

How To Use Words That SELL

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How to Use Words that Sell

Introduction

One of the most powerful tools in your sales arsenal is the informed and judicious use of words and terminology. Words have the ability to entice a prospect, hold the attention of the potential buyer, and ultimately result in the establishment of a relationship that not only results in a sale today, but helps to create other sales activity in the future.

At the same time, words have the power to turn away potential clients, make people feel unappreciated, and ultimately lead to not only the loss of a sale today, but also the loss of sales opportunities in the future.

The effective salesperson knows the importance of choosing the right verbiage to present both the seller and the product. Whether in verbal communications or in the creation of written documents such as sales brochures, letters and emails, or any other type of promotional materials, using the right words in the right places is key to being successful at the task of sales.

Here are some ideas that will help you hone your sales vocabulary, and enhance your ability to utilize words that ultimately lead to productive client relationships.

Section One: How to Write Words that Sell in Your Copy

Using verbiage that will result in sales opportunities is important in any environment. This is especially true when composing sales copy for a web site, an online press release, or an electronic advertisement. There are several factors to keep in mind when writing the text for your web copy. Here are some of the most important things to keep in mind.

First, it is imperative to keep your target audience in mind when composing the web copy. This will often mean making sure that the text is sprinkled with terminology that will be immediately recognizable to the reader. Adding in terms that are familiar to the consumer helps to accomplish two things.

First, they serve as markers that help the reader know that he or she is at a site that has relevance to their needs and interests. Second, the use of familiar terms creates the impression that the author of the web site possesses a competent knowledge about the subject matter.

Both of these factors help to hold the interest of the reader long enough for the web copy to present all the reasons why life would be so much easier with the acquisition of the advertised good or service.

Technical terms may be fine in some instances, while their use may actually be a deterrent in other situations. For example, even though your product offering may have to do with conference room telephones, you may want to refrain from using a lot of telephony terms.

This would be true if you are looking to promote your products to administrative assistants and busy executives. Instead of technical terminology, the focus should be on the features included with the unit, as well as emphasizing how easy the unit is to use.

Of course, if the focus is on promoting the telephone equipment to Information Technology managers, then the inclusion of technical terms and specifications would be a must. Knowing what type of verbiage will connect with your target audience will go a long way in making the copy of your web text interesting and attractive to your audience.

Another thing to keep in mind about your web copy is that you want to get the highest ranking as possible in various Internet search engines. The easiest way to accomplish this is to make sure there are keywords sprinkled throughout the copy. Keywords are simply words that are easily picked up as being relevant to the subject matter, and which are likely to be used by anyone doing research online related to that particular subject.

For example, if an assistant is charged with the task of finding good buys on a speakerphone for the conference room, there are several key words that he or she is likely to use as part of the search criteria.

Words such as speakerphone, conference, conference room, meeting, business, and telephone are some examples of words that may be used as part of the search. Having all those words included in the text of your sales web copy will help to ensure your web site is included as part of the search results that are returned by the search engine.

One way to get an idea of what types of keywords to include in your web copy is to conduct a search of your own. Check out competitor sites and make note of some of the words that seem to occur two to four times in their copy. Chances are repetition at that level is done in order to maximize the chances of getting a high ranking on an engine search.

Keeping in mind that you do not necessarily want to replicate the keywords that are used by your competitors, think of other terms that are similar in meaning and that you think would be likely words or phrases to use for a search. Try out your theory by doing a few searches using your own set of keywords. You may find that the results are very positive, and could lead to greatly increasing your chances of a high ranking on all the major search engines.

Section Two: Using Words Effectively in Email Marketing Campaigns

Just as you want to attract attention with the web copy on your web site, there is also the need to structure promotional emails so that they will catch the attention of consumers, and help to generate interest in the goods or services that you have for sale. There are a couple of key factors to keep in mind when you put together a promotional email.

First, the subject line for your targeted email needs to include elements that will grab the attention of the reader. There are several schools of thought on how to best accomplish this.

One approach is to employ a question in the subject line. The idea behind the question is that people have a tendency to not overlook a question, while a statement may not make much of an impression.

Because the question will result in more people at least stopping to consider the email, the chances that the promotion will be opened and read increases. This at least gets the promotional email past the first obstacle, which is being junked by a consumer without being read.

Another approach is to build on the relationship that you already have with the consumer. Assuming that the email campaign is directed at persons who have done business with you in the past, you may want to include an identifying mark in the subject line, such as the name of your company, or the name of the product that was previously purchased.

Using a familiar term helps to create instant recognition. If the consumer had a favorable experience with your company in the past, there is an excellent chance that he or she will open the email and take a few moments to read through your epistle.

Of course, once you have gotten through the minefield associated with getting the consumer to open the email, it is imperative to entice the prospect to keep reading after the first couple of sentences. Most people today are not interested in long winded emails that seem to have no end in sight. This means you want to do several things with the text to keep them reading.

First, use short paragraphs. When the email is opened, the eye will quickly note how many solid lines of text occur before there is a break of some sort. The brain immediately sends out a signal that reading this email is going to be a tiring process, and there is a good chance the email will be scanned at best, then abandoned. This impression can be avoided by using shorter paragraphs that focus on one aspect of the subject.

Breaks in the text make it easier to digest the whole email in manageable pieces. The end result is that you have the chance to build your sales pitch point by point as the reader moves through the text of the email.

Using bullets in the body of an email can also be effective. However, it is important to keep the bullets focused and short. Using a bunch of words to create what amounts to a bulleted paragraph will quickly cause the reader to lose interest.

A bullet should contain no more than seven to ten words, and focus on one complete thought that the consumer can easily relate to and digest. Remember, the purpose of the bullet is to present an idea, not expound on it. You can always do that on your web copy. Don't try to accomplish that with any email, and certainly not in a bullet contained in the body of the email.

Another good thing to keep in mind about the wording in an email is to not get complicated. Employing the old business adage of KISS is ideal for crafting email text. The need to keep the wording simple and easy to read is essential.

You may have only a few seconds to attract the attention of the reader, and that is most certainly accomplished by using words that do not cause the consumer to pause and have to think about what the word may mean. Technical wording should be kept at a

minimum, thus keeping the talking points accessible to just about everyone who might read the email.

The main factor to keep in mind with the use of words in promotional emails is that the text needs to be easily read, does not seem to be overwhelming, and is focused enough to increase interest in going to the web site for more details.

Section Three: Using Sales Copy Effectively

Using the sales copy you have created for the web and as part of email promotional campaigns can also be used in other ways to create interest in your products and services. The great thing is that you don't always have to come up with more original copy to create other pieces that will help to spread the word.

Here are some examples of how you can use that web copy and email text to create more promotional documents that will help you to generate additional sales.

Even if you operate mainly as a web business, it pays to participate in trade shows and conventions. Of course this means you need to set up an exhibit that will attract the attention of attendees as they walk by.

At the very least, you will want some graphics that will catch the eye that can be mounted on tables or on the back panels for an exhibit booth. Along with images, you may want to include a few snippets from the text that you use on your web site or email promotions.

Remember those crisp and concise bullets that you used as part of the email campaign? They now translate into some wonderful visual slogans to catch the eyes of conference attendees. Create some storyboards that splash those bullets across the facades in colors that will attract attention.

By using your words to entice people to come over to your exhibit, you have the chance to engage them in conversations that will help lead to the collection of leads that you can follow up on after the show closes.

Along with using your web text as graphics for the booth, consider reorganizing some of the information into a slide presentation. This will allow you to set up a computer screen and have the presentation continually running on a loop. Movement helps to attract the eye.

People will come over and check out your presentation, even if you are currently busy with other visitors. This gives you the chance to make a connection even if you are not free to engage the person in dialogue at that very moment. Because you are using words that are part of your web site, the visitors will feel a sense of familiarity when they visit your online business at a later date.

You will also need some printed matter that interested parties can take along with them. This will most likely be in the form of sales brochures. Use text from your email campaign to create one easy to read bi-fold brochure, then the text from your web site to create at least a couple of other brochures that are different in size and format.

This adds an element of visual interest to your printed matter, so odds are the visitor will take one of each. Three brochures taken would mean three opportunities to capture the interest of the reader. Chances are you will need to do little to no editing in order to adapt your web text for hard copy publications.

Keep in mind that when the trade show is over, you also have the ability to use those same brochures as part of a direct mail campaign. This sort of application, while not necessarily a big money maker, is usually worth the investment.

Going with printed mail campaigns opens up one more means of getting steady customers. Using your existing copy to accomplish the task is all the better for your bottom line.

Section Four: Using Psychological Triggers

Psychological triggers are simply words, images, and sounds that can be used to promote a particular response. When it comes to the use of these triggers in your sales effort, two of your most powerful tools will be words and the way you choose to present them.

Here are some things to keep in mind that will help you make the most of psychological triggers in the sales copy you compose, as well as some visual approaches to help those triggers do the job.

To a degree, the use of keywords sprinkled throughout your copy is an example of using psychological triggers. Keywords provide the basis for rapport between the reader and your copy. Chances are that the consumer is already looking for something in particular.

Keywords are evidence that he or she is at the right place to find that which is desired or needed. Thus, having important keywords in the text is one way of causing the triggering of a reaction that ensures the consumer will keep reading through the web site, assured there is something of value there.

Another thing to keep in mind is that you want to use phrases and words that speak to the mindset of the reader. For example, including words that describe applications with special meaning to your target audience will help to elicit the desired response.

Someone who is looking for financial software for a faith based organization is likely to respond very positively to such words as stewardship, accountability, and trust. Triggers of this type resonate with some of the reasons why the individual may be searching for a good deal on financial software, and will easily help to draw in interested persons.

Triggers can also be used to invoke the emotions of the reader as well. Invoking a sense of fun into the search, while still being professional, is often enough to get people to take a few moments and check out what you have to offer. Humor may not be right for all products and services, but in many cases, the strategy works.

If you market office products and cater to busy administrative assistants trying to keep the boss happy, you may want to try a tag line with a trigger that speaks to the frustration that can come with the job. Something along the lines of “tired of searching the Internet to keep your boss from popping a vein?”

“Get everything you need here!” can help to soothe frayed nerves and at the same time creates the impression that there is no need to look anywhere else.

Guilt is also being a trigger that can be used to good advantage. Using verbiage that conveys a sense that failure to purchase your good or service is something akin to a dereliction of duty. Of course, this tends to work better when the intimation is somewhat understated, since that does not insult the intelligence of the consumer.

Something along the lines of “a day without software is a day with a lot of wasted time” hints at the advantage of buying your product and impressing the boss with a high level of productivity. At the same time, the intimation is that without the software, the reader will not be as productive and thus will not be able to do the best job possible.

Preying on the sense of responsibility, then trigger motivates the consumer to read further and learn what your product can do to make the day a successful one.

Motivation through the written word is another example of a great psychological trigger. The vast majority of people want to do a good job with everything they do. However, they also want to accomplish that good job in as little time and with as little effort as possible.

Using triggers in your sales copy like “easy to use”, “cuts hours off your workload” and “increase your free time” will definitely play to the desire for more success with less investment. Using these types of triggers in headlines throughout the text is one way of getting noticed, but don’t forget to work a few of these motivational style motivators into the main text as well.

Section Five: Writing Solo Ads

As part of your sales campaign, there will be many opportunities to compose solo ads that can be used in a number of situations. In some cases, these may be general ads that are designed as part of the materials for a marketing campaign aimed at a new target group of consumers.

At other times, you may want to develop a solo ad that is aimed at appearing in a one time publication, such as an annual chamber of commerce directory. There are also situations where it may be advantageous to develop a series of solo ads that spotlight several of your high profile products or services. Here are a few tips to help you come up with solo ads that will work.

When planning an ad, it is a good idea to think about the amount of space you can afford. Obviously, you want to target print publications that will reach the types of consumers that you want to connect with.

Keep in mind that a quarter page ad in the right publication is a much better investment than a page ad in a publication that does not include a readership that would have an interest in what you have to offer.

Spend your money on ads that are geared toward the right people, and make sure the text of the ad makes that clear. Knowing where to place ads is your first step in deciding what type of copy to include in the customized solo ad.

The same type of approach can be applied to online ads as well. Creating a simple but effective solo ad that is targeted and can be placed on particular sites where potential clients visit. The text should be short, snappy, and make the point without taking more than a couple of seconds.

Generally, an online ad will also redirect visitors to your web site, so make sure that the tag or trigger you use with the ad is relevant to what the prospect will see when he or she arrives at the site.

Keep in mind that solo ads are not meant to be detailed repetitions of the information on your web site.

Instead, they are meant to call attention to some aspect of your business, and build enough interest that people will want to learn more. Don't try to accomplish too many things with one solo ad. If the purpose for the ad is to promote a sale, then make sure the verbiage proclaims how good the sale is.

Perhaps you want to tout a new and improved product. Under those circumstances, focus on one or two new features of the enhanced offering. That is enough to act as a teaser without spilling all the details about what is so good about the new version of the product.

One easy way to create a series of solo ads is to come up with one basic format that can easily be adapted for different venues. Once the basic elements are in place, it is relatively easy to use the master ad as the template.

From that vantage point, it is easy to make some changes that will personalize each ad placement to target the specific print publication or set up web sites where the solo ads will appear. This approach also provides a sense of continuity.

Consumers who see two or more of your solo ads will easily recognize all of them as associated with the same products, based on the choice of graphics and the layout of the content.

Section Six: Writing Classified Ads

Both in print and around the Internet, there are opportunities to write classified ads to spread the word about your business. In some cases, the classified ad may be only a sentence or two. In other cases, you may be able to manage something longer and still make it profitable.

Writing copy for classified ads is a little different from larger advertisements, in that no matter how generous the room for a classified ad, it is still a small space. Your challenge is to use that little bit of space to make a big impact.

The nature of a classified ad is to say a lot in just a few words. This means you will need to be as exacting in your choice of words as possible. Fortunately, a classified ad does not have to rely on proper sentence structure.

This makes it possible for you to make use of phrases to get your point across, if they are appropriate. Quick blurbs that are crafted properly will get the point across, and allow you to convey your intent in just a few words.

Another way to pack in more detail in just a few words is to employ the use of abbreviations. Depending on the publication where the classified ad will appear, you may be able to get by with using certain abbreviations that will be easily understood by the readers.

For example, if the classified ad is appearing in the back of a magazine dedicated to Information Systems professionals, then there is no need to spell out those words in the ad. Use the abbreviation "IS" and you save a lot of space that can be used to squeeze in another possible point of interest.

Along with industry related abbreviations there are generally accepted abbreviations that work both in print media and online. One such abbreviation would be "ISO" which is commonly used as the abbreviation for "in search of". You may be surprised at how many abbreviations you can use without damaging the flow or integrity of the ad text.

Still, it is a good idea to balance the shortcuts with at least a couple of terms that are spelled out. If you are unsure of what types of abbreviations would be acceptable, check out some of the other ads for ideas.

One component that you should always include in the ad is contact information. Make sure that the type of contact detail you provide is completely reliable. If there is not a

good chance of returning a phone call in a timely manner, then opt for an email address. Better yet, include the URL for your web site, so that the reader can go right to the source.

Usually, directing readers to the main page of your site is the proper procedure. However, if you are running a sale or want to feature one of your products or services, you may want to redirect the reader directly to a page that focuses on the particular item.

In fact, reading through several of the classified ads that are found on the ad web site or in the print publication is a good idea. It is possible to pick up on a number of pointers about the type of classified ads that the publication considers be acceptable.

You can easily incorporate those ideas into your concept for the classified ad, making sure that you are in compliance with accepted guidelines. This investment of time doing a little quick research will help to make the task of actually writing the ad a lot easier.

Section Seven: How to Use Sales Language

Sales language is simply the use of accepted terms and verbal techniques that are understood to be helpful in the process of identifying qualified leads, talking to interested prospects, and closing a sale. While the verbiage may tend to vary slightly from one sales setting to another, there are a number of rules that seem to apply across the board.

Here are some examples of effective sales language and how these approaches may be helpful.

One of the first things that any successful salesperson learns is that proper sales language employs the basic principle of conveying confidence. That confidence has to do with the belief that all the goods and services on the table are of the best quality.

Further, each and every one of them will make a huge difference in the quality of life for any person who chooses to buy any of the services offered. Along with the knowledge that the goods and services are absolutely the best thing since sliced bread, the salesperson also has full confidence in his or her ability to convince the buyer of how good the products happen to be.

Without this underlying level of confidence, even the most convincing of all verbal techniques will fall short of the mark.

Sales language is all about accentuating the positive. Helping people to realize the value of what you have to offer involves conveying that what you have will make any task easier to accomplish. Along with making the task easier, your product will also speed up the process so there is more time to devote to other matters. Best of all, it will also pay for itself in a very short period of time.

This means understanding what types of approaches will make an immediate impact with a customer. For example, if you open with something along the lines of “how would you like to leave a half hour early every day and still get all your work done?” you are certain to grab the attention of just about anyone.

You are using sales language to offer something of value to the individual and chances are you will get the chance to explain just what you mean.

Another part of employing sales language is learning when to ask clarifying questions. One you have engaged a prospect and you begin to get feedback, it is important that you check now and then to make sure the two of you are on the same page. Clarifying questions is one of the verbal tools you can use to keep on track.

A clarifying question is simply when you take a moment to ask a question that helps to ensure you understand something that the prospect has told you. Often, these types of questions are phrased to allow a simple yes or no response.

For example, if the client has mentioned the use of word processing software applications, you may want to take the matter one step further, and ask of in addition to

word processing, would spreadsheet capability at no extra cost be something that would help out in the workplace.

This allows you to add more value to a need that is already expressed, and provide the prospect with one more reason to keep talking to you.

Along with the clarifying question, another verbal tool in your arsenal is the perception check. Here you are making sure that you assimilated information provided by the prospect. Often, a perception check will begin with a phrase like “if I understand you correctly” or “from what you have told me, I understand that you need.”

The point of the perception check is to allow the seller the chance to present in his or her own words what the buyer has indicated is a want or need. In turn, the buyer has the chance to affirm that the seller has indeed grasped the need, or has the chance to correct the perception of the seller if the connection did not quite capture everything.

It is important to frame the perception check so that any miscommunication is owned by the seller, and does not reflect on the buyer.

In fact, sales language should always place the burden of providing services on the seller. This leaves the buyer as seeming to be in complete control of the conversation, and without any sense that the buyer is being unclear or imprecise. This approach also conveys the sense that the seller is genuinely interested in meeting the needs and desires of the buyer.

Sales language is employed in online communications with prospects in several ways. First, email correspondence should always convey the desire to meet the needs of the buyer. Second, sales language that is positive, leads to discussions about what the products can do, and anticipates questions will go a long way in keeping the web copy for your site fresh, interesting, and entertaining.

Conclusion

Using words to sell is something that every successful sales person has to learn to do. This is true when talking live with any prospective client.

Along with live discussions, using the right words can make all the difference in the ability of a web site to attract visitors, and hold their attention long enough to make a sale.

Ads, both electronic and print types also depend heavily on choosing the right words for the right situation. Knowing what to say and when to say it will help keep a sales career fresh and exciting, not to mention lucrative.