus under any other topic, but it works amazingly well where there is no clear outright best approach to take.

Elements of successful product intro's and bullets – Presentation

Ok moving on now to the presentation of your benefits. We've already established that listing a benefit and then stating it saves time or will make the reader 'lots of money quickly' doesn't do the job. It's vague, it's boring and it's a lot of other bad things that I won't mention here. Let's look at some of the

main aspects of a benefit. Remember, not every benefit has to have every aspect that we're about to discuss. That would just give everyone a headache and be might hard to craft in such a way that it makes sense. All approaches work and should be utilized throughout the sales letter in different bullet points to convey your features and benefits differently to attract (and keep) the attention of your readers.

Specifics – Always be specific in your benefits. Don't say it saves time, but put your product into practical use in the readers mind. How much time did it save you? How much time did it save other people who tried it? Don't tell them they'll make a bunch of money because of it, instead, how much did the product make in practical terms for you and other users? How much on average did it increase your income?

Note: Don't go over the top here. Benefits packed with 99% this, \$101,983.23 that and 15 hours 10 minutes and 23 seconds and such like do not go down very well. It was originally a method of letting the reader visualize your product in use in relation to their life/position/business. Unfortunately, it's becoming overused. Be very careful any time you mention specifics like this. If the picture conjured up in your mind starts to disappear, you went too far. Remove some.

Intrigue – Next on the list is intrigue. This a great one and it's easy to do, because you're pretty much saying, 'this feature allowed me to make a million dollars last month, and you'd likely be able to make a million this month if you knew what I did.' Even with that vague sentence that definitely isn't fit to be seen on any sales letter, you can see how the intrigue is created. You tell people what a feature does, you expand into the benefits and tell them what it would do for them, but then you rub it in a little bit by telling them that they can get the benefit when they buy your product. If they don't buy, then they have to go without. Powerful stuff when you look at it in a very basic format such as this.

Educate – Education is such an excellent tool that you can use in many ways throughout your sales process. If you can teach someone something that works and they go off and use it, they'll remember you for it, and they'll want more and hopefully buy your product. The catch is, during a sales letter, you can't let that happen. Who knows if they'll be back or just forget about you never to return. This is what e-courses, follow-up and subscriptions are for. With sales letters things are a little different. We've already established if you give people a little tidbit of information that works, they'll want more, but we need to prove it works without giving them time to go off and try it. There's two ways to do this.

Method number one is to educate them, and then display a testimonial, or a bank statement, or a screenshot, some sort of solid proof so that they know for a fact it works. Effectively you're giving away a little tip. A taster or a teaser, and just a small insight into what's yet to come when they buy the product.

Check out the biggest marketers on your list and have a look at their sales letters. They don't give out this information in their courses, but they're doing it. Something is fishy, they know something you don't. If it didn't work, they wouldn't be doing it regularly. Trust me on this one, it works, and is a big factor that separates the big guys from the little guys when it comes to effective sales letters.

Method number two, which has almost the same effect is to reveal something that the reader already knows works. They don't know that you know you just told them something already in their knowledgebase, but you did it because they can immediately say 'Yeah, I know for sure that works. This person knows what they're talking about'. The risk here is that you may end up sounding like you're rattling off a bunch of information that reader already knows and that your product may not be useful to them after all.

Use this as a last resort if you can't get testimonials or you're launching a brand new product without any feedback and always back it up with a 'And 3

other methods even more effective than this one that I discovered just two weeks ago that you can't get anywhere else'. It's important to punch the idea out of the reader's mind that they know what you're going to say already when going down this risky and best-avoided road.

Empathize And Connect – Ah this one is my favorite by far. First things first. If you don't know what your target market wants, you should not be launching your product. On the plus side, when you do know what your target market wants, it's so easy to tap into their emotions. Now I'm going to assume that most of you reading this are in the online marketing business since you're reading about online sales letters. With that in mind, let me put to you some things that happened to me when I first got started in online marketing.

Ok, let's see. Here's the first one. When I first started in online marketing, the promise of quick cash lured me in. I was on a budget, I needed some extra money to improve my lifestyle, and this seemed like the quick and easy way to do it. All that extra money was a pretty exciting thought - A new car, a new house, long relaxing vacations in the sun away from the stresses of the daily grind. Anything my family needed I could provide them with too. (Sounding anything like you yet?)

Turns out though, in the end that it wasn't as easy as I thought it'd be. The only people telling me how easy and quick it was were those that wanted to get their grubby hands on my money. What a disappointment. (How about now?)

What I quickly found out was, good information was hard to find. Everyone seemed to contradict each other and claim that they're the next best thing just to get their hands on my money. It's strange you know; considering everyone claimed to know everything about online business, no one could give me a straight answer. Finding myself still awake at 3am, working far harder than anyone else I knew, but still getting nowhere was about the time frustration started to hit me. (Example Ends Here, back to the course)

See where I'm going with this? I've never met you before, we've never spoken, but I know for sure, if you're in online marketing you've had these sentiments before and felt those emotions under particular circumstances. If you haven't, then well, that doesn't bother me because you wouldn't be reading my sales letter or be interested in my online product. Use your past experiences and what you know about your market to connect and empathize with your reader. If you can get them feeling something as they read, they're far more likely to listen to you. If you don't know what turns your readers on, or how they'd feel or have felt in the past, or what they want from your product, you don't know your market well enough and shouldn't be trying to sell to them. A bold statement yes, but how can someone try and sell a product to someone else to solve a problem they know nothing about?

They can't. It's not possible. Which is how I know that you already know how to do this and what to say to your target market. It doesn't just apply to online marketers either. I could tell you that business owners get frustrated when their software lets them down. I know it's annoying when you have to waste your time doing something unnecessary or dealing with a problem that shouldn't have occurred. I could tell you that it's scary and nerve racking to go through a job interview when you've been turned down before, or take a driving exam when you've failed previously. I know safety issues are a concern when you're buying toys for your kids, and health is an issue for your beloved family pets. All of these emotions, no matter your product, can and should be used to connect to your target market through your benefits.

Future, Past, Present – This is a bit of a strange one to put in here maybe, but I think it's important to talk to you about how people react to different situations. Let's say I want to evoke some emotions in you. How can I do this? Let me ask you a couple of questions and you'll see what I'm getting at.

Let's try this with some positive examples.

How did you feel when you had your first child?

How will you feel when you have your next child?

How did you feel when you passed your driving test?

How will you feel when you pass your driving test?

How did you feel when you caught your biggest fish?

How will you feel when you catch your biggest fish?

How did you feel when you your first online business sale?

How will you feel when your next online business sale?

How did you feel yesterday?

How do you feel right now?

How will you feel tomorrow?

Ok enough of that. What I'm trying to demonstrate here is two-fold. When talking through your benefits, you should always make the effort to relate to past happenings. Past and present feelings evoke the most emotion because it's easy to recall such things. You can't make this connection to your reader without first evoking some emotion. Trying to get them to visualize something in the future is often far harder than getting them thinking about the past for that exact reason.

Now, even when I talk to you about the future, how do you know that's how you're going to feel? Easy, you're relating it to past feelings. So my point is this. Always talk about the future with a hint of the past in it. If you're going to focus on the positive aspect of say a piece of software doing something for you while you're asleep from now on, tell them so in a way that they can relate to. Do I know how it'd feel for a piece of software to do all the work for me? No, I don't. If I did, I wouldn't need your product.

But do I know how it'd feel to be snuggled up in my warm bed and not have to stare at a computer screen at 3am when all I want to do is sleep? You bet I do

because I've been there before, and thankfully, because of your product, I never have to do it again.

Hot Tip: Benefits do work. Anyone who tells you they're amateur and don't belong on their 'professional' website is missing out. Why not create a product similar to theirs and show them how it's done? If they don't want the customers and the sales, you might as well take them instead. Bottom line is benefits work.

Elements of successful product intro's and bullets – Big titles

Alright, finally we come to the titles. I'm talking big titles that split your product up into segments. If you check any big marketer's sales letter out there (or indeed the sales letter attached to this course) you'll see that the benefits are never just a great big list of bullet points. What if your reader loses interest on the first bullet point and the bold highlighted features and benefits don't do anything to grab their attention again? They're going to scroll right by all the information about your product and find that they've bypassed all useful information, and leave. Bullet points without clear, big, bold, centered headers are almost as bad as one big block of untitled, unformatted text that never gets read.

This is why you always have at least three segments of bullets for this section of your sales letter and split it up with big headlines introducing each segment of your product, specifically designed to attract attention. 6 bullets, header, 8 bullets, header, 7 bullets, header and so on, or you will lose readers part way through.

Chapter

10

The number 10 is rendered in a large, white, outlined font. Behind the number, there is a decorative background consisting of a blue and white wavy pattern, resembling water or a stylized ocean. The pattern is more prominent behind the '1' and the '0'.

Piling it on

Proof And Testimonials

Ok, the last section on introducing your product and bullets was packed with information. Lots to take in there, and it was pretty harsh. If you haven't taken a break yet, now might be a good time to do so to let everything sink in well. If you're ready to continue, you'll be happy to find out you're in for a much easier and more straight-forward ride with this section. Piling it on, proof and testimonials, which looks at exactly that. While this section is pretty short, and most of it is pretty straight forward and self explanatory, there are a few big points that are often left out by marketers not in the know.

Testimonials - How To & Their Role

The role of testimonials is a simple one. That's to create confidence in your product through experiences of customers and purchasers of your product. It gives your purchaser an idea of what they might expect if they buy your product and put it into action. Ultimately, it's proof your product works.

Testimonials, The Good & The Not So Good

The most important aspects you should be looking at when gathering testimonials from a pre-release give away or from current customers are three fold.

Number one. The results the customer gets and reports from your product. It's all very well putting up some from people who are 'happy' with the result, and may provide your visitors with the knowledge that you're legit, but that's only half the battle. What kind of results did they get? How much did they earn using your methods? How long did it take them? How many fish did they catch? What percentage did they increase their efficiency by? How many more hits and sales are they getting through their websites?

It's all about the statistics and specifics. Again, this is something that's easier to visualize. The words 'good' and 'great' and 'excellent' mean nothing if they have no real hard facts attached to them, so remember to ask for those statistics and display them with pride.

Number two. The background of your testimonials. You know, it's amazing how many sites I come across that have a testimonial from someone saying how product X made them a particular amount of money, when actually, you know full well they've been earning that much for years because they're at the top of their field. What we like to see instead is normal people, from normal or even unlikely backgrounds that you wouldn't think would be able to make a success of using the product. We want the visitor to say 'Hey, yeah, they're normal, they made a bunch of money out of this, so I should be able to as well'.

Don't get me wrong here. I'm not saying you shouldn't have any high profile testimonials. They can be good for your reputation, but mix in some from real average Joe's also and you'll reap the rewards from doing so. It's not hard to get them, all you have to do is present your product in a pre-release state or ask current customers to go ahead and send you them. Don't forget to ask though. A silence after buying your product usually means good things. It's when the complaints come in that you have a problem.

Number three. Make them real. Something that always amuses me is fake testimonials. In my previous sale I create some websites for people to use with the products if they wanted to re-sell them and it amazed me how many people actually went ahead and put up the fake testimonials that I made every effort to point out were fake, in the terms and conditions, in the read me file, in the intro, in the members area and even on the websites themselves. What we ended up with was several different websites with the same testimonials, with different names under them. Dodgy huh? And obvious too, especially those who didn't even change the names. They were all names from well

known movie and computer game leads. Another example I saw, which I came across on a website that was trying to pirate my software ironically enough, had a bunch of testimonials with no websites listed, only an initial, a name and every single one of them was written by the non English speaking website owner. You could tell, because the rest of the site was in exactly the same state.

So here's the deal. When you put up testimonials, don't fake them, because it's so obvious. Always check your pre-written sales copy for testimonials and either remove them, or find your own, because it's likely they're fake. In addition, when collecting testimonials, always look to include a website address. An e-mail address can be easily harvested and spammed, so that's out, but a website address along with the name, is the safest and most easily verifiable piece of information up there.

Testimonial Presentation

Ok, this is a big one now. Simply put, the more interactive, pretty, and multimedia-like you can make your testimonials, the more water they will hold, and the greater effect they will have on your visitor. The most basic testimonial should include a name, a website address and of course the testimonial itself.

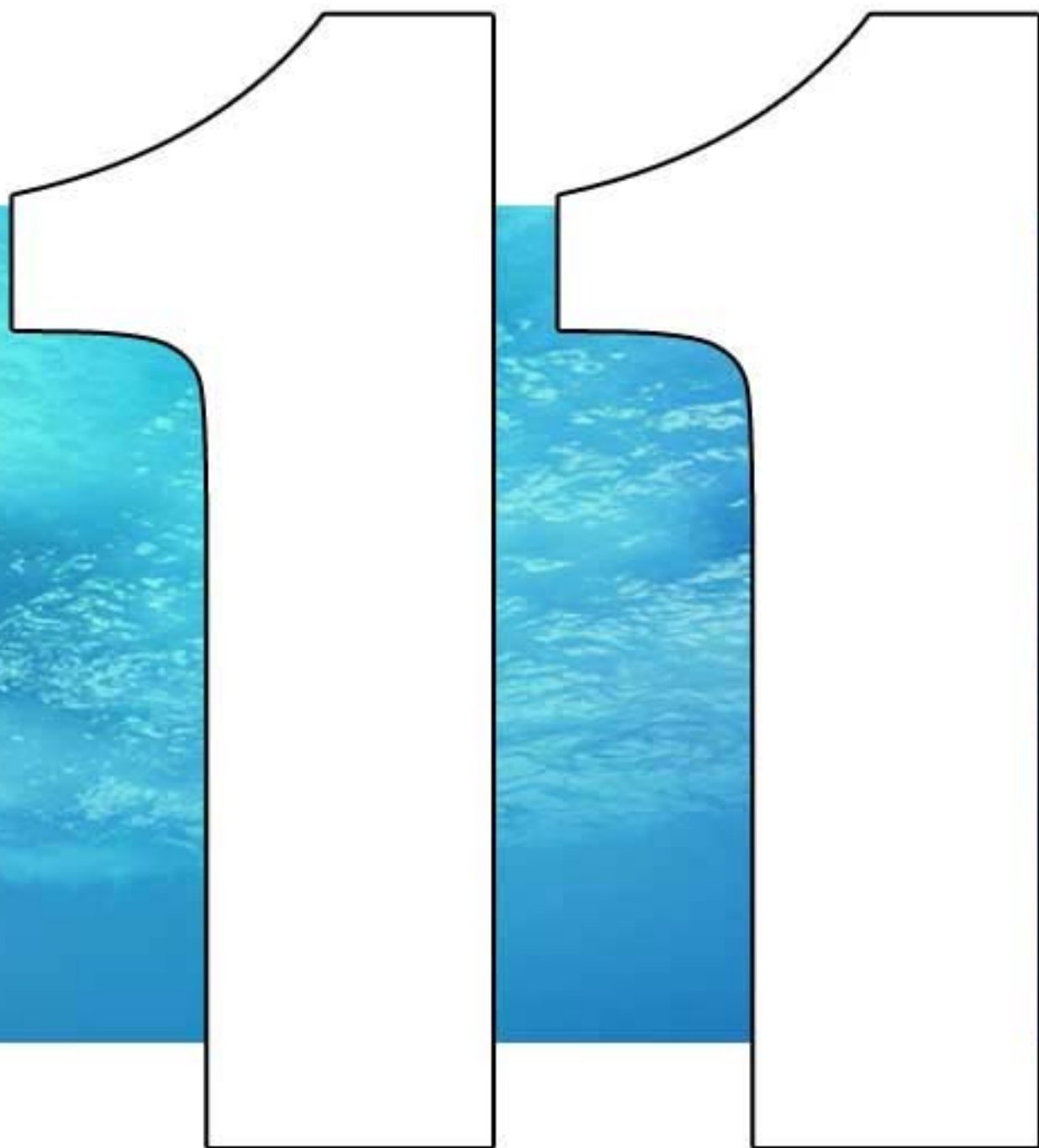
Moving on from that, try and grab yourself a photo of the user. People love talking about themselves, and most would jump at the chance to put a picture of themselves up on your website along with their opinion on your product. Remember, they won't come to you though. You have to ask them. Fact of the matter is, people only come to you if it's bad, rarely if it's good.

You can take things further. With advances in technology nowadays, if you think your host can handle it, you can always take the audio route. Just make sure it doesn't play the moment the page is opened up, people don't seem to like that one.

Lastly, why not go all the way? Grab the testimonial, the website address, their name, a photo, audio and video? These have a profound effect on not only personalizing your product, but saying to the user, look, this is real. These are real people. They're normal people just like you, and look what my product did for them. This could be you if you hand over your cash.

So there we have it. That's testimonials in a nutshell. It's Pretty simple and straight forward to say the least. I'll leave you with one final comment. It's better to have none at all, than to have fake ones, because it's mighty obvious if you attempt this. Take a minute or two out of your time, fire an e-mail off to your customers and start those testimonials rolling in, get them published and watch what effect they have on your visitor to sales ratios. You won't be disappointed.

Chapter



Make Your Price Meaningless Compared To The Benefits

We're doing well so far, but now comes the part that all sales people hate, and that's revealing your prices. My first bit of advice for you is this: you have to make out as if the reader is getting a bargain. If you can do this, they will buy from you. A straight out price does not cut it anymore. You can do all sorts of things with this, from creating urgency, making your price seem cheaper than it actually is, making your deal far better than the competition (even if you're more expensive) and more. Let's take a look at how to do this now.

Creating a sense of urgency

Creating a sense of urgency is one of the easiest things to do when it comes to your price. The best thing about this is instead of trying to compensate and compare your biggest benefit with the price, you're bypassing that altogether and attracting impulse buys. I'd be pretty confident in saying that everyone here has bought something on impulse before, myself included. What you find is that the offer looks so good, or you buy so quickly to try not to miss out on it that the price goes cloudy and becomes almost ignored and irrelevant.

There's a couple of aspects that have to be in place for this to work however. Your sales letter in general has to be well written, and the benefits have to be big. Once you've got the reader visualizing using your product and services and the results they're going to get from them, your price is already a little cloudy to them. Often all that's needed is a sense of urgency and they're away and ordering before they even know it.

There's so many ways to do this, but I'll be honest with you, it very much depends on your product. Most of these require a deadline of some sort. Whether it's buy today and get yourself a discount, or a little extra added bonus to sweeten the deal. Maybe it's free installation for your script, maybe it's a discount on other products. Most of all, make sure it's totally relevant to your original product.

Also, ditch those fake deadlines. I've said this before. Fake deadlines that refresh themselves automatically to stay a certain amount of time ahead always fail to impress the experienced marketer, and they'll spot it a mile off. Use a countdown timer instead - a real one.

Compare benefits to the cost

Just stating a price is no longer enough. When you put a price in front of a potential customer, that's all there is in their mind. Of course you have to sell your product well to start with for them to even get that far. Think about it in terms of the way you do things. Someone can sell you something in real life, or you can walk into a store, or find a product on a website, and you'll totally be excited about buying it. You'll want it, you'll need it, but then you come to your price. Everything that you've been told so far evaporates. All there is, is you and a cost.

To alleviate that problem we need to change that. It's no longer you and the cost. It's now got to be you, the cost, and the biggest benefit. When you look at things like this you now have three things to ponder over. Because this benefit has been drilled into your mind so much throughout the sales letter, it's often more prominent than the price. Of course this changes if your price is extremely high, but that's pricing strategies and a whole new report altogether.

For now though, we'll leave it at this. When you mention your price, mention your biggest benefit at the same time and you will reap the rewards of this. All it takes is a sentence, and you can make anything up to ten percent more sales on this and beyond. Not bad when you spread a single technique over several products.

Compare to real life objects

Ok, finally we have my favourite. Comparing your price to real life products to make it seem insignificant. Often, this goes hand in hand with putting your benefit next to your price. Again, just don't just say that's less than the price of

a pack of sandwiches a day for a week. So what? That means absolutely nothing at all. Sure you're making out your product isn't really all that costly, but that's not what you're trying to do. You don't need to make your product seem cheaper, but instead, more beneficial. This is yet another chance for you to add on even more reason to purchase your product in a positive light. (Noticed the pattern of changing all the negatives into positives throughout the whole sales letter?)

Look at the effect this has when you put it against your biggest benefit, and you have this additional positive working in your favour. 'That's less than the price of a pack of sandwiches for a mere 30 days, not bad considering our customers are earning over \$150,000 per year with our techniques. (That's 50,000 packs of sandwiches! Although, we suggest you buy something that you will enjoy a little more with your profit, but that's up to you).

It's simple, but effective. Keep this in mind for all aspects of your sales letter. Cover the negatives with greater positives, and your potential customers will soon overlook the bad bits in favour of the good bits.

Biggest mistakes

There's not much to talk about here in terms of mistakes. The only one is giving your price as a set piece. When you come to the end of a sales letter, you should never say 'my product costs this much', and leave it at that. You should always have at least one of the above points in with your price. This makes a huge difference in terms of those who actually buy your product when reaching this point in your sales letter. While it may only give you one or two percent extra when looking at overall visitors, in my experience it can add five to ten percent to sales from those who actually read this far into the letter.

As you may have noticed already, a sales letter is all about piling on the pressure. Not pressure in a hard sell sense mind you, but look at it as layers, each layer adding more weight to the potential customers good side, the side that persuades them to buy, and removing the weight from the bad side, the

bad side being where all their questions come from about how much they trust what you're saying, whether the product will work for them, what if it doesn't, and so on and so forth. With that said, the same rings true here. The more positive factors you can put into your sales letter that crush their doubts and move the weights over to the good side, the more of an advantage they see in your product, the better, which is why I advise you to use every single one of the above methods in your marketing. Grab yourself some testing software and create a split run test and watch the results closely. You'll be pleasantly surprised at how much of a difference this little factor makes to your sales.

Chapter

12

The Guarantee And Their Roles

The guarantee is one of the most important parts of your sales letter. From the point of view of your customer, or in this case your potential customer, it's their safety net. If they buy your product and it doesn't work, this is their protection, this is what they can fall back on. It's a warranty of sorts. Would you buy a 64" plasma screen for \$15,000 without being assured that if it breaks down, or if it doesn't work when you get home that you can get it fixed, replaced or refunded and exchanged? I wouldn't that's for sure.

Think about things from the point of view of your customer. The risk is high here. It's not like you're some well-known super store that would go out of business if satisfaction isn't assured. You could be some fly by night wannabe businessperson that just wants to grab their money and leave. Your job, and that of your sales letter is to persuade them otherwise. A guarantee is a huge part of eliminating that risk for them, because lets face it, I can sit here now and tell you that even though that \$34,000 cheque landed in my bank account in one week in March, it's still my cash. I earned it, and I'm not going to go and spend it on something I don't have the utmost confidence in that includes a plan B or a guarantee.

What you'll also find is the same reaction coming from those that earn five times that amount in the same period. You'll also hear the same from people that don't earn anything yet. I think it's important to remember that no matter how much cash you believe your target market has, whether they're the richest of the rich, or the poorest of the poor, the reaction will be the same from all of us. We want to know your product is going to work, and we're not going to hand you our money unless you can guarantee us that.

It answers one of the biggest doubts in your potential customers minds. Will this product work for me? No matter how much proof you give them, while it will ease them a little, the guarantee will do twice the job any testimonials will do. There will always be that doubt in the back of peoples minds. It's up to you

to crush it, or they're not going to buy from you. In short, you're eliminating the risk. You're saying, if something goes wrong, I'll fix it for you.

Guarantees Are Not For Everyone

If I said that to a majority of business owners out there, I'd probably get a swift slap, because I'll be honest with you, many people are taught guarantees are the best thing since sliced bread. They don't test and track without them, they just take it at face value, and say yeah, ok, I heard I won't be able to sell anything without a guarantee, I heard that people rarely use the product and don't claim on them anyway, and yes, while that is often the case I have tested not using a guarantee and in some cases it can work in your favour.

Take a fire sale for example. You're giving away full source code rights and resale rights to a specific product. You have everything in there from images, to source code of scripts, to 3d images, freely editable documents and more. Unlike a course or information that may or may not work that you can offer a guarantee with, this is very different. As a result, we have never offered a guarantee with a fire sale, especially as the numbers are limited anyway.

So there we have the first instance where a guarantee isn't needed. Where you have limited numbers and you know that you're going to sell out in a short period of time anyway. You may of course sell out faster when you offer a guarantee with a product like this, but all in all a couple of extra days won't make a difference, you're saving on any refund requests that may come through, and you don't risk releasing such a product to someone who will get a refund, grab the products, and head off, change them a little and breach the terms and conditions without being able to be stopped by legal action for months, by which time the product is devalued, and it's ruined for everyone.

You can actually make this work to your advantage. What we found was that instead of hiding the no refund clause in the terms and conditions, if we made it as big and bright as possible, and gave the reason that there's only a limited amount, we know we're going to sell out within a week or two, we know the

products are some of the best we've ever seen, if you don't trust us, we're not worried. We'll get our cash anyway. You just won't get your product. Of course we put it a much nicer way than that as you will see on the original sales letter responsible for the first fire sale we carried out. What you're creating there is a sense of urgency in place of increasing confidence in your products. It's not ideal, but from what our statistics have shown us, it more than makes up for lacking a guarantee. Who would have thought taking something that has been deemed one of the most important confidence building sections of a sales letter, removing it, and then shouting as loud as we can to the customers telling them what we did not would have such a positive effect?

We sure didn't. As far as we were concerned we weren't giving refunds simply because of the risk, the protection of our customers and the logistical impossibility of taking money back from affiliates who were paid immediately, and hey, we've been in marketing for a combined 17 years. You really do learn something every day in this business. This is a good example of such discoveries. Don't forget your tracking and testing or you'll miss things like this that really boost your sales in specific situations.

Scripts is another good example. It's way too easy for someone to steal your code and just disguise it and then come and get a refund, sell on or use your script anyway. To be honest, most people are trustworthy in this sense. I have sold a number of scripts in my time, and in fact I'm just getting back into it, but unless something has changed since mid 2005, the refund rate is generally very low especially from people who try to take you for a ride and get your product for free. (It's always very obvious when someone tries to do this and turn the tables, but that's a whole new report altogether).

Common Mistakes

Alright, before we get to the good stuff and talk about how to construct a guarantee that's good for your product, let's look at some of the biggest mistakes online marketers tend to make. It might surprise you to find out that there's actually only one of them. I'm not including the marketer that chooses

not to use a guarantee here, because in this case specifically, as we already discussed, there are times when this is the best choice.

So what's this big mistake that I'm talking about? Well, it's the 100% satisfaction guarantee. We've all seen them, and if you've been in online marketing for a while you'll have seen them too. The marketer has understood that a guarantee will crush any fears the potential customer has about the product not working and create a safety net for them. This part is good.

The part that isn't so good is the guarantee itself. What exactly is a satisfaction guarantee? They guarantee satisfaction, but fail to actually give the safety net by offering any action if it doesn't work. No one in their right mind can safely offer a 100% satisfaction guarantee on it's own, because no matter how good the product is, there will always be someone out there who can't use it, or even can't be bothered to use it.

So here's my point. Remember above all that a satisfaction guarantee is nothing. It doesn't do any more for trust building and fear crushing in your customers mind than the rest of your sales letter has been doing. It's about actions, and in this case the action tied to it. A guarantee with no action is not a guarantee, and aside from not having any positive effect for the reader it could get you into serious legal trouble. Don't use this method even if you're confident you've just created your best work, because there will be someone out there that it won't work for.

Elements of a successful guarantee

Ok, so we've established to be successful and for this to have the desired effect, you need to have an action after your guarantee. Something you're going to do to honour your words if things don't work out. There's quite a few ways to go about this, some are better than others.

The standard refund guarantee

Ok, here we have your bog standard money back guarantee. If it doesn't work, I'm going to give you your money back. It's as simple as that.

Unfortunately it's not such a great method to use anymore, even if you do decide you want to offer a guarantee that will give the user their money back. You see, while you're giving them assurances, you need to have some assurances yourself. You need to know that you're not going to be taken advantage of. In my experience there are some people who will attempt to get their money back for reasons other than it doesn't work. I've had all sorts of customers, those who can't be bothered to try the product, those who wait three months and then ask for a refund even though they clearly haven't read the product, those that and change their minds and more. My advice, avoid the standard money back guarantee.

The pay you guarantee

Taking the money back guarantee to the next step. With this guarantee you're paying people to try your product in a sense. Making the point that you'd be out of business if your product didn't work, because everyone would be taking your profit and more from you. On the plus side, you're doing far more than removing fear and giving your customers a safety net. In reality you're giving them an incentive to actually try your product in addition to what the benefits they'd gain from the product itself.

Of course when offering a refund like this, there's always a risk, especially if your product is high priced and you offer something like a 200% money back guarantee. My advice would be to start small with 110%. It's still an incentive without risking too much on your part. It's also nice to know that the majority of people are legitimate, and you rarely get a refund request from the honest marketers. Still though, without additional protection (which we'll discuss in a moment) it's not advisable to go this route.

The I'll help you personally guarantee

This is a great one to use because it's a double guarantee in essence. My product will work, or I'll help you personally to get it working. If we still can't get it to work, then I'll give you your money back. This is especially useful if you have a good name, or have done a good job stamping your authority on the matter. Bear in mind though that you will have to assist these people if your product isn't up to scratch. Make sure it is, or you'll have more work on your hands than you can handle.

The If you can show me it doesn't work guarantee

This is your safety net now. All of the guarantee we just talked about provide a safety net to your customers, but don't forget to protect yourself and your business. If you can show me you've put my product into action and it doesn't work, I'll give you your money back, double your money back, or help you personally. (Your choice entirely). You're safe. I'll be honest with you, barely any of your purchasers will ever read or use your product, never mind get as far as putting it into action. It's a shame really with so much good information floating around, but I guess that's why info products have been so hot for so long, and will continue to be so for a long time to come.

So there we have it. Pick the one that suits your business the best. A standard refund often doesn't cut it though. The 'help if it doesn't work' yields the best response by far, but if you're pushed for time and don't want to take a huge risk, a small money back in addition to stating you'd be out of business if your product didn't work is a happy medium.

Chapter

13

A Call To Action

And no dead ends

So there we have it. You've attracted the attention of your target market, and you've sold them on your product all the way through your sales letter. You've provided proof, testimonials, features and benefits. They're now almost across that bridge. They're almost ready to give you their cash. What happens next?

This is something that all sales people are taught from the very start, whether you're online or offline, it should be one of the most basic actions that you carry out every single time you want something to do something. You tell them to do it.

Let me let you in on a little something. No matter how well your sales letter is created, no matter how much of a trance you put your readers in and no matter how good your stories are, your guarantees, your testimonials, your bullets and so on, there is always the chance that you could lose that customer. If they haven't given you the money yet, it's not a sale. You don't leave your sales post and start to relax until you have sealed the deal. The fact is customers (or potential customers at this point) will always have questions and doubts in their mind. Not necessarily about your product once you've reached this point, but there's always the time issue and other distractions vying for their attention.

Now in real life, this is easy enough. You agree a price and volume, and out goes your hand to seal the deal. A quick handshake later and it's immensely rare for anyone to change their mind once the deal has been done like this.

In the online world, things happen in a very similar fashion. If you can, when you create your sales letter from this guide, set up a tracking link and see how many people click on your order link and how many order. You'll find that clicking on the order link is like sealing the deal. A very high percentage of people that click that order link (Generally 98%+ if you're telling them your

price before they click) will actually buy your product. It's the online handshake. Something again that's very similar to offline selling.

So here's the thing. Always seal your deal by asking for the money. Ask for the order, ask for them to click the link to access their downloads. Always seal the deal. Otherwise, in my experience, you begin to lose some serious signups. You'll begin to notice long stays on your sales letter, lots of clicks of links to your proof, or information contained in your PS', but your sales will begin to fail as potential customers casually swan around your site, looking back over the images, checking to see where the links go, looking for some more information, and generally losing direction.

Hot Tip: One little note that I want to put in here right now is that calls to action can be anywhere on your site where the user is required to do something. I've seen people forget to call the visitor to take action on way too many occasions. Everything from dead end pages that are packed with information and no way to proceed other than to go back, to affiliate scripts with signup forms and no sales letter or call to action. I've seen random pop ups and mailing list subscriptions that advertise a free course but never actually tell you how to go about getting it. Something is very wrong when this much direction is missing, especially as it's so important for the flow of things. So here's the deal. If you want a visitor to do something, tell them to do it. Don't assume that they'll find their way around on their own. Selling is about sending those people in the direction of purchasing one of your products. If you're not telling them where to go and when, you're not selling, full stop.

Some good calls to action and some bad calls to action examples.

Ok, there is such a thing as a good call to action and a bad call to action. We're going to be concentrating on order links, but note that this does apply to other areas of your site also. Wherever you want someone to take action, you have to tell them so. So what constitutes a bad call to action?

[Click here to sign up](#)

[Click here to enrol](#)

[Fill in the signup form here](#)

So what's so bad about them? Well, what happened to sealing the deal? Of course the deal is officially done when they fill in the form and hand you their money, but we want to seal it early. The best part about the above sentences is that they are calling the user to action. They're directing the visitor, telling them where to go and what to do, when and why. This is great, but something is still missing.

We need a virtual handshake that's very hard to walk away from before they even see the signup form. The above sentences say quite simply, the signup form is on the next page. The deal hasn't been sealed yet, but if you fill in the form it will be. Remember what I said earlier about people still having second thoughts no matter how good your sales letter is? Well, the time they have to fill in that form is crunch time. We want to change this around a little and have the click of the signup button turned into crunch time. They haven't agreed to anything in their minds until they've filled in the signup form. We need to change that around a little. They haven't agreed to anything in their minds until they've clicked the signup button.

[Click here to have your place reserved](#)

[Click here to enter the download area](#)

[Click here to complete your reservation](#)

[Click here to enter your exclusive members area](#)

You can even add to that further. Something that I've been playing with recently is placing a time on the following page, thanking them for clicking the signup button, stating that their spot has now been reserved, their members area has been created for them by their IP address as they have requested, and a message saying 'Thank you for your order' and all they need to do to access it is to fill in the form (which is obviously the payment form itself). It's the virtual handshake.

Thank you very much, the deal has been sealed. Now I have to admit, this violates some of the online marketing unspoken rules that have come about over the past few years. Sites and layouts that have become a standard, but in all honesty that doesn't bother me, because it's working far better than forwarding to a blank signup form and is matching up and even exceeding results that I've been saying from those yes! Pages with the checkboxes, that are designed to do the same. Seal the deal early.

Chapter

14

PS

And ending your sales letter

Ok, we're looking good now. We've finished the mainstay of your new sales letter using all the tips, tactics and over seven years of tracking and testing data. Of course that doesn't mean that you should stop tracking and testing, for the simple reason when 2006 is over, everything could change, something could become cliché, overused, stop working and so on.

Lets move on now to the base of your letter. Don't let the fact that this is the bottom fool you, because it's almost as important as the headline. What you'll find also is that the people who buy your product will be reading this part even if they go on to click the order link above it. One mess up now could well ruin all the hard work you've put in, so let's get it right now.

The Role Of The PS

The role of the PS is pretty straightforward. It's to push people over the edge and to get them to purchase your products when they wouldn't have done so normally. It's pretty unusual for someone to get to the end of the sales letter and not buy your product because they want more information, especially if your sales letter is attractive. It does however help to capture more sales without a doubt, even if it's just a small percentage. One thing I will note straight away is that you can actually detract from your sales letter if this is done incorrectly. There's one really great idea that someone had that I tried, fully expecting to convert more sales, but in fact, the opposite happened, and the result was worse than when I used no PS at all. Scary huh? So lets not underestimate this and make sure we get it right from the start.

There's been this strange little rumour floating around the online marketing world for some time now, and that's that your PS' are the most read part of your sales letter, which is why they have to be so finely tuned. I can confidently say to you right now that this is false. I have no doubt it does increase sales though if done correctly. I also have no doubt it decreases

sales if done incorrectly. I'll tell you how, and how I found out (the hard way) in a moment.

Putting Together Your PS' – Number One

PS' are essentially pretty straight forward to actually put together effectively. There are three things that you should have in your PS'. The first is your biggest benefit. The whole sales letter has been about piling on trust, piling on knowledge and expertise, discrediting competition (without getting sued), adding your biggest features and benefits to the pile, while sounding friendly and not including any hard sell aspects. When you get to this point in the sales letter with only the PS' to go, there's always going to be someone umming and arring about whether to buy or not. They don't necessarily have any questions that haven't been answered, they're just not sure whether they want to hand their money over. They did work darn hard to earn it after all.

So what do you do? You give them a little shove over the edge. You take your biggest benefit, you pack it with the biggest and best statistics and proof that you possibly can, and then tell them that they could be achieving this too if they bought your product.

Think headlines. It's very similar to the headline you created at the top of your sales letter. Avoid words like 'Remember' though, because even though it's tempting to use such words when re-iterating a point you've already made, they know it's something they've heard already, not new information and are more likely to skip over it or dismiss it if they've been told before.

Finally in this PS comes your call to action. We just talked about this in the previous section, so I won't dwell on it, as what we talked about applies to this too. Tell them to 'click here', and make sure when they click that link, they're sealing the deal in a way that can't be reversed easily. Much like a real life handshake. We need to get them to shake your hand and accept the deal before they fill out the form. That way, there's much less chance of them leaving and not coming back before handing you their cash.

Check back to the previous section on that if you've forgotten how to go about doing this. Once you're done, that's your first PS out of the way out of a total of three. We tend to stick with three as it looks a bit odd after hitting PPPS.

Putting Together Your PS' – Number Two

So you've handed them your biggest benefit, but they still don't click that order link and purchase your product. What's your next move?

It's your contact invitation. The truth is, since someone has read this far, it's obvious they want your product, or at least have an interest in it. The old saying about a good salesperson being able to sell anything to anyone is a myth. If someone can't afford it, you can't sell them it for one, no matter how much interest they take in your product. This is one of many reasons why someone may not buy after reading through your whole sales letter even if you've done everything right.

Hot Tip: Don't forget to offer your potential customers options, especially if you have a premium product. If they can't afford it full stop, there's not much you can do. If they can't afford it in one go however, you can always allow them to pay in instalments through a recurring monthly charge to get over this problem.

Putting Together Your PS' – Number Two Continued

The greatest thing about having a contact link here and actually inviting your visitors to talk to you is that you can end up with some great new ideas and some improvements for your sales letter. Remember we already said that you can never have too much information. If It's irrelevant the reader will use your well labelled headings to skip over it to the next section.

The most recent example I can think of is with the previous resale products I offered to online marketers when someone e-mailed me with their feedback.

They loved the products in all, which was great to hear, but something struck me. He mentioned that they're good, honest products with no forced ads in them like similar packages being offered for sale. I hold my hands up, I had no idea that other products did that. I thought the whole idea of re-sell and re-branding rights was to have clean content that the buyer can use, work from, and re-present in any way they see fit.

So up went my new sales letter, complete with new terms and conditions that stated in a big way that there were no forced ads, and the products are packed with content, but a blank canvas that they can use to present how they like. I would never have known to answer this question if this person hadn't contacted me and mentioned it. Another concern removed from the minds of my visitors. Bonus.

Now I know there are some people out there that would argue that it's best to put the contact us link at the bottom of the page in the last PS. I don't like to do that though, as when the user submits the contact form, they'll likely be leaving the site completely and be waiting for a reply. I like to give them something to come back to. 'It's just three lines, I might as well finish it off' or 'I'm just going back to see what those last three lines said'. It's amazing how much difference a 30 second break from reading a sales letter can change things. I made this change purely on the basis of how I act. Leaving the page entirely if I've finished reading or going back to finish if I'm not.

Once I carried this out, I started to notice a small number of sales coming through from people who had submitted a contact form awaiting my reply before they purchased. Seeing as the final PS doesn't give any new information, they would have just been leaving the page otherwise and awaiting a reply. By then they would have been cold again and forgotten half of the letter or moved on to the next best thing. That was quite successful. Where the mainstay of my marketing may have just bought me a new apartment, this little change, by the look of the orders without a reply to an e-mail regarding the product bought me a mid range laptop computer. Not bad at all seeing as it took about 30 seconds to make the change itself.

Putting Together Your PS' – Number Three

We're almost done. Just one final PS to go before the line of P's get so long things start to look like a circus. You've given it all you've got at this point. You've answered all the questions in your prospects mind. You've crushed their fears and heightened their hopes in every way you possibly can without meeting them in person. There's one final task for you though.

That task is to re-iterate the sense of urgency.

Whether you're using time limits, deadlines, volume limits, or any other type of limit, now is the time to tell them again, just like you did earlier in your letter, just before you asked for them to seal the deal. Once you've done this for the final time you're set. There's nothing more you can do, aside from make sure you haven't made any of the following fatal mistakes in your PS'.

PS' Mistake Number One

The first mistake I see being made is relevant to benefit in PS number one. This benefit should be the 'be all and end all' of your product. It should be as strong as your headline. Make sure you don't do what the majority do and kind of fizzle out at the end here, and accidentally simply list a feature. We talked about it earlier and it's a huge no-no. Now is not the time to go ruining all the hard work you put it. Obvious? Well maybe, but this had to be said and is very much worth of the seven lines it took to say it.

PS' Mistake Two

The not so urgent sense of urgency. I'm sure you've seen those little scripts before that automatically update times and dates to strategically push forward the date so that it never comes. My advise would be don't use them. It's so blatantly obvious when this happens it's not even funny anymore. Use either set numbers, or use a real deadline. You can tell it's a real deadline just one way that I know of, and that's through the use of another little script you

should have no trouble finding for free: A countdown timer. A sense of urgency can't be created with one of these moving-date scripts anymore.

PS' Mistake Three – The Ultimate PS Mistake

Ok I left the big one until last. Have you ever seen those PS' that say 'Click here if you've decided not to order'? If you've ever seen one on a real sales letter, you'll know for yourself that the promise of a special offer of some sort is too much, not to mention you want to know what's behind the link, so you click it, and the idea is that it's supposed to be a condensed version of the long sales letter, absolutely packed with proof, features, benefits, persuasive language, urgency, testimonials and the like. The problem I have with this is two fold. Number one, people get it wrong very often. I see these pages created as an afterthought almost. It's like they forget everything they learned about writing sales letters and end up missing out important information, and even the call to action in some cases (dead end page anyone?).

The second problem is probably a little worse than that. They do not work. My tracking tells me that people who were going to order anyway end up clicking this just out of curiosity. Many of them never go back and sign up and I actually began to lose sales. I tested this several times to make sure it wasn't a coincidence, and sure enough, three times when I added the link, my sales went down and when I removed it, back up they went. Sure the loss was only 2 in 10, but 20%, think about that in terms of annual profit. That's a pretty big loss. No matter what I added or took away from this page, I could not get it to perform as well as just a single sheet sales letter.

When I pointed this out earlier this year, a good friend of mine replied 'But all the big guys are using, so it must work'. My reply was, well, they have to test and track too. I'm sure they'll quit using it once their testing is done. Sure enough, here we are in 2006, looking at all the top marketers new releases, I don't see a single 'click here if you decide not to order' link. Word has got around. My advice would be to stay away. There's plenty of other aspects of a

sales letter that can be tested that yield higher results for a successful move than this concoction.

Well, that about sums it up for the PS', and in fact, that's about it for the course itself. I think what's most important here is that you remember to keep an eye out for those best sellers and new techniques being tested by someone else. Finally, don't be afraid to get out there and purchase those products. Anything copywriting based is always worth buying, even if it only sparks the odd idea here and there.

After all, if a single idea can increase your profit by 25% on four of your products, it's got to be worth it.

Happy copywriting!

Chapter

15

The End.

Well what a ride it's been. We've talked about sales letters from top to bottom, headlines to the PS section, general ins and outs and more. As this course is now at an end there's a couple of thoughts I'd like to leave you with, both about the course and your sales letter writing.

First up, if you missed it in the introduction section, I mentioned that much of the course would be about looking at the wrongs as well as the rights and not just either or. If all has gone well up to now, when you come to writing your own sales letters, you should find yourself stopping every so often and critiquing yourself. You'll immediately know when you've done something that isn't going to help your cause and sell your products.

Secondly, don't just critique everything you come across, but test and track your own sales letters too. There is nothing better than being able to draw on your own conclusions when writing for yourself. Being able to say that something works for sure is a very powerful ability to have. Without that, it's just a guessing game. Just like I showed you in one of the earlier examples, you could actually be reducing your sales figures if you go about this without gathering your own results.

Thirdly, if you have found that a method that works for you that either myself or someone else has told you is useless, go with your own stats, not what someone else tells you. Every business is different, and techniques may vary in effectiveness depending who you're targeting. Be confident and stick with what you have.

And finally, on a similar note, if you find yourself with a sales letter that exceeds all your expectations as far as conversion is concerned, don't change it entirely if you want to try and improve it further. Use split run testing that we talked about earlier, or leave it as it is. Sometimes you can do too much editing and changing when your sales letter doesn't need it.

The more responsive your sales letter is, the higher the risk you have of reducing its effectiveness. When you produce something that is of excellence, sometimes it's better to just leave it as it is rather than claw for an extra half percent conversion at the risk of losing up to 25% of its effectiveness.

All that's left for me to do now is to wish you well, hope you enjoyed reading as much as I enjoyed writing, and that those low performing sales letters only improve and make you a heck of a lot of money in the process.

Happy copywriting.

You've got the knowledge. It's up to you to use it.