

[Promo Power]



THE MAGIC FORMULA

look better, feel better, make more money, draw their family together. What is the primary benefit your clients enjoy?

PROOF

People are skeptical. Marketing communications that make big promises, but offer nothing to back them up, are quickly dismissed. Tell them about your qualifications. Quote a couple of (real) customer testimonials. Give them a money-back guarantee. Find a way to take away all risk.

The proof step is equivalent to “answering objections” in a sales conversation. What might cause them to hesitate? Answer it now.

PROPOSITION

You got them excited. You promised their life would be better. You proved you can deliver on your promise. Surely the prospect has ordered by now, right? People still need a shove. They need to be motivated to take action. This is where you offer free shipping, special terms, buy one/get one free...some extra enticement to respond right now.

ACTION

What do they do specifically to take advantage of your offer? “Pick up the phone right now and dial 515-555-5555” Don’t assume they’ll look for your phone number or address. “Get in the car right now and drive down to 123 Main Street.”

This is basically a sales conversation, but the prospect isn’t sitting across the desk from you. So, you have to work to snap them out of their preoccupation with what’s going on in their world. Promise they’ll enjoy a significant benefit if they keep reading and take action. Prove you can deliver. Make an offer that motivates them to act now instead of turning the page or clicking to another site. Then, tell them simply, clearly what to do to seal the deal. ■



GRAPHIC DESIGN 101

You’ve gone to the effort of writing your copy in the *Magic Formula* sequence. Your graphic designer’s most important mission is to get your prospects to read it in sequence.

That attention-grabbing headline or photo should be the dominant graphic focal point, and it should be at the top of your space. It should attract the eye immediately. I call this a “distractor.”

If you’re creating a print ad, you want to distract your prospect away from all of the competing ads on the page. If it’s a webpage or mailer, you at least want to start their eye at the beginning of your message.

Then, the reader should be taken by the proverbial hand and encouraged to read your promise. If you used a photo for your headline, the promise will be like a caption underneath it. If your headline was giant text, the promise will be the next-largest text, just below it.

I call that a “director.” Any graphic element that encourages the eye to follow the sequence is a director: Hierarchy of type sizes; bullet points; indentations (white space).

The classic graphic design mistake I see all too often is the placement of a distractor somewhere other than the beginning of the message: A starburst with the special price somewhere down the page; a photo of the product; a logo that is much larger than it should be. Any of these things can draw the eye out of the copy, meaning they don’t read it in the sequence in which it was written.

If they get your message out of sequence, the odds of getting a response go way down.

Writing copy for your marketing communications may seem like a huge challenge. My *Magic Formula for Persuasion* should simplify the process for you.

It’s a step-by-step sequence for your promotional message. Whether you’re advertising in print, writing for your website, designing a direct-mail piece, or creating an email, this formula will help you get more response.

ATTENTION

The first step is to get your prospect’s attention. And, it’s possibly the most important step in the whole process. Why? If you don’t grab their attention and make them stop to read more, it doesn’t really matter what else you put in there, because they’re gone.

We’re talking about a headline here. Your headline can either be text or a photo. Either way, it should stir some emotion in your reader. Get them excited with powerful language about what your product or service will do for them. In the case of a photo, use a picture of a model just like your prospect (same age, gender, level of sophistication, etc.) enjoying the benefit the prospect will get if they buy.

Most small businesses make the classic mistake of making their company name the headline. Headlines should be about the prospect, not about you. If you do this right, they’ll be searching for your name and contact information by the time we’re done.

PROMISE

The promise is a continuation of the attention step. Tell them how their life will be better after they buy from you. They’ll

Larry Mersereau works with business owners, marketers, and sales professionals who want to bring in more business, so they can take home more money. More at www.PromoPower.com.