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Six Essential Elements of Successful Sales Letters

By Joanne L. Mason

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I'm about to reveal to you six essential elements of successful sales letter. These are time-tested principles that have been used by master copywriters for many decades. Include these elements in your sales letters and you can dramatically increase your income.

Success Element #1: Always Use Attention Grabbing Headlines

A great headline is your best opportunity to capture your prospect's attention. In fact it's been proven that a great headline can actually increase the responsiveness of your ad or sales letter by up 1700%! Use your headline to immediately tell your prospective customer the number one benefit that he/she will gain from your product. Keep your customer focused by using sub-headlines throughout your sales letters that go into more details about your product.

Success Element #2: Bring on the Benefits!

Benefits tell your customers what they will receive from your product. Reveal every possible benefit so customers will be anxious to buy from you right away. Offer benefits that give you the edge over your competition. Some benefits that customers want include a fair price, great bonuses, a risk free guarantee, easy payment options, and reliable customer support.

Success Element #3: Use Testimonials to Add Credibility

Nothing adds more credibility to your sales letters than testimonials. A testimonial is the equivalent of a trusted friend or respected expert's recommendation of your product. Testimonials help customers feel at ease in purchasing from you because it says that others have tried your product and were pleased.

Success Element #4: Reverse 100% of the Risk

A great way to dramatically increase your sales is to totally remove all risk involved with the purchase. Offer customers a 100% money-back guarantee if they're not satisfied. Studies have shown that the

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longer the guarantee the lower the ratio of returns. If you know you have a great product you won't have to worry about very many returns, so go ahead and offer the longest guarantee possible.

Success Element #5: Give Customers a Reason to Act Now

The "everyday low prices" marketing tactics may work for huge retail stores but your small business will quickly be out of business unless you give customers a compelling reason to act now. Do you want the customer to call now for a free estimate, visit your shop or web site for "Two-for-Tuesdays", or purchase today and receive a free bonus? Determine what immediate action you want customers to take and be sure to specifically tell them to do it.

Success Element #6: PS...Don't Forget to Use Your Postscript

After the headline the second most read part of every sales letter is the PS, or the postscript. This is why it's absolutely crucial that you use a PS on every single sales letter you ever write. Use the PS to summarize your offer, introduce an extra bonus or set a limit for the offer. Be sure that your PS is intriguing enough to get your customer to go back and read your entire sales letter.

Now you have the six essential elements of successful sales letters. Even if your marketing efforts are doing okay, a winning sales letter you can actually double or even triple the results you're getting now. Apply these six elements to your sales letters and watch your profits soar!

Joanne L. Mason is the publisher of the Sales Letters Secrets, your source for great ideas, tips and techniques for creating winning sales letters. Get your FREE subscription online at www.moneymakingsalesletters.com/ezine.html Discover How To Instantly Grab The Attention Of More Customers And Increase Your Sales By Up To 1700% "<http://www.moneymakingsalesletters.com/greatheadlines>

Long Sales Letters vs. Short Sales Letters

By Matthew Cobb

Everywhere I turn, I'm being asked to weigh in on the issue of whether copy should be long or short in a sales letter. I receive countless newsletters on copywriting and marketing, and they are all still debating the issue.

I doubt that the question will be answered definitively, but after hearing from other Internet copywriters and after considering the issue myself, I've learned that if you follow three guidelines, the issue of length will become almost irrelevant.

Guideline #1) TELL PROSPECTS WHAT THEY WANT AND NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE A BUYING DECISION.

Interested prospects will read even a sales letter of several pages long if they are interested and if your

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sales letter has good content. Many of us are more interested in telling prospects what WE want them to know. But we should all be telling prospects what THEY want and need to know.

Guideline #2) OMIT NEEDLESS WORDS.

This guideline is actually Rule #17 from Strunk & White's famous little book on writing, The Elements of Style. (If you write, you really should read this small but influential book.)

Anything that doesn't have a direct purpose or work toward winning over your prospect should be cut out. I don't care how much you want to tell them about what a great reputation your company has and how successful you were last year. Unless that information takes the reader one step closer to buying (admittedly, sometimes it does), cut it.

Do the research and know your target audience. Then, write with their needs in mind. Write everything your prospects want and need to read, but write ONLY what they want and need to read. Cut the rest.

Guideline #3) TEST. TEST. TEST.

This is the best indicator of how long your sales letter should be. If you don't like to test, you have to rely on luck. Not a good idea. Put together the best sales letter you can with everything a prospect needs to know to make a buying decision, cut out anything that's not essential reading for your prospect, then run it. Record the results. Rewrite a portion of the letter. Test again. Record the results. Keep doing this until conversion rates improve and you'll know how long your sales letter needs to be. Of course, this kind of testing is much easier online than in offline direct mail, but it needs to be done. (Offline direct mail will probably require a split mailing.)

Although many people will tell you that "research has shown longer sales letters pull better," the only research you should be paying attention to is your own. Long sales letters don't pull well for everyone.

There's an easy way to answer to the question of how long or short a sales letter should be. (It's the same for other similar questions of tone, diction, and how much text you should emphasize.) Determine the needs and desires of your readers and you'll have your answer.

Matthew Cobb is an independent copywriter/consultant. Contact him at contact@cobbwriting.com or learn more about Sales Letters by Matthew Cobb by visiting his Web site at

, and sign up for his free monthly e-publication, The Seductive Sales

Letter Clinic.

Long Sales Letters vs. Short Sales Letters

Covering All The Bases: How to Make Sure Your Newsletters Get Opened and Read
5 Overlooked, Yet Deadly Reasons Why Your Sales Letter May Be Getting Poor Results
10 Proven Tips for Boosting Ad Response

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