

"Telling People Anything Is Wasted Effort"

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By Bob McElwain

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Avis said, "We're second. So we try harder." The first sentence was indisputably true. They were second to Hertz in the car rental business, and everybody knew it. This lent credibility to the second sentence.

When heard or read, these two sentences were "converted" in the minds of potential car renters to, "Since they must try harder, they'll make life easier for me." Then they rented from Avis, rather than Hertz. Business boomed with this slogan as the underlying position in all sales messages.

How "Best" Works

Now suppose Avis had said, "We're the best!"

"Who says?" would be the kindest retort, as the reader or listener turned quickly away to rent from Hertz.

Avis And Your Website

"We're the best!" won't work in your advertising, on your website, or in your newsletter. Not one bit better than it would have worked for Avis. Surely we all know this. Why then do we see so many ads, newsletters, and sites that tell us they're the best? Then go on to tell us what to do or think?

There are two reasons that come to mind right quick. First, some really do not understand that unsubstantiated claims will be ignored, or even turned against you. Second, it's easier and

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quicker to tell, rather than to demonstrate.

Good Books And Films

In quality stories, printed or filmed, you are never told that Duke is a really bad dude. You see him doing really bad things, then draw your own conclusions.

Good teachers don't tell; they provide their students whatever is needed to demonstrate the point. Non-fiction writers do the same. They seek to convince you of the point they want to make by providing examples and references. And the

views of other authorities. All of which can be checked out.

Now Listen Up!

"Show, don't tell."

Do you believe this is true?

Not unless you already do. You'd need a whole lot of faith in me to accept this as truth on my word alone. In fact some would call you foolish if you did so.

Beyond providing answers to simple questions, such as how to get from here to there, telling folks fails. For one thing, people flat don't like to be told anything. For another, they always question the authority of the speaker. And many feel they know all that's needed, so don't want more from you or anybody else. Further, the world is awash in, "My opinion is as good as yours."

Some Do Get Away With Telling

The media, politicians, and "famous" people are telling us all what to think. Unfortunately many are listening to these sound-bites, and assuming what they hear is "truth." But they are not listening to me in this unqualified manner. Nor will they listen in this way to you.

You must seek to persuade people of your point. Provide information the reader can accept or reject. If collectively you sufficiently support your point, you have at least a shot at being believed.

How This Applies To Selling Anything

The rules of selling are changing rapidly. It's true the hard-sell, loaded with hype, con, and even lies, continues to work for some. And even the junkiest spam brings profits to a few.

But permission selling is now the mode, particularly on the Web. A visitor is invited to freely consider a possible solution to a problem or information that may help. Within these notes, there are invitations to explore a product or service that goes specifically to the point.

If your visitor accepts a second invitation, then sell. But honestly. Gently. With benefits to the potential customer. This is a kinder way of doing business. One with which both the

seller and customer are comfortable.

Don't Screw It Up

In this way of selling, there is no room at all for telling anybody anything. All is persuasion. We seek to convince our potential customer, one point at a time, that our product or service is exactly what they need. Slip in a "known fact" or "best ever" and you'll blow the deal.

If you have the power, you may be able to tell people what to do and make it happen. But you are wasting time trying to tell anybody what to believe without backing it up with verifiable information.

Bob McElwain, author of "Your Path To Success."How to build ANY business you want, just the way you want it, with only pocket money.

3 Strange And Twisted Copywriting Tactics!

By Larry Dotson

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1. You can build credibility with your prospects by telling them you can't solve all their problems, but you can solve a percentage of them.

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For example:

My product can't eliminate all your problems, but what if it could take away 97.5% percent of them. How much better would you feel?

With this technique you wouldn't be making those unbelievable claims. Your prospects would know for sure you're not lying to them. It will increase your credibility and make them confident enough to buy your product. Using a percentage makes it easier for your prospects to understand just how much better their situation could be.

2. Stun your prospect by telling them the negative things they are probably thinking about your product or business. Then tell them the negative effects of thinking negative about your product or business.

For example:

You're probably thinking this marketing book is like all the rest you've wasted your hard earned money on and you'll go on with your business losing sale after sale until your finally have to go out of business.

3. Give your prospects an image of two different paths they can take; one if they order your product and one if they don't.

For example:

Imagine yourself at an intersection and you clearly see two different roads on which you can turn on. One where you can chose not to buy our product and continue to have your problem or one where

you can buy our product and eliminate your problem. Which road will you chose?

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