

*“I have some great looking brochures from my suppliers... so why do I need one of my own?”*

Hmmm, just off the top of my head..

- To gain customers
- Win business
- Make a sale
- Earn a profit
- Live a better life

Consider..

I was at a trade show recently, one of the biggest of the year in my hometown, with over 150 exhibitors, each of whom had ponied up big bucks for booth space, backdrops, displays and (they fervently hoped), eye-catching reasons to get visitors to stop to chat.

Most were professionally done, obviously with the assistance of well-paid graphic designers. Many of the exhibitors, with that expense behind them, will be at as many trade shows and exhibitions as they can afford while the display still looks new and inviting, because the first rule of sales is that it's all about numbers. Get yourself in front of as many people as possible, hook 'em and reel 'em in. The more eyes and ears you attract, the better your chances of making that valued contact.

Then it's up to your selling expertise to convert them to paying customers. Most frequent exhibitors view trade shows as great opportunities: with all those people, *“it's like shooting*

***fish in a barrel!*** Except that there are huge schools of fish moving past your boat, so your lure had better be the best. It's like a modern-day version of a carnival, complete with fast-talking barkers, only dressed better.

I was singularly impressed by some of the displays: working fountains, spas, spinning wheels and games for giveaways. The most impressive displays were from paving contractors, whose elaborate setups in the main lobby looked like part of the exhibition hall's architecture. Money and time had been expended; care and craftsmanship were showcased.

But the disconcerting aspect for me, as a writer, was what most exhibitors had added to their tables. Depending on their budget, some exhibitors had promotional giveaway items, business cards, data and information sheets, and brochures. Tons of brochures, all glossy and professionally done: descriptive, inviting, practically screaming "***pick me up! Take me home! Read me! Buy from me!***"

There was only one problem. These beautiful, enticing brochures were produced by their vendors, and included a helpful little blank space at the bottom or on the back for the local franchisee or contractor to add the all-important contact information: business name, address, telephone number, email, website.

Many had this information professionally printed, others glued on their business cards, a few had affixed computer-generated labels, and in one sad instance, written the info by hand. The penmanship was precise and careful but all I could

think about was the poor person (likely the business owner or spouse) who had likely developed writer's cramp "finishing" several hundred brochures.

Don't get me wrong. There's nothing wrong with the brochures themselves. They're easily picked up and added to a bag; maybe half of them are actually read word for word when the visitor gets home. And I'm sure they're fiscally attractive to the local business owner... they're written, produced and paid for by their vendors. In many instances, the vendors provide them free, or with a nominal charge to cover the cost of printing. Sometimes the vendors will even offer preprinted localized information, for a seamless, enticing and professional look.

Yet they also do it for your competitors.

Unless the supplier has granted you an exclusive distributorship or predefined territory, chances are, the guy down the aisle has the same brochure on his table. Or in his store, or is mailing it, sometimes even to your previous customers.

More importantly, what does it say about you?

Nothing, except that you carry the product.

Picture a busy intersection, with a gas station on each corner, all competing for the same drivers, the same fill-ups. When you need gas and come to that intersection, only a few factors influence your purchasing decision: if the big numbers display the lowest price, whether or not you have a particular

oil company's credit card, or, more likely, **that it's the closest and most convenient.** (There's another factor, minor but nonetheless important: if you have an ongoing, working and comfortable relationship with the business owner. Remember that for later reference.)

The point is, if you're competing for the same customers and all you're really showing those prospects is that you carry the same products as the guy across the street (whether it's gasoline, pavers, lighting, roofing services or pizza), you're not helping yourself by displaying those beautiful brochures, for one simple reason.

To repeat, it says nothing about you.

Or your employees, or about the way you do business, or the way you treat your customers, or how your customers perceive you.

In fact, if you're displaying the same brochure as your competitor, all you're saying in effect is: **"I've got the same thing he has, too. Won't you please consider me?"** That's an extraordinarily passive method of drumming up business.

What have you done to differentiate yourself from the competition? What makes you the better choice? What have you done to influence a buying decision?

These are not rhetorical questions.

If you've been in business for any length of time, you've discovered all the pitfalls, problems, and, it is hoped, solutions to those business practices.

You've developed ongoing, working and comfortable relationships with your customers, gone the extra mile, provided exemplary service (as well as those quality products) and are dedicated to giving value to each and every customer while maintaining your gross profit margin.

You've developed a respectable standing in the community, your opinions are valued, people genuinely like you, and come to you first when they have a need for your products and services. They even stop you in the grocery store and ask you for free advice. Many businessmen consider that an annoyance and dislike giving it away free, but think about what you've accomplished: you've previously earned the trust of that customer. You have a reputation that others value. How good is that?

That's all well and good with your previous customers, and after all, if you get and keep them, you can make a comfortable living, but what happens when circumstances cause that base to erode?

What if the price of gas increases and people start looking for more frugal ways to spend their money? (Oh, that's already happened?)

What do you do when your loyal customers move away, or some new competitor entices them to try them instead of you?

What happens if a big-box store comes in and offers the same products you do, at a price you can't touch? How do you replace those past clients who've disappeared and are no longer talking up your company, your products and your services?

Remember that sales is all about numbers. The more people you reach, the more fish you can hook and land in the boat, the better the chances that you and your family will have a bountiful Sunday dinner.

So you advertise, advertise, advertise.

Market, market, market.

Promote, promote, promote.

Sell, sell, sell.

Which brings us back to that brochure, the one your supplier gave to you, at little or no cost to you. Keep that "little or no cost" in mind, along with the old adage that you get what you pay for. Wouldn't it be better to have marketing materials that actually say something about **you**, that promote **your** company, **your** employees and services, as well as **your** products?

Step back a second and think about the most common forms of advertising today: TV, magazines, billboards, radio and to an increasing extent, the internet.

There is a common theme to each of these media: because of the immense magnitude of advertising messages the typical consumer is deluged with every day, the advertisement has to have a "grabber," something that cuts through the clutter and forces the prospect to pause at least for a second and give it a closer look.

Radio is alone in this group in that it cannot offer visual enticements, so must rely on sound: music, sound effects, great voices. The other media can initially grab attention with a hot (or cool) look, something bright, colorful, or unexpected, anything out of the ordinary or mundane.

But a strange thing happens with TV, magazine, billboard and internet ads: after they grab your attention, they have to sell. And the way they all do that is with **wording**, just like the spots on the radio.

This is not a pitch for radio, even though I have a fondness for that medium, with over 20 years experience writing radio spots, over 8000 of them, in fact.

It's about your need for a copywriter, a professional who can work with you to determine the best way to market your specific business, and how to differentiate you from your competitors.

Sure, you can do it yourself, or assign someone on staff who has "a knack for writing" and some computer expertise to knock out a brochure, newsletter, sales letter and other forms of customer contact.

But unless that person has true expertise in crafting well-written marketing materials (and let's face it, everything that carries your business name is, by definition, your marketing material), you may not be getting the best value.

In fact, a carelessly edited, average piece of copywriting can actually **harm** your company. Maybe it's just me, but if I see a commercial, whether on TV, in a newspaper or magazine or on a billboard or the internet, and it contains spelling errors or bad grammar, awkward syntax or boring, pedestrian copy, it influences my decision **NOT** to buy.

So, go ahead and use that slick brochure from your vendors, or ask them if they have one that is customizable to include more of what you're about, and not just their swell product. But consider also how to more effectively market what is **different** about you and your business.

Step apart from the crowd.

Step ahead of the pack.

Stand out.

Sell.

Consider a professional copywriter, no matter what medium you're thinking of using. The professional copywriter can create:

- **Brochures**, customized to your specifications

- **Newsletters**, to provide your past, present and future customers with vital information
- **Promotional copy, flyers or campaigns** to advertise upcoming events or sales
- **Web content**
- **Sales letters**, long and short form
- Everyday **customer correspondence**
- Expert **proofing and editing** services
- **Banner ads**
- **Radio, TV and print** copy

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Call today to set up an appointment for a free, no-obligation consultation with Bill Kaye, the Kopywriter.

I'll speak with you at your convenience to determine your goals, aspirations and dreams for making your business the absolute best it can be.

At that time I'll explain the way that **I** do business, which, put simply, is to craft the best possible copywriting to help you achieve your goals; in short, providing...

**“Writing for your Success!”**

***K*** ***OPYWRITER***

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