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**One–Two–Three Punch Marketing**

**By Catherine Franz**

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Printed material is just as important today as it was before the Internet. With sp\*a\*m getting out of hand, it's a wise choice to rev up, update or create printed material, ads, catalogs, direct mail, press releases, letters, templates and the like.

You will notice that I didn't add brochures to this list. Brochures are not a good investment for a first piece. When someone asks for a brochure and you don't have one, this doesn't mean you ignore their request. Worse scenario, you may run wildly around using up a large portion of your year's marketing budget completing one.

If you move or update your materials frequently, it isn't wise to spend thousands of dollars on new material. Here are a few alternatives. You can use a professionally created folding business card as a main document. Another option to expensive letterhead is to print your own in a two–pass process. Use a color printer in the first pass for your logo and use a black and white pass through for the content. Use Kinko's if you don't have a color printer (<http://www.kinkos.com>). At Kinko's you can send them a file via Internet, have them print the color portion on high quality paper.

Mailing out a marketing piece weeks after your first contact is too late. When opportunity knocks, be ready. Timing is everything. If you don't, the extra time allows them to solve the issue on their own, or change its priority.

## One–Two–Three Punch Marketing

It is always preferable to have a serious phone discussion even before an in–person meeting. If they don't show up for the call, it is easier to recoup your time, and it indicates they aren't ready to buy. All you need to do is follow–up lightly to remind them to contact you when the time is right. Send them a newsletter, template letter, or flyer and not expensive material. People generally toss items they receive on the first punch. Save the best for a time when the punch is more effective. Multi–follow–ups show them that you aren't a fly–by–night going–to–fad–in–the–next–few–months provider.

Giving too much information early in the marketing process overwhelms customers and jeopardizes the sale. It makes them nervous about you. This is, of course, if you are selling services or products worth more than whatever your market considers discretionary.

Instead, create a call to action to get them to visit your web site periodically, send them an "I'm still here for you when you are ready" note, or a printed copy of your latest newsletter or ezine.

Selling a product? Send an oversized post card or direct mail piece. The direct mail piece needs to use an "I'm–following–up" language and not a "you–never–met–us–yet" dialogue.

Have template letters, Word or Act, ready to go with a few clicks. Design them so the first or second paragraphs are easy to add a personalized follow–up dialogue.

When you drive along the same route and one day you spot something that seems new, only later discover it's been there all along you are pleasantly surprised. For even when we seem fully awake, many things pass our radar. .

In marketing, it is the same experience. We don't see something that's been there until something happens and wakes us up. The seven–times rule, a proven marketing principle, is the "you have demonstrated credibility" and "I now see you" model. The seven–time rule applies whether the main marketing draw is a web site, networking, direct mail, or a combination. People who don't like to sell stop after the first or second punch.

## One–Two–Three Punch Marketing

Printed materials do indicate credibility and quality counts in most cases. If you post your brochures at your State's visitor's center, you will see that they stand next to many similar ones. What stands out are the one–half page black and white flyers or the like. In this situation, the plain black and whites get the attention of many. It is important to know how, when, and where your materials are going to be viewed and be represented.

For mailings, this doesn't mean send the best stuff first and let it do the sale for you. No, no, no. Printed material seldom makes the sale. It's just another contact point. First punches are either tossed or buried in some stack.

If your price is under \$100, send them to your web site. Over, send them material for added credibility. This also depends on the target market value of your price. If your market considers \$500 a drop in the bucket then credibility perception changes.

Interview past purchasers. Find out when did they first take notice and how many before they took action. Was it when they received a certain number of contacts? Always. When did the need make it a priority. Create a list of the triggers and look for those signs in future contacts. Model your follow–up program accordingly.

In several studies, 92% of the purchase makers cited that letterhead, envelopes and business cards where the major factors in how they rated creditability.

Credibility can be lost if your material includes careless mistakes or omits vital information. In the buyer's perspective, all the answers need to lead on how they can feel confident about your service or product and how it solves their need.

One of my services is printed material and web site analysis. After reviewing 294 brochures, I found 81.5% of the information dancing around solutions instead of commitment to direct and clear solutions. Non–commitment is the biggest sales destroyers. Don't send them material about X when they inquired about Y. If it doesn't answer Y, it's tossed. And you have 30 seconds to 3 minutes to

complete their question. Long sales letters demonstrate commitment in receiver's minds because of the thought and care it took to create and address their challenge.

Also, don't send Y, with the "I think we need to offer this because we've received a few inquires lately even if it's off our path" feeling. If you are unable to fit in the time to write a letter explaining how and why you can provide Y, then pass it up. This may be a "good" opportunity but not be the "great" opportunity you truly want to attract.

If, on the other hand, their issue isn't clearly understood or known, then you're asking the horse to jump the fence without knowing how height. It's a wasted effort and you can

lame the horse. Don't mail it with an "if it works, okay, if it doesn't oh well" energy. This gives the impression that you weren't listening. A big strike against you. Usually one too big to overcome.

For service businesses, it is best to complete your first contact verbally and follow–up with printed material once or twice, then verbally, then twice, etc. Give prospects the 1–2–3 punches if you have the answer. Be honest if you don't provide what they are seeking. Don't adjust and accommodate because sales are down for the month. This is a disservice to your customer and your business. This will diminish assets later. Share the wealth; earn a life–long customer, and new collaborator with your referral.

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~\*~\*~ RESOURCE BOX ~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Word count: 1192 words

Catherine Franz, 15 year business coach, specializes in marketing and nonfiction writing, She is available for 1–on–1 and group support. She also instructs teleprograms and workshops. Additional articles, ezines, and blog available at: <http://www.AbundanceCenter.com>.

~\*~\*~\*~ PUBLISHING GUIDELINES ~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

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## **Hair Plug Horror – Revisiting Standard Punch Graft**

**By Maggie Kay**

### **Hair Plug Horror – Revisiting Standard Punch Graft by Maggie Kay**

Standard punch grafting is the procedure responsible for giving the hair restoration industry a bad name. Unrefined in technique and esthetically displeasing in appearance, standard punch grafting is the old "hair plug" method that was popularized in the 1980s.

This hair transplant procedure involved removing skin from the front of the scalp to make room for the large plugs (about 4mm) that were to be implanted. The plugs contained many hair follicles and gave an unnatural, obvious look to the hairline and scalp. Hair plugs were the standard form of hair restoration for many years.

- Hair plugs contain about 15–35 hairs each and are the size of pencil erasers, giving the scalp an unattractive, "corn row" look.
- Only a small number of hair follicles take root after the plug is transplanted because many of the follicles are severed during removal from the donor area. This is damaging to the patient because it destroys precious hair follicles.
- Punch grafts leave large wounds on the scalp which increases the length of the recovery period. This limits surgeons to perform only 20 to 50 grafts each sitting, thereby prolonging the hair restoration process to many sessions.

Due to the significant negative consequences of punch grafts, many hair restoration surgeons today are being asked to repair hair plug disasters. About 10% – 20% of a surgeon's clientele requests repair work. Usually, it involves re–transplanting individual hairs from the dense plug into the sparse areas between the plugs.

Today, standard punch grafting has been replaced by a more efficient technique called follicular unit extraction.

About the Author – Maggie Kay is a freelance writer from Montreal and is the head researcher and content manager of

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