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**Getting ideas that sell**

**By Angela Booth**

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Summary: If you want to sell your writing, you need to get ideas that sell.

Category: Writing

Words: 650

Getting ideas that sell

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(This article is an extract from my new writing workshop, Writing to Sell in the Internet Age.)

As the old saying goes, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink. You can offer your writing too, but if no one wants it, you're stuck.

You've got to train yourself to come up with saleable ideas, for specific audiences. Somehow, someday, you've got to discover what

people want, and give it to them in your writing. The more successfully you do that, the more you'll sell.

==> To get more ideas, write more

In an article, the prolific thriller/ horror writer Dean Koontz said that when he wrote more, spending six to eight hours a day at it, he got more ideas. He frequently found himself writing one book, while making notes for another two or three.

It's true. If you're not writing, you won't get ideas. Your subconscious mind is lazy. You haven't convinced it that finding

ideas is important to you, so you don't get them.

Start a program of writing every day. Write anything, but make sure that you're doing it for at least an hour, and that you force yourself to write. Get your fingers on the keyboard, and move them. Let whatever wants to come out, come out.

Sounds like work, right?

Sure. At first it is. Then it's fun. And easy. The first couple of days you do this, you may feel that it's pointless. But I promise you, keep at it, and within a few days you'll start coming up with more ideas that you know what to do with.

==> If you want to know what people want, ask them

One way to find out what people are interested in is to read the bestseller lists. What are people buying? Extrapolate from these lists. Can you find any new trends?

On the other hand, the best way to discover what people are willing to buy, is to ask them. Go to the online places where they hang out, and ask.

For example, let's say that in your day job, you're a nutritionist. You know that diet is a perennially popular topic. You advise dieters on how to eat, and you've garnered a lot of experience in how and why people put on weight, and ways that they can safely dump the lard.

You decide that you need to learn what people really want to know. So you subscribe to a few discussion groups, and after

you've read the postings for a few weeks, and have posted responses to some questions, you ask your own questions.

Be straightforward about this. Just admit that you're doing research, and ask for help. Post a questionnaire for people to fill in. (Assure them that their privacy will be respected.)

After a month of this, you'll get ideas for products (articles, books) that will sell.

==> The sure-fire formula for winning, instantly saleable ideas: combine entertainment and information

You need to be clear about what you're selling. With non-fiction, you're selling information. With fiction, you're selling entertainment.

The best way to sell either fiction or non-fiction is to combine both in your writing.

Mix a dash of entertainment with your information. That is, when you're writing an information product, an article or a book, even though it's non-fiction, don't be dull. Check out the wildly popular For Dummies series of books: good information, delivered with an entertaining style.

On the other hand, if you're writing fiction, ground it in real life with good information. I'm a fan of Diana Gabaldon's Outlander series. Definitely fiction, but Ms Gabaldon grounds her time-travel historical novels in their era with fascinating facts that make the unbelievable plots credible.

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Australian author, journalist and copywriter Angela Booth has been writing professionally for over twenty years. She writes business books and copy for businesses.

## **10 Ways Focus Groups Can Propel Your Profits**

**By Larry Dotson**

A focus group is a group of employees or current customers that discuss and brainstorm new ways to improve different parts of your business.

1. They can give you new ideas on how to advertise and market your product or service to your targeted audience.
2. They can give you ideas that could help improve your current product or service. For example, you could make it smaller, faster, heavier, etc.
3. They can give you ideas for new products or services to develop and sell. For example, a new gift wrapping service for your products.
4. They can help you solve lingering problems with your business. For example, you could give your employees incentives to solve slow production.
5. They can give you new ideas on how to cut costs and save money. For example, you could recycle damaged or old products instead of trashing them.
6. They can find new ways to improve your current customer service policy. For example, hire extra operators so you don't have to put anyone on hold.
7. They can give you new ideas on how to get the most and best out of your employees in the less amount of time.
8. They can give you news ideas for upsell, back end and add-on products to sell. For example, you could upsell a video when selling your books.
9. They can help you find new ways to stay ahead of your competition. For example, you could give your customers free shipping.
10. They can give ideas for raising your employees morale. For example, you could hold a party, give them a holiday bonus, give them a free day, etc.

As a bonus, Bob

Osgoodby publishes the free weekly "Your Business" Newsletter – visit his web site to subscribe and place a FREE Ad!

10 Ways Focus Groups Can Propel Your Profits

Start Up Your Passion: Startup Ideas From My Home-Based Business Advisor

Success Tips for the Sales Professional

7 Quick and Easy Ways To Multiply Your Sales

How To Turn Any Product You Sell In To Residual Income

The Art of Kissing  
147 Killer Epublishing Strategies  
Money Saving ideas  
The Toaster's Handbook  
Hitting the Search Engines



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