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**11 Tender Writing Sins ... Part One**

**By Kris Mills**

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Put simply, producing a winning tender is all about being able to sell your company face to face and on paper. It's about addressing the needs your prospect wants fulfilled, and proving how you fulfil those needs in the most result-oriented way.

This article introduces you to the most common mistakes people make when producing tenders and shows you how to learn from these mistakes and turn them into a positive outcome for your company.

Sin no. 1. Not knowing "why"

"Not knowing the answer to this question means that your tender response could miss the mark completely, simply because you're not aware of any bad experiences or challenges they have had in the past ."

The reason why a company or a Government body calls for tenders always plays a HUGE role in what factors are important to them when selecting a supplier, So, it makes sense knowing the REAL reasons why. This is something that isn't usually FULLY listed in the tender documentation.

For instance, if their previous supplier is hopelessly unreliable, proof of reliability, capacity, and a money back guarantee will probably be very important to them.

Dig around. Talk to everyone you know in the industry. See how resourceful you can be.

Telephone the purchasing officer and ask them why they are calling for tenders, why they want to undertake the project, and what's important to them.

Strike up a conversation. Get to know them a little and discover what makes them tick. You'll be surprised at how much information you can find out – information that will be priceless in the tender creation process. Attend "meet the buyer's nights."

Ask questions like:

Why do they want to start using this type of product/service now?

Who did they use in the past and why?

Why do they want to change?

What do they know about the potential positives and negatives of dealing with people?

Why is this of particular importance to them?

Why do they want to change?

Who have they been using in the past?

What did they like or dislike about that supplier?

Discovering the answers to these questions puts you one step closer to ensuring that your tender response hits the buyer's hot buttons.

Sin no 2. Not addressing the "real", core needs

Quite often, what's written in tender documentation only tells half the story. Either that or, it might be a comprehensive document, but the core hot buttons are buried within pages and pages of material and they're often easy to miss.

Unfortunately, many tender submissions miss the point completely. They're completed in such a rush that they simply don't address the "obvious" criteria, let alone, the "read between the lines" stuff.

Having said this, Government tender documentation (especially) is so long that it is easy to forget an important element. The

document will often include mandatory and desirable requirements, a Schedule of Particulars, Evaluation Criteria, Project Description, Government purchasing policy and regulations and a background and scope to the project.

Usually, each of these areas reveals some priceless piece of information that you can then use in your document. Instead, many potential suppliers just fill out the Schedule of Particulars and address the evaluation criteria, but not address any other points revealed in the background material.

The background material will address what the potential supplier has been doing in the past, what their corporate policies and commitments are, and perhaps what their culture is. By showing how your product/service addresses this information, you'll have

far greater impact.

The moral of the story?

Read the document thoroughly and then read it again. When you're doing that, grab a highlighter and highlight any points that are important to address in your document. These points could appear anywhere within the document. Not just in the product or evaluation criteria areas.

Then, when you've done that ask yourself "why". Why is this important to them? Then once you've discovered the answer, ask "why" again, until you cover the real, core need.

Kris Mills of Words that Sell, is an experienced copywriter who has produced dozens of winning tenders and proposals for a wide range of clients. For more ideas on preparing winning tenders and proposals, visit <http://www.synergie.com.au/tendersthat sell.htm>

## **7 Deadly Sins of Distributor Web Sites**

**By Jeff Gilman**

### **7 Deadly Sins of Distributor Web Sites by Jeff Gilman**

7 Deadly Sins of Distributor Web Sites  
Survey of Distributor Web Sites in the HVACR Industry

Survey shows how web sites DID NOT try to sell. Examples include; few placed featured merchandise

in best web page selling space, few offered 'scratch and dent specials', and few provided resources for existing high volume customers. Complete text at [http://www.marketingforidiots.com/distributor\\_web\\_sites.htm](http://www.marketingforidiots.com/distributor_web_sites.htm).

Mr. Gilman has extensive management information systems experience gained in several capacities. He has held the positions of Senior Consultant with KPMG Peat Marwick, performed project management for the U.S. Agency for International Development, and was the Office Automation Project Manager for the Health Care Finance Administration and the Integrated Services Office Automation Architect for Saudi Telecom



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