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Scary Mail

By Gary Onks

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I wish it was Halloween mail that I was talking about, but due to recent events, it's everyday mail that now scares folks.

Mail is very important to all of us. We look forward to its arrival each day. From a business perspective, mail is an essential part of our daily activities. As individuals we look forward to getting letters and postcards from people that we care about. Whatever our age, getting mail is a decades old and ingrained habit. As for seniors, they will read just about everything that you send them. There is little if any *junk mail* from the senior viewpoint.

However, there has always been some mail that most of us are a little suspicious of and it truly applies to mail we get today. Mail without a return address screams JUNK rather loudly and nowadays no address will mean no opening or viewing. A real close second is mail with a PO Box address. We tend to view this as a fly-by-night or at best a small potatoes outfit. After all what kind of business would fit in a PO Box anyway and nobody could actually live in one (hey, it's an old saying so bear with me).

To avoid these old issues as well as the scary new ones, here are some tips. Follow these and your mail will get through and not be ignored and cast out or even worse, returned to you unopened. These tips apply to all envelopes and mailing labels that you use.

- * If possible do not use a PO Box address
- * Show your full street address (with PO Box if necessary)
- * Print telephone number and toll free number with return address
- * List your website and email address as part of return address

Scary Mail

* Use a postage meter for the "real look" of business mail

We have been doing this all along here at my company. The whole point is to make your business as real, legitimate and easy to contact as possible. Not just to the person you are mailing to, but to everyone who sees and handles your materials in transit. It's an inexpensive advertising method that could bring more sales.

SOS Factoid: Well labeled mail is not scary mail to anyone.

Gary Onks is the author of "How You Can Reach & Sell the \$20 Trillion Senior Marketplace" which is

described as: "The 'Art' of pleasing senior customers" ~ Washington Times Sold On Seniors, Inc.
http://www.SoldOnSeniors.com Phone: 800-416-8785 or 540-785-4438

GAINING THE TRUST AND CONFIDENCE OF YOUR READERS

By Tim North

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How do you ensure that customers will react well to an e-mail sales letter? Similarly, what if you're soliciting a job via e-mail, pitching a book idea or any of 100 other situations that are increasingly handled by e-mail? How do you write e-mail that will gain the trust and confidence of your readers?

Will your good looks help? Having lots of money? Being tall?

The answer to all these questions is, of course, no. While these things can be a definite advantage in the real world, in e-mail, these factors are invisible. No, when it comes to e-mail, **YOU ARE WHAT YOU WRITE.** (A scary thought for some of us!)

In the everyday world, trust and confidence are influenced by many things. These include your occupation, signs of affluence, height, dress and looks. It may not be fair, but we **are** judged by these criteria. Tall men **do** have an advantage. Well-dressed people **are** treated better in shops.

In an e-mail message, though, these visual cues are not present, so how do we earn trust and confidence? Here's a posting to a newsgroup that I noticed many years ago. It's as true now as it was then.

Scary Mail

From: xxx xxx
Newsgroups: alt.culture.usenet
Subject: Re: Musings on readability (longish response)
Date: 12 Apr 93 04:53:35 GMT

xxxx xxxx writes:

> ...
> On the internet, "you are what you write" defines
> how people are perceived.
> ...

Electronic communications **does** become something of a "you are what you write" situation. Someone who doesn't have the ability to speak clearly will generally do only slightly better when writing. Non-sequiters and poor logical organization will make readers think less of the author as a person to be respected.

...

Formatting is **not** wasted bandwidth. Without the assistance of body language and other sideband information available in visual contact communications, other means are found to evaluate the sincerity and intelligence of the person "speaking."

The use of a large vocabulary, attention to proper punctuation and grammar, use of visually attractive formatting, all serve to increase the value of a posting.

In short, style becomes an issue of more importance. Style is certainly an influence in visual contact (why do news anchors wear \$500 suits and dresses? – style!) so it should be no surprise that it is important in writing as well.

These two writers have made an important point. How well you write is a very significant influence in determining how your e-mail will be regarded.

When all other visual cues are gone, almost all that you can present to other people are your words. It's no surprise then that those who do not write well will find this disability a far greater handicap in the textual world of e-mail correspondence.

The message then is clear. If you are what you write, write well!

Scary Mail

You'll find over 200 tips like this in Tim North's much applauded—book BETTER WRITING SKILLS. It's just \$19.95 and comes with a 90—day, money—back guarantee. Download a sample chapter here:<http://www.betterwritingskills.com>



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