

## 5 Tips to Get More Results from Your Marketing Materials

The moment I decided to specialize as a direct response copywriter (which means you get a response directly from the marketing materials, there's no middle person involved, like a sales rep) I knew there would be one thing that would determine if I would be eating steak or eating mac and cheese.

And what's the one thing? The results I got for my clients.

Therefore, improving results became a pretty big focus of mine. You might even call it a passion. (Some people who aren't nearly as nice have called it in an obsession.)

Regardless, here are 5 tips that can help you improve the conversions of your marketing materials.

1. Know who you're talking to. If I hear anyone say "women are my potential customers" or "anyone with skin is my target market" (yes, that really was a direct quote from someone who sold Mary Kay or Arbonne or something like that) I will send my border collies (all 3 of them) to your house and force you to play fetch with them until your arm falls off. Seriously, the quickest way you can end up with the most dismal results imaginable is to try and talk to everyone. Come up with a specific customer -- the more specific the better -- and make sure your marketing materials speak directly to that customer.

2. Make sure you write benefits, not features. This one is probably the hardest one to "get" but also one of the most critical. People buy benefits, not features, so if you only talk about features you're just asking for people not to buy what you're selling.

So what is the difference between features and benefits? Features are a description of a product -- for instance, if we're talking about a diet pill, a feature would be that the product is a pill. A benefit would be the solution the product provides -- in this case, losing weight.

As much as you possibly can, write about why someone should buy your product. No one buys diet pills because they like taking pills, they buy them to lose weight. Think of the solution your product or service provides and write about that.

3. Work on that headline. David Ogilvy, famous ad man and author of *Confessions of an Advertising Man*, has said that people make the decision to read your marketing materials based on your headline.

Your headline should: a. speak to your potential customers, b. contain a benefit, c. be so compelling your target market is compelled to read further. That's a lot to ask for from basically a handful of words. So don't rush the process -- take as much time as you need to create the very best headline for your particular piece.

4. Don't forget the call to action. You've got to tell people what to do next. If you don't tell them what you want them to do, chances are they won't do anything.

Don't assume your potential customers know what you want them to do. They don't. They can't read your mind. Nor do they want to. They're busy people. They don't have the time or the energy to figure things out. Tell them what to do next, or don't be surprised when they don't do anything.

5. Use P.S.'s or captions. Postscripts (P.S.) are the second most read item in a sales piece. What's the third? Captions. (The copy under photos, diagrams or other illustrations.) Now that you know that, think of the ways you can use either or both of those items in your pieces. Maybe you put a special offer in there or you highlight a particularly compelling benefit. Or you tell them again what you want their next step to be. Whatever you do, don't waste that space.

If you even do just one of these tips, you should start seeing better results. Work on all five and you might be amazed at how much your results improve.

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### About the Author

Michele PW (Michele Pariza Wacek) helps people become more successful at attracting new clients, selling products and services and boosting business. To find out how she can help you take your business to the next level, visit her site at <http://www.michelepw.com>.