

MY NOTE TAKING NERD

“Giving You The Edge”



NO B.S. Newsletter Compendium
DAN KENNEDY

- AMERICAN EXPRESS IS OFFERING ITS CARDHOLDER DATABASE TO ITS MERCHANTS, with lots of selects i.e. age, sex and buying interests i.e. travel, entertainment, sports, etc. So a restaurant can get a list of AE cardholders in their area that use the card a lot in restaurants. A national m.o. marketer of golf stuff can get a list of cardholders who buy golf products or patronize golf courses. Etc. If you're an AE merchant, you probably got the same letter about this I did, but if not: their List Services #800-649-1022. AE also has a "business website" @ www.americanexpress.com.
- **ANYTIME YOU THINK OPPORTUNITY HAS DRIED UP**, wait a minute, because somebody's going to pop up with something that surprises you. Thus this report from IC Member David Deutsch: it seems that the U.S. government regularly publishes a travel advisory warning of dangerous places. From this, a clever author has kicked out what is now the hottest selling travel book of all, "The World's Most Dangerous Places." It has sold over 80,000 copies and its web site is getting 30,000 hits a week. If you're interested in planning a vacation complete with sniper fire, armed thugs breaking into your room, bombs bursting in air and the sweet smell of napalm drifting through the evening air, this book's for you. Goes to show that just about any information can be packaged and sold. (Also another egs. of public domain info converted to saleable product. Matthew Lesko is a genius at this.)
- If you want to get married, you don't go to a singles bar and propose to each person you meet. Instead, you date for an extended period of time. And then you propose. Dating is another word for permission. Both sides agree to participate.
- **There are five basic rules of Permission Marketing:**
 1. Permission must be granted; it cannot be presumed.
 2. Consumers only grant permission if they perceive that there's something in it for them. And you've got only about two seconds to communicate what that is.
 3. Once you get permission, you must take care of it.....he can instantly revoke the permission.
 4. You can't transfer permission from marketer to marketer.
 5. Measuring permission is the first step to forging a strong relationship.
- Here are some questions to help you evaluate your performance on the Permission Marketing scale:
 1. Does every single marketing piece you create invite consumers to contact you, to begin dating?
 2. Is there a curriculum you can easily walk someone through to learn about your products?
- Okay, first, as I said, this ain't no "NEW science." I started teaching this in earnest in the early 1980's. Over the past 5 years, I've provided all the steps - effective lead generation, use of non-threatening and consumer-educational free recorded messages, inten-sified "plant the farm" i.e. "get permission" direct-mail sequences, the works. Just because he's just discovered this, he assumes it's new. But I'm happy when anybody "gets it", especially anybody in the traditional advertising field, so if he wants to think it's new, fine. More importantly, he is mostly right. Most adver-tising and marketing is what I call "shouting at deaf ears", and when you insist on doing that, having a great message is no advantage vs. having a terrible message. You need strategies to separate your high probability prospects from the herd, and to get them to ask for, welcome and give their attention to what you have to say and offer.

- Then, let's look at the copy, the bullet points. I'd number them 1 - 10, rather than just putting the little stars in front of them. Why? Because quantity itself is persuasive, but it's not smart to leave it up to the reader to see that there's quantity of reasons here.
- **REFERRALS: ...** So here's an interesting exercise: review your active client/customer/patient list to find out who has not referred. Then take 'em out to lunch and ask 'em why. Oh, and read/re-read Jerry Wilson's book WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING. (We always taught the chiropractors to have the C.A. give them the "referral history" with the patient's notes, charts or x-rays...the traveling file...so the Drs. could talk with each patient about referrals while treating them.)
- **VALUE DIFFERENCES don't have to come from the "core" item, whether a product or a service; they usually are built out of SERVICE and EXPERTISE.** Sometimes guarantees and warranties. Or access or open-hours. If you're stuck selling a commodity, you'd darn well better master the fine art of creating value differences. If you can't give me five really good, compelling, specific reasons to buy insurance (or whatever) from you at a higher price than I can get it from your competitors, you're stuck "selling" instead of "marketing."
- Look, these people who want to stubbornly insist that "my business is different" just never make big money. They're solidly parked right in their own way. Big money is made by translating great ideas from outside your industry, whatever it is, into your industry so you have a competitive edge, a unique selling proposition.

A few smart questions for each day's end:

1. What do I know now I didn't know yesterday?
2. What was I reminded of today that I'd forgotten yesterday?
3. What did I do today, to improve things vs. the way they were yesterday?

First two answers aren't all that valuable without a good answer to the third question.

- PERMISSION MARKETING. Here are this guy's **"4 Tests Of Permission"**, well worth asking yourself about:
 1. Does every single marketing effort you create encourage a learning relationship with your customers? Does it invite customers to "raise their hands" and start communicating?*
 2. Do you have a permissions database? (My note: Lists of people who have given you permission to continue communicating with them and selling to them....who you know will read your mail?)
 3. If consumers gave you permission to talk to them, would you have anything to say? Have you developed a marketing curriculum** to teach people about your products (or services)?
 4. Once someone becomes a customer, do you work to deepen your permission to communicate with that person?

- *I first heard Gary Halbert talking about the value of getting people to "raise their hands" more than a dozen years ago. This is the essence of smart, discriminatory marketing i.e. getting the high probability prospects to step forward and identify themselves as early and cheaply as possible, so you can invest the bulk of your resources only in them (and avoid investing in everybody else). In MAGNETIC MARKETING, I most often show this being done by offering some kind of relevant, appealing, informational Lead Generation Magnet (LGM).
- **Very good terminology: "marketing curriculum." Much like school has material to be covered in Grade 1, then more in Grade 2, etc., you should be clear about what you want your customers to know about you first and foremost, second, third, etc. and have a strategy to teach and train the customer with your curriculum. Customers MUST be educated AND trained and conditioned, by the way.
- RE. **ENVELOPES & TEASER COPY.** You will hear some marketing gurus tell you NEVER to use teaser-type envelopes. Beware the dogma. It sticks to your shoes and stinks when you step in it. There definitely are times and situations where the sneaky, personal-look does not win. Sometimes economics preclude its use. Or, often, when mailing to established customers who welcome your mail or to prospects who have been contacted repeatedly and know you by name, the sneaky approach gets beat in tests by the teaser approach. One of the most successful direct-mail campaigns I've conducted for my own businesses in years had the offer itself on the outside of the envelope.
- **HOW TO GET PAST GATEKEEPERS & SECURE APPOINTMENTS WITH PRIZED PROSPECTS.** Given \$5,000.00 to reach 100 key prospects (\$50 each) , the in-house marketing team at Phoneworks put together a powerful effort. They used FedEx as the delivery method. Inside the FedEx envelope was a wallet containing three dollars, an I.D. with the prospect's information on it, and a note reading: "John, I found your wallet. I'll call to make sure you got it. Cass." Then, every component of the loyalty/retention product Phoneworks sells, called SmartSpiffs, was highlighted with enclosures stuffed into the wallet. There was a to-do list on the back of an ATM receipt with a reminder note to find out more about SmartSpiffs, a While You Were Out pink slip with a note about a phone message from Kathy at Phoneworks, a Wall Street Journal article tear sheet, about SmartSpiffs, actual award certs from SmartSpiffs' users (MinuteMaid Orange Juice and Jack Daniels). Result: 63 sales presentation appointments from the 100 prospects. (63% response.)
- **HOW TO INCREASE YELLOW PAGES AD RESPONSE (UP TO 10X).** Basic Tip #1: Copy sells; the more you tell, the more you sell. Tests and focus group research by YP indicates that when two comparable ads are shown to consumers, the one with the most information is chosen between 69% to 73% of the time. Basic Tip #2: Buyers do not go to YP looking for a firm by name. A Bell Atlantic study: 44% completely uncommitted, no pre-conceived ideas; 31% had two or more company names in mind, still open-minded. Basic Tip #3: Given a message that justifies the space, bigger size multiplies results exponentially. Smallest to next smallest i.e. 2X size, 4X response. Size jump 4X, 19X response. Specific test of one page of florist ads, 400 consumers: 88% read largest ad first - 15X more than read the next biggest ad first. (VERY important point for our clients... May want to look at a LOT of yellow pages ads for chiros, test out more copy, etc)

- I got some spectacularly good advice; quote: **"You'll make money most readily by selling to successful people eager to get a little bit better, not to those who need this information most."** It was true then, it's true now. In many cases, our whole approach to advertising is to get people already thinking "right" to step forward and identify themselves so we can sell to them; it is not to change anybody's thinking.
- To Do: Any way to advertise financing vs. your product/service?
- LISTS: did you know most Guthy-Renker TV buyer lists are available? Egs.: VitaPower Continuity Buyers (locally, could be used by chiropractors, personal trainers, healthy-food restaurants); Victoria Principal skin care buyers (womens' fashions, spa, gym); Tony Robbins' Personal Power/Power Talk buyers. Also: the lists from the company grown up from Halberts; NUMA Ltd. are available: buyers of family heritage information, books, engraved gifts.
- **GRABBERS:** IC Member Mario Cantin takes regular, real U.S. quarters and covers them in 24 Kt. Gold! When you see this, it is absolutely striking! They are actually sold one by one as a "collectible" for \$3 to \$5. You can get them from Mario for about \$1.50 each. Obviously, a costly grabber, but for somebody in a high transaction value or high client value business like financial services, luxury cars, etc. these could be very powerful. Contact Mario @ Cantin Marketing, 77 Maitland Place #921 in Toronto, Ont. Canada, M4Y 2V6, FAX 416-928-1470, Phone 416-928-0622.
- Also re. Grabbers: here's an example of a business-to-business letter using an Excedrin packet as a grabber. (Exhibit #12 Actual letter has actual Excedrin packet stapled to it). I often use these. I tell you where to get these kinds of grabbers at dirt-cheap costs in my PROMOTIONAL MERCHANDISE MANUAL. Thinking To Do: Do you have a sales letter that works, to test adding a grabber to, to see if it bumps response?
- AMAZING: **A BIG COMPANY ACTUALLY PAYING ATTENTION!** Some months ago, I had a lousy experience on Air Canada, raised heck, and threatened to walk across the continent before ever flying their airline again. Then, of course, I flew on them again. And I got this letter from Alden Golsse from "Customer Relations And Special Projects": "Dear Mr. Kennedy: In following up on some specially flagged files, I noted that you had occasion to fly with Air Canada from Cleveland to Toronto in early April. I am so glad that you decided to try Air Canada again, and I sincerely hope that your flight with them went well. Should you have another opportunity to be traveling to a destination in Canada, I would like to invite you to visit our Maple Leaf Lounge. The enclosed Passes may be used in conjunction with a confirmed same day ticket on Air Canada." Note the "specially flagged files." Wow! Imagine a business actually watching and following up on unhappy customers.
- FOCUS ON CUSTOMER SERVICE: an excellent article: "THE DEATH OF CUSTOMER SERVICE" from the October (1998) Issue of 'Smart Money' Magazine. It paints a bleak picture of the economics of customer service; that big businesses are finding it more net-profitable to deliver bad service than good service. (I suggest reading it.) My thoughts after doing so: big business' continual movement toward shorter and shorter term thinking, and complete incompetence when it comes to wisely deploying resources between advertising for new customers vs. keeping and creating value in present customers simply means growing, greater opportunity for "little guys" who will take the longer view... in his book 'Dave's Way',

Dave wrote: "Adding a brand new item won't save a stumbling restaurant. Too many people want to hit a home run with the latest fad menu item rather than having a sparkling clean restroom..... The salad bar won't wash your windows. Well managed operations are more important than any one product you sell." My experience is that most companies mistakenly separate "customer service" (as a cost of operations) from "sales and marketing" (a profit center.) What Dave Thomas, Walt Disney and a few others grasped is that "clean windows" IS marketing. We've long taught Mike Vance's "5-Sense-ing" to chiropractors and dentists, arguing that the sum impact of input from all five senses on the patient's subconscious controls retention and referrals. Most businesses would be well served by re-allocating 30% of their ad budget to customer satisfaction matters, like clean restrooms, adequate staffing, etc., and another 30% to customer service matters, like post-service concern calls, customer education and so on.

- **GETTING TESTIMONIALS.** There's always a lot of discussion about what can be done to encourage and obtain good testimonials - including can they; should they be incentivized or rewarded? I spotted a little tiny-print foot note in a stock prospectus-brochure from a company called Trans-Orient Petroleum featuring shareholder testimonials: "In appreciation for sharing their stories, Trans-Orient Petroleum has donated \$500 to the charity of choice of each shareholder profiled." One more way to handle this.
- One of the most interesting opportunities presented by the Internet is the ability to dredge up old, previously successful mail-order promotions and give them a reincarnated life. I predict a whole lot of folks will make a whole lot of money doing just that in the years to come. (Re: Website doing "family heraldry" type of thing, completely ripping off Halbert)
- there are a few mistakes reoccurring with mind-numbing consistency: first, underuse of testimonials. Thinking that you should be or will be believed just cuz you say so is an enormous and expensive conceit. The smart albeit mildly paranoid alternative is to assume you will be dis-believed at every turn, with every assertion small or large, and strive to support your statements with proof, which is often best provided by testimonials. Second, being dull, factual, "professional" and/or institutional instead of interesting, even entertaining, provocative, conversational and personal. Third, wimping out when it comes time to "close the sale". Most ads and letters are sabotaged by either the lack of a specific, clear, irresistible offer or by lack of a specific, clear instruction of what to do next.
- AN OBSERVATION: MEDICAL DRs. DON'T RATE AS ENDORSERS. Maybe you've noticed: there's a huge boom in the alternative health industry - in part, a reflection of the public's ever-increasing distrust and displeasure with the medical establishment. Also: Blue Cross is promoting an 800# to call and get advice from nurses (NOT doctors). Make a note: if marketing health products: chiropractors and nurses are better than M.D.'s as endorsers these days.
- **SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO "PROVE YOUR CASE"?** - consider conducting, publishing, even publicizing your own survey, poll or other research... Smart Questions: what kind of survey, poll or research study can you conduct or have conducted for you by a research company (even one you create and own), that will then be newsworthy and used to generate publicity and/or of such interest to your prospects it can be used as a "widget" for lead generation?

- HOW TO GET "RICH" MATERIAL FOR "HOT" INFO-PRODUCTS, FREE. I'm about to lay in your lap a very profitable approach to creating information products. An "author" (actually "compiler") by the name of Janet Lowe is being published by Wiley, with a series of new books, beginning with "OPRAH WINFREY SPEAKS: Insight From The World's Most Influential Voice" and "BILL GATES SPEAKS: Insight From The World's Greatest Entrepreneur" and "WARREN BUFFET SPEAKS: Insights From America's Most Successful Investor." These books have full front cover photos of Oprah, Bill and Warren. But make no mistake about this; Oprah, etc. had nothing to do with these books. These people are public figures, so they have little protective rights over their utterances. So these books are compilations of what these people have said in interviews in newspapers, magazines, on radio and TV, and in their own writings. This is a model anybody could copy, drawing on any public figures that would be of interest to their customer bases.
- **"FINAL NOTICE" MARKETING WORKS**. IC Member C.J. Bonstrup of Atlas Info Services in NC (who sells biz info to the P.I. industry) sent me his postcard (Exhibit #9) sent to 1,750 accumulated, unconverted leads - and followed up with FAX and/or e-mail. This uses the "impending price increase" as its theme. Result: 25 units. About an 8-to-1 against costs, maybe a bit better. In his note to me, he said he was violating my methods by using postcards. Not at all. We use them, my clients use them. To clarify, my position is as follows: (a) a full-blown letter will almost always outperform a postcard mailing in gross results but not necessarily in net profits, so the value of the transaction and/or customer acquired helps determine the best media; (b) while letters are best at the early stages of a sequence, postcards can definitely work as part of a sequence. Thanks CJ.
- So, to get past gatekeepers: in general, you can try urgent delivery methods, such as FedEx, messenger services, etc. and/or directly enlisting the aid of the gatekeeper by letter or call (or visit) - with a strong statement of potential benefit to the gatekeeper that could result from the prospect reviewing your information. (Egs.: Mrs. Office Manager, when doctors implement our system, not only do they save money, but they reduce staff workload by 18% to 22%.) To command attention and compel response, you must then either so alarm the prospect or hold out such an irresistible, huge promise(s), that he cannot risk ignoring you. And it must be very specific to the prospect. If I were in your shoes (and I have been), I'd get busy. Fixing what we just talked about. And, when you really have no cash, you usually have time, so you can hand-address, you can be your own messenger service, you can do follow-up calls, and so on. Specific to marketing to Drs. though, you desperately need a "champion" - a happy doctor client who will let you use him in your marketing. You may need to barter free services for this.



IF YOU SPEND SERIOUS DOLLARS ON ADVERTISING: I highly recommend getting and studying Barry Maher's book "Getting The Most From Your Yellow Pages Ad." This is a 304-page "giant" full of great examples, which-ad-pulled-best? tests, guide-lines for spending, and inside info. In the mid 80's Barry was the #1 Yellow Pages sales rep for GTE in the whole country. Since then, he's earned everybody's respect as a knowledgeable consultant, a straight-shooter. You can get the book from our office for \$19.95 plus \$4.50 s/h: \$24.45 total. While I am not in 100% agreement with Barry, there IS a wealth of solid info here, and anybody spending from a few hundred bucks a month on up on YP advertising is just goofy not to get it.

- DIRECT-MAIL: Recent, massive study by Pitney-Bowes about what gets mail opened vs. trashed revealed (verified) that the type of postage was the second most important factor: recipients judge the relative importance of mail this way, and in biz-to-biz, stamps and first class metered (marked first class) got almost the same ranking, but permit imprints (pre-sorted first, std.-A, bulk) were all found to be significant deterrents in getting mail opened. Conclusion: use of pre-printed permit mail will negatively impact response rates. Now get this: return address was the #1 factor. People want to know who the mail is from - so, if you have a good relationship with customers, or a high, positive profile with prospects, identifying yourself and your company prominently on the outside envelope works. The absence of a name and return address was one of the biggest reasons people do not open mail - so if going "blind"/sneak up, it better be perfect.
- business focusing on payments instead of price, i.e. "any procedures, any result, just \$39.95 a week." Most recently, I've seen the same tactic in very good TV commercials for "1-800-BRACES", at \$109.00 a month. The principle is taken from the auto industry: sell payments, not price. This is the correct marketing gambit for our times, for anything sold to consumers OR businesses carrying a sizeable price tag; you need to find a way to present affordable payments and make the price itself irrelevant. Just as an example, let's consider the corner car wash: unlimited full service, just \$18.97 a month auto-charged to your credit card.
- "You Wouldn't Go To The Finest Steak House In Town And Order Fish -- So Why Would You Order Your Custom Lapel Pins >From A Nincompoop Who Knows Little Or Nothing About Your Organization?" Attention, Copywriting Coach-ing Members: add this to your bank of formulaic, fill-in-the-blanks. (You Wouldn't Go To A ----- For -----, So Why Would You ----- From -----.)
- **GOOD ADS, BAD PHONE = BAD RESULTS.** Jim McCann, founder of 1-800-FLOWERS has been on several of the Peter Lowe Int'l events with us last year and this year - and, if you want to hear superb handling of the phones, call there and place an order for some flowers. The last time I did it, Diane was outstanding, with suggestive selling, gentle price-bumping, two post-order upsells and an attempt at capturing an e-mail address. But best of all, as I was trying to end the call: "Mr. Kennedy, just one more minute: I want to congratulate you on making a great choice"....then re-described how terrific this thing looked and smelled...."and I want you to know I'll personally take very good care of your order." Very difficult to get this kind of quality on the phone in a big operation, heck, in any size operation. And make no mistake about this: many otherwise effective advertising and marketing campaigns are sabotaged by the handling of the inbound calls.
- A lot of people think their clients ought to refer just because of the great job they do. But you are supposed to do a great job. That's what the client pays for, and paying ends his obligation. If you want to obligate him further, you have to do really extraordinary, outside-the-box, added value things in service and in relationship nurturing. And even then, you still need to at least ask and reward, if not also incentivize referrals. Considering what it costs to get a client via other means, you can spend half that on a referral stimulation program and be way ahead. In short, you market to clients to get referrals, you don't get them automatically. I recently looked at results from one of Michael Kimble's printer clients: this printer used a referral stimulation letter, sent out 350 letters, and brought in \$70,000.00 worth of new business from referred

clients. A chiropractor I occasionally consult with booked 73 new exam appointments as a result of his two day patient appreciation days/bring-a-friend event. But such things don't happen accidentally or automatically.

- **SELL VALUE, NOT PRICE.** Any doofus can sell by cheapest price. There's no more intrigue in that then there was in the "war" when Reagan invaded Grenada. Take a look at a great YP ad (Exhibit #2) - I'm sure it's from a Joe Polish/Piranha Marketing customer - for a carpet cleaning company. Look at his first sentence: "If all you want is cheap, brush the dirt off surface cleaning, please call another company." Well, there's a guy with brass ones. That's telling 'em. Cheapsakates, go bother somebody else, I'm busy taking care of smart customers. Obviously, there's a lot more to learn from this ad; a lot of "sell" squeezed in.
- SPEAKING OF "BOUNCE-BACKS", here's what I recently learned from Elvin Frankel, a "legend" and "giant" in the dry cleaning industry: 4 visits = a buying habit that'll go unaltered unless and until the dry cleaner commits some egregious offense. So their strategy for the grand opening of their stores is: (1) bring 'em in by the herd with an Irresistible Offer; (2) make 'em come back to pick up the cleaning; (3) Put a "bounceback offer" via coupons with the cleaning being picked up, that is almost as good as the original Irresistible Offer, with an expiration date; (4) then they come back with that; and (5) they have to come back again to pick up that cleaning. Now coming there is the habit. It has replaced whatever they did before and wherever they went before re. their dry cleaning. Old habit erased; new habit implanted. (Surely you can see the application to your business.)
- **HOW TO SELL MORE INFO PRODUCTS: SELL SPECIFICS (NOT VAGUE GENERALITIES).** I recently got a very excited FAX from IC Member W. E. Allinger. This fellow is a small-time mail-order operator, usually selling self-published info-products, like booklets, via sales letters, usually mailing 500 at a time. He writes: "Recently, Linda and I sent out a little 100 letter test, one page, both sides, offering a report for \$26.75. The results are shocking. Unbelievable. 52 orders so far. I never got more than a 1% or 2% response in my life." 52% response. (No credit cards; no phone orders!) Would you like to know what MUST be present to get such incredible response? First of all, perfect message-to-market match. In his case, he created a product (report) and this sales letter to precisely, exactly, totally match up with a known, responsive market. Second, meaningful specifics. In this case, his letter is full of very specific questions and bullet points, with the page numbers the answers are on in the Report (a favorite technique by my friends at Boardroom Reports). Note those principles, so you don't get "lost" in the example (Exhibit #7) - this is a letter sent only to people actively involved in sending out chain letters, selling top secret info about chain letters, thus the perfect match.
- ...Says he's a Patient Relations Counselor from Dr. X's office, and is there because Dr. X wants to extend an apology for not making sure their family was getting appropriate dental care. "Somehow, frankly, you slipped through the cracks of the office's patient follow-up system. If you now have a dentist, fine. If not, I have a wonderful offer for you."
- (In the restaurant/club biz, by the way, not doing birthday free gifts is beyond dumb. Even chains have figured this out. Nobody cele-brates their birthday alone. A \$10 or \$20 gift cert to the birthday customer brings in a party of 4, average.) PLEASE: be smart about preserving and maximizing the value of your customers.

- **HORRIBLE NEWS FOR HOME-BASED & SMALL BIZ COURTESY OF UNCLE SAM:** If you use a private postal store's box to safeguard the privacy of your home and family, but still have a street address, it's over. New restrictions on the way private mail box centers (like Mail Boxes Etc.) let customers identify addresses AND new sacrifice of privacy. Problem#1: you'll soon be required to put PMB in your address, telegraphing to the world you are using a box, thus eliminating the important opportunity to show a street address - this will depress response. Problem#2: when you are id'd as using a PMB, any wacko who wants to can contact the post office serving that area, demand and get your true, permanent (home) address. At this point, I have no solutions. I'll keep you posted, and if you learn anything useful, let me know. (Look into how this is currently being handled)
- **WARNING RE. TITLES & CLAIMS.** Didja know?....your product title can be interpreted by regulatory agencies as a product claim? Some years back, "The Future Millionaires' Home Study Course" product title was judged fraudulent in and of itself, based on the lack of typicality of its students actually becoming millionaires. I recently refused a title suggested for my infomercial product due to this claims issue. And I think a product like "Endless Youth" now advertised on TV is at risk. You have to be sensitive to this issue. And knowledgeable about the differences between "core speech" and "commercial speech"; one is constitutionally protected, the other is not. (and this!)
- **BRILLIANT RETAIL PROMOTION.** The "FSI", Free Standing Insert is a solid media; these are all the flyers and stuffers in the center of your Sunday newspaper. On 7/31, in the Cleve. Plain Dealer (and I assume elsewhere) OFFICE MAX used a giant brown paper bag as its FSI, imprinted on both sides with its back-to-school-sale offers and promotions, featuring "20% OFF EVERYTHING YOU CAN FIT IN THIS BAG." And noted: no bags available at stores; one bag per customer; you have to bring the bag in to "play." I was so intrigued I almost drove over there myself, bag in hand, even though I didn't need anything. This is very clever. And copyable.
- **ABOUT GUARANTEES.** My "rules": you ought to offer guarantees.....if you can't guarantee what you do or sell, find something better to offer.....multiple guarantees outpull single guarantees, stronger guarantees outpull wimpy guarantees.....weasel clauses kill guarantees.....clever wording makes ordinary guarantees extraordinary (egs.: "if your friends don't actually accuse you of having had a face-lift, return the empty jar"....."if you lose weight too quickly and must discontinue use of Pounds-Away before you have used the two month supply, you may return the unused portion for a full refund and your weight loss will have been free....."). A Wine Club's guarantee: "If you're not completely satisfied with our monthly selection, send it back - and we'll drink it."
- ...these companies would all be well-served by doing 50% less advertising and re-directing the other 50% of the budget into assembling solid operations; handling of the prospects their advertising creates. (How many business owners do you think NEVER make test calls and pretend to be prospects? NEVER go to their stores incognito to buy things?)
- there's little value in aggressively, successfully advertising and attracting lots of leads without a good system for follow-up; attracting lots of new customers (patients) if your "internal act" isn't solid, so that you excel at retention, repeat sales and/or upsells, and referral stimulation.

- **SPEAKING OF DOCTORS: THEY'RE WRONG ABOUT THEIR #1 PROBLEM.** A detailed survey of patients who switched doctors, reported in ResearchAlert (8-6-99) revealed that 23% did so because of changes in their insurance coverage or HMO, but 27% because of dissatisfaction with the doctor, defined as poor communication (won't answer questions; doesn't explain things well; leave confused; not listening). Further, it'd be a reasonable assumption that some piece of the 23% might not have gone so easily if they were "bonded" well with their doctors. In this same survey, 52% ranked receiving information/education from their drs. and/or having the dr. listen to them as more important than quality of care or waiting time....yet 71% insisted they were given NO information on their last visit. It's arguable that fixing the 27% problem would remove the sting of the 23%. In other words, they ought to focus on what they CAN control instead of what they can't.
- **Making money and making excuses are incompatible skills:** anybody good at one just automatically stinks at the other. The neat thing is, you get to choose which one to get good at and which one to stink at. Anybody with the IQ of dirt and the imagination of a cabbage can come up with a list of reasons (excuses) why he doesn't have time to do marketing stuff. That takes no smarts at all. Figuring out where to get the time to do it, now that has some value. So, do you want to increase your value to your business or stand around mimicking a vegetable? (In one business I had a piece of ten years or so back, we had a sales manager handling a crew of about thirty or forty salespeople. On his office wall, he had a huge list of 99 excuses for being late or not getting to work at all, for blowing a sale, etc. - when a rep came in, he'd say, "Just give me the number.")
- **Check all your advertising: if anything that looks or sounds like something a Fortune 500 company might do or approve of sneaks in, kill it.** Check your operations: if you're mimicking big business in any way, stop. Check your image: if it's "big" or "institutional" or "corporate", switch to "personal".
- THANKSGIVING presents a fantastic marketing opportunity for most businesses - it's a non-denominational event, hard to offend anybody's delicate sensibilities with it, and made-to-order for "thank you" promotions to past and present customers. If you can't create a cash flow surge out of that, you're badly in need of a brain transfusion.
- **The basics (of a DM piece):**
 1. A headline that clearly, directly telegraphs the promise
 2. Simple, benefit-driven subheads
 3. Photos that tell a story
 4. Before/after photo
 5. "Scientific" demonstration of how the product works
 6. Testimonials
- Most common mistakes made in attitudes re. customers, in my opinion: (1) Arrogance....thinking you are superior to them (different yes, superior, not necessarily); (2) Contempt.....actually disliking them, seeing them as "marks" or "numbers"; (3) Not Diagnosing & Responding To Their Desires.....assuming, presuming, guessing, forcing what you think they ought to have down their throats; (4) Failing To Recognize & Reward Their Loyalty.....taking them for granted.

- Here's a pretty good rule: make what you want to sell the star of your ads.
- **COPYWRITING TECHNIQUE:** "Apply the same principle when talking with your prospects as you would if you were hopping a freight train. When you are hopping a freight train, you run along with it for awhile - getting in stride with the train - then you reach up with one hand and grab a rung, reach up with the other hand and grab another, still running along with the train...and finally swing up and on, gently. When you call on your prospects, their minds compare to moving freight trains. They are moving along, thinking about the things they are interested in....whatever it is, they aren't thinking about you and what you have to offer. You can't suddenly enter their space and ask, "Hey, you want to buy some widgets?" (Source: Ben Gay III's newsletter, THE CLOSER.)
- **THE ENTREPRENEUR'S MOST IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS (THAT SEEM HARDEST TO TEACH).** Jeff Paul and I were talking over lunch not long ago, about the behaviors of successful entrepreneurs that we keep failing at teaching to others - including our own employees, associates, etc. - the few key characteristics that almost seem instinctive or in-born, that no matter how hard you preach or how many times you demonstrate, most people can't or won't adopt. If this topic interests you, I'll give 'em to you in brief: (1) Refusal to take "no" for an answer; (2) Urgency; (3) Immunity to others' opinions; (4) Outcome orientation. The most successful people I know are unreasonable people who refuse to accept that what they want done cannot be done when they want it done.
- **HEARD THIS STORY RE. THE INTERNET:** A number of people in Los Angeles accessed a very helpful web site over the past year or so, downloading detailed plans for building hidden home safes, concealing valuables in hiding places in the home, and installing your own alarm system with parts easily bought at a Radio Shack for 1/10th what a security company charges --- all with the caution that, if you hire a security company to install a system or safe, that company's employees know you are worth robbing and may sell your name and address to criminals. The folks using this site entered their names, addresses, phone numbers, etc. in order to get all this nifty information. It turns out the site was designed, put up and operated by a "fence" who buys stolen merchandise, jewelry, etc. from house thieves, who was selling the leads to the house thieves he bought merchandise from.
- Never Raise Prices Without Adding (Perceived) Value
- **HOW TO INCREASE INFO-PRODUCT SALES BY 200% OR MORE.** Listen, a 200% bump in response is nothing to sneeze at under any circumstances, but when your product carries a \$1,600.00 price tag, it is GIGANTIC. So, congrats to KIC Member Ron Ruiz, who just sent me a package of sales literature he created for a company that sells a \$1,600.00 home study course on gunsmithing. Pre-Ruiz, the client used a 2-page sales letter and a video, and was doing well. But Ron increased his sales by nearly 250%.

Here's how, in a nutshell:

1. Expanded the sales letter from 2 to 8 pages*
2. Added two follow-up letters*
3. Contacted past customers and collected good testimonials

4. Published the testimonials in an 8-1/2x11" page size, 50-page booklet, used as an enclosure with the sales letters
 5. Added a "Better-Than-Bulletproof Guarantee"
- In my opinion, his 4th action had more to do with the huge increase in response and sales than the other changes, and I'll again remind everybody that proof-via-testimonials remains the #1 most important and #1 most frequently underused selling tool in the world. (Geez, I am a broken record.)
 - **THE QUANTUM LEAP IN INCOME COMES WHEN YOU CHANGE FROM "DOER" OF YOUR THING TO "MARKETER" OF YOUR THING.** Whatever your thing is.
 - "The main object of person-to-person communication is not to say what you think they will understand, but to say it in such a way that you cannot possibly be misunderstood." It so easy to let your writing (or speaking) rise above the level easily understood by your prospects, so tempting to over-estimate their sophistication or knowledge, so natural to let techno-terms or insider-language creep in. As you become more and more familiar with a subject, you naturally attribute that understanding to your prospects too. Yet, it's often surprising, even shocking to discover what people don't know. The trick to selling-via-media is, as Jerry noted, to go overboard in making certain you cannot be misunderstood - because the confused prospect simply takes no action whatsoever.
 - "One of the most important strategies for the advertising copywriter to remember is: overcoming unspoken objections." It's long been my observation that most salespeople fear prospects' objections, and go about their selling hoping that the prospect does not raise any. However, when selling in print, you do have the luxury of never hearing or having to respond to a prospect's objection, but it's a very costly luxury. Because the unspoken, unanswered objection is a sales or response killer; the skillfully, sensibly answered objection is a stepping stone to the sale. Thus the savviest copywriter raises every conceivable objection (for the mute prospect) and answers it. In terms of format, this is sometimes done via "question and answer." Or in follow-up mailings, as "there are only x# reasons why people seem to hesitate..."
 - A favorite lesson, opinion from Max Sackheim: "There isn't much difference between the top-notch copywriters except for their ability or skill in creating headlines." Jerry zeroed in on this opinion of Sackheim's for good reason; there is no other aspect of copywriting, no other component of an advertisement more important than headlines. Remember, if the headline fails to compel readership, everything else is being said to deaf ears... remember that each subhead and each photo caption is another headline. One overlooked key to creating effective headlines (as well as titles and product names) is "clarity"; telegraphing the core or most important benefit of your offer, telegraphing an understanding of what you do. While there are instances where the extreme opposite - a "curiosity" headline - works, they are much rarer than the successes driven by very clear, direct, benefit-oriented headlines.
 - Do not stop a foot short of the goal line. Tell the reader exactly what it is he is to do next and how he is to do it. Jerry wrote about this at length in one of his newsletters, citing an advertisement for a product that interested him, but devoid of clear instructions for

buying the product. I thought of this when I recently saw publicity about a product, called the listed 800# to have literature sent to me, got a brochure in the mail with no accompanying sales letter, no offer, not even an order form. My speaking colleague Zig Ziglar says: "Timid salesmen have skinny kids." One form of crippling sales timidity is ending a pitch wimpy, without outright asking for the order, or better yet assumptively providing clear, concise instructions for what to do next. I see a lot of business-to-business sales letters that make a great case for a product or service, then end with soothing vague like "Please call me if I can be of service." This is exactly what Jerry means by "stopping short of the goal line."

HIRING: "Whenever Applebees comes into a community, they send out recruiters into area restaurants. The recruiters eat a meal, evaluate the servers, pick out the strongest prospects and approach them. We independents need to learn some of these practices and do unto them before they do unto us"

- also: "...hire Honor Students. Make your establishment the place where winners work, not losers. You'll have to be more flexible in scheduling around activities. If a kid has the discipline to get good grades, then he/she usually will be a quick study and a competent worker. More importantly, always work with the parents. I interview the parents as well as the student." From Bill Marvin re. in-person recruiting: "Good people tend to hang out with good people, and dirtballs hang out with dirtballs. (When you find a good employee in someone else's business) I suggest you do not make a direct offer - it can get you in trouble with the proprietor. Rather, as you hand a potential star your business card, you might say: 'you really impress me with the way you handle yourself. If you know of someone like yourself who might be looking for an opportunity (to work in a fill-in-the-blank), have them call me.' Half the time, that person will show up themselves but they may also refer you to another likely suspect you never would have met." For info about Bill's newsletters: www.restaurantdoctor.com.
- ...the list of "Top Steakhouses" published in the airline mags by a faux association is nothing more than co-op advertising paid for by the listed restaurants.
- **Some quick tips:** (1) Think "small-medium-large"; (2) Don't just throw together a bundle; create logical reasons for the items assembled, so you can talk in terms of "systems" or "processes"; (3) Give each package a title; (4) Consider linkage to follow-up services and presentation as levels of membership.
- WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE? A suggestion to every niche marketer: on your own or teamed up with a knowledgeable expert: put together a course or seminar: "How To Turn Your Fill-In-Blank-Type-Of-Business Into A Million Dollars In X Years Or Less: Converting Income To Wealth" or something along those lines. Get in the business of asking: who wants to be a millionaire?
- HOW TO GET NEW INFO-PRODUCT DONE: I got a FAX from KIC Member Ed Driscoll - in response to the comment about the writer;'s discipline of no less than one page a day - with some very good tips for being prolific: (1) recycle material - from newsletter or articles to a book, from book to newsletter, etc; (2) interview others, get the interviews transcribed, convert to content; (3) have someone interview you; (4) take tools you use in your business and convert to "how to" products for others. Ed says: "I was able to get a 135 page book done in 2 weekends by employing these methods, which I sell using Paul Hartunian's publicity methods." He notes that the concepts of publishing-on-demand and not finishing or even starting a book (or other info product) until you prove it will sell are two of the most important concepts acquired from Jeff Paul.
- First of all - make a note - whenever you ask or tell somebody to do something, the first thing that pops into their mind is: "Why?", and if there ain't no answer, there ain't no response.
- THE IRRELEVANCE OF PRICE: One of the marketing related issues I deal with a lot in talking with business owners is "price", usually their fears about being vulnerable to

competitors' cheaper prices. One of the things I devoutly believe true in 90% of all businesses is that price can be made irrelevant. Hey, you know those little bandaid-like strips you can stick on your nose to breath better? You see ballplayers wearing them. And you can buy a box of them at the drugstore for a few bucks. Well, they make bigger ones for racehorses. And each disposable, one-time-use strip costs twelve dollars. Twelve bucks! But whether it's ten, twelve or twenty, it's pretty much irrelevant. If you think sticking a nose strip on might make the difference between finishing 5th vs. 6th, or 4th vs. 5th, you buy it. You see, it's not the price, it's what we believe to be true about the product and its benefits.

- **People who spend \$30 a month on cable TV won't spend \$30 a month on vitamins. It ain't the price. \$30 is \$30. It's what they think and/or have been made to think about each of those products.**
- a Jerry Buchanan writing from 1995: **"If I had to give a two word instruction of how to deliver an excellent sales story - the words would be: be believable. In today's marketplace, the buyer has become a natural doubter of almost any appeal to his pocket-book. While you may say the right things in the opening headline or first sentences to gain his attention, or you may present an offer perfectly in tune with his greatest fears and desires, if you slip and say just one little exaggeration, advance one half-truth, take just one too aggressive a liberty, you shoot yourself in the foot. Any one thing said that cannot be believed undermines everything else said."**
- In short, if there's a weak link anywhere in your sales story, it'll break. This is why, when I construct a sales story for a client, I'm constantly looking for the weak link, and I painstakingly strive to prove each individual link in the entire chain of ideas, information and assertions. And it is NOT enough just NOT to fib; you must try to prove the legitimacy of your assertions. The most certain approach to this is to isolate each separate claim, 'fact', promise, benefit and assertion on its own piece of paper or 3x5" card, then match it with some item of proof you will use to establish or reinforce its believability. The most dangerous approach is to presume you will be believed because of your credibility or because of the obviousness of the truth or for any other reason.
- Frankly, if you are too darned lazy to thoroughly research the product/business category you choose to work in (or invest in), you deserve what you get. **Do yourself a favor: take a "history course" in your business.**
- Having a legitimately superior product rarely is a marketing advantage, because competitors can make all the same claims you can for their inferior (and lower cost) products. The product superiority may be an advantage after the sale, but not before. So do not delude yourself, that you can get better response from advertising or command higher prices or otherwise escape controlling economics just because you have a superior mousetrap.
- **"GOTCHA'S" - FROM THE BOOK "DRIVE YOUR COMPETITION CRAZY"*:** A pizza chain entering a market offered a 2-for-1 promotion to anybody bringing in a competitor's Yellow Pages ad. (It's hard to later call other pizza places when their ads are gone.)when a major bank closed branch offices, a competing bank dispatched "mobile bank" vans to those parking lots, to sign up customers..... my thought: marketing basically boils down to two tasks: one, securing your customers so they are immune to theft or seduction by competitors and you get as much money from them as possible; two, stealing your competitors' customers.

- **Headlines for Chiro's: "How Much Younger Do You Want To Feel?"** (Could to a database report and target this to people over 40, or over 50, etc)
- the "how much" part triggers curiosity - well, how much younger could I look? Gee, I wonder how much older than my years I do look? Easy to move it. *Example:* How Much Richer Do You Want To Be, 24 Months From Today? *Example:* How Much Safer Than Those Unfortunate Kids at Columbine Do You Want YOUR Kids To Be?. *Example:* How Much Smarter About Retiring Financially Secure Could You Stand To Be? (In fact, I took it and used it for a client's project.)
- The idea behind asking such questions is simple: **if you seek readership, engage the reader.**
- Read "HOW TO DRIVE YOUR COMPETITION CRAZY: CREATING DISRUPTION FOR FUN & PROFIT" by Guy Kawasaki. I'd pay particular attention to pages 14, 19-23*, 42, 63, 66, 116, and 120. In addition to these pages, a point: Kawasaki suggests, as I do, that you become a prospect and, when not prohibitively expensive, a customer of your competitors - and I'm often surprised people don't do this. Get on competitors' mailing lists. He also suggests: if any of your competitors are public companies, buy a few shares of stock, so you get the stockholder mailings and annual reports.
- here's what I always taught the chiropractors and dentists: get rid of the moldy old magazines and the fancy paintings; use the space and time wisely; there are only three things that should be happening while the patient/customer is (briefly!!!) waiting: (1) getting better educated about you, your products and services and how to get better results with them; (2) getting more sold, committed and enthused; (3) getting motivated to refer.
- Which brings me to a letter I just received from a new KIC Member, John Brett, Circle Auto Service & Tire, in Philadelphia: "About 2 months ago, I started sending out questionnaires to my clients to see how their experience was when they used my services. I've collected quite a few responses with unbelievable results. I never realized my clients were so impressed. I just thought I was giving service they expected, but I guess the level of service expected in my field is far below what I provide. I used these results to compile a book that I keep in my customer waiting area, so any clients that are in my store can read them. I didn't know this would affect sales until one day, a regular customer - I use the term loosely; he only purchased specials from my Val-Pak coupons and could never be upsold - was reading the testimonial book while waiting for his car. While my men were working on his car, they again made recommendations for additional service, which this client always declined. To my amazement, he purchased every recommendation and never even asked the price. He even became more sociable with me. This person has been coming into my shop for five years and this is the first add-on purchase he has ever made."
- "As a result of our conversation during your last Call-In Day, we raised our prices on full service mailings to doctors' patients - and it's been the best thing ever. In one month, our revenue has skyrocketed. All clients who were at a certain price were sent a letter explaining our increase, and letting them know they were still paying less than new clients. Not ONE complaint! We did this 'too little, too late,' as you figured. We have also implemented takeaway selling, requiring each doctor to submit an application before we will accept them as a client - and that has worked wonders! At our new price for new clients - a 50% increase - we are not seeing any decrease in new client conversions."

- **What happens IMMEDIATELY after the first transaction is critically important.** I don't think customers consciously enunciate it, but they are disappointed after making a purchase from a new source and NOT being thanked. So, for starters, some form of personal-feeling, formal thank you is a very good idea. Then, depending on the business, you may look to immediate upsells. If you are better at new customer acquisition than at retention, it's probably due more to the ratio of concentration, effort and expense devoted to the first rather than the latter. Retention really boils n to only 5 factors or strategies:
 1. Satisfactory goods and services
 2. Frequent AND consistent communication
 3. Recognition and appreciation
 4. Rewards - such as "frequent buyer programs"
 5. Loss of certain benefits if cease or reduce purchases
- You might not be able to work on all five. But we can do a lot with any one. Just for example, consider the 5th item. A client might lose prestige and bragging rights if he ends his relationship with a "celebrity" provider. A merchant might engineer a collection of information-type benefits that the client becomes accustomed to, even dependent on, but loses if he ceases purchasing at a certain level. Consider #3: periodic, unexpected gifts are a great way of showing appreciation to foster an effective combination of loyalty and obligation. On top of all this, I'd remind you of continuity programs; anytime you can put a customer into an "automatic" status, with the delivery of goods or services on a pre-agreed, continuing schedule, you then take all competitors off that customer's radar screen. Above all else, it's important to accurately measure, closely monitor and continually work at improving retention. ...which most marketers neglect. As to books, you named a great one: Murray Raphel's UP THE LOYALTY LADDER. Also: CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE, the Sewell Cadillac story and methods. Jerry Wilson's WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING.
- All this gave me an idea - once every year or two, you ought to prepare to teach a three day seminar on everything you know about your business. Whether you actually teach it or not is irrelevant, you'll make plenty of moolah just by reminding yourself of things to do you know to do but aren't doing.
- When one prospect voices an objection, it's a sure bet most of your other prospects think it silently. It is these unvoiced and unanswered objections that suppress response to ads or sales letters, that kill sales face-to-face. In other words, there's no such thing as an isolated or oddball objection. The astute marketer takes careful note when an objection is raised, crafts the best possible answer, and from then on, voluntarily and proactively weaves it into the presentation rather than reserving it for use only when a prospect requests it. This is why, when a sales letter fails, it's necessary to do the ugly job of calling non-respondents in search of their objections that were not successfully addressed. You should never simply counter voiced objections, close a sale and think no more about it, anymore than you should crush a lone cockroach underfoot and forget about it.
- To summarize my advice on this matter: (1) Sell only what you can "cleanly" guarantee, without weasel clauses and fine print; (2) Target markets where most customers won't abuse your fairness; (3) Regardless of who's right or wrong, or what your policies are, act quickly and aggressively to respond to and resolve customer complaints; (4) Refund, refund, refund. (5) Do your utmost to avoid sending away even a "lost" customer mad. Occasionally, it may be

unavoidable. But the operable word better be "occasionally" or, better yet, "rarely." To paraphrase advice I got on another matter: satisfied customers come and go, but enemies accumulate.

- During the years I worked closely with chiropractors and dentists and actually created their Yellow Pages ads, when a doctor complained his ad wasn't pulling, it ALWAYS turned out to be a problem with the handling of the incoming calls rather than the lack of calls. In the professional practice arena, we talk about delivering to patients "the WOW! experience" --- an in-office experience from first to last minute, encompassing every encounter with every staff-person, including every detail from the soap and lotion dispensers in the bathrooms (vs. the bar of icky soap laying on the sink) to the video playing in the reception area. It costs comparatively little more in dollars to go from delivering ordinary or merely satisfactory to "wow" experiences for customers. Usually, the devil or the opportunity is in the details. But sometimes there's a "big opportunity", too. Either way or incorporating both, it's important.
- (Re: a butler on a cruise ship) About the butler. I think he took care of 8 SkySuites. Let's assume they pay him \$50,000.00 a year. And I'm going to guess at some other math: say, 3 cruises a month times the 8 Suites, equals 24 per month; 268 a year. \$50,000.00 divided by 268...250 for simple math: \$200.00 per cruise-sale. (Average cruise length 7 days, that's \$30.00 a day.) In selling the cruise, \$200.00 deducted from the price if the butler was omitted would NOT sell more cruises. I doubt \$200.00 added to the price causes anybody to decide "no." The \$200.00 is irrelevant. Further, if the cruise folks are really sharp, they'll call this an advertising expense, not an operations expense. Because that's exactly what it is: it is THE thing that will be most talked about, THE fuel for word-of-mouth advertising. If it gets each of the 268 people to tell 5 more people who could cruise about their experience than they would otherwise, that's $268 \times 5 = 1,340$ otherwise nonexistent prospects, divided into the \$50,000.00 = about \$40 or so per, in word-of-mouth advertising budget. See, this is a big idea. Begs the smart question: what extra thing could you do that'd have this kind of impact and power?...where the added cost would be irrelevant to sales? Think about it. What is THE thing in your business, or that you could put in your business, that would fuel word-of-mouth advertising? Think about that, too.
- **You do market differently to women than to men.** *For those using direct media, specifically direct-mail, this suggests strategy; two different direct-mail packages by gender, possibly even going to the same household....whether you run a Jiffy Lube or car wash, dental or chiropractic office, restaurant, etc., should you have a very different direct-mail package directed to the man-of-the-house vs. the-woman-of-the-house? I believe this could be a "response doubler" for many marketers.*
- I recently got a piece from a jewelry store owner who, for years, has periodically done a mailing offering free cleaning, repair and, if requested, written appraisal of up to 5 pieces of jewelry with the purchase of any watch from a specially priced collection (usually \$99.00). Works well pre-Xmas, pre-Fathers Day. He just tested the "flip": \$99.00 for cleaning, repair and appraisal of up to 5 pieces of jewelry, choose any watch from the special fashion collection free. Result: nearly 15% better response. This is NOT an isolated example. I've seen the "offer flip" work a lot. You might examine all your offers, to see if you have reason to test a "flip."
- **GETTING APPOINTMENTS: THE DIFFICULT MADE EASY.** *here's the ultimate universal truth about this: if you have difficulty securing the appointments you want, it's because you are not offering something ardently desired and of profound interest to those prospects.*

- material i.e. certain words that may be ideal for one purpose i.e. communicating with one audience may be useless for another purpose i.e. different audience. Age, gender, geography, education, vocation, are just a few of the "screens" through which people get and mangle messages. Critical analysis of copy includes trying to discern what the copywriter meant vs. how someone might misunderstand. Part of copywriting is assuming you will be misunderstood and attempting to prevent it with many tools, including, of course, very carefully chosen words, internal repetition, reinforcement with testimonials, etc.
- **(I still wear those cuff-links my Dad gave me, emblazoned YCDBSOYA. That stands for You Can't Do Business Sitting On Your Ass.)** Not long ago, I got a letter from somebody who'd worked on a direct-mail postcard for six months, was submitting it for the third critique, still trying to decide which headline to use, and still, of course, hadn't mailed anything. Here's a tip: if it takes you six months to get a direct-mail piece together, you're too slow. Over here in the real world, we deal in hours, not months. In action, not perfection. Experimentation, not prediction. And I often say, you can answer EVERY question about direct-mail with the same one word seminar scrawled on a 3x5" card anyway: "Test."
- **There's no one thing that's gonna supply you with all the customers or clients you need!!** If it was that easy to keep a business thriving and growing, there'd be no employees anywhere and every idiot'd be self-employed. If all it took was running one ad in one place once a month, your dog would own his own business. Listen, the privilege of being your own boss, earning a high income and using that income and your business to become financially independent is not supposed to be without a hefty price tag, essentially represented by the degree of difficulty, commitment and effort required. This part of the program is there to prevent lazy or silly people from getting rich. But it ain't that difficult either. If you can turn \$35.00 into \$800.00, you should be able to do okay.
- **It costs money to generate leads.** If it's done right, a lead is someone who has stepped forward out of the camouflage of the crowd and identified himself with a red bullseye painted on his chest as someone matching your profile of the likely-to-buy consumer. Giving up on him too quickly or easily is a very common mistake.
- One way or another, every customer should beget at least one new customer per year.
- Finally, for everybody's benefit let me caution against the urge to become a nameless, faceless institution vs. a real person, a personality.
- whether attempting to keep a customer's attention for a few moments or keep a customer coming back for life, you dare not rely on "loyalty" at all. It doesn't exist. Instead, you must make an all-out commitment to manufacturing loyal behavior by what you do, not expecting it from the customer as his natural behavior; you must understand that 'loyalty' is unnatural, not natural.
- Has it ever occurred to you -- the reason you're having trouble getting past gatekeepers, the reason your mailings don't get response, the reason your customers aren't referring others to you in waves -- may be that YOU ARE BORING!

- Big, dumb errors: one, spending more than your yearly gross on any experiment. Two, prioritizing what's "exciting" over what's profitable. I have several clients who insist on making this misake. As their marketing skills grow, they get bored with applying them to their tried-and-true, profitable core business. I'm not opposed to experimentation, diversification or the Internet. But - RECOMMENDATION: Allocate only a small percentage of time and money resources to exploring untested waters. And try to start small, just like you did with your present successful business.....even if a boatload of other peoples' money is available, restrain yourself. (George Will said: "There may be nothing more pleasureable - even sex - than spending large amounts of someone else's money.")
- EVERY SERIOUS STUDENT OF MARKETING OR COPYWRITING OR MAIL-ORDER must study Peterman. I suggest you buy his book 'Peterman Rides Again' (which I bought for all my Platinum Members) and get on his mailing list - and stay on it by buying something once in a while. Go to www.jpeterman.com
- Maybe THE biggest financial and marketing mistake in most businesses is letting umpteen dollars readily available from present customers slip-slide away while spending umpteen dollars chasing down new, first-time customers. The smart opposite is at work at The Palm, a chain of a dozen top steakhouses, with 34,000 customers in its "loyalty reward programs". They recently took one customer-member who'd accumulated 58,000 points (based on \$58,000.00 spent!!! - in 18 months!) and flew him and his companion from Washington to their restaurant in San Juan, Puerto Rico, picking up the whole tab - and, of course, bragging about it in their newsletter. *The newsletter is mailed to nearly 200,000 people*, names assembled from reservation lists, comment cards, sweepstakes, etc.; it promotes the restaurants, invites enrollment in the loyalty rewards club, profiles chefs and famous patrons. Rewards program members get more frequent mailings than the entire database. *In total, 95% of the company's entire marketing budget goes to mailings to that database - only 5% to "outside" advertising.* And there is one of the most important "secrets" you will ever uncover about controlling your own destiny in business; about making competition irrelevant; about successfully selling at prices higher than your competition. Bottom-line: build, nurture and use your own list.
- Customers rarely migrate from dissatisfaction over a faulty product, flawed service, screw-up or error to rage, then a lasting grudge over the "thing"; that always occurs because of the way they are treated beyond the problem.
- You have to know the TCV number - AND USE IT - to make good decisions in general, about advertising and marketing investments as well as operational policies.....and to make (or empower your people to make) case-by-case decisions about satisfying or choosing to lose and anger customers.
- Do you think it might be smart of somebody over there to ask why - *hey, what happened to this customer, anyway?* Here's the likely mistake: somebody looks (just) at the numbers. We keep mailing these postcards, we keep getting X% of response, okey-dokey. That's the accountant running marketing. Sure, you want to watch the numbers. But you also want to look beyond the numbers, inside the numbers...look at each customer. Think of this as diligently "gold-mining" your customer records. In their customer records lies ME, once a very good customer and source of referrals, but missing-in-action for 36 months. Somebody should want to know if I'm getting this car serviced elsewhere....if so, why.....why there instead of at their place.....and

what they might do to get me back, so I buy my next car from them. But I've not received a letter. A phone call. A drop-by. Nothing. Nada. Zip. Shall we assume their service department is booked 100% of the time to 100% capacity, so they don't need me anymore? Maybe, but I doubt it. But even so, I'd wager not all their salespeople are selling more cars than they can deliver. Letting me slip through the cracks is a mistake. And you can bet, I'm not the only lost customer they're wasting money sending these same postcards to with no attention paid to the customers ignoring them.

- if you are sending a lot of mail into one city, town or (most vulnerable) blitzing neighborhoods, it's best to dole the mail out in hunks days apart rather than one big drop. You can try various envelope design tricks (like "official look" or "legal notice warnings re. USPS law" notices) to deter USPS workers from tossing the mail. None of this is foolproof.
- women make up only 19% of the golfer population - but still spend an average of \$411.00 each on clubs, balls, apparel, etc. (vs. the male golfer: \$462.00.) Okay, here's the questions: (a) is your advertising/marketing properly weighted, to correspond with the percentage of male/female buyers in your category? (b) Do you play the odds by ignoring one entirely? - or do you focus aggressively on the neglected minority? In other words, do you have strategy about this? Consider the golf example: if you sell, say, custom clubs, and you play the odds, you simply ignore women golfers altogether; all your ads, sales letters, etc. target guys, use guy-talk, only photos of guys, etc. But the other way to play is to totally focus marketing on the 19% being largely ignored by everybody else playing the odds. The worst is a hybrid of the two, operating without strategy, without consciously and deliberately responding to the 81%/19% division at all.
- some dynamic insight into that small minority of people who achieve their goals and dreams, make things happen, get rich, etc., there it is; they act on what they know . The vast Mediocre-Majority of people know more than enough to do much, much better than they do, it's just that they never use what they know. (I'd suppose if you could actually act on what you know 30%, 40% of the time, you'd be 3000% or 4000% ahead of 95% of the people around you.)
- **GRABBERS, GRABBERS, GRABBERS**. I see things that can be used as grabbers, "lumpy mail", giveaways, etc. all the time and I'm amazed when people tell me they can't come up with such ideas or find such items. the fake lottery tickets we've used a couple times, are from Lakeside Products, 773/761-5495, about 50 cents each. They look so real they fool people. A terrific, cheap grabber. Remember, lots of sources for this sort of thing are in my Promotional & Close-Out Merchandise Guide, in the Kimble-Kennedy Publishing catalog.
- **SOMETIMES THE SIMPLEST DIRECT-MAIL WORKS BEST.** My speaking colleague Jeff Slutsky's* article in the 4/2001 issue of SUCCESS presents several examples. #1: While in Las Vegas for a convention, the owner of a print shop bought 400 picture postcards from the MGM-Grand, hand-addressed them to 400 prospects back home, and wrote "Don't gamble with your printing needs" and an offer, 10% off first order. An amazing 100 (25%!) were redeemed. The lesson - it didn't instantly look like junk mail. If you got the postcard, you'd think "who do I know who went to Vegas?" and turn it over and read it. It might even escape being id'd as junk mail by the postal carriers too. #2: Postcards that had been crumpled up, then flattened out, sent inside envelopes with Post-It Notes reading "Don't throw this out again. It's important." #3: Use of regular greeting cards, hand-addressed. (Note: Platinum Member Bill

Glazer uses a Thanksgiving greeting card every year to promote his holiday sales, with great success.)

- **SELLING INFO-PRODUCTS TO LIBRARIES.** Gold+ Member Bill Childs has had \$100,000.00+ success selling his videos on do-it-yourself stonemasonry to public libraries nationwide, using broadcast FAX and telemarketing, and at my urging, has assembled a complete kit so authors, small publishers, etc. can replicate his success. There are over 17,000 public libraries in North America, and about 20% of their billion dollar annual budget goes to "independent" publishers and authors who sell to them direct.
- **ONLINE/OFFLINE.** 69% of the people who go online and "research" a product or service with a price tag of \$5,000.00 or more say they do so to avoid talking to a salesperson "live" - but after they do online research, 79% want to speak with a salesperson before purchasing.* This speaks volumes about the correct and incorrect uses of web sites. (*Source: ResearchAlert 5/2001.)
- I apparently cannot repeat this often enough: you cannot just call up a list broker. It ain't that easy. YOU must go hunting for lists, because you know better than anybody who you are looking for - and while you may or may not find lists of buyers of your exact same product, you will certainly find other lists, such as periodical subscribers, book buyers, event attendees, exercise device buyers, etc. that can work. So, please, follow the instructions in the 'How To Turn Mailing Lists Into Money' Report with Magnetic Marketing and/or the info on getting rich with mailing lists I gave out at the Boot Camp. Bottom-line: do exhaustive, thoughtful, patient research with SRDS. With that said, though, you are right to think joint ventures. If there are marketers whose lists are not commercially available, but that you know should work for your offer, and you have a tested and proven promotion, by all means go to those marketers and try to make a deal.
- Most people, of course, require imposed motivation. And close supervision. And imminent deadlines. If you turn them loose in any environment missing those things, nothing much gets done. Remember that about others. But eradicate it in yourself.
- “So, the other day, I went to a horse auction in southern Ohio with my trainer in Ohio, his father, and a friend, and I bought two additional racehorses. It was about a 2 hour drive in each direction. There was the auction, plenty of distractions, and it'd be easy to say "no business today - I'll do two things tomorrow and catch up." But, for 45 or 50 minutes, I was a guest speaker on a conference call with several hundred listeners, helping to promote a seminar at which I'm speaking later this year, so there'd be more people there, so my time there speaking would be in front of as many potential new customers as possible. I made the call from my cell phone in a truck in the rain. (For the record, in the "old days", I'd have done it from a pay phone.) I frankly do not think you can "motivate" somebody to do this with speeches, lectures, tapes, books, trapeze training or hot coals - unless you shove the hot coals....well, anyway, I think this only occurs when a person motivates himself to do it, and that process involves developing and having the self-image of someone who is so disciplined.”
- "You must learn to have confidence when you're only half sure. If you need to be 100% sure, that's procrastination." – Mark Burnett

- Incredibly, when the economy slows, the first place a lot of dumb business owners cut costs is in advertising and marketing. That's dumb for several reasons. First of all, it's the only expenditure that directly produces profit (and if you're spending money on marketing that's not profitable, it should have been cut long before now.) Second, it's what the herd does, so for that reason alone, it's wrong. Third, because your competitors do it, it leaves them especially vulnerable to an aggressive marketer. Instead, the correct response to a slow-down in the economy is to become even more aggressive and innovative. Tigers starve last in the jungle.
- Point: every info-marketers customer base has a small number of people willing, even eager to commit to a very high level of service for very large fees.

- **Four rules on mailings:**

1. Mail your house list more **CONSISTENTLY**. Man oh man, am I tired of people asking me if they can mail their newsletter quarterly instead of monthly and have the same impact. Lazy, undisciplined shnooks. People long for consistency.
 2. Mail your house list more **FREQUENTLY**. Out of sight, out of mind. As some of you know, when I was a pup, I was in the Amway business. I actually had a retail business with many good customers. I was urged to call them every two weeks and initially thought that overkill. I made sure my little sticker with my name and phone number was on all the products - if they were running out, they'd call me. So I'm delivering stuff to a customer one day, including a box of detergent, and I come in through the garage and laundry room, and there's a small box of Tide sitting there. When I inquire, she says: "Well, I was running out of yours, and I was at the store anyway, so I just got some of this to tide me over. (No pun intended.) - because (get this!) I didn't want to bother you." Want to know why I outsold damned near everybody in our entire organization? 'Cuz from then on I called every customer every two weeks and they didn't. So now flash ahead to this decade: I find virtually every client I ever work with mailing their own customers with insufficient frequency.
 3. Mail customers AND leads more **PERSISTENTLY**. Consider Dr. Nielsen's Rick Schaefer. Let's say he really did mail to him 179 times between transactions. He'll still get it all back in a few visits. One good referral pays for mailing 179 times to ten Schaefer's. With leads, here's a formula: at least be willing to invest 300% the initial lead cost in follow-up. And split that, half to an intense, short-term sequence, half to long-term "drip." Be very, very reluctant to give up on somebody from a good source who expressed interest, or on someone who has been willing to give you money in the past. At our most recent Platinum meeting, one Member revealed this stat: 70% of his sales in 2000 came from aggressively mailing "dead", unconverted leads from 18 to 36 months old!!!
 4. Mail customers and leads more **CREATIVELY**. I hesitated in using the word, but I mean 'practical creativity.' I mean, make it interesting, even fun to hear from you. Oh, and don't be afraid to pull back the curtain and let them see what you're up to. Customers who appreciate your "show" as much as the products or services, buy more. Have 'em eager to see what you'll do next.
- When we had Platinum in Ohio, Carla called The Brown Derby/Roadhouse, a steak restaurant, nearby to make dinner reservations for 20. She was refused. "We can't make reservations for that many," the woman said, "we might need those seats." This restaurant is within 5 minutes of our house. If I live here for 40 years, I will never set foot in it.

- Bubba, if you own any kind of a business where the phone is answered by human beings or human beings have contact with customers, you better play "mystery shopper" a lot. A whole lot. Often, often, often.
- I see this with clients all the time; they're nowhere near maximum utilization of proven winners in their businesses, but eager to experiment with other things. It may be more fun to play in new concepts, but it'll likely be more profitable to expand and improve use of what already works.
- **WHY DON'T MORE BUSINESS OWNERS SEEK 'MARKETING PARTNERS'?** Inner Circle Member Byron Howell owns an auto windshield repair biz in Louisiana, and notes that the most successful marketing strategy he's ever used has been a joint venture with full-service car washes, accounting for a 30% increase in his sales. I'm dismayed more small business owners don't get together and share lists, cross-sell goods and services, share mailing costs, and so forth. (See this Issue's SPECIAL REPORT for even more incentive to do this.)
- **WORST FLAW IN A SALESMAN:** Need to be liked.
- **WORST FLAW IN AN ENTREPRENEUR:** There are so many to choose from. But if I must choose one, it'd be ego as it equals a fragile or vulnerable self-image, because that precludes resiliency.
- **WORST FLAW IN A MARKETER: Too many ideas, too little implementation.**
- **the whole idea of an 'advertising budget' is idiotic. We should spend all the dollars we can that bring back profits. We should not spend any that don't. Anything that performs within our Maximum Allowable Customer Acquisition Cost, do more of. Anything that doesn't, stop.**
- you need to keep references unknown or unfamiliar to your prospects out, even though those references are common to you. **Awareness of what people don't know** is a huge part of marketing. And what you don't know about what your prospects and customers don't know can cripple your marketing effort.
- **NEW HOMEOWNER LISTS.** Another source, with over 300,000 Welcome Wagon package recipients per month, available with income, home value, age, and mail-order buyer selects, and available with phone numbers. GETKO DIRECT RESPONSE, 800-642-8732.
- ...the typically profitable strategy of scooping up customers from someone else's dead business, even if you must deliver services for free or otherwise make good on the other guy's obligations. In the newsletter business, I've done this not once, but several times, always with satisfactory results. But it applies to every business. Sometime soon, someone in your same business will go belly up, leaving customers on the loose to find new vendors, possibly having unfulfilled obligations to those customers - and you could capture those customers by graciously fulfilling those obligations. A simple strategy I've discussed before is the taking over of dead business' phone numbers, as another example.

- **NEW YEARS IS PRIME MARKETING TERRITORY** for anything related to heightened dissatisfaction and determination to make this new year different or better. Works for weight loss, works for management consulting. The CEO and Big Momma are both new years' resolution susceptible. People take stock of their progress (or lack thereof) at year's end; they try to start off better in the new year. People are very prediction-oriented at this time of year, too (you'll notice all the psychics trot out their predictions in the tabloids, on radio, on TV. And economists - who are just corporate psychics, after all - do the same in the biz media). *How are you piggybacking on all this?*
- **MORE VERY GOOD QUESTIONS FOR BIZ-TO-BIZ CO.'S & THEIR SALESPEOPLE** In the book 'Beep! Beep! Competing In The Age Of The Road Runner', the authors have a mythical speaker pose these questions to an audience of sales reps:
 1. If all your customers could at any time remotely "look" into your warehouse, find the solution or part they needed, and get it shipped overnight, what would they need you for?
 2. If all your products were engineered to be 'smart', and the part itself could alert the distribution center when it needed to be changed, replenished or deleted, what would your customers need you for?
 3. If all price shopping was driven by real-time, global comparisons via the Internet and customers could request customized products and services which in turn drove your production cycles, what would they need you for?
- If you can't answer these brilliantly, you're a commodity waiting discovery, at which point you'll find yourself out back, in the dumpster.
- Step out of the biz-to-biz box for a second and consider McDonalds. Why DO you think they have playgrounds, "fun meals", toy giveaways, Monopoly games, etc., etc? To overcome the fact that they are in a commodity business. The biz-to-biz'er OR the consumer marketer faced with the **same** fundamental change must employ the same fundamental solutions. You "get out of" a commodity business by creating all kinds of added value, relationship strengthening, even distractions. You wrap your core business inside other value more difficult to replicate. By the way, very, very, very few business-to-business marketers ever figure out that they should be closely studying McDonalds rather than their competitor tool and die makers to see how to "disguise" the commodity nature of their business.
- **THE \$11.87 A YEAR SWIPE FILE.** It's no secret that top pro copywriters and other smart marketers maintain what we call "swipe files", made up of others' ads, sales letters, headlines, order forms, etc., which we attempt to "pervert" for our own purposes rather than "inventing." I often counsel businesspeople of every stripe to subscribe to the National Enquirer, which I believe costs \$11.87. I notice when I suggest this from the platform, as I did at Gold+ Member Dr. Ben Altadonna's Chiropractors' Boot Camp, hardly anybody makes a note. Too bad. Because, the direct-response ads in these tabloids, where space is very costly, represent the best work of the best and the brightest advertising minds in America...and these ads often must sell the incredible, thus the techniques employed are even more powerful when used to sell the credible.
- **LESSON#1: WE WRITE OFF LOST CUSTOMERS (OR OLD LEADS) TOO EASILY, TOO QUICKLY.** Most companies would be far more profitable pursuing lost customers rather than

brand new prospects, especially if willing to correct whatever caused the customers to stop buying or go elsewhere. Many companies, small businesses, practices, etc. would be more profitable pursuing old, unconverted leads than generating new ones - and, incidentally, this demonstrates the importance and value of capturing addresses, phone, FAX numbers, etc.; of building a lead database vs. just advertising with no lead capture. In my consulting work, I meet with companies all the time that spend fortunes on advertising, but all they get from it is the traffic to their stores or offices, the direct business; they do not engineer into it other opportunities for people to respond "a little", thus capturing their contact info for follow-up.

- **LESSON #2: THE "OLD CHESTNUT" OF GIFT-WITH-APPOINTMENT (&/OR GIFT-WITH-PURCHASE) WORKS JUST AS WELL IN BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS OR WITH SOPHISTICATED CLIENTELE AS IT DOES IN CONSUMER MARKETING WITH THE GREAT UNWASHED MASSES.** The stubborn insistence that "my clients are above that" "the CEO's that I sell to won't be motivated by a stupid jacket" is a major obstacle for me, when I'm trying to do marketing for biz-to-biz'ers.
- It is VERY significant that the Harry Potter movie has broken ALL records for advance ticket sales now, when the media is busily hyping recession, the stock market has been, admittedly, ugly, we are at war, etc., etc. - the moral of the story is simple: People will respond and spend money entirely regardless of national, local or even personal adverse circumstances, if the product, service or offer is of extraordinary interest and extraordinarily desirable to them. Of course, you can say "there's nothing I can do to match the power of somebody's kids begging, cajoling and demanding they be taken to this movie." You can say that and suffer, or get busy figuring out exactly how to make what you offer equally compelling to your audience.
- The big objection is waste: "I have to rent a minimum of 5,000 names from a list, but in my area, only 260 of the 5,000 are useful." If it costs, for simple math, \$100.00 per 1,000 ie. \$500.00 for 5,000, but 260 are useable, that's \$1.92 per useable name. Measure that against costs of finding those same ideally qualified, interested and responsive prospects by other lead-generation means or by mass mailing and incurring waste. If, for example, I mass mail by zip code, 1,000 pieces at \$1.00 each, and get 1/4th-of-1%, that's 10 customers, cost \$100.00 each. If I target mail the 260 at \$1.92 name cost and double the other costs, \$2.00, \$3.92, call it \$4.00 each, I invest about the same: \$1,040.00. But surely I'll do better than the 1/4 of 1%. However, if you still want to mitigate waste, round up a few peers in other areas who'll go together with you on a list rental.
- ...the owner of Zephyr Cove Restaurant, maintains a database of 15,000 customers, and every month does a birthday mailing to those with birthdays that month. But they also buy a list of 5,000+ birthdays a month from their local newspaper, mail to them, and frequently get asked "how did you know it was my birthday?" from new customers coming in. They rank their birthday campaigns as the most profitable of all the advertising and marketing they do - and they do a lot. Response rates: 20% to 25% house list, 5% to the cold list. Note: start getting birthday info from your customers if you don't already have it. Use it.
- So, carefully examine your business. Where are the hidden or unexploited upsell opportunities, at point of purchase or time of sale, whether it's tea on the table, or an impulse item on the order form; on the phone; in person; in immediate follow-up to a purchase, etc. Hunt. Think. Be constantly alert for examples in others' businesses that suggest opportunities in yours.

- **BOOK I HIGHLY RECOMMEND: THE TRUSTED ADVISOR** (by Maiser/Galford) presents strategies, processes and ideas for successfully positioning yourself as a trusted advisor rather than salesperson or vendor. As usual, I do not agree with everything suggested in the book; in fact, there are two things I vehemently disagree with (giving away advice too freely as "sampling" and rapid response and accessibility), however, overall, this is a very solid discussion of what is required to quickly and deliberately establish trust, to use your relationship itself as differentiation. Anyone engaged in consulting, in business-to-business/industrial selling, in professional practices should definitely read it, but it'd be useful for just about anybody doing any personal selling.
- **From a marketing standpoint, the premises never change.** (1) Find a manageable, readily and affordably reachable, desirable target market with needs, wants, fears, etc. for which you have or can craft beneficial solutions in the forms of goods and services. (2) Devise compelling, magnetic "bait" that will cause the most eager and responsive persons or entities within that target market to step forward, identify themselves and ask you for your assistance. (3) Position yourself as a trustworthy, knowledgeable, sincerely concerned individual or organization with the best or, preferably, only answer to their needs and desires. (4) Communicate all that with direct-response strategies, via as many different media as testing proves effective. For the record: that's MARKET, MESSAGE, MEDIA. When in doubt, return to this basic formula. Deviate from it or any part of it at your peril. Whether Greenspan sneezes, anthrax dust is discovered in your next door neighbor's garage, or the polar ice cap melts away another millimeter today does not change that moneymaking, marketing formula one whit. DSK
- ...I've noticed a little 'trend' among the most successful ones, worth emulating; they carefully analyze all the direct-mail they get from Michael Kimble's companies, from me, from other Kennedy-trained marketers in search of the newest techniques and strategies, the gambits they have not seen before, then they steal 'em.
- **A good part of the time I am so busy I skip all sorts of things.** Getting haircuts. Getting my car washed. Eating a meal. I'm the guy putting toothpaste on his toast to save time. But I almost always find time to open and inspect the veritable ton of "junk mail" that arrives everyday. When I'm away, I pay to have it ALL boxed up and sent FedEx to me at least once a week. Throwing out this 'education' unopened is as inconceivable to me as campaigning for Hillary next time around.
- Bottom-line: measurement always improves results and, conversely, the absence of measurement always worsens results. The more you measure, the better the results. You must measure as many indicators of success as possible daily, others weekly, others monthly, the more frequent and consistent and short-term, the better.
- "One of the things that made Wendy's a better restaurant was actually putting a limit on the number of good ideas that we had - or at least the number that we decided to act on at any one time. Instead of having fifty good ideas a month and doing them all hit-or-miss, we decided we would have only two or three good ideas and execute the heck out of them. We slowed ourselves down and learned our routine. A lot of people try to do and be everything - too many things - at once. Just do what you can and be who you are."

- My premise is that the reason to sell goods and services is to have customers. To develop some percentage of customers into hyper-responsives. Because if you carefully analyze most businesses, even those with no deliberate strategy for nurturing hyper-responsives, you will find that 70% + of the business' net profits are coming from 20% to as few as 5% of the repeat customers. Admittedly there are exceptions, typically high transaction, single transaction businesses, where it is difficult and may not be worthwhile to add "back-end." But these are exceptions. For most businesses, the 'principle' of profit from hyper-responsives applies.
- Here's a recent illuminating case history: this company just tested putting three different offers into the same mailing, to customers who have historically been sent one solo offer after another. Approximately 8% of the buyers bought all three, and another 12% of the buyers bought two of the three. The overall impact on net profit from the mailing was a 400% improvement. Why does this happen? Why do upsells work? Because, above all else, **a buyer is a buyer is a buyer**. Catalog and TV direct marketers have learned they can do two, three or even four sequential telephone upsells rather than one. My own clients have discovered, in the past year or so, how to put high-priced (rather than low, impulse-priced) items as upsells on order forms. There are lessons here for everybody. A \$300 suit can be an upsell to a \$30 tie, not just vice versa; in fact, I had that tried on me the other day when ordering a tie out of a catalog. Re-carpeting an entire house for \$5,000.00 could be an upsell to a \$200.00 carpet cleaning job.
- Now, **where is the real value in the business?** I used to say I'd never buy a business without a mailing list. Years ago, I looked at buying a big bookstore in downtown Phoenix, and what queered the deal for me was: no list. I suppose today I'd be disinterested without street addresses, e-mail addresses, FAX numbers and phone numbers. I'd knock half the value off of an otherwise good business, if missing this information about its customers. Without it, you're buying furniture. But knowing what I know now, I'd be even pickier. I'd want to look at the number of hyper-responsives that existed.
- If you want to build virtually permanent, unshakeable value, you will aggressively build hyper-responsives. **Hyper-responsive**. n. (1) The customer who finds benefit, profit, value or exceptional satisfaction in purchases made and in his relationship with the seller, so that he is motivated to buy repetitively, frequently and continuously, often at higher price points, buying larger packages of products or services than rank-and-file customers. (2) plural: The customers who represent 5% to 20% of a business' entire customer base or customer list, which accounts for 70% or more of the business' net profits. (3) The customers often, unfortunately, taken for granted, overlooked or under-valued by the business. **hyper-responsive**. adj. (1) The buying behavior of a hyper-responsive (n).
- "Remember, people are NOT buying the product. They are buying the benefit of having the product. **If you've done your job well, they feel they have completed everything they need to do to get that benefit merely by picking up the phone and ordering.**" Making this kind of pitch for an info-product is delicate and complicated; figuring out how to put things into the product itself to support this idea is even tougher. But do not underestimate the importance of John's statement. He has brilliantly summarized what the prospect must get, above all else, out of your message in order to find it irresistible. This is one worth copying onto a bright yellow 4x6" card and sticking it up on your bulletin board.

- ...there are 5% who ALWAYS participate and eagerly, aggressively seek out information, who ALWAYS invest in improving their own know-how, 15% who OFTEN do so, 80% who NEVER do so. Most simply won't do anything. But complain. This is the way it is. I long ago ceased having any real curiosity about this, instead strategically engineering my business to work with the comparative few in the 5% and 20% groups, and drive the others away as much as possible.
- ANYONE selling cafeteria-style is making a mistake.
- "MY BUSINESS IS DIFFERENT". One of the Members began his presentation by saying "I thought MY business was different" and we all laughed, because that's what everyone thinks, and what any of us teaching marketing hears from their clients. A quantum leap in making money is the realization that no business is different; all businesses are the same; all clientele is the same; and what works works, period. Conversely, the stubborn insistence that your business or your clients are different is the biggest impediment to success.
- Direct-response 101: The basic headline test: isolate the headline from everything else and see if it works in isolation.
- Lead generation is really very, very simple. It's about fair exchange. *I want your name, address, etc. and permission to tell you my sales story; in exchange I will give you "x", which should be irresistible to you, if you are the person I want.*
- **seriously consider driving off the unqualified.** Some of the best lead generation advertising tells who should not respond. The very fact that you clearly tell a bunch of people to go away and not bother you makes you more attractive to the qualified prospects you seek.
- Look blabbermouth, at least half of everything you say in your voice to your prospects (and many of your customers) is instantly discredited, instantly discounted, instantly dis-believed. To operate on the arrogant presumption that you will be trusted and believed is just flat-out, brain-dead stupid. In case you haven't noticed, EVERY institution, group or person that the public trusted has screwed over everybody royally. Recently, the Fortune500 (sic. Enron), Arthur Andersen, the SEC, the Catholic Church, and on and on and on. I haven't seen one accurate weather report in a month. Why should anybody believe anybody, especially anybody after their money? For the record here are the principles:
 1. PROVE EVERY ELEMENT OF YOUR CASE OR BE DISTRUSTED.
 2. FAIL TO PROVE ANY ONE ELEMENT, ALL OTHER ELEMENTS ARE DISCREDITED.
 3. WHAT YOUR ENTHUSIASTIC CLIENTS SAY ABOUT YOU IS 1000% MORE PERSUASIVE THAN WHAT YOU SAY, EVEN IF YOU ARE 10,000% MORE ARTICULATE, SO A PREFERRED TYPE OF PROOF IS CLIENT TESTIMONIALS.
 4. PREPONDERANCE OF PROOF.
- Here's a real valuable quote I was forced to memorize years ago: "Only when a person wants, needs and, most of all, appreciates your help can you help them."

- Two weeks ago, I was purchasing a \$1,800.00 chair from a catalog, until their computer wouldn't let them enter my address - it was too long. If you ever let the words "our computer won't let us" exit your lips, a pox on you too. If you hamstringing your employees with such idiocy, a double pox on you.
- "...Second, what I didn't take time to tell the kid is: my "slow start", aw-shucksing, uuuming, appearing to be spontaneous and thoughtful about what I was choosing to share, is strategic, calculated, intentional and practiced; nothing I do on the platform is accidental; but, of course, I am speaking for the purpose of selling the maximum quantity of goods possible, not speaking to win a \$1.98-cent plaque at Toastmasters - and instead of being a critic, he might be better served studying and learning from my example."
- For penny-pinchers, cheapskates and those legitimately handcuffed by low transaction value or low margin situations, nothing beats the postcard for ROI. For starters, here's a simple idea lots of you can use at least once or twice a year: recently Gold+VIP Member Kit Grant ("featured" in our last issue) was traveling to Australia, and I suggested he take a list of key clients and prospects with him, and send them each a picture-postcard from Australia, with the Australian stamps and postmark, and a handwritten note of one kind or another, maybe suggesting he was there gathering additional info and insights of value to his clients. Kit reports spending \$230.00 on the mailing from Down Under, and booking \$15,000.00 in business as a result - a portion of which came from a client he had not been with in 5 years - with calls beginning with, "I got your postcard....." Anytime you travel anywhere interesting (thus ruling out Toledo, Ohio, Peoria, Illinois or pretty much anywhere in Kansas), you can use this very simple, cheap strategy.
- TIP: If a good postcard mailing with a strong offer to your past/present customers fails to produce satisfactory results, you are probably getting an unpleasant wake-up call about the quality of your relationship with these customers, their true happiness with past experience, and of the value or lack thereof in your list.
- POSTCARDS IN THE MAIL IN 48 HRS. - FROM IDEA TO MAILBOX. At our most recent Platinum meeting, T.J. Rohleder showed a couple of examples of postcards he's using in a sequence, which he's having printed and mailed for him by the company discussed here, where you can go online, choose from a bazillion stock photos, cartoons, designs, etc., enter your copy, approve your layout, e-mail your list, and they do everything, and have the buggers in the mail in 48 hours. Even a couple Platinum Members missed the point, and got hung up in the comparatively high cost of this service - roughly .60 to .80 a unit, for something you could do yourself for as little as .25 a unit. Here's why you should NEVER sell OR BUY by price alone: because it is return on investment i.e. value that matters. In this case, it is the getting it done and getting it done almost instantly, without multiple vendors, with no staff, with no handling of anything, etc., etc. that is the value. For example, assume you have an offer deadline hit on a Wednesday, and the response has been less than desired; at 10AM Wednesday you can decide to mail a "deadline extended" postcard to 100, 1,000, 10,000 or 50,000 of your customers, go to this company's site, do everything online, and have it all in the mail the next day. If you do it "normally" you may do it for half the cost, but get it out 8, 9, 10 days later, dramatically diminishing its punch, and its results, to the point that the price for speed was the bargain. Anyway, it's an interesting and, for many, useful vendor. (Joe Polish has his Members using this too.) For info: www.amazingmail.com (LOTS of good ideas in here for us...)

- when you are getting a lot done fast, as we both do, you cannot prevent all these kinds of mistakes (ie simple typos) without slowing everything to a crawl; the trick is to let those of little financial impact go but catch those that are really significant (ie wrong phone number, website, etc).
- FIRE THAT MEDIA. Stephen McLean showed and explained an excellent newspaper insert he was using, and also explained that he used voice broadcast to past and present customers, to alert them to the insert in their newspapers. He wisely wanted customers to redeem coupons and save money (contrary to the idiocy of many business owners who pray their customers don't see their ads or even restrict coupon redemption to new customers only). Anyway, it made me think of a new "media test". If your good customers don't see and mention your ads, you're probably in a place you shouldn't be.
- (On Lead Gen)They would be infinitely better off with a 24-hour, 7-day recorded message and automated lead capture*, an invitation to FAX a request, and a web site, with NO option of calling and getting a live person. So would most businesses doing lead generation. There's little point in investing staff time in talking to a "stage one" lead. They're not going to make this sale over the phone with no literature in the prospect's hands. Furthermore, it is a major irritant for prospects to be "bait 'n switched"; offered free info, then denied that same info until they do a tele-dance with a sales rep. Far better in this case to efficiently capture leads, honor the free offer, send out a very good package, position the rep(s) as "equine exercise facility consultants", and drive the prospect to a complimentary telephone consultation after they've reviewed the material.
- **there is no such thing as "undeserved success." The losers of the world must cling to and promote the theory of undeserved success**, otherwise they have no way of explaining their own lowly status and bare bank accounts. For many, the theory of undeserved success is quite literally their religion: a means of explaining the unexplainable and incomprehensible, and providing comfort and shelter against fear, terror and despair.
- **In your advertising, marketing, sales practices, and businesses you must offend some people.** Peers, of course. But beyond that, other people too. If you never do, your message is too milktoast. You only know you are pushing the line of maximum impact when somebody feels you've stepped over it. I'm not suggesting being offensive for the sake of being offensive, any more than, say, advertising should be entertaining for the sake of being entertaining and at the expense of selling. But you can't be thin-skinned or tippy-toe timid either. Never offending means never being noticed.
- **You just cannot make maximum money until you embrace the reality of UNIVERSAL success principles.** Further, the truth is that breakthroughs in your business rarely if ever come from being focused on your own industry or profession, thus the restaurant owner may have less to gain from analysis of Starbucks than the widget manufacturer, acupuncturist or pet shop owner. **Not being able to transfer and translate successful advertising, marketing and sales practices from outside your box into your box is a severe entrepreneurial handicap. The response just canNOT ever be "This doesn't apply to me"; it must ALWAYS be "how can I apply this?"**.

- **We are first talking about a vital ATTITUDE SHIFT in the life of the business owner.** As I've often put it, the switch from "doer of the thing" to "marketer of the thing." To the chiropractor, dentist, etc. who says he has no time for marketing because he is seeing patients all day, I say two things: one, it's a lie - you are also babysitting employees, writing checks, going to lunch with people who can't contribute to your success, ordering supplies, etc. But two, close your office one full day a week, see no patients, and devote it totally to marketing. "I can't afford to do that," he says. I say he is a blithering idiot who can't count. To the CEO of a sizeable company who offers comparable excuses - like: "I'm in meetings all day" - I say: pick a day each week, no meetings. But this won't happen unless you get it, buy it, embrace it, make that attitude shift to **MARKETER ABOVE ALL ELSE, MARKETING FIRST BEFORE ALL ELSE.** (For our business: This is the ideal, but if you're not comfortable doing that, or don't know where to start, let us help you...)
- One cautionary note: don't too narrowly define marketing. For example, the close supervision, results measurement and hawk-like monitoring of something like effective handling of inbound calls (see next item) is "marketing" just as much writing copy for a new sales letter.
- My Platinum Member Jay Geier has developed a truly extraordinary business within the chiropractic profession, providing a comprehensive training and support system for doctors' front desk staffs, on handling the inbound call -- the single biggest hole in the bucket there, and in most businesses. (My "R-i-n-g" article in the June Issue was written well before his remarkable presentation at my Boot Camp.) For any business where the focal entry point for patients, clients or customers is the phone. To demonstrate the desperate and urgent need for improvement, Jay "audit calls" the offices, records the calls with one of his people playing the part of the prospect. At my Boot Camp, unknown to the doctors, before the event, he audit-called every one of their offices and played their tapes on stage. Denial was impossible. To be fair, the abysmal handling of the calls and the massive losses and waste of marketing dollars linked to this problem is rarely staff's fault; typically, staff is given no scripts, no training, no supervision, no effectiveness measurement and no motivation to get this right. However, the net result is the same as if it was ineptitude by evil intent; the business is robbed daily of thousands of dollars.
- the beauty of being a marketer is you can (and will) be wrong a lot, make lots of mistakes, and still be a big, fat winner thanks to the occasional hit. **Success is NOT about being right; it's about being in motion.**
- Anyway, here's a big tip about testimonials: the best ones tell dramatic and/or emotional and/or unusual and/or amusing stories. These kinds of testimonials are "golden." Sometimes you'll get them spontaneously, but you also want to be alert for them.....when somebody tells you one, don't let it slip away; capture it on tape or on paper.....then use the beejeezus out of it! If you are not using, massively using testimonials, you are making a mistake.
- (On copywriting technique) One of the most reliable, easily learned is "BENEFIT DRIVEN COPY." This requires meticulously eliminating "features only" and ladling on benefit upon benefit upon benefit, so that no sentence is absent benefits.
- **DIRECT-MAIL EXAMPLE OF THE MONTH.** Regrettably the Exhibit reprinted here (Exhibit #1) won't do this piece justice, so I'm going to describe it for you. This is a double-sized

postcard that folds over and mails postcard size. When you open it, inside there is a little zip-lock baggie attached with a staple. Inside the baggie is a "diamond" or at least a little stone shimmering like a diamond. And when you read the copy you discover it might be an actual diamond worth \$1,000.00 or more, or it might just be a cubic zirconia (good for \$50 of in-store credit if returned). The entire promotion is for a one day open house/sale event at the jewelry store. Gold Inner Circle Member Mike Jurado says this is his most successful, reliable promotion, used twice a year, year after year. Now here's what I want to point out: on a small scale, for a small town, local business, Mike has borrowed technique and gimmicks liberally from the giants' sweepstakes and prize promotions, like Publishers Clearinghouse and Readers Digest. While many small business owners would look at those mailings and never think they could work in their businesses, Mike cleverly adapted. Regarding the gimmick itself: variations abound. In the auto business, there's a classic promotion where keys are sent out in the mail, and your key might be the one that starts up the brand new car in the showroom and if it does, you win the car - obviously you have to come in to find out. What variation of this idea could you use? (Even us info-marketers could use the key gimmick tied to attending a boot camp.)

- Of course consumers are increasingly skeptical. And resistant to advertising. But that is good news, not bad news, and it is reason to invest more aggressively in advertising, not to run away from it. The skeptical consumer is our best prospect, because we wind up with little competition; if we do smart advertising, incorporating reason-why copy, compelling testimonials, other social proof, ironclad guarantees, etc. vs. others' dumb advertising absent those ingredients, we are the only voices the skeptic will listen to.
- SHEDDING LIGHT ON THE ELUSIVE USP. "THE PROMISE ONLY YOU CAN MAKE." This is a very good synonym for Unique Selling Proposition, which, incidentally is far stronger and more difficult to develop than an ASP i.e. Articulated Sales Proposition. Key word: unique. Egs. from this book's chapter: "Scandinavian Airlines could have marketed itself as 'the best airline in Europe'. But that would have been a grandiose, unbelievable claim. Instead, it decided to be 'the best airline for frequent business travelers in Europe'. " To stick with this example, and move onto LEVERAGING THE USP INTO A MARKETING MESSAGE, we revert to reason-why advertising i.e. "Nine Reasons Why Scandinavian Airlines Is The Best Airline For Frequent Business Travelers In Europe." If we're smart and gutsy, one of those nine will be a guarantee. Some of the nine reasons might also be answers to what irks business travelers most, or objections skeptical prospects might have. When we are done, we will have successfully answered my USP question: "why should I, your prospect, choose to do business with you vs. any and every other option available to me?".
- ...INVALIDATE OTHER OPTIONS. The 2nd column of this ad invalidates three common options (in this case, going to a local dealer; using E-Bay; having a yard sale). This is an extremely important sales/copywriting strategy missed a lot. **Rarely are you the only possible option or solution, but your job is to make yourself the only viable one, by discrediting all the others.** Make a big mental note of this one.
- **If you do not already have a gigantic, awesomely powerful 'ability to produce', it is THE goal and aspiration to concentrate all your energy and resources on. If you feel you do possess such an 'ability', by all means value it, feed it, nurture it, exercise it, strengthen it, invest in it.**

- And that suggests opportunity: how can you reduce or remove hassle from your customers' lives? I noticed that Outback Steakhouses are advertising a take-out service: call, pull up, they bring the to-go order out to you. I was talking the other day with another consultant to small businesses who's advocating "convenience combos" - for example, a dry cleaning drop-off/pick-up satellite location inside a gym; it gives the gym something unique to promote, a new way to serve its members; customers get to kill two birds with one stone; the dry cleaner gets additional business. Dr. Eben Davis has used a very clever "trick" to create and promote a practice with no waiting room because there is no waiting, not even a minute. I think this may be the path to new competitive advantage for a great many businesses - for some, requiring thinking way, way, way outside the box.
- ONE-STOP DIRECT-MAIL. In a recent issue I directed you to a source for instant postcards, done and mailed for you. Here's another, similar vendor called to my attention by several Members: www.corporatemailnow.com.
- This also points out that every news story represents opportunity and gain for somebody. Regardless of how tragic the event, when it is dropped into the water of public consciousness, there will be a ripple effect that naturally causes commerce, and there will be entrepreneurs proactively capitalizing on it. While no one would ever wish for, say, the serial sniper attacks recent to Washington DC area, many profited because of them. CNN and MSNBC, for example, build viewer-ship, showcase their shows, and attract advertisers whenever something like this occurs. In this case, the pro-gun-control/anti-gun non-profits' rapid response teams raced to get fundraising letters in the mail, to get news releases to the media, to get their spokespersons interviewed. In-bound calls to area burglar alarm companies surged; the smart ones bumped up the size and frequency of their ads. Consider it grisly if you wish, but it is what it is: every event breeds commerce and opportunity. And opportunism is part and parcel of entrepreneurship. Of course, there are plenty of news events less violent than hurricanes and serial murders to respond to and capitalize on. You can pick and choose. But if you are completely neglecting rapid response to current events as a marketing strategy, you are failing to utilize opportunities handed to you daily on a silver platter, so you certainly have no right to complain about your business not thriving to the extent you would like.
- Halloween has officially become the "biggest" adult holiday, surpassing New Years Eve for party-related expenditures. In the community where I have a home in Ohio, most (not a few, most) homes have front yard and exterior lighting and decoration for Halloween every bit as elaborate as Christmas displays. The year's calendar is rich with one holiday/seasonal selling opportunity overlapping the next, yet far too many businesses ignore all this, presumably believing it as important only to retail. But they are wrong, because regardless of what business or profession they are in, they are selling to people, and holidays are important to the people they sell to.
- Recently, a client asked me, of everything I talk about most, what one thing did I think I've advocated that has had the greatest impact on my clients and Members - was it USP? Irresistible Offers? Premium pricing? Direct-mail sequences? What do you think that answer would be? I believe it is convincing businesspeople to do business on their terms; to establish rules for their customers to follow; to dictate the terms of the relationship that suit the business owner's preferences --- usually contrary to industry norms.

- As marketers, we should always remember that most folks are absolutely starved for appreciation and respect, and will handsomely reward just about anybody who gives it to them - yet we must take care not to let our customers unreasonably control or abuse us, in the name of 'appreciation.' (THIS calls for "Abraham" style education... tell them what you're doing for them to show them the respect they want, so they can feel it)
- By virtue of reading this newsletter - if that was your sole marketing education - **you are very likely the king in a land of the blind**, in whatever industry or area you are in. Go ahead, act courageously as if you are infinitely more knowledgeable, capable and qualified to succeed than anyone else in your field, and equally more deserving --- of premium prices or fees, of conducting business on your terms. I'd wager heavily you are.
- **COURAGE IN ACTION** I just love Courageous Marketing. At the Copywriting Boot Camp, Gold Member Eliot Silverman was describing the guarantees he uses for his auto repair business - but I suggested a bolder one: **IF WE FIX YOUR CAR AND YOU'RE NOT SATISFIED, WE'LL BUY YOUR CAR.** To his credit, Eliot gulped, worried, but rushed home and implemented. Exhibit #1 is the flyer (distributed door to door) Eliot put out featuring the guarantee - on November 14th, he reported getting the fastest response to any flyer he's ever used. Says if it works out OK and he doesn't buy too many cars, he'll put it in as a newspaper insert. I would make this guarantee bigger and bolder AND use it as the pre-headline. Maybe even photo, Eliot next to a car, holding out an open briefcase full of money, captioned "I FIX IT RIGHT OR I BUY IT."
- BARRING ANYTHING BETTER, YOU CAN DO A LOT WORSE THAN LEANING ON A COURAGEOUS GUARANTEE.
- I recently got a terrific direct-mail piece from a well-respected national charitable organization I won't name. The piece pitches investing in their charitable annuity. It is a total fear, insecurity driven pitch. It uses the recent stock market doldrums, spectre of war devastating the economy, costs of terrorism making insurers and banks insolvent, and insidiously works at making the reader doubt his ability to make any wise choices with his money. It plays upon ego, to be shrewder than your friends in protecting your wealth. And so on and so on. Ultimately, the "deal" locks up your money forever at a measly 5.6% interest rate, with no security other than the continuing liquidity of the charity.
- GETTING THE OFFER UP-FRONT. Most advertising makes no offer at all. Too much of the advertising and direct-mail that does buries the offer. Sometimes this is necessary, such as when we are selling something "unknown" or horribly pricey. But in most situations, we are best off bringing the offer to the forefront. In this letter it is the subhead: **"You'll Receive Our Deluxe MOMMY & ME Session With Color + Black & White Poses Of You And Your Baby Together PLUS Some Poses Of Your Baby Alone & You'll Save 50% Off The Session Fee If You Call Before Friday, August 23rd at 5:00 PM and Are Photographed before Tuesday, September 17th."** Let's see - what they get, the discount, the very precise deadline, all in the top/first 1/3rd of the first page.
- Here's a headline and subhead I just wrote for a new client: **"An Open Letter To Sincere Individuals In Search Of A Legitimate, Affordable, High Income Business Opportunity Providing Services You Can Be Proud Of To An Eager And Appreciative Clientele ---"**

WITHOUT The Common Headaches Of Most Businesses, Including Overhead, Debt, Franchisor's Restrictions, Employees."

- "FREE INFORMATION KIT - NOW AVAILABLE - REVEALS HOW YOU CAN ENJOY EXCEPTIONAL INCOME, IDEAL LIFESTYLE AND PRESTIGE IN YOUR OWN BUSINESS, REPRESENTING IMPORTANT FINANCIAL PRIVACY, ASSET PROTECTION & TAX REDUCTION SERVICES TO BUSINESS OWNERS, PROFESSIONALS AND FAMILIES IN YOUR AREA."
- FEAR OF LONG HEADLINES IS UNWARRANTED.
- Few things have sufficient inherent or intrinsic value to support even the cheapest of prices they are sold for. Diamonds, after all, are just compressed dirt. Once you decide to deviate from price linked to intrinsic value, why does it matter how big the deviation? Once you deviate from intrinsic value, the limit to price has nothing to do with value, only with perceived value, which is created in the buyer's mind through superior salesmanship.
- It is important to command the highest possible price, for many reasons. Those at the high end are less vulnerable to price-based competition than those at the low end; you build a more secure business. You can make your desired income with less infrastructure to support fewer transactions, fewer customers. You deal with a better customer. You have happier customers, too. The owner of the \$800.00 vacuum is much happier than the owner of the \$59.00 vac. The owner of the \$800.00 vac gets it out of the closet to show her friends. She feels proud to own it. She tells people about it. The owner of the \$59.00 vac does not. And, there is a closed loop with price and marketing; the higher your prices the more you can spend on marketing. Because price is product of salesmanship and marketing, not of intrinsic value, it is vitally important to continually improve, strengthen and sharpen your sales and marketing expertise and confidence. ("I paid \$X for it, and it was worth every penny!")
- I heard a guy interviewed on the radio who discovered one afternoon that he had hit the lottery for millions of dollars. Before turning in his ticket, that night he called every family member, every friend, every neighbor, every co-worker and told each of them he was in a huge pickle, couldn't tell them the details, and needed to borrow \$1,000.00 immediately. As I recall, he made over 50 calls, got 2 yes's, 48 stories and excuses. The next day he was all over the news as his state's newest multi-millionaire. Do you suppose the 48 got the message?
- Here's what I believe: the person who knows how to make money, to bring money in the door, is top man on the totem pole. He's the smart one. And he needs to give himself full credit, and have all the confidence in the world.
- **BUT WE CAN'T OFFER GUARANTEES IN OUR BUSINESS.** ... ad for a chiropractor promoting a guarantee. This ad has a very good headline and a good subhead, beginning with one of those great headline words - "Finally...". The guarantee itself is gutsy: pain relief in first visit.
- **WHAT? A GUARANTEE FROM A CHARITY? YOU BETCHA! Here's something BRAND NEW and NEVER SEEN BEFORE in charity appeals - a GUARANTEE. Never in the history of non-profits has a charity offered you a guarantee. Dedication & Everlasting Love To Animals is the first charity in America to go on record with this**

groundbreaking guarantee because we are so sure you won't be able to call us on it! You have nothing to lose in donating to our animal shelter today. With our No-Risk Guarantee, you have up to a year to visit our Supershelter and see for yourself it is everything I've said it is, and more! If it isn't, I'll take the donation you send to our animals today and I'll mail it to any other animal charity of your choice. That's more than fair, and that's the proof you should be offered from every charity asking for your heartfelt contributions today. So please rush your life-saving gift to our animals now, and come on a Members' Tour to see for yourself how we spent it.

- Buying the appointment: I'm amazed more sales professionals and companies don't do this. After all, if you're any good, you know what your closing ratio is. You know or should know what it costs you in toto to get an appointment i.e. all the advertising, mailing, number of phone calls, etc. added up. You CAN figure out what you can pay for that same appointment - in cash, charity donation, or bribe/gift. Copy for an outright buy of an appointment looks like this: "Give me ___ minutes. If I fail to show you at least # ___ you did not know about and would otherwise not have known about - and that your ___ had not told you about - and you honestly feel I wasted your time, just say the word, and I will pay you \$_____ as my penalty, right on the spot, cash on your desk. That's how certain I am....." Example: "Give me 19 minutes. If I fail to show you three strategies for improving response to your existent advertising or extracting more value from your leads - that your ad agency has not told you about - and you honestly feel I wasted your time, I will pay you \$500.00....."
- WHEN GUARANTEES WON'T HELP. Even a bold, strong guarantee won't help a fundamentally uninteresting proposition, or a message delivered to a poorly selected, unresponsive market. You also have to be careful about the balancing act between guarantees and takeaway selling - I've walked that tightrope successfully for years, because I guarantee my initial consultation days with full fee refund. Finally, of course, a guarantee can't help - and could bankrupt you - if you cannot deliver on it.
- **There are two primary ways to use a grabber:** ONE: to refresh or boost the response of an already successful mailing. If you've got one that's working and you want to try improving on it, try adding a grabber. It may force changing the headline, opening paragraph, it may not. If it does, it may make the entire letter more compelling. TWO: as the starting point of a sales letter. The grabber suggests the theme
- **Oh, and by the way, most of the salespeople floating around under the age of 40 are woefully devoid of exposure to good sales training and sales fundamentals. Gold+VIP Member Mitch Carson has recently been hiring, and has been flabbergasted that nobody even has an answer to "Name your three favorite books about selling." They don't know about Zig or Tommy or Sandler or 'The Closers.'** Keep it in mind. And if you have salespeople who aren't reading, listening to tapes, working on both their skills or their attitudes, fix that, or replace them. Salespeople need to be taught that, in absence of them having and using a SYSTEM for selling, they are at the mercy of their prospects' system for buying or not-buying.
- **It costs a lot of money and you invest a lot of energy in getting a prospect to call or come in to your place of business. When somebody fumbles that, they are stealing money from**

you just as certainly as taking cash from the register. Think about the difference in the severity of your reaction to the one kind of theft versus the other.

- **here's my observation: top achievers deny no emotions. Above all else, top achievers are as honest with themselves as they can possibly be. And quite adept at converting everything inside into energy. But what is most important is your own self-assessment. What really motivates you? Where does your energy come from? If there is "negative" energy, how can you re-engineer it to be more useful? Entrepreneurship requires enormous energy and emotional strength.**
- the best sales letter is no better than the worst if it escapes reading - so these photos are extremely important. This strategy: enclosing loose, actual photos is a very powerful one. It obviously adds cost. Most of the time, it's money well spent. On top of that, it helps get the mailing OPENED, because it justifies envelope teaser copy: PHOTOS ENCLOSED. DO NOT BEND.
- Here is a "big idea" about investing in direct-mail. Most marketers worry way too much about controlling the mailing cost, and make all kinds of compromises to keep the cost per piece mailed below a certain amount. A smarter approach to cost control can be found with the list rather than the mailing itself. In other words, manage your list(s) better, so you can mail fewer pieces to better prospects thus affording a higher per-piece investment.
- DILBERT THINKING-LAND. There the slogan, the mantra is: **"We can't do that because...."** So here are my two big tips: If anybody around you - associate, employee, vendor, etc. - says "we can't do that because" more than once in a blue moon, get rid of that person. My second big tip is to avoid wasting time and energy trying to help any companies, businesses or organizations populated by, run by, or tolerant of "we can't because" types - unless you get a ton of money paid to you wholly unrelated to accomplishment and have a cast iron stomach.
- MAYBE "THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE" HAS SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THE FUTURE OF YOUR BUSINESS. a closed, restricted access practice, where a limited number of patients must pay an annual fee just for access. Does this have broader applications? Let's invent an example: on Monday nights during the football season, I close my restaurant and bar to the public, I bring in extra big screen TV's to show Monday Night football, I put out a huge, gourmet buffet before the game, snacks at half time, I have prizes for proposition bets during the game, etc., etc., but you can only get in if you are a pre-paid Member of my Monday Night Football Club, at, let's say \$1,000.00 a year. You can come as many Monday nights as you like, bring up to 3 guests, the food is free, booze you buy, and nobody but Members can get in. Let's see, I only need to sell 100 of these to put \$100,000.00 in the bank. Will there be "closed to the public" clothing stores? "Closed to the public" other kinds of businesses? Should people be paying just for the privilege of buying from you?
- in the 60's, it was common to give away cassette players with self-improvement and business audio cassettes. There'll always be some product that can best be pushed by giving away the "thing" you need to use the product.
- often "small" (ie niche) magazines have ridiculously cheap advertising rates. Right now, we have three different Members, one of whom is in Gold+VIP, each making over \$50,000.00 a

month on full page ads in a particular magazine that cost less than \$1,500.00. The magazine caters to a small crowd with a narrow interest. It attracts no big, dumb, image advertisers, so its rates are forced to be low. These kinds of magazines are analogous to what small towns were for Wal-Mart or college campus adjacent locations for Dominos.

- You really can't expect to go from a standing start at zero to high levels of responsiveness overnight. People who are cold need to be warmed up, not set on fire. He will face months of warm-up time, and having to invest in frequent communication, gifts, etc. to re-establish a good relationship with his market.
- the idea of the month club. Hopping like a grasshopper with hemorrhoids from one thing to another, never staying with anything long enough to make it work.
- Another huge problem is cafeteria implementation. This is where somebody says they are using an idea, but have cut it up into pieces and only used the parts they like. Guy'll say "I tried that three letter system. Didn't work." Question: did you find and use a response list or demographic list closely matched to your best customers? Answer: Nope. Too hard. Too costly. Just mailed a zip code. Question: did you get the envelopes hand-addressed and use stamps? Answer: Nope. Too expensive. Didn't even use envelopes. Folded over the letters, ran 'em through the postage machine. Sent 'em to 'Occupant.' Question: did you offer a good free gift just for coming in? Answer: Nope. I wrote eight lines of fine print weasel copy restricting how they could get a gift. But I used your system and it didn't work. Uh-huh.
- "Presenting to anyone else (than the main decision maker)," the author writes, "is like that slicer-dicer guy at the fair presenting his wares to the decision-maker's cat. The kitty might really like what the man is doing, and be fascinated by the shiny objects, but it can't write him a check. So, don't pitch cats." a lot of salespeople prefer the comfortable activity of pitching cats rather than the arguably more challenging productivity of insisting only on talking to decision-makers - and if you have salespeople working for you, you need to watch out for this. A lot more salespeople wind up pitching cats out of ignorance or laziness, in not using our kind of marketing to get to the decision-maker; in fact, reversing the sales process, so that the decision-maker pursues the seller.
- Re: not helping customers, and doing other "work" instead. MAKE A NOTE: what you think her work is and what she thinks it is are quite probably two different lists, organized in different priority. I promise you, it occurs in your business too. Maybe not when you're around to hear it. Maybe not vocalized. But it IS there. And it undercuts all the marketing you do, steals from every dollar you invest in advertising. Yes, it is theft, just the same as reaching into the cash register drawer. No employee would ever see it that way. But stealing it is, and that's a fact.
- **RAPID RESPONSE.** A scant 24 hours after Martha Stewart's indictment, you could go to www.marthastewartlivinginprison.com and buy T-shirts. Never underestimate the American entrepreneurial spirit! This gives the opportunity to link to the conversations occurring in today's news for their own promotional purposes. No other media has ever offered affordable, mass, instant communication with customers and prospects - make use of it.
- ...nothing beats well-executed birthday promotions. Now there's a "cold" database by birthday available, with 22 million names matched to exact date of birth plus selects like income, home

ownership, gender, ethnicity, age, state or zip, starting at \$70/M. From Rubin Management, 646-487-3780.

- ...If you are immediately grumbling that you're not a chiropractor and this doesn't apply to you, loosen your underwear, slap your face, and try thinking clearly. This type of business - forget for a moment it is a chiropractic practice - has the following: it deals with an automatically skeptical public; it has tons of competition; it must separate qualified from unqualified prospects; it must get prospects to raise their hands and identify themselves; it needs to create 'expert positioning' for itself in prospects minds; and ultimately it needs prospects to make appointments and come in for a sales presentation. Just might have something in common with your business.
- **IN SEARCH OF THE ELUSIVE USP.** As you undoubtedly know, I harp on "Unique Selling Proposition", and typically suggest three questions to try and get at it:
 1. Why should I choose to do business with you vs. any and every other option available to me?
 2. What do you offer no one else can or will?
 3. What is your reason for existence in your chosen market - other than the fact that you want to be there?
- Fourth, what they guarantee is very bold and compelling - not the product, but the enjoyment thereof.
- ...people are VERY aware of and frustrated by just how far apart advertising promises and delivered realities have become. example: He taps into it by talking about his own anger at how poorly and ineptly he was recently treated by real estate agents, escrow officers and loan processors when buying his home, and telling his customers if they ever catch him performing at that level of mediocrity, carelessness or thoughtlessness - even if he thinks he's doing great - they can call him on it and claim \$50.00. He's had no takers in 4 months, but he has had a whopping 22% increase in response.
- **PAYING THE PENALTY.** I frequently use "penalty guarantees" i.e. more-than-your-money back guarantees ... I did this in selling my recent book on speaking, **BIG MOUTH, BIG MONEY: LESSONS FROM MY 25 YEARS IN SPEAKING.** That book sold for \$297.00, with a triple your money back guarantee! Yep, with cold prospects, not raving fans, I took nearly a \$900.00 liability with every book sold. If we had experienced a 15% or 20% return rate, I'd have lost my hind end. Actually, we sold hundreds of copies. Only one schmuck nicked me for the triple refund. Would I have sold as many without making a big deal out of this outrageously gutsy guarantee? Can't say for sure as no split test, but I know this market intimately, and I am convinced I would not. I love doing this kind of gutsy, in-their-face marketing, but mostly I do it 'cuz it works.
- **A WORD TO THE 'EXPIREDS' READING THIS** (Everybody else can skip this item.) If you've read this far, you've had a very clear demonstration of just how much practical value I pack into this newsletter. Calling it a newsletter is misnomer; it is a seminar in print, and more than that, it is a collection of examples and tools you can instantly grab and use in your own marketing. Any ONE Issue is worth more than the small fee I charge for the entire year. Quite frankly, I am just befuddled beyond words why you would choose to cut yourself off from this

flow of useful material. So befuddled, I'm willing to pay you to tell me. Write me a letter explaining whatever good reason (or bad excuse) you have for not renewing your Membership, and I will send you \$50.00. FAX 602-269-3113. Or, of course, you could do the smart thing, and renew!

- There is a famous story of a retail shopkeeper, as I recall, the owner of a hardware store who found a way to get nearly every person walking past his store to stop and look in its front display window; he blacked over all but a very small circle; people were so curious, they had to peer into the small circle to see what was behind the blacked out window.
- **Attention/Interest Strategies: Precision Target Marketing and Message To Market Match** - because, by far, THE best way to leap out of the crowd, cut through clutter, and capture somebody's attention is to clearly have something to say of very direct, specific, particular, personal importance to the recipient. **Peer Proof** - because the vast majority of marketers competing with you for a group's attention fail to utilize this most important marketing tool. **Invest More In Better Direct-Mail to Fewer Prospects.** Spend more on selection or lead generation, so you can spend more on the impact of what you send. Clients who limit the number of pages to stay within one stamp just slay me. If you're stressed over that, it means your list sucks or your message is generic, vanilla and unimportant.
- Speaking of Barnum, gullibility, etc. An Iowa farmer (who else?) who claims to be in communication with aliens has organized an "event" at his farm, where, for an entire day, he and his family will be "beaming up" messages from anyone who cares to send one - for the very reasonable fee of \$20.00 per. To-date, 90,000 people have forked over their twenty dollars and submitted their messages. For those of you who went to college, that's 1.8-million smackers.
- You need a sensible criteria to use in deciding whose opinions you pay attention to. Most people easily give undeserved expert status to their unemployed brother-in-law, next door neighbor, butcher, bartender and spouse. If Warren Buffet has financial advice for you, welcome it. If Jimmy Buffet has financial advice, consider it. If your sister-in-law, who watched Suze Orman on QVC for 20 minutes, has financial advice for you, ignore it. Anyone who wants their opinions about a subject taken seriously ought to earn that right through study and experience. Next time you're on a jetliner, hope the pilot doesn't turn the controls over to his girlfriend because she has an opinion about landing airplanes.
- I have repeatedly urged you to study Barry Kaye as a model, his books as models. To my knowledge, only two Members have gotten his books and done so - VIP Members Michael Cage and Dr. Charley Martin. Sigh.
- Utilize references people recognize and view as credible. For example, quoting from USA TODAY, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, some publication read by your market. Most marketers never bother to even hit the library and do some very basic research, to find support for their presentation.
- Regardless of the nature of your "ugly" --- much higher prices than a competitor, a massive product recall, your CEO going to jail, a stain remover product that can't make a dent against grape juice --- ignoring a 3,000 pound elephant in the room and hoping others don't notice him

either is simply idiotic. Every product has some flaw. The wimpy salesperson never mentions it and holds his breath, fearing the moment the prospect will. The strong salesperson preemptively acknowledges it and finds some way of using it to advantage, and always gains "trust points" by doing so. If you do salesmanship-by-media rather than face-to-face, you still have the same choice to make, between two approaches; one fraught with peril, one offering opportunity. ("No Lie, Truth is the ultimate sales tool" book confirmation...)

NEW DIRECT-MAIL TOOL: Post-It Notes on the outside of envelopes, on postcards. The USPS has approved a new kind of sticky note (3M's Post-It the most popular) that can withstand the rigors of mail processing when affixed to the outside of an envelope or to a postcard. The stickum on these is strong enough they can even be re-positioned by the recipient - for example, moved from envelope to calendar. Because the biggest factor in direct-mail success is getting an envelope opened and message read, this will (until massively over-used) be a powerful tool for many marketers. Ask your printer, mailing house, or you can find lengthy article in July-August issue, Mailing Systems Technology Magazine. One vendor is automecha.com.

- A few weeks ago, three different viruses invaded a number of clients' databases and ate 'em up. Identity theft via the Internet doubled 2003 vs. 2002. Etc. A computer hooked to the Internet is wide open door into your vault. (DAILY backup of database onto flash drives, external HD's and CDs/DVDs wouldn't be a bad idea...)
- (For Lindsay) SCARY NEWS FOR 'LUDDITE' REALTORS: we have quite a few real estate agents as Members, so here's some research data for them: first 3 months of '03, 71% of homebuyers used the Internet to search for their new home and/or related information, and 90% of those using the Internet also used a real estate agent (compared to 79% of non-Internet users). (Source: Nat'l Assoc Realtors). This should SCARE! the daylights out of any real estate agent still doing business without a well-designed, functioning web site or web sites. By that I mean, direct response sites, not brochure sites. My client, Craig Proctor, and Ron Romano at Automated Marketing Solutions provide the best, turn-key Realtor web sites, period, and if you are in real estate, and not working with them, you should be. Craig has a huge boot camp coming up, incidentally; information available at QuantumLeapSeminar.com.
- one of the many lessons within the Dominos USP example: not trying to be all things to all people. Craft the strongest possible, most pointed and targeted appeal possible to the highest probability and most desirable prospects with no concern over it excluding or repelling or even repulsing everyone else.
- you MUST utilize 'Preponderance Of Proof' at every turn. You dare not assume even the blandest, most obviously true claim, promise or assertion you make will be accepted as true without proof. I have beaten this drum until my hands ache, yet earlier today, I handled 38 critiques from Members, and 26 of them had zero testimonials, zero scientific evidence, zero proof of claims of any kind.
- ...they judge whether your price is "too high" or not based NOT on any knowledge base of their own, but SOLELY based on how you present it.

- But the most important Lesson is that price is NOT linked to your prospect's actual knowledge of what price should be or what comparable prices are. You have far more freedom and flexibility than you probably take advantage of, to price as you please.
- In the case of a women's clothing catalog, they increased demand for a dress by raising the price from \$34 to \$39, but changing from \$34 to \$44 had no effect. So, two things: the '9' seemed like a better value than the '4', even though it raised the price by \$5.00. However, there might be more net profit selling fewer at \$44 than selling more at \$39.
- For professional practices, I often suggest "differential pricing" - if you want Gold+VIP Member Mace Yampolsky to personally handle your DUI case the rate is X-dollars an hour OR if you want one of the other firm's lawyers, supervised by Mace, to handle it, the fee is less, only Y-dollars per hour. (I'd like to do this myself, with copywriting, but I've never yet found anybody to trust with the work.) This works for doctors, dentists, chiropractors, lawyers, CPA's, etc., but can conceivably have wider application.
- I remind you of one of my Ultimate Entrepreneurship Principles: the worst number in business is 'one.' One product, one client, one employee, one revenue source, one media, one anything that if gone leaves you in trouble - if such a thing exists in your life, fix it.
- In the case of a DC, with an average patient value of only \$2,000.00, if he loses just one a month (and in the average office I'd wager it's more like 2 per week, 8 per month): 1 per month = 12 per year. If the doc'll be in practice another 20 years, that's 240 x \$2,000.00: \$480,000.00. Just by NOT fixing one hole in the bucket. If you figure there's at least one more lost per month because of sloppy, late, erratic or non-existent follow-up, there's another \$480,000.00. Nearly a million bucks.
- mail-order genius Melvin Powers has said that 90% of all book titles fail to instantly sell the books or intrigue readers, and he's right. A skilled copywriter will pay heed to my "Headline Test" (which I'm sure you know!), utilize a thesaurus, the "Words That Sell" advertising thesaurus, 'swipe files', creativity checklists (like the one in Alex Osbourne's book), and invest a lot of thought in getting the name just right.
- 'The Man Who Can Sell' is really the only person who is totally and completely free to write his own paycheck and make his way as he prefers in the world. Personally, I favor and have done very well concentrating on the relatively simple approaches presented by people like Tom Hopkins, his mentor J. Douglas Edwards, Fred Herman, Robert Trailins, Zig, rather than the more complex, such as NLP. From a direct-response marketing perspective, everything I do in print or other media is constructed as if a good person-to-person or platform sales presentation. Advertisements, sales letters, TV infomercials, web sites all go awry far more often than not when constructed in any other way, from any other premise.
- Note: one huge source of stock photographs you can license and use for advertising purposes is uniphoto.com.
- (re: direct response & copywriting) "this type of selling in print is THE most valuable skill you can develop in yourself and your children. Regardless of your goal or purpose, copywriting allows you to replicate your message to millions with the voice targeted to one."

- Here's something to be very thankful for, as a direct-response marketer: **All humans respond exactly the same way to a relatively short list, a small toolbox of very reliable tools of influence and motivation.** In fact, you can master, maybe, a dozen or so vitally important principles, put about two dozen tools in your toolbox, and just keep living off of those over and over again, regardless of the market or job site you travel to. (Confession: my 'swipe' file is a lot smaller than most think it is.)
- Most people who target the affluent or highly educated, or who market business-to-business, especially if to executives or CEO's, argue with me incessantly that their clientele is immune to the lure of the premium i.e. gift with purchase, or, for that matter, gift with appointment. You know the line: in Lake Wobegon, where all the children are above-average. when I show them examples such as commercial mortgage broker and Gold+VIP Member Al Williams' use of Palm Springs getaway weekends to secure new multi-million dollar loans, whoever I am working with will still argue that his executive or doctor or lawyer or CEO or museum director, etc. clients would never be influenced by such embarrassing tactics.
- **Everybody is susceptible to influence, motivation and even control with freebies and premiums. Nobody is immune to influence by freebies and premiums. If your clients or prospects do not respond to your 'bribery', it is not because they are immune, it is only indication you haven't offered the right 'bribe.'**
- Cynics call it gullibility. The more favorable spin, is the indomitable optimism and hope so hardwired into us all, we constantly set aside logic, skepticism and caution. However you wish to catalog the impulse, be glad it's there. And understand that if you put out a message that fails to elicit satisfactory response, it is evidence either of wrong target reached, wrong media used, or most often, offering something that people do not find so irresistible and compelling they will throw all caution to the wind and respond. Because whenever the offer is irresistible and on target with its audience, people DO cast aside caution, procrastination and logic, and respond.
- consider the challenge of the chiropractor prescribing a 12-month treatment program. A year to get well, on the surface, sounds rather unappealing. Unless and until, its pointed out that it took you 38 years to get into the condition you're in, and you have a reasonable probability of living at least another 40 years in your choice of chronic pain or good health - so, it took 13,900 days to manifest a problem that can be solved in 365 days...solved in less than 3% of the time it took to create it. In toto, it's taking only 365 of 28,500 days to restore and provide optimum health and function. Etc.
- A lot of people screw up their lead generation advertising by adding their business identity or trying to make it do more than one job.
- Want a customer satisfaction secret? Continental Airlines is once again serving ice cream sundaes in First Class, about halfway through long flights. It is hard to stay mad at somebody who is giving you ice cream. My hair stylist of many years routinely provides neck rubs, explaining "**A five minute neck rub makes up for a lot of bad haircuts.**"
- I have emphatically stated, long taught, and often proved that every business profits by putting out a newsletter to its customers (and targeted prospects, centers of influence, etc.) but I rail

against the quarterly or bi-annual or every-once-in-a-while approach. To be perceived, looked forward to as a “publication”, frequency and consistency are required. Also, frequency of communication with customers is vital anyway – big thumb rule: list loses 10% of value each month it is neglected. (Snubbed, a better word. After I’ve given you money as a customer, not hearing from you is being snubbed.) But the cheapskates squeal like pigs about the cost. The dysfunctional and lazy moan like beached whales about the agony and difficulty of writing the thing. One answer to the latter complaint is having it done for you. However if you want to do this quick, easy, dirt cheap, consider the newsletter on a postcard. ‘World’s Smallest Newsletter’ You should be able to copy this format and knock out each month’s in under 30 minutes.

- ...The envelope is used as a billboard front and back, the back side’s flap headlined: 6 REASONS TO OPEN THIS ENVELOPE! then in “Reason Why Advertising” format, six good reasons are given. The front of the envelope includes a full-color decal of a toy you can get for just a dollar; the sticker’s an involvement device too. I like the “6 Reasons Why” approach, and if mailing with B-pile look and teaser copy, I’d use this approach.
- ...classic A-pile, perfectly executed. The return address is one of those little address stickers like Grandma uses. Real stamp. Personal sized envelope. The handwritten addressing is not handwriting; it is a font from an off-the-shelf software program. The ultimate message about envelope design: it’s very important, and worth split-testing, or testing against a control.
- Four ways to personalize:
 1. **Exterior envelope or see-through window personalization**
 2. **Personalization/Name, City, etc. in Headline**
 3. **Personalization throughout the copy**
 4. **Customization: different blocks of copy depending on recipient**

Incidentally, this goes hand-in-hand with the enormous opportunity that comes from micro-managing and segmenting your customer list

- Just as big a mystery, the fruitcakes who assume they know how their customers think, what they want, why they buy, what’s important to them. If you get a business owner to make a list of the things that are important to his customers in priority order, get customers to do it, and compare, you’ll be shocked. Good question: ***“What would you like from your dentist that you don’t get?”*** Here’s a revelation: none of the answers had to do with dentistry, with the core services being purchased. None. They had to do with being greeted by first name or “Mr.”, being called in from the reception room or having someone come out to greet them, concern calls, neck massage, music, etc. In short, it’s the overall EXPERIENCE that matters most. Then there are 1,000 “little” things that make up the “experience.” So, here’s a good question to ask people about your business --- strangers you meet on a plane, other Inner Circle Members, your neighbors, everybody... **What would you like from your <your type of business>that you don’t get?**
- When W., Clement Stone said **"The sale is contingent upon the attitude of the salesperson, not the prospect"**, he didn't weasel it; he didn't say "unless the economy's bad" or "unless" -whatever. In fact, he first stated this to his insurance salespeople in the depths of the Great Depression.

- **NEW YEARS RESOLUTION#1:** STEAL MORE. BUT, WHO YOU GONNA COPY FROM? I'm actually surprised more Members don't take my promotions and translate them into their diverse businesses. IMPORTANT NOTE: you MUST get adept at taking winning ideas from outside your industry, outside your circle of peers, outside your ordinary exposure and translating it for your use. Breakthroughs rarely come from inside; usually from outside. An example: today's Guthy-Renker business is almost entirely based on continuity, whether skin care products or Dean Martin videos. Their infomercials would not be on the air without this. It originated with Maxwell Sackheim and the Book Of The Month Club.
- HONEST THEFT. For the record, Eliot stole honestly. He took the idea, not the copy verbatim, and he moved it from one type of business to another, entirely different type of business, thus avoiding any competition, confusion in marketplace or conflict. DISHONEST THEFT is taking actual trade names, book/product titles, brands or verbatim copy and/or utilizing someone's intellectual property in an environment where your advertising may very well bump up against his.
- For most businesses, customers are THE prime asset. So unnecessarily driving them off is unforgivably stupid.
- **SMART QUESTIONS:** *What dumb policy is in place in your business? What stupid stuff is being said by your employees to your customers? How might you know the second? Role-play: put different situations that might be raised by customers or prospects to your staff without advance warning and have them tell you what they would tell the customer. Play this "hot potato" game frequently. Also, mystery shop call your business. How might you uncover the first? Look closely at every policy to see if it is for the convenience of the customer or the convenience of the staff. (Easy for everybody to forget, it's the customer signing the paycheck, not the bookkeeper or the staff.) Yes, you DO need to have some rules that customers may not like, but you'd better very, very carefully and consciously weigh their value vs. their cost. Remember, one satisfied customer tells nobody, one ecstatic customer tells 4 to 8, one really annoyed customer tells 52. I bring the average up, by telling 5,000.*
- (Re: valentines day promotion) Of course, if you're just thinking about this now, it's too late bubba. If you follow Bill Glazer's sound advice and example of building a marketing calendar for your entire year in advance, and you paid attention to my advice on holiday linked promotion in 'The Ultimate Marketing Plan', then you were right on top of this.
- **HOW CAN I GET PAST THE GATE-KEEPERS?** *I refuse to answer this - because it is the wrong question. It suggests both artifice and difficulty; I'm opposed to both. Instead, the superior question is: *how can I get decision-makers seeking me out as an expert with important knowledge, solutions or opportunities for them?* This requires a substantial shift in thinking, and often, a thorough and complete re-engineering of the entire marketing-to-sales process, even the product or service itself. It's very hard to get salespeople out of the get-past-gatekeeper mode. Doing so begins with getting their focus off their product.*
- What do: the restaurant drive-in window, WalMart's greeters (whose real purpose is to make sure every customer gets a shopping cart - in case that hadn't dawned on you folks), gift with purchase at electronic stores (free DVD player with big screen TV), free cellphones with

contracts, and 0% interest in the car business have in common? every one of these advertising, marketing or sales strategies employed by the businesses named originated from a vastly different, wholly unrelated business. Drive-in window - banks; Wal-Mart greeters - casinos, gift with purchase - cosmetic counters, free cellphones - the razor blade/razor business, 0% interest - furniture stores.

- **ENTREPRENEUR VS. BUSINESS OWNER.** the difference 'tween entrepreneur and business owner can be summarized as fluid vs. fixed. The business owner is fixed in place, in one industry, even one business, and stays very focused on it, creating incremental improvements internally. The entrepreneur fluidly moves from one business, one field to another, and takes a bigger, broader view, often expanding a business outward. For example, someone who defines himself as a 'jewelry store owner' will, after 10 years, own one or more jewelry stores; someone who defines himself as an 'entrepreneur' who owns a jewelry store will, after 10 years, have a jewelry catalog business, web sites, be selling jewelry on e-bay, be dealing in antique jewelry, have kiosks in malls, etc.
- **WATCH OUT FOR THE GOOD STRATEGY, BADLY IMPLEMENTED.** About a week before Christmas, I had lunch at a Don Pablos restaurant and found a little fold-over card on my table making it easy to get gift certificates while eating, by handing the card to the waiter. There was also a little table sign just like this card. A smart idea, with application beyond restaurants. Unfortunately, the graphic artists made such a mess out of this, and used a meaningless headline, that I paid zero attention to it, until I was done eating, paid and leaving. This thing is printed in red, yellow, purple and gray swirls with only the words 'Shop Or Eat?' across its front - incomprehensible unless and until you open it. I would go to a plain, light background and big, bold letters: **“RELAX: You Can Eat And Shop At The Same Time.”** **GIFT CERTIFICATES, READY TO GO WHEN YOU ARE.** And I'd put the wait staff on commission, so they called attention to this to the customers. Businesses are overrun with good strategies, badly implemented just like this.
- **The Big Lesson is - you have to *WORK JUST AT GETTING IT READ*.** Not presume readership, which is what most people do. Way, way, way too much advertising and mail is produced with a presumption of readership. Actually, the opposite is the smarter approach; presuming every recipient will try NOT to read it. **THE BEST WAY TO MAXIMIZE READERSHIP IS** targeting. My 'message to market match' principle. But when you can't target, when you must use mass media and fish from a very large lake, then you have to work even harder at getting people to bother reading your message.
- With travel as example, there are people who can be motivated into a frenzy over the prospect of a trip, but there are others, like me, who get depressed at the very thought. This means, take care super-imposing your own likes and dislikes, be careful presuming interests and desires, find out as much as you can about what your prospects really want.
- (re: teleseminars) Why They Work: 1. Non-Threatening. People can attend and listen without fear of being high-pressure sold one on one, can bail out any time. 2. Convenience. People can dial in from office, home, cellphone anywhere. You can pick time appropriate for your market. 3. Interest. You can use your voice inflections, enthusiasm and personality, have testimonials on the line. 4. Group Dynamics, Urgency Close - if actually selling on the call, it has the same

dynamic as in an actual seminar room. Instead of the stampede to the rear of the room, it's a rush to the phones.

- Re: "Ugly" mailings: Marketers who still fear this sort ~ "professional image suicide" stay lost in mailbox clutter.
- DIRECT-MAIL BOOSTER TOOL: more and more of my Platinum and GoldNIP Members are utilizing computer-stored type fonts made from their own (or spouse's, staff-person's) actual handwriting, to address their 'a-pile' mail. It looks 1000% more authentic than the 'stock' handwriting fonts. (Look into this!)
- I preach the gospel of carving up a market, carving a niche out of a market, devising products/offers or entire businesses to match up to the chosen niche. The main reasons: (a) the "hey, that's for ME" reaction which automatically commands attention and boosts response, (b) the separation from competition; (c) the more powerful application of limited resources. EG: a Belgian furniture store advertises and sells "furniture packages for just divorced men." There, 50% of marriages end in divorce within 5 years. Recognizing most men hate to shop, aren't good at it, etc., they've created "packages" – example: a living room, bedroom, dining room, TV and DVD, \$2,290 euros (about \$2,700.00). They are selling 10 or more "packages" every week. (\$1.4-MILLION a year). The owner of the shop, twice divorced, has his own story to tell, empathy to share, and has discovered the wisdom of making things very, very simple and easy for these customers who are often in urgent need of something to sleep in, sit on, eat at and watch.
- THE AWESOME POWER OF 'AFFINITY'. ...Kelli deSante told me, about her experience moons ago as first female car salesperson in state of South Carolina, then a recently divorced mom, who had a horror-show experience buying her first car on her own, sans husband, after her divorce made it necessary. A postcard telling her story and offering to help, sent to women, brought them in, in droves. If you aren't utilizing 'affinity', you're missing out on one of the most powerful points of leverage in marketing. If you've tried it with unsatisfactory results, you somehow screwed it up.
- In most situations, most marketers err by 'cafeteria selling'; letting people pick and choose as if from a cafeteria line. This negligence nearly always produces lower average transactions than building and offering packages or, better yet, only packages. Restaurant chains, for example, often package sell: complete 4, 5 or 6 course meals, meals for 2, etc. (watch Stuart Andersons Black Angus, Applebees), but relatively few independent restaurants follow suit. Two types of Package Selling: one is the combination package; the other is the choice of levels of combinations i.e. Silver, Gold, Gold+, or Good Value, Better Value, Best Value.
- I think you and they have to have agreement on what the job priorities are, what constitutes success and failure. At many levels, there's a widening gap of misunderstanding. Simple example: in the doc's office, the front desk person who thinks her job is scheduling, does not view capturing information for follow-up from callers and simulating referrals from patients as her job. I just do not think there's

nearly enough initial or on-going training, re-training and discussion in most businesses. (Important for our business, & for Lou)

- If there is one shortcut that you can employ to get your mail noticed, it is to make it bigger than a typical #10 envelope. (ie 9 3/4th by 10 1/4 inches envelope)
- GREAT ‘OUTRAGEOUS’ LINES IN ADVERTISING. I admire the truly shameless, outrageous ad copy that blatantly dares credulity. Halbert’s guarantee for Nancy Kwan’s Pearl Cream qualifies: if your friends don’t actually accuse you of having had a face lift, return the empty jar.... And here’s a ‘classic’ from weight loss advertising, used with slight variations by hundreds of diet ads over the years: if weight loss greater than 10 pounds per week occurs, you may wish to consult your physician. Now, the diet promoters’ outrageous ‘caution’ has been swiped magnificently by a ‘respectable’ pharmaceutical company, as follows: Erections lasting longer than four hours, though rare, require immediate medical attention. This is from Cialis’ TV commercials. ‘Lest you have any doubts, such a ‘warning’ does not suppress sales.
- Read or re-read the book THE CLOSERS. You’ll see, this is not a gentle art. If you can’t get completely, totally past even the slightest twinge of squeamishness about doing everything needed, everything possible to make the sale, seek other work. We do not need any more people doing their jobs badly. Most sales copy is wimpy, mamby-pamby.
- (Re: Pay per click advertising/marketing) But what’s important for Direct Marketers is that you can instantaneously split test anything you want. Write two ads, and in as little as an hour you can see which one is better and which one is worse – then delete the inferior one and try again to ‘beat your control.’ It’s never been possible to test and track so quickly and easily as it is on Google AdWords.
- You just have to find ways to organize, discipline and motivate yourself to get more done, faster. Not more started. More done.
- BASIC TOOLS OF LEAD GENERATION: (a) an offer of free info, compelling to the target, (b) free 24-hour recorded messages; (c) expire dates, deadlines, specific urgency.
- 5 KEYS TO CONSUMER BEHAVIOR, CIRCA 2004: (1) SPEED, (2) TIME/CONVENIENCE, (3) NEW, (4) SERVICE GUARANTEES, (5) CELEBRITIES. Detailed analysis by four different ad research groups, summarized in one of the pricey research services I subscribe to rank these five as the top motivators. How many are you using?
- In selling weight-loss/diet by direct-mail, for example, a list of people who bought a particular pill or gadget a month or two ago get a letter from someone sharply critical of that pill or gadget that proved worthless, then offering the “real” pill or gadget that works. Sometimes the 2nd product is owned and marketed by the same company that owned and marketed the first one. With financial newsletters, lists of recent expirers are often more productive than lists of subscribers; the letter arrives criticizing the

previous guru and his ilk, whose stock tips proved disastrous, and presenting the “real” guru who knows his stuff. Often, five or six of these guru-newsletters are published by the same company, rotating expired subscribers from one to the next. This may strike you as a disreputable practice. However, you should study con artists and their scams for the same reason you study the most outlandish ads in the tabloids; borrowing what works to sell the incredible (non-credible) to sell the credible works fabulously well.

- in Lodi, California, Gary’s Uptown Restaurant And Bar charges its patrons different prices depending on how little hair they have on their heads. The owner, Gary Arnold, is bald, and has made his restaurant a haven for the bald ‘n beautiful. On Wednesdays, you get a discount based on how balding you are – 10%, 25%, 50%, even free. If you’ve got less than half your hair, you cut the menu prices in half. The real thing – a totally hairless head – gets the 100% discount and even repeat bald customers eat free. News has spread beyond Lodi to Sacramento, Modesto Stockton, and they come from miles around to congregate at Gary’s Anti-Hair-Club-For-Men. It has turned his slowest day into his busiest, more than doubling sales. You CAN niche-market anything or anybody.
- THE BEST ADVERTISING JUST NEVER WEARS OUT. If you want to churn out effective advertising for your business as quickly, efficiently and safely as possible, with no brain strain, just keep recycling the oldest of the old chestnuts, the classics that never seem to wear out. You can live off of Caples, Collier, the simplest of swipe files – like ‘the 100 best headlines’ in Schwab’s book. EXHIBIT #2 is an oversize postcard from Scott Palangi, with the most famous of all Caples headlines. Maybe the most frequently used of all of them (“They laughed when I..”)
- a ‘No B.S. MARKETING’ point for you: most of us are not just getting paid for the core product or service we deliver; we are getting paid for the relationship the customer has with us, feels he has with us, and with that relationship comes responsibility. You need to remember who’s signing your paycheck, and what they are really paying you for.
- In my entire life, I have not used a rented or purchased list, whether 5,000 or 50,000, without personally, manually going through it and looking at the labels!
- There is a book by this title: CUSTOMERS FOR LIFE. Its title alone is valuable. As your overriding objective, as its own litmus test: is doing this, saying this, selling this, promoting this, endorsing this, being seen involved with this helpful in keeping my customers for life?
- This is a HUGE lesson for everyone to learn – you need to think ‘outside the box.’ Instead of saying, “Oh this is cute, but it doesn’t apply to me,” you need to say, “How can I take this and adapt it for my own purpose?” Now, don’t miss the point that I just made. The marketer who understands this concept has a big advantage over the one who does not.

- **NO DEADLINE – NO OFFER**. It is not only important to state the deadline, but it is equally important to state it often. I want to make one more important point about deadlines. Be cautious not to make them too long. If you do, then they become worthless. My rule is that when using a ‘time sensitive’ deadline, you typically never want to give your clients more than 2 weeks to respond and 4 days or less usually works best.
- there are clubs, a convention and at least one magazine for people who collect old vacuum cleaners, athletic shoes, bowling balls? There are hundreds and hundreds of microbreweries, tens of thousands of home beer brewers, clubs, conventions, competitions and magazines just for these folks – in which I found EXHIBIT #8, for an insurance agent catering to brewers. ... His is the only insurance agent’s ad in the magazine. There are nicheing examples I’m sworn to secrecy about, giving ordinary businesspeople, like insurance agents, real estate agents, mortgage brokers, car dealers, spa owners, etc. truly obscene ROI’s on ad dollars and profits. I can’t nag you enough about this.
- 2 Big Reasons Why People Fail, When Success Is Within Their Grasp. One is poor follow-through. Salespeople and business owners alike chase and want more leads, more, more, more, but squander those they have. Customers who’ve proven their ability and willingness to buy go ignored while, again, the marketer lusts after more new leads. In short, the waste of their lead value and customer value eats up their profits. #2: Absence of value. Most businesspeople still think in transactional terms, in sales terms, rather than emphasizing development of value.
- Many of the info-marketers I work with have discovered that “Try Before You Buy” is more powerful than “Free Trial.” Tests show “Half Price” pulls better than “Half Off” or “50% Discount.”
- Hoffer’s book ‘True Believer’ (must reading for serious marketers).
- Maytag has begun converting their freestanding stores to “try before you buy” experience locations, where consumers can come in and wash a load of clothes or bake some cookies before buying the appliances.
- customers from many sources. I have often talked about the doctor who told me “I don’t know one way to get 50 new patients each month but I know 50 ways to get 1.”
- ...Now, here’s “the big lesson”: changing the enrollment form to an Application, and the addition to the back side of the form of five essay questions, substantially increased response. Making people “qualify” to be “accepted”, submit an “application” and answer five questions did NOT suppress response; instead it increased it. In effect, making it more difficult to enroll increased enrollments. The ‘big lesson’ here goes to the very core of human psychology and behavior in general, and to past conditioning in specific. In general, we value based on scarcity or difficulty of obtaining; we want most what we can’t have. In specific, we are conditioned to apply and qualify for things of value and importance: college, licenses, loans. You can raise both the perception of value and importance and the desire for

what you offer by mimicking or integrating such a process. It is a ‘plus’, incidentally if it is legitimate, meaning you actually are screening and selecting the customers/clients/patients you will and won’t do business with. If you cannot do this with your entire business, consider creating an elite club, customer group, or something akin to it within your business, for which you can be selective. This strategy can work for restaurant, service provider, doctor. This is totally contrary to what most businesspeople have been taught and believe. Most believe that they need to make it as easy as possible for customers to buy. This may be true in actual commodity businesses, where no differentiation is possible – such as fast food joints. But, ideally, you will resist commoditization, and if you do, you’ll have opportunity to use Takeaway Selling, and you’ll benefit by doing so.

- ... and many say: not for me, my customers are too sophisticated, my business is different. **And you are wrong.** I get the “not for my customers” b.s. mostly from B2B marketers, who foolishly and stubbornly insist there’s a difference between B2B and Consumer advertising or marketing. There is, but there shouldn’t be!
- By all means, get “my clients are different” engraved as epitaph on your gravestone. That way you can be eternally wrong.
- ... Years back, for a client of mine who set in-home sales appointments, we designed a door hanger that looked like a notice UPS would leave, notifying you of attempted delivery. It was brown and yellow ink on white (UPS colors), very official looking, with blue handwritten name, and message: “Call 1-800-000-0000 for delivery of your gift.” Over 85% of all of these prompted calls. Then the caller was told their gift was theirs as thanks for inviting a sales representative into their home for just 30 minutes. Ultimately, 15 appointments were set per 100 door hangers hung --- a far, far greater productivity, a far lower cost per appointment than achieved by any of the company’s other eight methods. Naturally, it also brought lots of complaints, threatened lawsuit from UPS, and in several states, attorney general letters. It had to be abandoned after a year, but it made a lot of money during that year. Some marketers are able to find opportunities to use “fool ‘em/scare ‘em/shock ‘em” mailings with their markets or customers that have low, tolerable backlash, but big upside. Jeff may or may not have done so; he IS mailing only to past customers. Is Danger your middle name?
- ...I’m adding a ‘Free Recorded Message’ to my marketing. One of my business problems has been talking to too many people on the phone for too long telling them all the same thing for 20 minutes. Now I’m finally doing something about it.
- Look up books by Jerry Jones, Ben Altadona, and Ron LeGrand
- ...Any place I can go for three days and not hear the word “no” out of anyone’s mouth gets my personal Five Star Award.
- THE HEADLINE –I know, I know, letters do not have headlines. But, letters that sell, do. And if you want to grab the reader’s attention, you should use a headline.

- “For more information, call Suzanne” (slightly tweaked) might work as a call to action scrawled on the bathroom wall in a low-rent bar, but it just isn’t a good direct-response instruction. Note that word: instruction. You have to give prospects specific instructions to follow. It has long been my observation that most customers have reasonably good, well-polished skills for following instructions; marketers just fail to give them any. Next, you need to tell prospects what will occur when they do follow the instructions. In most cases, you benefit by offering specific reward for following those instructions.
- Time is life. We all have less of it today that we did yesterday. You ought not tolerate anybody stealing yours either. Make that your #1 New Years resolution. The one you take seriously.
- Once there was Sears and J.C. Penney. Then discounters, K-Mart, Wal-Mart, Target. Then big box home stores, Home Depot, Lowes. Before you could say “Martha goes to jail”, these giants became dwarfs. They lost their positions, their reasons for existence in a more fragmented marketplace. Not the cheapest, not the highest priced, not the best value. Sears’ appliance business usurped by Lowes and Home Depot. **Suggested New Years resolution: clarify your ‘unique’ position in your marketplace, in your own mind, and as presented to customers and prospects.**
- Suggested New Years questions: should you broaden or should you narrow what you are known for? Should you make your business or a business-within-your-business ridiculously specialized?
- **BUSINESS RE-INVENTION/RE-DEFINITION.** Gold Member Mike Storms’ marketing for his martial arts schools sells “Safer, Smarter Kids”, not kicking, boxing , fighting machines. While this disturbs some of his purist peers, it provides the customers – parents – with what they actually want. New Years resolution possibility: to radically reinvent your business. Definite New Years resolution: to be very aware of business reinvention. To pay attention to it when it occurs. To collect examples and consider their possible applications to your business. (I have, at last count, 72 examples in my file on this subject – how many do you have?)
- the outrageously priced item that generates publicity and conversation; the \$100.00 Kobe beef hamburger, the \$50,000.00 diamond encrusted bra (Victoria’s Secret), etc. And it is an idea virtually any and every business could (and should) employ from time to time. The publicity opportunities are one thing, but I believe there’s value in this strategy even absent obtaining publicity; that value is: keeping things interesting for your established customers. Common, dangerous error: taking their patronage for granted. #1 marketing sin: being boring. Great strategy: having your customers curious, wondering, eager to see what weirdness you’ll come up with next. So, there’s a good New Years resolution: surprise ‘em, amaze ‘em, shock ‘em, make ‘em gasp, make ‘em laugh, get ‘em talking to everybody they know about you at least six times this year.
- ...a mailer for a B2B marketer of high-end technical products, a stuffy, industrial business – featuring illustrated fairy tales. The company is a regional provider of internet and broadband services to businesses, up against bigger competitors. One of the mailings was a 6x8” mailer

designed to look like a childrens' storybook, titled 'The Emperor's New Clothes, Episode II', inside copy in a few lines per page with illustrations, to also resemble a child's book.

- I believe the best premiums are not what you sell, but merchandise people'd like to have but might not go out and buy for themselves. Like, say, a hang-gliding vacation in Peru or a plasma walkie-talkie. Anyway, however you do it, you miss the boat if not tying your customers into a formal rewards program.
- One of the most important principles I teach has to do with opinions. Everybody's got 'em, but the only ones I care about come from people who give me money. This is the pragmatic approach. Care only about what works and nothing else. Not convention, tradition, industry norms, peers, competitors, mothers in law, neighbors, Wall Street, your trade association – their opinions about your marketing are probably no more valid than your dog's.
- Let me digress. Direct-response advertising and direct marketing requires Great Courage to be successful for several important reasons. First of all, you have, maybe, 5 seconds to grab attention, another 10, 20, 30 seconds at most to convince the person to read further, you have to suck 'em in like a carnival barker promising a naked three-breasted woman snake charmer just inside the tent. DR is not the time or place to be subtle or gentle or "professional" (whatever that is). You have to risk the scorn and anger of your peers, the disgust of your own family or staff, the derision of those who will certainly be offended by your brash approach, you have to "all in".
- direct-response is not interactive. The prospect can't talk back, ask questions, raise objections, so you need the courage to do these things for him. For example, in sales letters selling high-priced boot camps for my clients in niche industries, I actually bring up the possibility that the reader may still have the kit he bought wrapped in plastic, gathering dust on a closet shelf. Or may have tried doing something in the kit and gotten disappointing results. It takes COURAGE to bring up Bad Things in a letter asking them to make another, bigger purchase.
- direct-response is all about SELLING. That takes a lot more COURAGE than does brand-building or image advertising, because all that other stuff is nearly impossible to measure and hold accountable. It's a great place for incompetents and charlatans to hide out. It takes COURAGE to create a sales funnel, directly ask for action, and present a deadline.
- Let me hand you something on a silver platter that is under-utilized yet nearly always helps response – a survey. ...Bill Glazer used one very successfully for lead generation, for BGS-Marketing, originally as a broadcast FAX (before that media went bye-bye). (We could CERTAINLY put together a survey to generate leads)
- At whatever point(s) there is human contact with customer in your business, there ought to be an upsell, unless you're already too rich.
- ...if there had been a place I had to sign to refuse the Plan, indicating he had explained it and I understood I was putting my whole house at dire risk by refusing, not just the place to sign if I said yes, then the company would be more successful at getting all their people to do it. Just a little tip that can be worth big money.

- Let's try and get this straight: the job of an ad is to sell the darned product. Period. Not to win awards, not to respect the community (whatever that means), not to entertain, not to be creative, etc., etc. If being funny, for example, absolutely supports the sale of the product, fine. But only if it does. If you try to make your ad do more than one thing, you dilute its ability to do each of the multiple tasks, and usually wind up with an ineffectual mess viewed by disinterested or confused consumers.
- Keep in mind when you build a direct-mail package, the main sales letter can rarely stand alone; it needs sticky notes, a lift note, an "open and read this only if..." note, a grabber, and other enclosures.
- ...difference between an ordinary copywriter and a great copywriter – and the difference doesn't start with the writing; it starts with finding the 'voice' to write in, the 'person' (character) to present. People buy from people. It's very hard to create rapport, trust, interest for an institution or in a dull, institutional voice.
- ...I can count on fingers of one hand the number of times I've gotten a follow-up letter or card or call from anybody I spent money with in all of 2004. It just never happens. And this was the best kind: thank you + sales pitch. There's a very simple formula for you. So simple a monkey can use it.
- For example, are you under-pricing your goods or services while selling to somebody who is going to turn right around and pay \$250.00 for a pair of jeans? How aware, informed are you of your customers price and spending behavior, with businesses, goods and services other than your own? Could I stump you with questions about where they shop, where they vacation, what they buy, what they pay? Are you failing to craft offers that appeal to the rising mass affluent? And/or are you failing to target them? (Rob mansions – not convenience stores!)
- ...watched a woman sell about 200 copies of a book at \$47.00 each. She'd have sold 180 at \$97.00 each. Or 150 at \$397.00 each, by adding a couple audio CD's and a computer disk. You really can't let yourself stand in your own way here. I think a cup of coffee ought to be less than a dollar, that anything higher's a damned outrage. Howard Schultz obviously differs with my "sense of price."
- Super-successful entrepreneurs, with very rare exception, share a fundamental philosophical belief in abundance, opportunity, and any and every individual's, business', industry's or community's ability to prosper, to rise up from bad circumstances through initiative (not hand out). If you do not share that belief, how can you believe in yourself? How can you justify becoming wealthy yourself without guilt over somehow depriving others?
- ...**He exercises zero discrimination in attracting, chasing and acquiring customers, or in subsequent retention efforts.** Consequently, he has growth and ever bigger grosses, but definitely not proportionately increasing net profits. I could easily re-arrange his business to give him four times the in-his-pocket money at half its size, with half the employees, half the infrastructure and, in his case, half the regulatory risk. In short, he spends the same getting and keeping his least desirable customers as his most desirable customers.... at least half of most marketers' money is spent acquiring or keeping least desirable customers. Picking the low hanging fruit is rarely the best long-term business strategy.

- The marketplace usually responds well to clarity, certainty, confidence; to the person who refuses to bow head in embarrassment or humility. It is a bigger, broader application of my old speaking colleague Zig Ziglar's statement I memorized while still a kid: "Timid salespeople have skinny kids." I said that statement to myself in my head, as I stuttered while making cold telemarketing calls to get sales appointments. On appointments, I told myself another Zigism: they've got my money in their wallet, I've got their product in my car, and I ain't leaving until we make the exchange. Whether closing the sale, the step Zig was referring to, or starting the sale, the place my marketing tends to focus on, or anyplace in between, timidity loses.
- The thing a lot of businesspeople are most timid, hesitant and uncomfortable about is promoting themselves. Yet, for most businesses, the most unique and uniquely promotable asset is neither product nor service; it is the person.
- Recently, a new client was surprised when I sent him home to talk into a tape-recorder for at least a day, to tell me his life story. I wanted the details of his Viet Nam military service, his top secret clearance and spy activities, how he started his company with \$1,500.00 charged to a Discover Card fortuitously arriving unsolicited in the mail plus the \$28.00 in cash he had to his name, his bulldog's name, and everything else. I want that more than I want details of his products or his business. In that, I will find something(s) to use to intrigue and fascinate the market.
- (Re: inventors) ...all too timid, gutless, lazy and cheap to turn their ideas into proven winners, so as to capitalize on them. They clung to the delusion that genius, that the idea was enough of a contribution. Someone else was supposed to take all the risk, do all the dirty work, shamelessly promote, and still make them rich. Life so occasionally works that way it's not worth mentioning.
- Most marketing is pretty formulaic. Putting pieces together, being bold, and actually getting things done. A "C" grade piece in the mail beats the perfect "A+" never mailed.
- (Re: targetted sales letters) Even though we know we sent the thing to the right person, he doesn't know we know, so he doesn't know what's in his hands is right for him unless we guide him to that realization. One of the tools for doing this, whether in ad or letter, is The List. Creating the right list is a very big idea. example: a list of five things in the top, first column of the ad. If you match the list, this ad's for you! This can be presented as he did, with bullets, or numbered, or as a Yes/No quiz with check boxes (often my preference), and were it my ad, I might put it in a box, shade it, or put it in a different typeface, to make it stand out. The List is a good tool just about any advertiser can use.
- USPS' NEW MOVER MEDIA. Yep, the postal service has its own "Val Pak like" media pack, sent to everybody who fills in a change-of-address card. Whole thing's delivered in an official looking 'Official Change Of Address Confirmation' envelope from the United States Postal Service, complete with 'Verification Required: Do Not Discard' warning. I have no idea what it costs to advertise in this, but if I targeted new movers, I'd darn sure want to test it. Oh, and notice who was NOT in the one I got: dentist, chiropractor, veterinarian, doc in a box, car repair, maid service, and on and on. (Does Canada Post have anything like this? If so, GET LOU IN IT!)

- A prospect/buyer wants the thing that is ‘for’ him, precisely for him, built for him, intended for him, and used only by people exactly like him. When you hold that out in front of him, he leaps at it.
- The Big Mistake made by most copywriters, incidentally, is using The Big Idea only for the headline but not developing it deep into / throughout the ad or sales letter. If you have in your swipe file the famous Bud Weckesser ad, the weight loss ad with the divorcee’s story of rubbing her shocked husband’s nose in what he had given up, in the encounter in the restaurant, you have a grade-A example of the Caples headline truly used as a big idea for the entire ad rather than just its headline.
- Things to offer prospective clients? “...If you can’t manage to get the third, fourth and fifth steps of a mailing sequence out, if you refuse to mystery shop the way your phone is answered, if you insist on running ads with no USP’s or offers, if you’re too cheap to mail to your customers frequently, if you won’t do the 28 steps to produce a decent sales letter, if you insist on being vulnerable by relying on only one media, etc., etc.”
- PRICE GAMES: .. Recently, in a 2-day consulting session with a B2B marketer, I explained that price breaks are at the 50’s and 100’s, so there’s little diff between 00 and 49, and if you cross 49, little diff from 50 to 99. In their case, making their \$1,500.00 item a \$1,549.00 adds \$12-Million to their bottom line --- more than a 30% increase to their corporate income. .. Some years back, I wrote copy for a renewal campaign for Greg Stanley at Whitehall Practice Management and I was woefully UNSUCCESSFUL at increasing the % of clients renewing but I still increased his revenues by nearly half...by changing from one offer, one price to Basic and Deluxe, adding a higher priced option. .. A famous TV infomercial seller of kitchen gadgets discovered price increases adversely affected sales but bumping shipping and handling from \$9.95 to \$29.95 made no difference whatsoever....so, now, his formula is: Product Cost+Shipping = Shipping & Handling.
- Dan says to watch QVC (home shopping network), Family Feud, infomercials, read National Enquirer as a way to keep your finger on the pulse of your clients/prospects