

MIRED IN MEDIOCRITY?

Are you sitting down? You will be after this. The sad reality is that 90% of the ads out there don't work. Not yours, of course—you know they work because your cash register is ringing non-stop. But 90% of ads fail to deliver on their promise. Or they promise what the seller is selling, not what the customer needs to buy. These look familiar? Big Client Logo. Bold Type. WE ARE THE BEST. If you go elsewhere, you've made a mistake.

Thank you Mr. Manufacturer. Even if I have to pay more, I'll go elsewhere now, where I'm not insulted by your arrogance. Be Memorable. Make your ads gems of communication, so that the tag line becomes part of the fabric of society's vocabulary.

Here's an example – perhaps dating myself, but here goes:

Let me sell you some soap. This is a nice bar of soap, which smells good and will make you clean. Contrast that with 'Aren't you glad you use Dial®, don't you wish everybody did?' There are many brands of soap on the market. All, as near as I'm aware, with very similar formulations. What Dial® Corporation did was take you to the end result of what using this brand of soap will do for you. You know, and feel how good you look and smell when you use Dial®. Wouldn't it be nice if everyone smelled so good?

Now's your chance...

IT HAPPENS ONLY ONCE. THEN IT'S GONE FOREVER. YOU DON'T HAVE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO! THIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TODAY. IT WILL SAVE YOU TIME. MAKE YOU ABUNDANTLY WEALTHY. SATISFY YOUR HUNGER. IT WILL MAKE YOU BECOME ALL THAT YOU CAN BE. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE RARE DEVICES THAT'S BEEN AROUND FOR CENTURIES, BUT IS LARGELY IGNORED.

Pivotal to every large and small business, but only about 1% of them use it properly. In the right hands it can change lives, change governments, create or pacify civil disobedience. Incite the masses into frenzy, or lull them to apathy.

It can be your unmistakable signature, recognized around the globe, or lost amid the clutter, never to shake the eyelids of the right people. Shh! Quiet now, promise you'll tell everyone.

Okay... here's wha.... hold on someone's coming... Just a minute... Okay, the most important thing you can do today is... ADVERTISE.

If your readers miss you today, that chance is gone forever. Your ad must freeze your audience in their tracks to read your message. Your offer has to be so compelling that nothing else they do today is as important as reading your ad.

Your service has to save them time, make them money, make them better people, ease their struggles. 26 Letters. The power of the alphabet is enough to mobilize armies and set nation against nation. Surely those 26 letters can be rearranged to communicate your less aggressive intentions.

BE ORIGINAL

Do it with flair, distinction, memorability, and originality. Tell the WORLD. You've got THE idea of the century (or even of the weekend) , then communicate that without delay. For today's purposes, we will isolate Print Media. Print media, in all its forms, needs to grab attention. So create a Traffic Stopping headline. One that leaps from the page to your customer's eyeballs. That heart-beat of a second to lure readers in to the rest of your story. Advertising lets people know you're open for business.

No matter what your business. You sell shoes? Prepare tax returns? Own your own bakery? Your own motorcycle dealership? Provide health care solutions? You offer golf facilities or sell real estate? Your company's services are everything from toothpaste to hotels. You offer a coaching, consulting service where the product is information?

Your advertising is your link, your lifeline to your audience. Here's your chance to tell them your product/service is the best thing to happen to them today and they should act NOW.

WHY POSITION YOURSELF DIFFERENTLY?

There may be 100,000 or more potential buyers of your product or service. That's a lot of 'cold-calls' for you to make. Why not sell them on what makes you different and better rather than another 'me-too'?

WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN AN AD MAKE?

If you don't create a memorable identity, you're reduced to competing on price. And you know someone will always undercut you to make a sale. Apart from distinguishing you from the competitors and wannabees, it instantly catapults you to the forefront of the consumer's mind as being THE source for that product or service. Maybe you're skeptical about the difference an ad can make? Let me illustrate with Secret # 2 from Nine Secrets to Improving Your Advertising.

MONEY TALKS- ARE YOU LISTENING?

Mr. John Caples, a noted direct-mail copywriter and ad tester demonstrated that he has had some ads outperform others by 19 1/2 times better than a similar ad. Same ad size, same newspaper, same product. By changing the appeal (mostly through headlines) he was able to find the 'hot button' that spurred people to buy the product 19 1/2 times better than the other ad. Let's illustrate this with money shall we? If you paid \$1,000 for an ad, and your product sold for \$50 and you received 100 responses your total sales would be \$5,000. Less the cost of the \$1,000 ad for a profit of \$4,000. Let's say you ran a second ad, with a different headline, for the same product and it sold 19 1/2 times as many as the other ad, that's 1,950 sales at \$50 is \$97,500, less the cost of your \$1,000 ad, is a profit of \$96,500. Same product, same ad cost, same ad space, same newspaper, but different appeal and you've made over 24 times the amount of profit by changing the headline. When you TEST to see what works for your customer, you'll see the difference. (Today's Internet allows this testing in a fraction of the time, but regardless of media option chosen, Now's Your Chance!) If your headline, in the right media, doesn't get their attention – Just Like That – then you have little chance of getting them to take in the rest of

your sales message. And that \$20,000 creative bill and \$75,000 media buy is pointless if you can't reach the right people long enough to hear your pitch.

MAKE THEM HEAR YOU!

IF YOU'RE TIRED OF SEEING YOUR HARD EARNED SALES DOLLARS LOST ON POOR MARKETING, YOU MAY FIND THESE SEVEN (7) STEPS HELPFUL.

1. If your advertising isn't working right now, STOP running it. Right now. Save the money until you develop something that is working.
2. From Monday-Thursday, this week, devote 15 minutes per day to scan all the magazines that cross your desk. Another 15 minutes for newspapers. Cut out the ads which caught your attention. If it's one of your primary competitors, dismiss it. It will taint your judgment in step #4. Also, if it led off with a huge company logo, clearly their interests are ahead of yours, so dismiss them.
3. Put all 'the keepers' into one file folder. Don't look at them again until Friday.
4. On Friday- devote an hour, or more if necessary, to reviewing these ads again. Why did they get your attention? Did they command you to do some action? Force you to look at a new airline package? Try a new computer?. What was the trigger in what they wrote that got your attention?
5. Find the ad(s) that struck you with the most sense/impact/resonance. Now, can you or your agency team come up with something that approximates that for your company? You want your ads to evoke the same response their ads did to you.
6. Then write the same ad 12 times, changing the Headline each time.
7. Code the ads by phone number, or a redemption code, or an e-mail/web address and run a couple of the ads to find out which appeal works best. Then use the ad(s) which are performing best and replace the weaker ones with others in your stable of 12. Measure the response you get to each variation of the ad. This is the truest, surest way to improve your advertising. And it works for any industry. Remember, with each ad, Now's Your Chance.