

Simple Writing System Basics

"Making The Sale" Lesson #4:

How To Figure Out What To Charge.

From: John Carlton

"The most ripped-off and respected copywriter alive."

Howdy...

Hey, it's 10 pm.

Do you know where your cash-flow is?

Because of sheer lack of marketing savvy, entire populations of businesses voluntarily shut down the profit spigot, and willingly allow dollars that were headed their direction...

... to suddenly flow back *away* from them.

Yes, this is insane. But it's common.

Why? Because it "seems" to make sense. After all "everybody does it." It is invisible robbery, and there isn't an accountant in the world who will warn you away from it.

Here's what happens: You're selling widgets at \$39 a pop, and you're doing well. Then, for whatever reason, sales begin to drop.

You decide your widgets need a dramatic rescue to perk up sales again. So you do what most marketers do and...

Slash The Price!

And it *murders* your bottom line.

You know what I tell clients to do? It's simple: Don't slash the price. Rather... **increase the perceived value** of the deal by sweetening it with a ton of free goodies.

So instead of a widget at \$39, your customer now gets (for a short time only) the widget, plus a free report on how to use the widget like a pro, plus an recorded interview with Mr. Widget from the famous TV show... plus a 2-for-1 coupon for dinner at a local hotspot...

... PLUS a free tee shirt with a cool widget logo.

All for just \$49.

That's right - we actually *raised* the price ten bucks. The tee shirt and the free dinner alone are worth twice that.

It's a bargain.

What did it cost to add all this free stuff?

Almost nothing. The free report is paper and ink. The mp3 audio recording is downloadable, and Mr. Widget did the interview for the PR value. The dinner coupon offers the restaurant fabulous advertising, so you get them free.

The tee shirts are a couple of bucks, maybe.

I'm using these items as examples only. To make a point: **Your product is worth what you convince your customer to perceive it's worth.**

People respond to free stuff. They love getting things they would never otherwise be able to find (like Mr. Widget's autograph).

Especially when there's a story attached. ("Mr. Widget is really a nice guy! He was kissing babies and everything! But he's shorter than he looks on TV...").

I like information-based freebies best. You can pile them on like crazy... and it will cost just pennies to create. Offer *ten* free reports on something closely related to your product.

Selling garden equipment?

Add reports on growing prize winning roses, getting rid of gophers, designing decks and fountains and weed-free lawns.

Selling a diet?

Add info on finding cheap-but-expensive-looking clothes for your new figure... tips on getting free airfare to the Bahamas (because you can now wear bathing suits again)... and maybe a list of little-known places to meet your future soul-mate.

Selling insurance?

Add free reports on how to organize your important papers in a simple but easy-to-navigate home-made system. What to do when you can't find crucial phone numbers. How to get the best mortgage rate in the country using the Internet. What to put in an emergency kit is your garage to fix plumbing, electrical and structural problems until the contractor shows up. A thousand and one ways to use duct tape.

Get the idea?

None of this will cost you a cent, if you can write it yourself. Even if you have to hunt down someone who knows stuff you don't, you can often convince them to do an interview (which you can transcribe) *just for the exposure*.

And that means you don't have to rely on cutting prices -- just like every other podunk business in town.

Now here's another cunning way to widen the gap between you and the competition.

Most of us have competition.

And the natural urge is to trash them to your customers. To impugn their integrity and worth. To suggest criminal nature and evil intent.

Anything to stop the customer from ever dealing with them.

Don't do that. You don't have to.

There are 3 ways to trash the competition... and only the last one makes any sense to the savvy marketer.

Check it out:

First method: *Outright slander.*

"Don't deal with them. They have shoddy merchandise, and cheat people." Saying things like this only makes you look jealous and out-of-control.

And it can have the opposite effect you desire: Think of a teenager being told not to listen to rock and roll because it's evil. That same day, he'll be smuggling CDs of Eminem up to his room.

It's just as bad to feign superiority: "No one with any taste at all buys from them. We're the only store in town with the real thing." I actually had a guy in a shoe store pull this on me once. It only made me eager to see what the competition had that was pissing him off so much.

Second method: *Damning with faint praise.*

"Ah yes, that other store. Well, they certainly sell a lot of products... to kids." The implication being, you don't wanna be seen as a kid, do you?

The ol' backhanded compliment is the way to go. "Sure, they're a good choice, if all you care about is saving a few bucks right now."

It's a decent psychological tactic... but if you *really* do have a good product, with substance and value, take a page from the master salesman's manual and use...

Method Number Three: **Insist on a side-by-side comparison.**

"Hey, they've got a fine product over there. And sometimes it's hard to judge the value without a direct comparison. That's why we urge you to give their product a trial run... at the same time you give one to ours. *After all, you're the best judge of quality.*"

Very cool technique. Claude Hopkins (the legendary hero of direct response advertising) himself used it, when he knew he had a great product that would withstand all comparison.

It's not a cocky, in-your-face stance -- just a *confident suggestion*, made sincerely.

Most people won't bother with the "field test". All they're looking for is a reason to buy - a reason they can explain to themselves, to their wives, to their skeptical buddies.

And every time someone does the comparison, and chooses you... you have another compelling testimonial to use.

You are in such a powerful position when you have substance and value, it is pure foolishness not to use that power. Honest confidence sells.

That's it for today.

Don't forget to jump back over to www.SimpleWritingSystem.com/blog/ to what else we've posted.

I'm giving away a large amount of specific, useable information there for free. And it's the place where you'll learn how and when you can immerse yourself in my Simple Writing System. Risk free.

Action is ALWAYS the next step on the successful person's schedule.

I know you've probably got a LOT on your plate right now... and you may even be a tad overwhelmed just with the ideas triggered from the videos and quickie lessons I've given you. But that's where staying in touch makes perfect sense.

I love shortcuts. It's how I soared to the top of the heap in my career, and shortcuts are the foundation of my teaching style.

The best way to get "un"-overwhelmed... is to start taking full advantage of the opportunities out there.

So head back to the blog -- www.SimpleWritingSystem.com/blog/ -- and feast on more of the free specific tactics and advice we're posting there.

In the meantime... stay frosty...

John Carlton