

87 Marketing Secrets of The Written Word

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Introduction

Who can benefit by applying the tips in this booklet?

Every single business that wants to gain and keep more customers. And isn't this the main purpose of business anyway?

Look at it this way. The only function of business that is not a cost center is marketing (and sales). Marketing brings in revenue and earns profit if it's successful.

All other business functions (research, finance, and production) are cost centers. Please don't misunderstand me. These are crucially important business functions. But they are costs.

Don't make a common mistake. If you are not in a business that markets directly to its customers and are looking at suggestions for envelopes, headlines, etc., at first you may wonder if the information applies and will be useful to you.

I can assure you that it does.

For two reasons:

1. The principles of communication are exactly the same whether to distributors, wholesalers, sales-people, or any other "middlemen" to whom you sell your products and services.
2. "Direct Market or Die" is the working title of my next book. Why? I submit that unless you as a business owner or top executive learn how to communicate directly with customers fast, your days in business are numbered. You cannot rely solely on third parties.

The great businesses of today have learned how to effectively market by communicating directly with prospects and customers. A few notable examples include:

Dell Computer
Swatch watches
Nightingale-Conant (taped courses)
Prentice Hall (publishing)
Barnes and Noble (book retailing)
Mercedes Benz (automobiles)
Nestle
Nokia
America Online

Of course, you can have the best of both worlds. There are ways to market direct to consumers while protecting wholesalers, distributors, etc. But in the next decade, no longer can you market strictly through "middlemen" and survive.

This booklet contains valuable and timeless tips not found anywhere else. They will help you market your product or service regardless of your field of business.

May you enjoy the process and prosper.

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39 Direct Marketing Rules of Success

1. Spend up to 80% of your time on the headline of a space ad or sales letter. (Your letter headline can often be used as the teaser copy for the envelope.) Reason? 50% to 80% of the sales success of your advertising message is a direct result of your headline. That means your message loses up to 80% of its effectiveness without a strong headline! Another important reason to invest this time is that the offer's positioning is determined by the headline theme. Most copywriters do not spend nearly enough time on headlines. I write as many as 250 headlines before I select the final one for a campaign.

2. Use either "ragged" right or justified right margin for each column of copy when you have a space ad set in type. I've tested both and I have seen no effect in response rates.

3. Use Courier typeface in sales letters. Some call it old-fashioned, but my experience shows that Courier outpulls any other type style. The typewriter "me to you" look "feels" more personal and urgent.

4. Use highly salable products as free bonus gifts. Bonuses always increase sales with one exception. I once made the mistake of using a failed product as a bonus with disastrous results. Remember this: if you can't sell it, you can't give it away successfully!

5. Always use a headline at the top of your sales letter. Never use a company logo or your name and address at the top of a sales letter. It is a "me" message and depresses response. Use logo at the end of a letter on the last page. Exception: if you are writing to an audience who would be positively influenced by your name or credentials, e.g. a famous doctor writing to other doctors.

6. Never change a word of winning copy for anyone until you test it. Especially "for copy acceptance reasons." I learned the lesson the hard way. A magazine's legal department asked me to change 3 words in a 1200 word full-page ad, which I did. The response dropped to 1/10 of the former level! My recommendation: If it's working, don't change even a comma. If someone insists on changes, it's prudent to just pull the ad. Remember, because a winning ad often challenges conventional thinking, it seems to attract requests for change. But don't do it. Once you agree to do it with a given media you've lost control of the creative process. And your sales will usually plummet.

7. Copyright all your sales materials. Your winning ads are worth their weight in gold. You are bound to have people who try to copy your success. For your protection on every letter, space ad, brochure, etc., add the copyright symbol, a small c in a circle like this, ©, along with the word copyright, the year and your name. It should look like this:

8. Use a caption under every photo. The eye is drawn to a photograph. If you don't at least identify who is in the photo, at minimum you will lose many readers who will stop reading your sales message.
9. Test a photograph in your space ads. It often improves response. But it must support and tie into the headline and copy. For highest response, always include human beings rather than just objects in copy. Children are the biggest attention-getters of all. Remember the old saying, which happens to be true, "A picture is worth a thousand words."
10. In photos of people, make certain they are looking directly into the camera. Eye contact with the reader is a good involvement strategy.
11. Do not use more than 17 words in a headline. Why? Based on my tests, I've never been able to make a headline work that is longer than this.
12. Use the two most underused and powerful words more often in your copy. Free and You.
13. Do not use "I", the biggest turn-off word in copy, at all or very sparingly.
14. Always use a "drop" first letter in a space ad. This helps get the reader's eye from the headline into the body copy. Here is an example of a drop first letter—

How to get everything you ever
wanted in life...

15. Use subheads which are strong enough to be headlines. They both help keep the prospect reading plus break up large blocks of copy which appear to require so much effort, reading is discouraged.
16. Do not use a screen behind any copy area. (Except for yellow behind black, which can make copy more readable.) A screen in any other color diminishes readership. Use screens only for things for which you don't particularly want readership, such as some obscure regulation you may need to include in your offer. However, a screen for borders outside blocks of copy can help copy stand out.

17. Never print body copy in any color other than black. Black is easiest to read. Colors should only be used for headlines or sub-headlines.

18. Eliminate the word "that" in your copy. After copy is written, see if you can eliminate the word "that" as many times as you can. The word "that" is perhaps the most overused word in copy. It's boring and tends to weaken strong sentences.

19. Be provocative. If copy doesn't bother or offend someone it usually doesn't work! When getting feedback on new copy from colleagues, advertising media and prospects, if everyone likes it, watch out! Nearly every time I write a breakthrough ad or sales letter it pulls orders and also bothers someone. Reason? Great copy gets attention by being provocative. And interrupting usual thinking habits.

20. Never use sans-serif typeface on any body copy. All studies show it's more difficult to read.

21. Forget rules of grammar when writing copy. As copywriter John Kennedy in 1920 said, "Good copy is salesmanship in print." The prime goal in copy is to sell. Sentence fragments are OK.

22. Use short words, short sentences and short paragraphs in writing copy. Keep 75% of words 5 letters or less. Keep sentences to an average of 8 to 17 words. Paragraphs no more than 5 sentences. But vary the length. Otherwise it will seem repetitive and boring.

23. Use quotation marks around headlines. Studies show 27% more people will read the headline. It increases the feeling that something important is being stated.

24. Use upper and lower case letters in a headline. Do not use all caps, a frequent mistake by marketers and graphic designers in an attempt to make headlines stand out. Upper and lower case is easier to read. That's why any good newspaper or magazine sets their headlines this way.

25. Read copy out loud. The best test of copy tone, flow and persuasiveness is to say it out loud. This is what your reader does in his/her head. You will always be able to improve copy when you do this because the rough spots stand out.
26. Handwriting great copy is best way to improve your copywriting skills. When you come across someone else's effective copy, especially a control piece that is working for a period of time, hand write it, word for word. You will be exposed to the writer's thinking process. You'll also gain a deeper sense of how ideas should flow to a logical conclusion.
27. Get into a peak emotional state before you write. You cannot write great copy if you are exhausted, harassed or down mentally. Make sure to get a good night's sleep. Exercise moderately before starting. Eat sparingly. Take the time to count your blessings. Turn off the phone and make sure you are not interrupted. For mega-success, also do the Ted Nicholas "Yes" exercise (to be sent to any reader upon request).
28. When writing copy, imagine you are talking to a friend or loved one. Credibility, tone, and warmth in copy comes from the feelings you generate through the words you write. Be as honest and sincere as you possibly can be. Maintain enthusiasm about the product's benefits as though you are sharing with a friend.
29. Never put a period at the end of a headline. Do not punctuate at all except when asking a question. A period causes a reader to pause and possibly stop reading any further.
30. Break the last sentence on the page in a sales letter. Do not end the last sentence on any page. Break the sentence. Below it add the words "Please turn to page 2 (etc.)" to help keep the prospect reading.
31. Make sure your printer provides ink coverage that is as dark as possible on all your printed materials. Your response can drop by as much as 10% if the ink coverage in a letter has the all too common "gray" appearance. This is tough to read. The easiest way I know to increase mail response is by having the ink coverage made darker. I've seen response increase by 10% just by getting ink "blacker"!
32. Make the signature used in a sales letter clear and bold. Use a fine felt tip pen for the original. Prospects look at the signature and respond less well to a "wimpy" appearance, which suggests uncertainty or lack of confidence.
33. Use hand written margin notes on a sales letter to draw attention to important points.
34. Cross out and change prices and words in a sales letter to emphasize points, such as a

special price.

35. Underline words in a sales letter for emphasis. But don't overdo it. About 10 words a page is ideal.

36. Test a hand written P.S., which can often increase response.

37. Price your products using a 7 as the ending number, i.e. \$49.97, \$77.77, \$317, \$597, \$1,997, etc. My tests, as well as those of other marketers, find 7 attracts the most sales.

38. Write long copy. Don't limit what you write about the benefits of your product. Copy can never be too long. Just too boring! So, present your benefits with emotion combined with human interest and don't worry about the length. Remember the old true saying, "The more you tell, the more you sell."

39. Always include your name, address, telephone number and product price on brochures or fliers contained within your mail package. If the brochure is passed along or becomes separated from the sales letter the recipient can still order.

Little Known Envelope Secrets To Increase Response From Your Mailings

Would you like to double the response from your mailings simply by changing the envelope?

I've found a powerful outer envelope the most important element of any sales letter.

The following section focuses on why the envelope is so important as well as tips on how to improve response from your letters:

40. Write "teaser" copy (a word or phrase printed on the outside envelope) and place it on the outside of your outgoing envelopes. The sole purpose of teaser copy is to get the letter opened. Of course, unless the letter is opened you have zero chance to make a sale.

41. Devote as much time and effort to the important task of creating teaser copy for the envelope as you do for the headline of the sales letter.

42. Send mailings using blank envelopes with no copy unless you have created compelling teaser copy.

43. Choose a window envelope over a closed faced envelope to increase response.

44. Use a window envelope, which increases response over a closed face.
45. Try multiple windows, three or four, on the envelope. Some of my favorite phrases which can help to get the envelope opened include, e.g.:
- Free Gift Enclosed
 - 3 Free Gifts
 - Free Sample Inside
 - Gift Certificate Enclosed
46. Try colored envelopes, such as bright yellow, pink, blue, green and primrose. However, white sometimes works best to a business address.
47. Test a good photograph with a caption on the envelope. Sometimes a photo of the editor, product in use, or image which ties to teaser copy can increase response.
48. Always include a new envelope teaser test each time you mail. Teaser copy alone can lift response up to 250%.
49. Test odd size envelopes, which tend to stand out, e.g. 10%-20% larger than standard sizes.
50. Test a closed face envelope with live stamp and typed. (Do not use a label or teaser copy.) This is an exception to the rule if using effective teaser copy. At least 20% of the time this more personal look outpulls teaser copy and window envelopes. I suspect this is due to the fact most teaser copy is weak.
51. Test a good graphic drawing on the envelope, which can often increase response.
52. Test multiple versions of typeface graphics. Response can double using the same control teaser copy.
53. The creation of a mailing should start with the envelope. Prepare envelope copy and graphics before you write the sales letter.
54. If you plan to mail by first class, the words First-Class Mail on the envelope will improve response.
55. Name recognition rule. An envelope with a printed company name in the corner card

will do better when the name is known to the recipient than when it is not.

56. It's best to order special envelopes before other elements of a mail campaign as the manufacturers require a longer lead time.

57. Consider the eye-flow pattern regarding an envelope. As a rule, the recipient (1) looks at the front of the envelope; (2) his/her name and address; (3) teaser copy next to address; (4) corner card return address; (5) and last to the postage corner of the envelope. Then the envelope is turned over to the back. However, teaser copy on the back of the envelope is, of course, often read first if the envelope is lying on its face.

58. To reduce envelope cost, especially if you plan to mail on a cyclical basis, you can order your estimated yearly requirements and then take delivery on a periodic basis.

59. Keep the promise on the outer envelope. If the envelope says free gift, make that the first order of business in your letter.

60. Ideal location for teaser copy is the lower left hand corner.

61. As a rule, teaser copy works better to consumers than to prospects at business addresses. Secretaries and assistants at businesses are sometimes asked to toss all mail which appears to be advertising. However, when a teaser is "right on" it can be wonderfully effective in getting mail opened. My experience is that teaser copy should be tested even with business mailings as it can outpull the plain envelope.

62. Using reverse psychology can be powerful. A good way of getting envelope open can be to omit corner card copy. The recipient must open the envelope to find out who is sending the message.

63. A compelling question can serve as a powerful teaser.

64. A teaser which is targeted to your audience will work better than a teaser of a general nature.

65. Use a customer testimonial in quotation marks as teaser copy.

66. Begin your teaser copy with a powerful word or phrase such as:

Announcing	Now
At Last	Amazing
Breakthrough	How To (tried and true)
Who	Free
What	

67. Use the most important benefit of your product as your teaser

68. Find the biggest hidden benefit of your product or service and make that your teaser. This can be 10 times more powerful than any other approach to writing teaser copy.

Lucky 13 Secrets of A Successful Order Form

The main purpose of any sales letter is to get a sale. That's why the order form is crucially important.

69. Copywriting sequence. Prepare order form right after envelope is completed and before the letter.

Most copywriters prepare the order form after the letter is written. This is a mistake for many reasons. These include:

- (1) You must think through and clarify the offer
- (2) You should include and present the biggest benefits of your product or service
- (3) You haven't "run out of gas" writing the letter. You still have a fresh outlook

70. Start your order form with the word Yes. Then follow this with your most important two or three benefits.

71. Prepare the copy in the voice of the prospect, e.g.: Yes! I'd like to travel the world living in luxurious five-star hotels at rock bottom bargain prices. Please send me...etc.

72. Do not use the words "order" or "form" anywhere on the order form! These are negative words. "Order" reminds the customer they are spending money. No one likes to complete a "form." Do you?

73. Use a headline for the order form. Some proven winners for me include: Free Trial

Request, Free Examination Certificate, No Risk 60-Day Examination Certificate.

74. Print on quality paper, different from the letter or brochure. Two I've found highly effective are:

- (1) the same paper as a bank cheque
- (2) a parchment-like paper

75. "Pretty up" the order form. Most are ugly and boring. Some helpful devices include a stock certificate border, photos of people or the product, and an easy-to-read Times Roman typeface. The order form should be graphically pleasing.

76. Restate and describe Free gifts or bonuses that are part of the offer.

77. Leave the back of the order form blank. My tests always show a decline in orders when there is print on the back.

78. Use colored inks and papers. However, avoid green. Green reminds (American) prospects they are spending money.

79. Restate guarantee. To increase its power and importance, have the President or high level executive sign it. Put a border around it to help it stand out.

80. Test an oversized order form 8½" x 11" in size.

81. Make the order form as easy as possible to complete. Have someone else complete the order form while it's being developed. See how it looks completed and adjust as needed.

Direct Marketing Tips For Use on the Internet

Do not overestimate or underestimate the power of Internet marketing. The Internet is a pure direct marketing medium. I love it and have been very successful on the Internet. While not producing the profitability as yet of traditional media, such as print, T.V. and radio, definitely use it. But use it wisely.

Keep perspective. Potentially it could become the most successful of all the available advertising media. Nearly all the previous tips apply equally to Internet marketing.

82. Internet success depends not as much on what you do online, but on what you do offline! Look at it this way. Having a website is just like having an unlisted telephone number. It's nice to have available. But unless you drive people to it, no one will know

about it or use it.

According to the *Wall Street Journal*, there are over 300,000,000 websites. You must compete with them to get any attention. Clearly, you need to have an effective marketing program offline with print ads, direct mail, T.V. or radio to help attract people to your website.

83. Engage a computer literate graphics person with Internet experience to design your website. Keep it as simple and user friendly as possible. But do not allow the designer to write the copy. Prepare it yourself. Or hire a copywriter experienced in direct marketing.

Most websites are filled with incredibly boring copy and confusing design and layouts. The opportunity for any marketer who is “in tune” with the principles in this booklet is enormous.

84. Create a compelling subject line when you send email to your prospects and customers. This acts just like a headline.

85. Make building your email database a top priority. Offering a free gift, report or booklet which contains valuable information is a powerful way to induce your prospects to leave their name and contact information for your database.

86. Make your email sales letter as long as necessary to include the benefits of your products. But summarize the offer early in the email for those with short attention spans.

87. Respond fast. Make it easy to contact you. By email, phone or fax. Make it easy to buy. Easy to get more information. But a big key to Internet success is to respond to inquiries either the same day. Or within 24 hours. Most Internet marketers make their interested prospects wait days, even weeks. And a surprisingly high percentage don't respond at all.

About Ted Nicholas

Ted Nicholas is a world-renowned author, copywriter, self-publisher, public speaker and direct marketing expert.

Ted holds seminars around the world on direct marketing and self-publishing. Attendees happily pay up to \$7,500 to attend and feel they've gotten far more than their money's worth.

Here are some brief highlights of the remarkable career of Ted Nicholas:

- Unlike many speakers, was a successful entrepreneur long before he became known as an author, speaker and marketing guru
- Founded 23 companies of his own beginning at age 21
- His first business was a highly successful chain of 30 candy and ice cream parlors

- Developed a unique direct-to-consumer marketing approach, which can be applied to virtually any business
- Invested 100 million dollars of his own capital to refine his strategy
- Wrote 14 best-selling books, including HOW TO FORM YOUR OWN CORPORATION WITHOUT A LAWYER FOR UNDER \$75 and MAGIC WORDS THAT BRING YOU RICHES
- Started a consulting and seminar business in 1991. Has done hundreds of seminars around the world
- Serves consulting clients both small and large on six continents
- Serves on the board of directors of several growing companies

Additional Information

Please send me details of:

- Ted Nicholas books and tapes
- Ted Nicholas conference speaking
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- Engaging Ted Nicholas as a copywriter and/or marketing consultant
- How to start my own publishing business

- I'd like to order this booklet at only \$4.97 each. _____ copies
- I'm interested in booklets printed with our company logo.
Quantity prices available upon request

Name _____

Position _____

Company _____

Address _____

Telephone No. _____

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BK87MS

11 Tips to Promote Your Business With This Booklet

(It can be customized for you)

As a...

1. Thank you for the referral
2. Thank you for the piece of business
3. Thank you for the appointment
4. Thank you for being a great employee
5. Thank you for being a reliable supplier
6. Thank you for completing our survey
7. Thank you for entering our drawing
8. Thank you for your visit to our store
9. Thank you for your order. Enclosed is the special value added gift we promised with our compliments
10. Thank you for your order. I'm enclosing a special gift with our invoice
11. We miss you! (For previous customers you want to wake up.) I'm enclosing a free gift just to stay in touch.
12. _____
(Place your own creative idea above. Please let us know what it was and how it Worked. You'll be sent a special surprise gift.)

Are the tips in this booklet useful to you?

If you've tried them yourself and you are pleased, join enthusiastic clients around the world who use this booklet to promote their business. Because the marketing ideas herein are so powerful and useful to anyone who uses them, you are almost certain to build good will for yourself and your business by sharing them.

Order your supply today.