

# Salesmanship-in-Print

## How to build your business with the perfect sales letter - Part 1

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Just imagine if you could hire the ideal salesperson to sell your products and services: someone who will relentlessly deliver your message perfectly, every single time. Someone who will never call in sick, never complain, who shows up on time and never takes a vacation.

Just imagine an employee knocking on doors and drumming up business in a manner that truly represents you, your company, your products and your services. Imagine a sales rep that answers every customer's objection perfectly and will speak your prospect's language regardless of what your market is. This may seem too good to be true, but it's not. The "employee" I'm talking about is not a real person – it's a marketing letter, also known as a sales letter.

A great sales letter is the equivalent of having the perfect salesperson on call and at your disposal. If you're already in sales, the sales letter becomes your perfect assistant. It tells your complete story. It always asks for the order. It makes as many sales "calls" as you ask. It has no limiting beliefs, no fears, can work with no supervision, and doesn't need to be "motivated" to do its job. And there's no commission to be paid!

### **The marketing letter and how to leverage it**

Your sales letter is limited only by your own imagination. It is perfect for staying in touch with your current client base. Use it to expand your business by introducing new products and services. It can help you create qualified leads, attract new customers, reactivate those long-lost clients, and get referrals. It can help you keep your company and products top-of-mind.

The sales letter can be applied when you want to follow up on open quotes; it will help relieve potential "buyer's remorse" after the sale. Use it to up-sell or back-end-sell other products or services to existing customers. And, once you have a proven and tested marketing letter, you can

expand its reach to more and more people, and expect the same successful and predictable results every time.

### **Salesmanship-in-Print: the formula for a winning marketing letter**

Regardless of your intended purpose for your sales letter, the *real* objective of the letter is “salesmanship-in-print”. The best way to illustrate how salesmanship-in-print works is to take a closer look at how a professional salesperson completes the necessary steps to selling a product. Once you have the steps down, you can replicate them in your marketing letter.

A salesperson will first capture your interest, and will then build upon it to get you to stay with him or her during the rest of the sales presentation. He/she will have to generate enough excitement in the beginning of the pitch, or you will tune out and say “no” at the end.

Secondly, the salesperson will build a presentation filled with features and benefits which will illustrate how the product will benefit you and make your life better, and will tie the features of the product directly to its benefits.

Next, the salesperson will always offer a bonus, guarantee or an incentive for you to make the purchase *that day*. And lastly, a good salesperson will always *ask* for the order.

These four selling basics can also be referred to as the **A.I.D.A. model**:

- Attention – getting the prospect to listen to you
- Interest – explaining the features of your product or service, what it does
- Desire – aroused by showing the specific benefits of your product or service to the prospect
- Action – getting the prospect to make a buying decision

### **A.I.D.A. – A Closer Look**

As we dive deeper into the sales letter, we want to keep in mind the concept of salesmanship-in-print and the A.I.D.A. formula. Using A.I.D.A., our structure for creating a top-producing sales letter then becomes clear:

**Attention.** Your headline: if it doesn't capture attention, you're done before you even begin. This headline is actually the "ad" for your sales letter: it's the advertisement that will make the recipient want to read the rest of the letter. It's aimed at breaking the preoccupation of the prospect. Every prospect is preoccupied when you first meet them or when they first get a letter. You must answer the question: "Why should I continue reading?"

**Interest.** Once you have the reader's attention you have to move that reader to real interest in the message. Interest is aroused by articulating the features of your product or service. The best way to do this is with compelling benefits that answer the question, "What's in it for me?"

**Desire.** Create a strong desire for your prospects to respond to your letter by painting a picture of how they will benefit. You want to build on the interest you have already created, and take the sales letter/presentation to the next level. Help readers visualize how much better off they will be with your product or service by quantifying the gap between where they are now and where they *could* be. In addition, you can continue building that desire in other ways: by introducing free bonuses, guarantees or other appealing offers, and by including testimonials from satisfied customers.

**Action.** You want to inspire the prospect to take action. Your entire letter (or sales call) is wasted unless the customer takes action. You need to ignite that action with some specific instructions. The action can be to call your office, come in to the store, place an order, request a free report, or whatever it is. Many times you can increase action by inserting a deadline or discount for quick action.

### **Why a sales letter is something to get excited about**

If, up until now, the thought of writing a sales letter has been intimidating or unappealing to you, I'm hoping this article has given you the inspiration to try it for yourself. And if you've tried using a sales letter in the past, with disappointing results, maybe it's time to try it again – because chances

are, if those past attempts were unsuccessful it's because you didn't have the proper model to follow. Now, you do!

Your next question is probably: "How do I actually go about writing a sales letter?" And what should you do if you don't think your writing skills are up to the task? In Part 2 of this article, I'll take you in-depth with 11 key elements of an effective marketing letter, and in the final installment of the series, I'll provide tips for writing it yourself *or* for finding and choosing a qualified copywriter if you need one.

A sales letter is incredibly powerful as a business-building tool, but it needn't be intimidating, because after all, this is just *salesmanship-in-print*. You've already proven, in your business, that you know how to sell in other ways... and now you have a formula to do the same thing in print. And it's not difficult, it doesn't require a degree in journalism and you're not being "graded". I want you to be excited at the idea that a sales letter is about taking what you already know how to do – talking about your products or services and how they help your customers – and simply translating that into print.

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