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When Elephants Dance on Wooden Floors

By Steve Brunkhorst

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Imagine that you've just won a vacation to a beautiful tropical island. You are told it's a magical place where all your dreams will come true. The only requirement is that you must visit a secret cabin hidden in a mystical enchanted forest, and watch a special presentation from beginning to end. You are told that you will see the most incredible life-changing show you've ever seen.

On the first day of your visit, you and several other guests walk into the enticing cabin secluded deep in the woods. Inside, you find yourself in a large room. You are standing on an old shaky wooden floor. It creaks with each step. Some of the boards look as though they could be loose, and you feel very uncertain about it's safety.

You begin to become hesitant about staying, but you agreed to this. After-all, it will be a life-changing show! You notice an open door to your left. Inside the door are steps that you imagine lead down to a dark basement. You are very nervous by now, and begin to fear crashing through the old floor. Who knows what could be down there!

Just then, your tour guide, standing safely outside, shouts, "And now, the elephants!" Suddenly two huge elephants appear, the biggest ones you ever seen. They begin dancing around on the creaky old floor. So animated, they even seem to smile at you. They are bigger than life. You think you must be dreaming. It's simply unreal!

The elephants are wearing huge signs, telling how all your dreams of wealth and financial freedom are about to come true with no effort on your part. You think, 'Not if this floor gives way!' Just then, one of the old, loose floor boards breaks through and crashes into the dark basement, sending dusty smoke up into the room. The elephants continue to dance and smile.

By now you are completely skeptical of this whole situation. Rather than risk your life, you high-tail it out just in time to hear a huge crash. Dust and smoke pour out of the cabin as the elephants and the

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other mesmerized guests go crashing down into darkness. Luckily, you got out in time.

The tour guide seems oblivious to the destruction, and tells you not to worry – that he's decided to give you a second chance to see the show for free if you see it by midnight.

Have You Been to Fantasy Island?

If you're like me, you've seen plenty of advertising hype. The headline or copy looks like a "fantasy island" on paper. "You Will Make \$30,000 with No Effort" type headlines are like "elephants" that cannot dance on a wooden floor without crashing through – the wooden floor being your degree of trust based on past experience.

Hype is in the eye of the beholder. To me it is phrasing that is much stronger than needed to make the sale. It implies receiving more than one could reasonably expect to receive if actually putting the

product or information to use (AKA: following instructions). It rings with "Too good to be true." Hype should not be confused with false advertising, deliberately misleading the prospect, or making false claims about it's contents or price.

Your Prospect is Intelligent

Many people have been disappointed by past purchases, online and offline. These people will naturally have a healthy skepticism, a "shaky wooden floor" made of disbelief, and weakened by buyers' remorse or self-doubt. This will be true even if the product is absolutely wonderful. The feeling, "I don't believe that this is possible for me," is common place. In this case the person may initially lack the confidence to try something new.

Whether or not self-confidence is an issue, "elephants" are not accomplishing their objectives well. They are crashing through the floors of doubt weakened by advertising that over promised and underdelivered.

Online buyers are intelligent people looking for information, products, or services that will improve their lives. They want to increase their skills, and become more comfortable, happy, confident and financially independent. However, they deserve to receive what they pay for, and to have the benefits presented in a way that will allow them to make an informed decision. They deserve to feel pleased after receiving the product.

It is good to provide these benefits. You obviously believe in the product or service you sell. You are thrilled, and can't wait to share it's benefits with others. However, your prospects have not yet had your experience. They must first trust you, and witness your own level of belief and satisfaction. They often want very much to believe you.

Strengthening the "Floor" of Trust

When speaking with prospects in person, it is much easier to gain trust by first matching their level of

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enthusiasm, developing rapport, and offering proof of believable benefits. However, that becomes more difficult in print. There is no immediate feedback with which to adjust your language or style. What is believable to one person is not believable to another. You must know exactly who you are writing to. I have initially passed up several very good products because my own tolerance for "elephants" is extremely low.

The best products and services I've purchased – online and offline – described or illustrated clear benefits using sensible language. They touched me emotionally, but delivered much more than the advertisement originally promised. Two years ago I purchased a popular brand of fitness equipment. Three months later, I was convinced that the product was so good that the sales presentation had not done it justice.

Emotion Wins Out

Copy must be realistic, but also appeal to specific interests. It must reach the prospect emotionally, and convey honest enthusiasm for the offer. It must show how it will solve problems for your prospects. Most of all, it must be believable. There is a fine line between hype and good benefit-filled copy. Your target market and individual testing will determine when you cross that illusive line.

Here is an excellent quote to remember:

"In writing advertising it must always be kept in mind that the customer often knows more about the goods than the advertising writers because they have had experience in buying them."

~ John Wanamaker

The next time you write copy for your website or business, think about your target market, the people who will want and need your product. Who are they, exactly? Then think about their buying history, the strength of the "floor" that will support your presentation. It's strength will differ for each individual or group based on their past experiences. Provide your presentation based on the strength and tolerances of your market.

The extra effort and results will please you, and will please your prospects. Your customers will thank you for respecting their feelings, and for giving them even more in value than you promised.

You will also feel rewarded because you've fulfilled needs, improved lives, and made new friends!

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Ezine and Achieve! microzine at

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. Writers are welcome to submit original articles to help gain increased publicity for their businesses.

Wood Floors Buying Tips

By Bill Buchanan

Just like wooden wardrobes, wooden tables, wooden chairs etc, add value to the overall look of the house, wood floors too have an elegant and sophisticated charm. Wood floors can make a dull room look great.

The use of wooden floors has been going on for centuries. The floors last long and can be maintained easily. Wood floors are cheaper compared to other floorings. You can choose the wood floor according to your specifications. There are lots of varieties and designs available.

While buying the wood for flooring make sure you choose the right ones. Here are some tips to help you.

You can buy different wooden paints for the flooring. Try to buy the best one, which would suit the look and feel of your home. You can easily unfurnish and impregnate the wood floors without much time and money, and this is one of the main reasons why people love having wooden floors.

You can install wooden floors in the rooms of your choice. There are various ways you can install such as gluing or nailing it to the ground. You can laminate the wood floors and make it look more polished and shiny.

Most people think that wood floors do not last long, but this is a myth and it is a one-time investment and enhances the look of your home. You can decorate the wood floors with many designs and also paint with the colors of your choice.

You can buy oak, maple, teak wood, etc, for your flooring. The color of the flooring depends on many factors like the colors of the wall, curtains, ceiling etc. Most people prefer darker wood floors and lighter wall colors. If you have a casual room then you can go for light colored wood floors.

Hand painted wood floors look very attractive and artistic. You can design the floors yourself or hire a professional wood painter, who would design and paint according to your specifications. If you have any doubts on what type of wood to use for your wood floors, designing, painting, etc, then it is advised that you contact a wood flooring professional. A wood flooring professional has experience and knowledge in creating wood floors, so you can contact them and get a quote. You can search for a wood floor professional in yellow pages or on the Internet and hire them for your work.

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