



SPECIAL EDITION
Brought to you by  **JOHN WEISENBERGER**
ChainReactionsMarketing.com

by **Claudio Gormaz and Steven Cox**
Steven Von Loren Marketing Strategist

Accountants, how many of these costly mistakes are you making with your ads?

The only reason for having promotional campaigns is to attract new clients; if not, you're just throwing away your money!

About This Edition

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Chain Reactions marketing is a premier global strategy and marketing firm that helps business owners and their managers achieve sustainable long-term growth through Endorsement Marketing and Practical Customer Experience Management™ training and coaching programs.

"A good advertisement is one which sells the product without drawing attention to itself." - David Ogilvy

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Editor's Foreword

(why you should read this eBook)

Hello and welcome! This special edition eBook is one in a series of single-subject/single solution eBooks, each one featuring essential strategies and techniques that have been implemented and field-tested by numerous successful businesses.

More importantly, you're getting decades of experience and proven business growth results from its co-authors Claudio Gormaz and Steven E. Cox from the Steven Von Loren Marketing Strategist consultancy. Steven and Claudio have been serving clients in the Legal, Medical and Accounting industry for over three decades; with their strategies and methods now being using by multiple other industries as well.

What you're about to learn from this eBook is that your advertising **MUST** be a salesperson in print, online, on the radio, in your television ad, etc. Unless your advertising convinces clients to pick up the phone and call you, and purchase your services, your ads are useless, and you've thrown away your money.

In this special edition eBook, written specifically for Accountants, you're going to learn high-caliber advertising strategies from Claudio and Steven that will give your accounting firm a significant competitive advantage.

My only goal in providing you with this special edition eBook is to be your ally in your businesses' continued growth. I hope it helps!

John Weisenberger

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Introduction

THE TRUE PURPOSE OF ADVERTISING

The only purpose of advertising is to generate higher profits for your public accounting firm!

For your advertising to be successful, your ad MUST be a salesperson in print, online, on the radio, in your television ad, etc. Unless your ad convinces the clients to pick up the phone and call you or come into your office, your ads are useless, and you have thrown away your money.

Sadly, depending on the type of error, you may even be pushing potential business directly to your competition!

If you track several display ads, you will quickly notice that most of the ads look alike, and they say the same things. Worst of all, they all have nearly identical advertising mistakes, such as: "We deliver accounting and consulting services that maximize your wealth," or "Tax Preparation and CPA services," and "35 years in business."

- Though all these services and details are essential, and they all stand on their own merits! Unfortunately, as it applies in most cases, the only elements that change in the ad are the names of their practice.

Though many (if not most) media conduits provide their basic elements, essential ingredients, and software for an ad. Too often they [the media outlets] just offer some variation of a cookie-cutter, one size fits all, formula for their "advertising platform." Which is fine for their needs; however, too often some essential "components" are left out of your ad.

The importance of these elements becomes apparent when you look at your advertising from the perspective of what your ad is indeed designed to do for your accounting practice.

- Note, for simplicity, for rest of illustration we will use print advertising in a magazine as an example; though, the illustration applies to all other mediums as well.

Every ad is created with two purposes in mind: 1) To attract a stream of new clients; and, 2) To have those clients who see your ad choose your practice over everyone else in your field and demographic area. Unfortunately, your competitor is counting on the very same benefit!

Print advertising is a medium that allows your biggest competitor to sit in close proximity to you in the periodical for easy comparison. Whatever your advertising medium, shortly after your ad appears, or is heard, your competitor's ad will also be seen or heard. Therefore, as part of your marketing strategy, you have to do everything you can to stand out and stay one step ahead of your competition.

"What business strategy is all about and what distinguishes it from all other kinds of business planning is, in two words, **competitive advantage**. Without competitors there would be no need for strategy, for the sole purpose of strategic planning is to enable the company to gain, as efficiently as possible, a sustainable edge over its competitors." — Kenichi Ohmae

To stand out and have your next client pick up the phone and call you is beyond important. It is life and death (for your accounting practice). Your ad must be different! Shockingly, as stated above, some Accountants merely state their name in their ads, and besides a phone number --- that's all.

Interestingly, every consumer has one trait in common with every other buyer. We all like to buy; we just do not want to be sold!

Additionally, we buy using unique triggers that appeal specifically to our self-interests; in marketing terms, it is called the "What's in it for me?" quotient.

Your prospective client wants to know things like, "What benefit do I derive from you [the CPA]?" The reader may be thinking something like: Okay, "You've been in business for 35 years; how do I know you can help me?" Or, "How do I know that you didn't arrive at a 35-year career by merely screwing people?" Or, "I have pretty intricate tax returns; how are you going to maximize my well?"

Your advertisement needs to give your future client an immediate reason to choose your accounting firm over everyone else's on the same page, on the same social media site, or the same periodical constructs.

This book does not contain a series of graphs, diagrams, and unproven theories concocted from someone's imagination which only work if the circumstances are ideal --- like a greenhouse orchid.

"Knowing is not enough, we must apply. Willing is not enough, we must do." -- Bruce Lee



Steve and Claudio

Chapter One

HEADLINES - "Don't think that those millions will read your ads to find out if your product interests. They will decide at a glance – by your headline or your pictures. Address the people you seek, and them only." -- Claude Hopkins

Got A Question? (800) 473-2049



The Importance of a Compelling Headline

Let's face it; everyone wants to learn secrets to how to write "the perfect" ad --- one that immediately grabs a prospect's attention; which develops dependable, steady streams of new clients, and maximizes your return on investment. That's the entire point!

No matter what the platform, all promotional campaigns boil down to communication --- the ability to convey your unique message in a way that easily understood and remembered. Moreover, not just remembered, but acted upon.

The secret of writing better advertising and promotional pieces is that there is no secret!

As long as you keep in mind one vital principle: "Advertising is not an art form, it's a medium for information, a message with a single purpose: to sell." David Ogilvy

The sole purpose of advertising is to generate higher profits for your accounting services. Primarily, your ad must be a salesman in print (either actual or digital). It needs to be a compelling message that draws the viewer in further to explore what you have to offer.

Honestly, unless your ad convinces a prospect to pick up the phone and come to your firm, your promotional campaign is useless.

An impotent ad is hazardous to your practice's health on two levels: if it doesn't draw clients, your bottom line is affected immediately; and, not only has your ad not attracted clients but now your competition has free range to appeal and entice these available clients.

On a fundamental level, advertising consists of putting together a series of components that draw a person's attention and keeps their interests long enough to take in your entire message. In all, we're talking about six essential elements which, when strung together correctly, can produce significant profits and separation from your competitors.

Said differently, it's a crowded and noisy world out there. You need to be heard above the noise and confusion; you need to stand out from and above the crowd!

Every day there is a constant competition to acquire a finite number of available new clients. With few exceptions, most businesses are constrained, to one degree or another, by geography and demographics. Said another way, you don't have an infinite number of possible clients from which to provide your services. You need to compel and attract as many of the available clients in your area as possible.

As stated earlier, your advertising needs to be able to grab someone's attention immediately (and not let go). In advertising terms, this vehicle for capturing someone's attention is referred to as your headline.

You will notice that up to 95% of all ads have no headline. Countless numbers of marketing surveys point out this most valuable statistic, 80% of all the readers **only** read headlines. The use of a properly designed headline is the main ingredient in your advertising that makes it so compelling that it can increase your ads power by as much as 2000%.



The father of modern-day advertising, David Ogilvy, verifies this exact point when he said: "On

the average, five times as many people read the headline as read the body copy. When you have written your headline, you have spent eighty cents out of your dollar."

Once you set up your headline, now it's time to create your sub-headline which appears directly under the headline. The text is typically smaller, and it gives more

insight into the service you are providing, while further outlining why the client should care enough to keep reading (covered in more detail in the following chapter).

These last two statements tend to sound mechanical and ethereal, even a bit “highfalutin.” To an advertising geek like me, concepts like headlines and sub-headlines are like fine wines where bouquet and body are greatly appreciated; but, to anyone outside of advertising they may be thinking “What are you talking about?”

Marketing should be a straightforward process; so, we will approach it in this manner: Your clients have a problem which they don’t want; but, there is a result they want but don’t have. Your ad must to solve these two needs by delivering a message so compelling it practically forces your current and future clients to buy your services because you understand their problem, you're "the person" that can make it all better.

Your advertising needs to **Interpret** your patient’s needs, **Engage** so as to lead towards an answer, **Educate** them on the benefits of your service and **Offer** a solution.

The Interpret portion of this essential strategy covers your headline – which means it’s the first thing someone sees when they visit your website, read any of your marketing material, or hear you speak. Your headline **MUST** address the problem your clients have that they don’t want.

For example, “Are you sick and tired of the never-ending concerns created by estate, trust, and inheritance issues?”

The Engage aspect is your sub-headline. It **MUST** address the result your prospect wants but doesn’t have.

For example: “Learn proven techniques to kiss those pains goodbye!”

The only purpose of advertising is to generate higher profits for your public accounting firm!

Use a Headline. This single component is so crucial, that as stated earlier, its use can increase your display ad's pulling power by as much as 2,000%! Plus, decades of studies document that 80% of all potential clients only read headlines when deciding which company to use.

In the face of this evidence, it is that much more shocking that up to 95% of all public accounting firms' ads have no headlines.

Unfortunately, if the numbers are true [the 95%], that means a lot of people are not getting what they're paying for. Sadly, many media sources merely use a template format to create your specific ad --- they offer a consistent component within their business models, they meet "most" peoples' wants -- to create an ad (for those that don't have a particular direction for their audience or method to attract them).

However, one could argue that they [the contracted advertising resources/professionals] may not be meeting their [clients'] needs.

It is hugely important to stress that there is nothing wrong with the aforementioned format; so long as it yields the intended results, but if you are not getting the responses you want and need, then you must re-evaluate not just what you are saying to your future clients, but how you deliver the message.

The good news for you is that if your competitor is also using a cookie cutter format for their advertising; that means their promotional campaign is no better than yours. So for the time being, all is well. But it is just a matter of time before your competitor lands on something useful. It's like advertising roulette; and as they say, even a broken clock is right twice a day. Then what do you do (other than merely sitting back and watching them reap the lion's share of available business)?

All this confirms what world-renowned marketing experts have declared for decades that headlines account for up to 80% of an ad's effectiveness. Therefore, if your ad doesn't have a headline, create one. Using one will dramatically increase your response. Your headline should speak directly to your potential client.

Allow me to share with you the 8 words that single-handedly changed an industry and allowed the company to instantly dominate its marketplace: "Help, I've fallen, and I can't get up."

Countless numbers of comedians have done endless satirical takes about this commercial and the plight of getting older.

However, in a single sentence the Life Alert company addressed the problem that their prospective clients didn't want, and they provided a solution they wanted but didn't have. Plus, it was easily relatable for their target audience (the elderly, children caring for or concerned about older parents, Americans with disabilities, and so on).

That commercial/ad should be placed on the Mount Rushmore of brilliant advertising!

Your promotional campaigns may not "hit the ball" as far as Life Alert did, but I'm sure you can now appreciate the value of a strong headline.

Still not convinced, examine the topic from a quantitative perspective. According to Soccerlens.com explains the benefits of a headline clearly and succinctly:

- **"Grabbing attention in search engines** – Go to Google and type in virtually any word you can think of, and you'll often find millions of results. The exciting thing is that for most search results in Google (and other search engines) there is very little for readers to go by in deciding which result to click on. There is a title (aka your headline), a short excerpt, and a URL. The most highlighted of these is the title, and we believe it is a key to getting search-engine-referral visitors.
- **Getting RSS readers' attention** – In a very similar way, titles have the ability to grab the attention of those following your blog via RSS feeds in news aggregators [like NewsNow]. News-aggregator readers tend to scan the titles of posts for things of interest rather than reading the full-text version, stopping to read and visiting the posts that pique their interest.

* RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication which is a type of web feed that allows users to access updates to online content in a standardized, computer-readable format.

*According to Abouttech.com, “RSS” is about getting live web feeds directly to your computer. RSS takes the latest headlines from different websites and pushes those headlines down to your computer for quick scanning. Likewise, you can send out your site’s latest information to all your followers.

- **Getting attention on social bookmarking sites** – The same principle is true in social bookmarking sites like Reddit.com and Delicious.com, which have the potential to send your site many thousands of visitors based almost solely on the title (headline) of your post.
- **Loyal readers** – Good headlines also impact the way your loyal readers interact with your site. As we’ve discussed elsewhere, web users scan pages. One of the best ways to make them pause as they roll their eyes down your site is to capture their attention with a good headline that intrigues them enough to slow down their frantic web surfing and read the content.
- **Search engine optimization** – Though there are many factors that contribute to how search engines rank a page, one of the most potent onsite factors is to stick with the words that people use in the title (again, your headlines) of that page. By default, content-publisher platforms like WordPress will include your title in the title tags of your post’s page, and the URL structure of that page – both of these factors contribute to that page’s search engine ranking. Add to this that other bloggers often use your title to link to you (a compelling thing), and your titles [headlines] become a significant factor in ranking well and generating traffic in search engines.”

Specifically, your promotional campaign needs to quantitatively enumerate reasons why a client “MUST” choose you over everyone else providing the same service (aka your competitors).

When you advertise, you are competing in an arena where there are multiple competitors for the available clients. Highly successful and profitable display ads have concrete things in common, they include:

A Great Headline	What Makes You Unique?	Make a Decisive Offer
A Compelling Sub-Head	Offer Specific Benefit	Include a Call to Action

To illustrate further the importance of a solid headline, writer Jeff Goins wrote an excellent article called the “[5 Easy Tricks to Help You Write Catchy Headlines](#).”

Mr. Goins confirms everything that every other marketing experts have talked about for years when he says that the headline is the most neglected part of writing an ad or article. People just gloss over it without taking much time to consider it. In their minds, it’s the cherry on top. No, friends; it’s not. The headline is the sundae.

Mr. Goins suggest some very essential elements that are proven winners, such as:

Use numbers – There’s a reason why so many copywriters use numbers in their headlines. It works.

* Do an experiment: Go to the grocery store and scan the magazines in the checkout lane. Look at the front-page article headlines. It doesn’t matter if it’s a fitness magazine or a tabloid; many of them will be using numerals to start off the headline.

There aren’t any rules (as far as I know) regarding which numbers or what numbers combinations work best, but people typically only remember three to five points. That said, sometimes an obscure number like 19 or 37 can catch people’s attention.

Use interesting adjectives - Here are some examples:

Absolute	Essential	Fun	Painstaking
Effortless	Free	Incredible	Strange

Use unique rationale – If you’re going to do a list post, be original. For example, consider the following:

Facts	Lessons	Reasons	Tricks
Ideas	Principles	Secrets	Ways

If possible, never use the word "things." Please, for the love of Pete, don't use things. You can do better than that. Use what, why, how, or when.

These are trigger words. I typically use "why" and "how" the most, because I'm often trying to persuade or enable someone. Usually, you'll use either a trigger word or a number. Rarely does it sound good to do both triggers.

At this point you may be wondering what makes a highly shared headline so shareable? Is there a path to find a way to predict whether or not a headline would be well-shared?

It all comes down to something called the Emotional Marketing Value (EMV) score. This is the result of a simple test used to provide an actual rating that can be used to judge how well our headline will be received by others.

Headlines are so important that a single word can impact a campaign dramatically. We've seen e-mail subject lines where a one word change increased click-throughs by 46%.

Authors Neil Patel and Joseph Putnam weighed in on the question "So why are

headlines so important?" They wrote a very informative piece called "The definitive guide to copywriting."

In this article they explain that "it's because they're the first lines of your copy that customers read. They create an initial impression that either draws readers in or pushes them away. Even if the rest of the copy is amazing and would convince 3 out of 10 people to buy, if the headline puts them to sleep, only a fraction of the customers who would have bought something will read your copy and make a purchase."



The primary purpose of the headline is to get the first sentence read.

Mr.'s Patel and Putnam point out that there are four rules of thumb to keep in mind. They're taught as the "four u's" of headline writing by a number of copywriters.

The four u's:

- Your headline should be unique.
- Your headline should be ultra-specific.
- Your headline should convey a sense of urgency. Your
- headline should be useful.

Your headline should be unique. If you sound the same as everyone else, you're automatically going to put customers to sleep, but if you do something different, you'll stand out, your message will be refreshing, and you may delight your customers enough to get them to buy from you.

The benefit of doing something unique that stands out means you won't be placed in the same bucket as your competition. You're more likely to connect with clients who are looking for businesses that don't speak like boring corporate robots.

It works first and foremost because it has personality. People like to do business with people they like, and the same is true with businesses. If people like your business, they're more likely to want to do business with you. We'd rather give our money to someone we like than someone we don't.

In addition to being unique, your headline should be ultra-specific. It should provide enough information to let customers know whether or not the offer you're presenting is interesting to them. If your headline isn't specific enough, customers won't know whether or not what you're selling is something they're interested in.

When possible, your headline should convey a sense of urgency. It should include something that compels readers to continue reading so they don't miss out. This isn't a rule that can always be used, but when it can, it works really well.

This may be the most important tip of all. If your headline isn't useful and doesn't convey a benefit, then it may not give people a reason to continue on past the headline. People want to know what benefit they'll receive from reading what you've written.

This also happens to be one of the rules that companies break the most. They end up writing something clever because for some reason most people think that's the point of writing a headline. In doing so they fail to communicate a benefit and fail to give readers a reason to continue reading. Eventually, they end up with disappointing sales because no one pays attention to their copy. That's a mistake you don't want to make.

Tony Hetherington weighed in on the subject when he wrote an enlightening piece which explains more fully "Why headlines are so important." He explains that busy people keep their lives manageable by deciding almost instantly whether something is worth their time. It's the headline's job to entice them, engage them and capture their attention so that they ignore all other distractions to read and to find out more. It's frightening, but this process takes just a second or two and it's brutal. An email appears, a web page loads, a magazine page is flipped open and in a second or two the readers has made an instant judgment - to read or move on.

The headline is your first and sometimes only chance. Their eye will scan the headline and an instant decision will be made. Does it interest them, intrigue them or amuse them or can it be ignored? There's no second chance. No appeal. Just one chance. There is no going back and the rest of your article, brilliant, amusing and informative though it may be will never be read.

Tony writes about the golden rules of headlines. He believes there are five golden rules of headline writing that every successful headline must follow.

1. It must be clear - The headline is not the place to be confusing or circumspect. It has to be clear what the headline is saying and what the rest of the article is about.

2. It must be relevant - The headline must be relevant to the introduction and the rest of the article otherwise you will lose the reader as soon as they see any discrepancy.
3. Focus your headline - If you focus your headline on one specific group then they will love it and hang on your every word. This will also help it be more relevant.
4. It must be lean - A waffle-filled wordy headline will not be read. Keep your headline short and to the point.
5. It must be exciting - Don't bore your reader - excite them, amuse them, make them curious...

Finally, before you consider writing your headline, you have to identify what you represent. Like building a house, you must begin with a solid and sturdy foundation. That foundation is built on a substantial reputation as an authority and leader in your field; and that it's based creating trust and camaraderie.

A compelling headline is vital to the success of your promotional campaign. However, if you want your message to take flight and soar, you must explicitly define and communicate what you stand for (your purpose).

Consider this; you attract someone to your website based on a well written and compelling headline, now what? Does your site inspire people to follow you? Does your message encourage repeat patronage and loyalty?

Have a game-plan in place for what you will deliver when clients investigate your services further.

Finally, **Maria Konnikova** wrote a piece for **The New Yorker** where she confirms that a headline changes the way people read an article and the way they remember it. The headline frames the rest of the experience. A headline can tell you what kind of article you're about to read—news, opinion, research, LOL cats memes — and it sets the tone for what follows.

She goes on to point out that "by drawing attention to certain details or facts, a headline can affect what existing knowledge is activated in your head. By its choice of phrasing, a headline can influence your mindset as you read so that you later recall details that coincide with what you were expecting. For instance, the headline of this article I wrote—"A Gene That Makes You Need Less Sleep?"—Is not inaccurate in any way. But it does likely prompt a focus on one specific part of the piece. If I had instead called it "Why We Need Eight Hours of Sleep," people would remember it differently.

As a result of these shifts in perception, problems arise when a headline is ever so slightly misleading. "Air pollution now leading cause of lung

cancer," ran a headline last year in the U.K. paper Daily Express. The article, however, said no such thing, or, rather, not exactly. Instead, it reported that pollution was a leading "environmental" cause; other causes, like smoking, are still the main culprits. It is easy to understand a decision to run that sort of opening. Caveats don't fit in single columns, and, once people are intrigued enough to read the story, they'll get to the nuances just the same. But, as it turns out, reading the piece may not be enough to correct the headline's misdirection."

Remember, a headline is not necessarily meant to summarize, introduce, or tell the whole story. Instead, it should only give a hint or indication of what is to come, grab the reader's attention, and do the one essential thing that it was written to do — get the prospect to keep reading.

However, as it deals with "stretching-the-facts," Dr. Ullrich Ecker, a psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist at the University of Western Australia, says that misinformation appears to cause more damage when it's subtle than when it's blatant. We see through the latter and correct for it as we go.

The primary point is that headlines work exceptionally well for attracting a reader's attention and encouraging them to look further into the services you provide! Also, starting a headline with an action verb like "get," "want," "join," "see," and "discover" not only can enhance readership, but will potentially paint a picture vivid enough to direct visitors to take action. Headlines can either tell a reader what they should do or simply imply it — either way, if they communicate (in just a few seconds) something that person considers worth reading, they can compel to read further.

According to Psychotactics.com, question-based headlines get a stronger response than statement-based ones nearly every time. This is because questions trigger a reader's brain in a way that arouses curiosity and makes him or her want to know more.

Although not all headlines work best as questions, those that ask the right question can prove to be golden.

I will leave you with a parting thought, have you ever been to the grocery store and been stopped dead in your tracks by a headline?

Think about it, have you ever been in the checkout line, and the person ahead of you decides to pay with coupons, or pay with a check and not enough proper identification, or any other combination of inconvenience? I know, it's the nightmare!

As you patiently wait, your eyes wander across the tabloids and magazines in the rack by the counter, and suddenly like a flash, a headline jumps out at you.

You know, some outrageous headline that makes you say, "No Way!"

Even though you never normally read "those" magazines; you can't stop yourself from taking a quick peek inside.

Wouldn't you love people feel the same way about your ad, blog, or other promotional campaign?

It all starts with a great headline!

We know there's a lot to digest. To reach your true potential, you need to work with proven professionals that have actually done what they're proposing.

We have been directly responsible for many highly successful strategic advantage marketing campaigns for several practices for over three decades. We would like to extend to you our knowledge and experience by way of our proprietary 20-minute Content Strategy Audit Session (covering, for example, your blog posts, social

media campaigns, magazine articles, website content, patient newsletters etc.). We want to help you tell your compelling story!

Additional Reading/Resources:

5 Easy Tricks to Help You Write Catchy Headlines: <https://goinswriter.com/catchy-headlines/>

Abouttech: Abouttech.com

Tony Hetherington: <http://www.streetdirectory.com/etoday/whyheadline...>

How to write emotional headlines: <https://coschedule.com/blog/emotionalheadlines/>

Maria Konnikova - <https://www.newyorker.com/contributors/mariakonni...>

NewsNow: <http://www.newsnow.co.uk/h/>

Psycho Tactics - <https://www.psychotactics.com/psychoheadlines.pdf>

Soccerlens: Soccerlens.com

The definitive guide to copywriting: <https://www.quicksprout.com/thedefinitive-guide-t...>

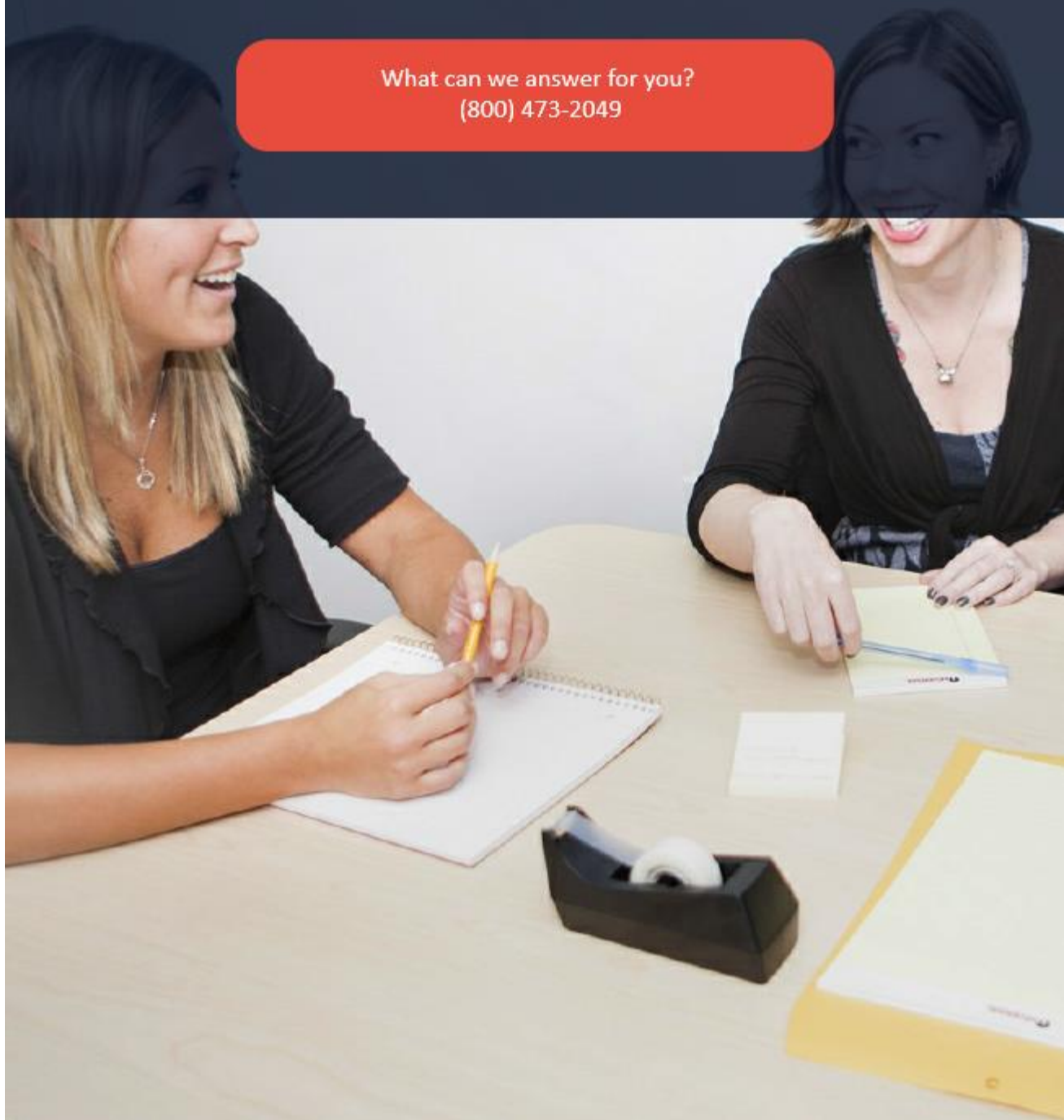
The New Yorker - <https://www.newyorker.com/science/mariakonnikova/...>

"Whenever you see a successful business, someone once made a courageous decision." --- Peter Drucker

Chapter Two

Sub-Headlines - "They're the secondary line of text that expands, advances, and otherwise informs the user beyond the standard headline.." -- Neil Patel

What can we answer for you?
(800) 473-2049



Why Subheadlines Are Massive

If Headlines attract the eyes and create immediate interest, then Sub-headlines focus on your clients' needs and further explains what you plan to deliver to meet their needs.

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, every day that you open your doors, there is another Accountant in your vicinity that is attempting to capture your hard-won clients.

Whether you were aware of it or not, when you began your practice, you signed up for a bloody battle for the eyes and minds of your future clients.

The promotional landscape is a huge, congested, and noisy space where everyone is jockeying for position and fighting to get noticed. Incidentally, this applies irrespective of the platform you select, be it print, radio or television advertising, your blogs, and so on.

So, to succeed in this field, you've come up with great ideas that readers will find useful.

You've created killer headlines that jump off the screen and demand attention.

You've spent hours writing and rewriting compelling and interesting content (your message) that is relatable and reads beautifully.

And yet readers still come to visit your blog and... (click) bounce just as quickly as they came.

According to noted author and social media guru, **Jon Morrow**, he says that the harsh reality of the situation is that they [recipients of your

promotional piece(s)] often don't even finish reading the article that brought them to your blog in the first place.

He believes that the reason readers don't stick around deals with very specific points.

- **Readers have adapted to their environment.** You know as well as I do that it's not exactly uncommon to be lured in by a compelling headline, click through to the article and find weak content.

Because of that, readers have become expert scanners.

We've all learned to scan content and determine if it piques our interest in mere seconds. If it doesn't grab us, we bounce – plain and simple.

Remember what was discussed in the first chapter, you need to address your advertising from the standpoint of “your client has a problem they don't want; and, there's a solution out there they want but don't have.”

Your advertising needs to **Interpret** your client's needs, **Engage** so as to lead towards an answer, **Educate** them on the benefits of your service and **Offer** a solution.

As we also discussed in the previous chapter, “Interpret” portion refers to your headline. This is the portion in which you acknowledge your clients' problems. According to the famous quote by Howard Gossage for the Socrates of San Francisco, “Nobody reads ads. People read what interests them. Sometimes it's an ad.”

If you're skeptical about Mr. Gossage's statement, here's a brief example of brilliant ads that have reached out and grabbed their viewer's attention (provided by **Digital Synopsis**):

“It's like a first date without the awkward silence” --- Harley-Davidson ad

“If you hate waiting, raise your hand.” --- New York taxi service

"Cheap enough to say, Phuket I'll go." --- Air Asia

"The nighttime, sniffing, sneezing, coughing, aching, fever, best sleep with a cold medicine." --- NyQuil

The point is, the primary goal is to capture your recipients' attention and have them read further so they can see the benefit you will provide them.

The Engage aspect is your sub-headline. It MUST address the result your prospect wants but doesn't have. If you can't deliver on your perspective "solution" message, they [prospective and current clients] will absolutely move on and never come back!

According to **The Nielsen Norman Group**, the vast majority of your visitors will make a judgment within a few seconds of opening your content whether they should stick around – or whether they should bounce.

Mr. Morrow goes on to point out that in just a few seconds, a good post and a great post look fairly similar. It's just not long enough to win hearts and minds and create that endless stream of traffic you've been dreaming of and spending time and money to attract.

It is vital to your success that we focus on this very point. At its core, that's what promotional campaigns are all about, the ability to take the complexities of your skills and turn them into something that your reader can relate to, be interested in, and remember.



Specifically, people are interested in stories that directly relate to their circumstances, and they want it quickly. Said differently, self-interest drives all people. As such, find out what they want, and write to them and about them [your clients].

Blogger, **Neil Patel**, said it so eloquently when wrote, "Subheadlines are important because you can't say everything you need to say in just a single headline.

Your headline should grab the reader's attention. But what's next?

Subheadlines have the power to reel the reader in. While the headline may grab the user's attention, you need to do more than that in order for the user to stay. You want to compel the reader to look, to click, to sample, to scroll, or to do whatever it is you want them to do.

The subheadline also gives readers that extra nudge. Or, to put it in the words of **Gary Korisko**, "the often overlooked subhead is really a stealthy and lethal ninja writing weapon just sitting there quietly waiting to be put to good use."

What the headline does for the post, the subhead does for each subsection of copy.

Mr. Korisko feels that too many writers just throw away their subheads. In fact, he wrote a piece specific to this subject with the "3 Subhead Blunders That Make Readers Bounce."

Let's take a look at the three most common blunders that cause subheads to fall flat.

1. **The Plain Label Subhead** - A lot of bloggers use subheads merely as a label. Labels are used to identify, not to pique interest.

Plain Label Subheads are boring, and they don't stop readers from scanning. They make them yawn. Not exactly the response you're looking for.

If, for example, you're writing a subhead above text that's about why headlines are important and your subhead is Why Headlines Are

Important, you're using it as a label. It's lifeless, boring, and does nothing to keep your readers engaged with your writing.

Instead, something like The Simple Secret to Hooking Your Readers would be more on track. Then let the text that follows explain the importance of great headlines.

2. **The Spoiler Subhead** - Spoiler Subheads tell readers exactly what's coming in the text that follows the subhead. Talk about playing right into the scanners'

hands! If you want to keep readers on your posts longer, don't give them a free pass to skip paragraphs. Tease them with the subhead.

Keeping with our example of headlines, if you've written a block of text in which your point is that the number-one priority of a headline is to create curiosity, don't precede it with a subhead that reads Use Headlines to Create Curiosity.

That's a big old spoiler that gives away your upcoming point. And if they know the point you're about to make, why should they read it?

A subhead that reads The One Thing Every Great Headline Has in Common would be a much better place to start. Then use the text below it to explain how curiosity is that one thing.

3. The Cryptic Subhead. - The other side of the subhead blunder coin is trying so hard to be creative and grab attention that you create something that is more confusing than compelling. These cryptic subheads can be a turnoff and lead to a bounce just as easily as the other two mistakes.

Your subhead should be a phrase that is crystal clear, but makes readers say, "I have to keep reading to see what this writer's getting at." If instead, it makes them say, "What the world does that phrase mean?" – you're flirting with being too cryptic.

Again, consider our example topic of headlines. If you're making the point that a headline acts as a lure, enticing readers into the body of the post, you might make an analogy with fishing and using bait to hook your readers. But out of context, a subhead which reads "Don't Forget the Worm!" won't make a whole lot of sense.

Therefore, it confuses rather than compels and misses the mark entirely. Readers don't want to solve puzzles. They want to learn.

If instead, you used one that reads "The Most Powerful Way to Get More Clicks," you're in the ballpark. You're making the same point, but the phrasing pulls readers further into your post instead of frustrating them to the point of clicking away.

You need to treat your subheads as another opportunity to stand out, to grab your readers' attention, and keep them on your site long enough to transform them into fans.

By this point, you recognize that explosive headlines should pull the reader down into the content, making them want whatever it is you are featuring or talking about.

Mr. Patel also suggests three tips to enhance the engagement levels of subheadline. He offers up the following:

- Explain more. If your product or service needs a bit more explanation, then try expanding on it with your subheadline.
- Talk about benefits. Benefit-focused headlines are great. By emphasizing how a product or service will improve the user's life, you can dramatically advance the page's power.
- Encourage action. A subheadline is also a great way to get users to do something. If you successfully encourage action, it's only a short hop for them to click the call to action button below.

The nature of your subheadline depends on your headline. You can choose one of the techniques above, or split test different varieties to see which one is best for your users.

Finally, a very brief technical note, if you are seeking search engine optimization (SEO), consider this for a moment: For search engine optimization, one of the primary edits you should make is to make sure that each web page has its own headline using the <h1> and <h2> tags.

* You assign a specific designation for that text which meant to be your headline and sub head.

These settings indicate a header (also known as a headline, which is referred to as a tag, or the <h1> tag in HTML) in your posting. Again, they will usually be the title of a post or other emphasized text on the page. It will usually be the largest

text that stands out. There are other header tags in HTML too, like an h2, h3, h4, etc.

Google and Yahoo! like to see that you have labeled your page using these tags. They are part of the indexing algorithm, and any text within these tags get a little extra weight. Be sure to use your chosen keywords within the title naturally. Additionally, if you're considering sprinkling these tags elsewhere as well, it makes no sense to have more than one <h1> per page for instance.

Furthermore, every good subheadline should, generate curiosity for the recipient and compel them to continue reading. Great sub-heads usually create curiosity and coax readers along by injecting surprise, personality, or emotion.

Take a look at your most recent posts. Take some time to evaluate the subheads and honestly ask yourself if they would make the casual reader stop and take notice.

I think the best advice I ever read when it came to writing headlines and sub-headlines was to infuse passion into the endeavor. In other words, when you create your sub headlines, don't make them cryptic and difficult to understand. Don't make them so obvious that the reader isn't persuaded to read further to hear your entire message. Above all, do not turn the writing of your sub headlines into drudgery and churn out a series of uninspired labels. Your goal is to compel your reader to go deeper into your promotional message; and ultimately, to have that reader pick up the phone and call you right away.

As was mentioned earlier, we have been directly responsible for many **highly successful client attraction** marketing campaigns for several practices. We would like to extend to you our proprietary 20-minute Headline and Sub head Strategy Audit Session (for your promotional pieces like your blog posts, social media campaigns, magazine articles, website content, client newsletters, etc.).

Additional Reading/Resources:

Gregory Ciotti: <https://www.helpscout.net/blog/disney-customer-exp...>

Digital Synopsis - <https://digitalsynopsis.com/advertising/creative-c...> Draw them closer:

<https://stevenvonloren.com/2016/01/legally-steal-y...> eMarketer:

<http://www.emarketer.com/Article/More-B2B-Marketer...> Gary Korisko -

<https://smartblogger.com/subhead-blunders/>

How to Craft a Compelling Subheadline That Makes People Click

<https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/craft-subheadli...>

Jon Morrow: <https://twitter.com/jonmorrow?lang=en>

Neil Patel - <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/craft-subheadli...>

Patient magnet: <https://stevenvonloren.com/?s=patient+magnet>

"Think big and don't listen to people who tell you 'it can't be done.' Life's too short to think small." --- Tim Ferriss

Brought to you from the desk of Steve Cox, co-founder of [StevenVonLoren](#)
[Marketing Strategists](#); [Amazon profile](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#)

Chapter Three

BRANDING - "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." -- Thomas Edison

Let's Talk



What Makes You Unique?

What makes you different than your competition? Why should anyone do business with you instead of them? What compelling or persuasive reason do you have so that someone can make an informed decision to entrust you with their business?

If you don't know the answer to the aforementioned questions, you're not alone. Over our nearly four decades of working with professional practices, we have learned that conveying these essential distinguishing features (mentioned above) which point to your firm's uniqueness are nearly universally blurred. In fact, the idea of transmitting your exclusivity creates for much tremendous anxiety and apprehension.

Most people simply don't think about what makes them categorically different than others; let alone how to articulate the variances.

Incidentally, this also explains why some promotional pieces will blatantly state that they are "the best, the most experienced, the most successful, we only hire from the most elite schools in the country, etc.;" those advertisers just don't know what else to say.

One of the significant advantages of being human is that we can all to be both rational and logical simultaneously. Think about it, have you ever seen an advertisement that proclaims they [the advertiser] are grossly incompetent? "If you use them you are very much assured to end up in a federal penitentiary for tax evasion." Or, that "if you use them you are sure to be disappointed because they're hardly ever in the office and they just as seldom work on your file." Of course not! So, the "go-to" line is to convince the reader of the ad that they are dealing with someone who is "highly professional." "They are the best that has ever been!" "They are available 25 hours a day, and they work eight days a week;" or some variation of this type of exceptionalism.

From a practical perspective, these “bold” statements are nebulous; you can’t wrap your brain or arms around this type of declaration. Therefore, the gesture is impotent!

So, what are you supposed to do to make sure clients choose you first? What do you say that doesn’t sound arrogant or like you’re a blowhard? Well, that’s precisely the point of this chapter; you will learn subtle techniques so that you stand out in very specific ways compared to your competition.

Fact, it’s a noisy world out there; and, your competitors are making every effort to target and entice your existing clients to do business with them instead of you. Therefore, you need to make sure that people can hear you about the noise and confusion by differentiating yourself from all other accountants in your geographic area --- this is vital to your success!

However, if you feel that your profession is essential, but straightforward in its explanation and everyone knows what your service consists of and what it involves; or, if you believe that standing out from the crowd is too daunting or maybe even impossible, then take the advice from competitors in an incredibly crowded field where huge money prevails, and advertising and big promotion is king: the hamburger market. Small entrepreneurs are staking out a beach-head in the specialty burger market.

I have been reading a lot about burger places in the mid-West that have introduced the “Juicy Lucy.” This burger is a scrumptious concoction of molten lava of cheese, grilled onions and mushrooms (basically, whatever you want to pack into it), stuffed between two fresh, grass-fed, ground patties, and oozing out with every incredible bite you take. Now, I don’t eat red meat much these days, but this sounds like heaven on earth! More specifically, the big chains can’t compete, and these impresarios are gaining market share and opening new locations!

Incidentally, before we go much further, we are discussing the development of your brand. And, if you’re a sole proprietor, you are your brand. Whether your corporation or a sole proprietor you need to nurture and loving mold your brand! Remember this; consumers build brands, not companies. Consumers give brands value by developing perceptions and expectations for those brands. It's up to you

to your enhance value by delivering consistent brand experiences that consumers can trust.

So, one of the first things you need to do is to develop superior processes to connect with your readers and viewers of your promotional campaigns in more substantial and memorable ways.

Consider the perspective of the noted author, motivational speaker and marketing expert, **Simon Sinek**, when he discusses the strategy of authenticity. He states that all promotions (and their subsequent sales) come in one of two forms. You can either attract clients and have them choose you over the competition by manipulating price points and offers, such as: buy one get one free, special discount for..., giving something away for free, or some variation of a value-added concept. Or, you can opt for the alternative; you can inspire people to follow you with no manipulation, trickery, or celebrity endorsements.

Incidentally, I cannot dispute that these and many other manipulations work; without question they do, and quite effectively, that's why we [the advertising industry] use them. The problem is none of them breathe loyalty or engender trust.

According to Mr. Sinek, only a few leaders and a few organizations rely more on inspiration than manipulation. Some of the big ones that use inspiration to draw followers include Apple computers, Harley-Davidson, Disney, or Southwest Airlines, but you also see the same pattern in great leaders like Nelson Mandela, or Martin Luther King, or John F Kennedy.

He points out that most businesses conduct their conversations and subsequent communication in the following manner:

- A company begins with what they do in business.
- They quickly proceed to describe how they do business.
- Then, very often they neglect to explain why they do business.

Most of their exchanges end up sounding something like this: If you're computer manufacturer, "We make great computers; they're beautifully designed, simple to

use and user-friendly. Wanna buy one?" Or, maybe you're a car dealer, in which case you might be saying something like "Our new car has tinted windows, great gas mileage, leather seats. Do want to buy it?" We're a public accounting firm, "We've got all the best accountants, we went to all the best schools, we do great by our clients, we work with some of the largest companies, hire us."

As you can see, these are merely variations of "what we do" and "how we do it." These things are great, but as we stated earlier, they neither inspire



nor do they promote you as the leader and authority in your industry.

The question is why anyone should follow you? What is your purpose in business, what's your cause, what's your belief, why does your company exist? Do we really need another accounting firm?

Maybe an example of how a company like Apple computers handles the questions above may provide clarity. First, their method of communication is crystal clear. Second, it's direct and to point. More importantly, they begin by explaining why they are in business. "Everything we do, we believe. We believe in challenging the status quo, the way we challenge the status quo is by making our products beautifully designed, simple to use, and user-friendly. We just happened to make great computers. Want to buy one?"

For this little thing to work, you have to have three things: 1. You must have clarity of "**why**." If you don't know why your company exists, how will anybody else? 2. You have to have a discipline of "**how**." You have to hold yourself and

your people accountable for your own guiding principles and your own values. 3. You need to have a consistency of “**what.**” Everything you say and everything you do has to prove what you believe at the end of the day.

We live in the tangible world at the end of the day. The only way people will know what you believe is if you say and do the things you believe. This is the concept behind authenticity.

If we approach business with the standard models of leading with “what we do” and “how we do it,” we have it all backward. A well-defined “why” speaks to our inner self; it forms bonds and alliances. Moreover, this is all grounded in the tenets of biology. It has to do with our human brains and our neocortex; within our brains lays the limbic system which is responsible for all of our feelings of trust and loyalty. It's also responsible for all human behavior, all decision-making.

Let us stay with Apple Computer for this next illustration. According to Mr.

Sinek, the difference is Apple's not just selling us one of their computers. Apple is so clear about what they believe, so disciplined how they do authority branding, and so consistent in what they do --- it gets the point that their computers serve as a symbol of a set of values and beliefs. Those people who love their Mac didn't buy it just for the product. Their decision is based on the irrational sensibilities, and the rational differentiators. The same can said about people walking around with Harley-Davidson tattoos on their body; this is a corporate logo. In fact, some of them don't even own the product. Nobody is walking around with Procter and Gamble logos on their arm. The reason is apparent, Harley is so clear about what they believe. They're so disciplined about how they do it and so consistent in what they do, it gets to the point that everything they say and everything they do serves as proof of what they believe.

In both examples, they [consumers] bought it because it demonstrates something about who they are (the client comes to believe that the company is “One of me!”). This is why authenticity matters, because if you say and do the things you actually believe you will attract people who believe what you believe.

That is the most critical point; you need to focus on developing your promotional campaign to do business with people who believe what you believe, your kindred spirits, a group of people with a common set of values and beliefs. When we're

surrounded by people who believe what we believe, something remarkable happens; trust emerges.

People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it!

The goal is not to do business with everyone who needs what you have; the goal is to do business with those people who believe what you believe.

There's an inextricable link between communication and leadership; those who lead can clearly communicate what they believe, and those who can clearly articulate what they believe are the ones who lead. When you talk about what you believe, and you can put your beliefs and values in clear words and symbols, consistent enough, authentic enough, people know that everything you say and do is what you believe. They will be drawn to you for themselves.

It's a documentable fact, people who believe what you believe will go out of their way to do business with you. Those who don't believe what you believe just want cheaper services.

There's a considerable difference between repeat business and loyalty.

Repeat business means that someone is willing to do business with you again, and again, and again. Loyalty says a person is willing to overlook others, turn down a better product, at a better price, or even inconvenience, to do business with you.

As is the theme of this entire book, because it's a crowded marketplace, you have to do everything you can to stand out from the crowd; this means, eliminating your competition and leaving them as far back as possible in your rear-view mirror!

Why you may ask; I mean, can't we all get along and share the available clients? Sure, if that's how you choose to run your practice; if that's the case though, this book is not written for you. But if you desire to be the best accountant in town and get superior information on standing-out from all others, then read on.

If you wish to be the preeminent accountant within your geographic area, you were going to have to be unique. More importantly, the subject goes beyond client

attraction; what we're also discussing deals with a client's **lifetime value** (LTV – explained later in this chapter) to your firm.

Therefore, what we're conferring is a "two-prong" objective, one that seeks to maximize your consumer attraction skills and one that utilizes particular strategies to increase your client retention matrix --- both of which are achieved through your brand.

Your firm must continually demonstrate your competitive advantage by tangibly highlighting makes your firm different than every other accountant in your vicinity (aka your **Unique Selling Proposition** [U.S.P]).

* Your U.S.P. is that single unique benefit or significant promise that you hold out to the client; one that no other competitor offers --- it distinguishes you from your competitors.

Plus, your U.S.P. must be a clear, concise, compelling reason that makes your client immediately aware of what you can do for them. Make your business the obvious choice for clients which can be anything you offer that gives them a reason to choose you over all the other accountants in the area.

You need to develop your brand, so you instantly separate yourself from every account in the area (as Simon Sinek suggested earlier by authenticity and leading with you or why)! Entrepreneur.com weighs in with their interpretation of uniqueness as it relates to branding:

"Branding is the marketing practice of creating a name, symbol or design that identifies and differentiates a product (in this case, you) from other products (your competitors). An effective brand strategy gives you a major edge in increasingly competitive markets."

Your U.S.P should be the cornerstone of every promotional piece you send and client interaction you have. A finely tuned U.S.P conveyed throughout every aspect of your business should elevate your practice and enable you to consistently out-market your competition.

An essential marketing truth that can't be denied is that consumers shape brands with their perception and subsequent loyalty. They give brands value by developing opinions and expectations for those brands they trust, enjoy and depend on the most. Therefore, it is your primary job to enhance the value your patients receive by delivering a consistent brand experience that they can trust.

Additionally, you must figure out the correlation between your client's needs and what drives them to take action.

As you can see your brand development, your practice's growth, and your clients' experience and perception come together in what should be a beautiful dance --- A coordinated effort involving mutually beneficial interests expressed in synchronized movements.

At this point, were discussing client education. Undoubtedly, you are an exceptional accountant; moreover, you probably do a great job of keeping your clients informed about crucial issues that will help said clients in the

Traditionally accountants haven't done much to promote themselves. You may not know how to communicate your Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Let us help, we have helped many firms with their client messaging. Call us, (800) 473-2049, we're here for you!

future. However, how do you positively impact consumers when they're not with you? Fact, there is nothing you can do to prevent your competition from contacting your clients when you're not around. So, how do you stay in touch with, influence, and guide consumers with your unique skills when they are at home?

An essential tactical element for enhancing your brand is to provide something that others in your field don't; which benefit your clients, keep you top-of-mind, and shares your expertise beyond your validity of the financial statements you work on by educating your clients with your unique approach towards practical application of your duties or auditing policies, etc.

Take an inventory of your firm's client profiles. You will notice that of the many clients that see you, concentrations of specific treatments will emerge, for

example, wills and trusts. Act upon this insight; deliver your unique perspective with practical tools and stories regarding administration for trustees, helpful tips for executors, how trusts work from beginning to end, how to include dividends when they have different tax liabilities, and so on.

The principle focuses on Maslow's **Hierarchy of Needs**, in which Abraham Maslow identified five essential human needs for fulfilling psychological health, culminating in self-actualization. The five hierarchical stages include Physiological, Safety, Love and Belonging, Esteem, and Self-actualization.

The second level addresses safety needs, those things that give us a sense of security in all aspects of our lives. They include a person's health, family, job and so on. Therefore, your client education mechanism would provide consumers with much needed practical understanding; in turn, you will benefit from an exceptional and time-proven strategy which surpasses all other forms of promotion, the written word.

According to noted author, Adam Witty, who wrote *21 Ways To Build Your Business With A Book*, becoming a published author provides several benefits, including all:

- Historically, authors have been trusted sources of information. Consumers naturally see authors as authorities and experts on the subject of their book.
- You are awarded a position of authority. A book can influence consumers unlike other forms of communication. Books provide near instantaneous acceptance of its message in the minds and hearts of its readers.
- The value of a book for your practice is immense if appropriately used; it allows you an uninterrupted platform to explain your vision and best treatment recommendations.

As you write and publish your special reports and e-books, send them to your clients. Have them see you as more than the friendly CPA who helps them with their financial discomforts; have them see you as "the" trusted resource and local expert.

Mr. Witty says your written word can give you a bulletproof marketing advantage, an edge that lasts for years and years. Once done, you can reuse it many times over.

For example, Brian Fricke is a financial planner from Orlando, Florida. In an effort to build stronger client relationship he wrote a book called Worry Free Retirement --- Do what you want, when you want, where you want.

Shortly after releasing his book, Brian provided a copy to every client. Brian found that "My clients get a flavor of who I am and our philosophies. Therefore, it tends to create a stronger bond between us."

Mr. Fricke also credits his book with a tremendous increase in referrals. Plus, he's found that referred prospects are more qualified and ready to work with him. Brian goes on to say that, to date, he's obtained several new clients as a direct response from the book (he claims that each new client can be worth as much as \$10,000 of annual income).

Consider also the story of Dr. Charles Martin. He is a dentist and the founder of the Richmond Smile Center. According to Dr. Martin "the great advantage of being a published author is it gives you a status point that your competitors do not have. Also, your book provides you more presence and prominence in the eyes of your patients." Actually, books work even if your patient doesn't read it.

When it comes to marketing a book, there are several ways to do it. One of the most natural things Dr. Martin does is display his books in waiting and consultation rooms. His books are also prominently featured on his website.

Dr. Martin takes one extra step. "I take a book and mark which pages to read. The fact of the matter is that your people aren't always going to read the entire book, but things they do read can be a big deal."

Dr. Martin reminds us that more profound benefits exist. "Not only is there a return on investment financially, but there is also a return on investments emotionally and professionally from the admiration and respect you get from people you serve."

Keith Ayers a business consultant in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania also benefited greatly by promoting his insight on paper, when he wrote Engagement is Not Enough --- You need passionate employees to reach your dream. He works with businesses to develop high-performing teams.

Keith points out that once published, prospects and clients alike saw him as a lot more credible than his competitors. He says, "Well I don't need to be an expert in my industry (or town, or niche). Our service speaks for itself. Our staff has certified training, and we have the highest standards." I'm sure you can think of similar statements for your industry and practice. He adds that "unfortunately, every time you say this, you can bet, your competition is saying it, too."

Your Radio Voice –

Traditionally, accountants and accounting firms have done very little to reach out to their clients. As we mentioned several times, it is a noisy world out there, and you have to do everything you can to stand out. An exceptional option and platform for providing client education are to provide regularly featured radio podcasts that can be accessed through your website and downloaded to attract new clients and future employees.

For decades the radio has been the constant companion for all of us on every road trip, jaunt to the market, and general outing throughout the country. Everywhere we go, there is a radio nearby. Why not pass your expertise onto consumers via the most familiar piece of electronics that we all have in our cars, homes, and offices?

Why not share your knowledge with a program like "The Accounting Department -- on our show, everybody counts." Or, "Let's Get Fiscal." I assure you that very few, if any, of your competitors, are reaching out quite this way.

Internet Radio is really taking off. Author, **Richie Laxton** points out that there are tremendous opportunities available for the internet radio entrepreneur using this innovative medium.

He points out that "the advantages of internet only 'radio' stations are many. For starters, start-up costs and maintenance can be dirt cheap by comparison. Even royalties paid through collectors like Sound Exchange can be far less. In reality, all one needs are one or two good, reliable computers, a decent microphone coupled with perhaps a small mixer, maybe a modest server and of course, a streaming provider and or platform. Also, reliable broadband, high-speed internet is a must. The expensive technology limitations of terrestrial radio are a moot point in the cyber world. Plus, anyone around the world could potentially hear your station or your radio show."



Many of the newer generations of broadcast software designers are creating programs that will work in

either type of broadcast environment. There are programs such as Zara Radio, Radio DJ, SAM Broadcaster, Shout cast and Radio Jar, to name a few are popping up almost monthly. Many of these streaming providers offer free accounts as well. If the internet broadcaster has good internet, reliable equipment and knows how to use them to the fullest, the result can produce outstanding high fidelity and a professional audio image! Plus, most of these sites offer

downloadable apps for Smartphone users. So, listening either to live streams or podcasts becomes quite simple. The Smartphone or handheld tablet has now become the new transistor radio!

The most successful broadcasts per revenue and listenership regarding shows/stations online, seem to be those meeting a niche market need that's not otherwise being addressed.

As you can see, promoting your expertise has never been easier or more laser-focused! All you need is a computer with internet connection, headset/microphones, and your content and you are off on your mission to stand apart from every other chiropractor in your area.

- Tell your story about what you love

- Streaming on the internet

Internet broadcasting: on a tablet, mobile, PC and tying it to your social media platform. Thus, widening your appeal and making people part of the “family.”

Internet radio is a massively growing medium according to the Radio Advertising Bureau (RAB).

- Creating/empowering your brand

Develop listener loyalty by giving the people what they want by keeping your content relevant, creating an exchange with audiences, etc. • Promote radio broadcast live and put them on a website, acquired a 24hour streaming service. People can text into the show, and you can endorse other professionals, etc.

According to James Mulvany, the founder of Radio.co (which is the United Kingdom’s fastest growing and leading internet radio medium):

"You wouldn't think it, but Internet Radio like ours is over 20 years old having started back in 1993, it quickly became popular with bedroom DJs and music enthusiasts - Now half of Americans tune into internet radio every week with over 136 million unique listeners.

Internet radio is helping shape the next generation of internet radio by making it accessible to everyone. An all in one solution that allows you to manage your shows easily, curate your information, invite consumers and future employees, and let listeners tune in from their phones.

The radical ways in which the internet has changed all traditional media, not least radio, challenged industry standard models of consumption so that practically all media can now be accessed by anyone and anywhere instantly.

There's never been a better time to throw your hat in the ring, even if you're not technical, with Radio.co you can curate your own shows to share with friends and family, something we believe will only get better."

Whatever the method you select, whether they be your written voice or audio transmission, it is in your best interest to create different, new, and better solutions for your clients. Fact, your clients have a lot of options, and they don't

“need” to use you --- honestly, there are many exceptional accountants out there! What are you doing to compete against them?

Take your vision and translate and convey it into a clear, focused, compelling, and persuasive message. Target your market and developing a reputation [brand] as an excellent resource.

Feature Informative Testimonials -

Videos are the ultimate “no-brainer!” It is surprising how often accountants don’t tell anyone about the positive experiences of other clients in similar situations.

Gather and display all your current testimonials. Create and upload “need specific” videos (no longer than 2 minutes) into your website letting others know how you pulled them [client] out of a bind.

The entire point of testimonials is that “CPA Jones” must be perceived as the people’s champion. There are several benefits to video testimonials; here is just a glimpse:

- Videos get more attention on Google - Having relevant, keyword optimized video content on your site can help increase its performance in terms of SEO. on sites like Facebook and Twitter.
- It improves your site’s user experience – Visitors to your website will proactively look for video content – which means that featuring video increases the amount of time people will spend exploring your website.
- It can help build your credibility - Training or how-to videos are a great way to establish your website as an information resource while demonstrating the knowledge and expertise your team has to offer. Another advantage of this kind of content is that it can stay relevant for years – so you’ll get a significant return on your investment.
- 92% of mobile video viewers share videos with others. (source: [Virtuets](#))
- Video on a landing page can increase conversions by 80% or more (source: [Slideshare](#)).

As an excellent and thorough financial professional, it is in your best interest to let as many consumers as possible know about your skills.

As we have been stating all along throughout this book, we are not directing you to attempt to attract everyone blindly. It is about becoming an essential person in the community that “must be called upon” in your marketplace.

The benefits of becoming that “go-to” person are profound; especially as it deals with your bottom line.

Therefore, let us discuss the lifetime value of each client you work with, and how your firm can reap considerable gains from establishing deep and meaningful relationships with your clientele.

If you have never considered the value, over a lifetime, of each client, you are in for an eye-full! The lifetime value a client represents is an easily calculated formula. You simply calculate the amount of revenue you receive from a client each time they visit. You would then multiply that amount by the average number of years that you retain your client.

Additionally, according to the [Harvard Business Review](#), it is up to 25% more expensive to acquire a new client than to retain existing one. Further, [Frederick Reichheld of Bain & Company](#) states that increasing customer retention rates by 5% increases profits by 25%-95%.

Khalid Saleh, with [Invespcro](#), reports that 89% of companies see customer experience as a critical factor in driving customer loyalty, retention and referrals. Additionally, existing customers are 50% more likely to try new products and spend 31% more, when compared to new customers. So, to attract more and better clients, provide more and better service to your existing clients. The data is irrefutable; if you want to excel, your current client base will get you there!

When discussing the benefits of retaining clients versus acquiring new ones, consider this, there is a lot of compelling data suggesting that it costs as much as seven times more to obtain a new client than it does to retain one.

In fact, according to **Campaign Monitor**, 81% of companies that focus on client retention do so by implementing strong email campaigns; and, you are six times more likely to receive a click-thru from an email campaign than you are from a tweet.

Further, **Gartner Group** statistics tell us that 80% of your company's future revenue will come from just 20% of your existing customers. When you add the lifetime value of each client into the formula, the numbers are staggering!

So the motto of the story is, you don't have to spend time and resources to get new clients, you just have to make the ones you have happy and feeling secure.

To conclude, the sole objective of developing your uniqueness and brand is to inspire client loyalty!

I wish I could say that all clients are hugely loyal and would never be wooed away by your competitor. If that were true, there wouldn't be companies that used to be household names; but now, they are no more!

In fairness, there are multiple reasons why companies close their doors, but the point is the no one is impervious to joining the long list of organizations, on some trivia question, inquiring about those companies that used to be!

Remember PaineWebber, Compaq, Woolworth's, General Foods, Author Andersen, Standard Oil, or TWA? They were once household names, but not anymore. These companies that made big names for themselves, but they didn't stand the test of time.

As has been said multiple times, "It's a noisy world out there, and your competitors are targeting your existing clients. Without authority, your voice is a mere whisper."

The goal is to make recognized and sought-after professional which means creating said status. As a recognized expert, you don't have to shout because people come to you. They seek you out, join your world, and consume everything you have to offer.

Consumers are a lot more sophisticated. They are no longer settling for average service or just “the best price.” They have too many choices. The consumers you want are those for whom your expert status is more important than only your fees. They’re looking for a high degree of competence.

Have you ever heard of Robert Kiyosaki, author of Rich Dad, Poor Dad? Whether you agree with his financial premise or not, his book that made him “the” critical, “go-to” expert. For that matter, consider Tim Ferris, he’s the author of “The Four Hour Work Week.” Their books made them famous; their books made credible.

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, you need to differentiate yourself from everyone else. Writing, podcasts, and videos are perfect vehicles for creating that separation. Plus, being an author instantly catapults you away from the “rest of the pack.”

Many professionals are too busy and often don’t have time to do any heavy lifting. Your staff members already have a lot on their plates, so adding another project just isn’t feasible. Maybe you were someone who hated writing in school; your thing was math.

Well, if any of this is true, I have a solution for you. We [our firm] would like to help. We are directly responsible for many highly successful reputation management and branding campaigns for numerous firms.

We would like to gift you our proprietary 20-minute Promotional Strategy Audit Session (covering things like your educational campaigns, your blog posts, social media, magazine articles, your books and special reports, website content, patient newsletters, etc.).

We look forward to hearing from you; (800) 473-2049.

Additional Reading/Resources:

21 Ways To Build Your Business With A Book: <https://www.amazon.com/Ways-Build-Your-Business-Bo...>

Campaign Monitor: <https://www.campaignmonitor.com/>

Frederick Reichheld of Bain & Company: http://www.bain.com/Images/BB_Prescription_cutting...

Gartner Group: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gartnergroup/#515e430...>

Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/2014/10/the-value-of-keepingthe-r...>

Invespcro: <https://www.invespcro.com/blog/customer-acquisitio...>

Lifetime Value of Clients: <https://stevenvonloren.com/2017/02/savethousands-...>

Maslow's Hierarchy: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Richie Laxton: <https://www.facebook.com/Host.RichieL>

Simon Sinek: https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_ss_i_3_5?url=se...

SlideShare: <https://www.slideshare.net/AdelieStudios/adelie-st...>

Unique Selling Proposition: <https://stevenvonloren.com/?s=unique+selling+propo...>

Virtuets: <https://www.virtuets.com/45-video-marketing-statis...>

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go." --- T.S. Eliot

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[Amazon Author Profile](#), [Facebook](#), [Google+](#),
[Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#)

Chapter Four

MAKING A DECISIVE OFFER - "Know the difference between the person that speaks about it, and the person that is about it." --

Themotivatedinc

Let's Talk



Make A Decisive Offer

How do you let others know you're the best professional option in town? You should regularly be asking yourself these questions. Enclosed are proven strategies for increasing your leverage.

It's incredible that hardly any accounting firm's display advertisements include offers, incentives of any kind to use their services immediately, or for that matter, any suggestion that their firm delivers a superior solution to their financial concerns.

Your initial reaction to this last statement I made may be "wait a minute; we have guidelines and regulations regarding our promotional efforts that

we cannot violate!" Every industry has some guideline concerning what one can and cannot do with their advertising.

However, within these regulations, accounting firms may offer substantial options for services that help business owners stay financially organized, tax compliant and that help prepare for business growth. As an accounting firm owner, what you don't want is to be seen as a mere commodity, someone only to be contacted quarterly or annually for bookkeeping or tax preparation; but certainly not an indispensable business partner.

As we have been discussing throughout this entire book, the objective is to stand out and separate your firm from every other accountant in your town. Therefore, consider providing particular offers to persuade clients to contact you. For example: offer to create a free individual summary to help identify the best solutions and assistance in creating entities that make the most amount of tax sense for a company. Or, you may even develop a series of special reports focusing on businesses, and their principal owners, and the relationship between

the business entity and the establishment of family trusts. Otherwise, you can offer your book detailing essential tips and financial aspects of running a business (such as maintaining accurate

records, creating profit and loss statements that break down crucial areas of cost and revenue streams, providing vital assistance with accounts receivables and managing outgoing monies for vendor payments and payroll processes, creating valuation reports, etc.).

The **Harvard Business Review** wrote an excellent piece, titled "Creating New Market Space," where they cover this very topic. They say, "As rivals try to outdo one another, they end up competing solely on the basis of incremental improvements in cost or quality or both.

Instead, the authors suggest that rather than competing on price and features, you should try to create a new market space. Creating new market space requires a different pattern of strategic thinking. Instead of looking within the accepted boundaries that define how we compete, managers can look systematically across them. By doing so, they can find unoccupied territory that represents a real breakthrough in value."

The problem is that many business owners just don't know what to say.

They cannot convert the complexity of their skills into compelling, persuasive, and memorable narratives. Stated differently, they have no idea how to communicate their **competitive advantage(s)**.

If you can't clearly define why you're the best option, then you get relegated to the status of a commodity --- an item of merchandise (as soybeans) whose price is the sole basis of futures trading.

Think back to when you initially opened your doors. Did you intend to build a practice that was only distinguishable by the prices you charged for the services you provide; or where the only discernable difference between your firm and that of your competitors is the décor and color of the ties you wear?

It is important to stress that merely buying an ad in the local news, Facebook, your website, or sponsoring a sports team, though it does bring attention to your practice, it doesn't separate you from your competition.



Your marketing needs to create curiosity, an interest to explore, and ultimately break the loyalty hold that someone has with their current accounting professional.

Think of this like sports. If you have ever played basketball, football, soccer, or hockey you were taught to play a "zone defense" when the time came to protect your side of the field.

Zone Defense - (in basketball, football, and hockey) a system of defensive play in which each player guards an allotted area of the field of play and guards an opponent only when the opponent is in their area.

Therefore, the principal element of using this type of niche strategy is to find that place between the zones (an alley if you will) where your competitors aren't --- these areas are known as "soft spots." By recognizing, then establishing a presence within the seams, your firm can realize significant financial gains.

The Harvard report illustrates several examples of companies finding those "soft spots" within the zone to maximize their market share.

- Consider Home Depot, the company that has revolutionized the do-it yourself market in North America. Home Depot did not achieve that level of growth simply by taking market share away from other hardware stores; instead, it has created a new market of do-it-yourselfers out of ordinary home owners.

There are many explanations for Home Depot's success: its warehouse format, its relatively low-cost store locations, its knowledgeable service, its combination of large stores and low prices generating high volumes and economies of scale.

But such explanations miss the more fundamental question: Where did Home Depot get its original insight into how to revolutionize and expand its market?

Home Depot looked at the existing industries serving home improvement needs. It saw that people had two choices: they could hire contractors, or they could buy tools and materials from a hardware store and do the work themselves. The key to Home Depot's original insight was the understanding of why buyers would choose one substitute over another. (It is essential here to keep the analysis at the industry, and not the company level).

Home Depot began with the question "why do people hire a contractor?" The answer was fairly simple; they have specialized know-how that the home owner lacks. Then they asked, "why do people choose hardware stores over professional contractors?" The most common answer would be to save money.

Home Depot offers a solution that delivers the expertise of professional home contractors at markedly lower prices than hardware stores. They created a forum and decisive advantages of melding both industries by eliminating or reducing everything else. In so doing, Home Depot has transformed enormous latent demand for home improvement into real demand.

- Consider too Polo by Ralph Lauren, a few years ago they created an entirely new and paradoxical market in clothing: high fashion with no fashion. Ralph Lauren was the first American design house to take its brand worldwide successfully.

At Polo Ralph Lauren's inception more than 30 years ago, fashion industry experts of almost every stripe criticized the company. Where, they asked, was the fashion? Lacking creativity in design, how could Ralph Lauren charge such high prices? Lauren's lack of fashion was its greatest strength. Ralph Lauren built on the decisive advantages of the two strategic groups that dominated the high-end clothing market— designer haute couture and the higher-volume, but lower-priced, classical lines of Burberry's, Brooks Brothers, Aquascutum, and the like.

The trendy designs the fashion houses work so hard to create are, ironically, the major drawback of haute couture for most high-end customers, few of whom

have the sophistication or the bodies to wear such original clothing. Conversely, customers who trade down for classic lines over haute couture want to buy garments of lasting quality that justifies high prices.

Ralph Lauren has built its brand in the space between these two strategic groups, but it didn't do so by taking the average of the groups' differences. Instead, Lauren captured the advantages of trading designer names, elegant stores, and luxury materials which captures what most customer's value in haute couture; Lauren's updated classical look and price capture the best of the classical lines. By combining the most attractive factors of both groups, and eliminating or reducing everything else, Polo Ralph Lauren not only captured share from both segments but also drew many new customers into the market.

- Study Bloomberg. In little over a decade, Bloomberg has become one of the largest and most profitable business-information providers in the world. Until Bloomberg's debut in the early 1980s, Reuters and Telerate dominated the online financial information industry, providing news and prices in real time to the brokerage and investment community. The industry focused on purchasers—the IT managers—who valued standardized systems, which made their lives easier.

Bloomberg realized that traders and analysts, not IT managers, make or lose millions of dollars for their employers each day. Profit opportunities come from disparities in information. When markets are active, traders and analysts must make rapid decisions. Every second counts.

So Bloomberg designed a system specifically to offer traders better value, one with easy-to-use terminals and keyboards labeled with familiar financial terms. The systems also have two flat-panel monitors, so traders can see all the information they need at once without having to open and close numerous windows. Since traders have to analyze information before they act, Bloomberg added a built-in analytic capability that works with the press of a button. Before, traders and analysts had to download data and use a pencil and calculator to perform critical financial calculations. Now users can quickly run "what if" scenarios to compute returns on alternative investments, and they can perform longitudinal analyses of historical data.

By focusing on users, Bloomberg was also able to see the paradox of traders' and analysts' personal lives. They have tremendous income but work such long hours that they have little time to spend it. Realizing that markets have slow times during the day when little trading takes place, Bloomberg decided to add information and purchasing services aimed at enhancing traders' personal lives. Traders can buy items like flowers, clothing, and jewelry; make travel arrangements; get information about wines, or search through real estate listings.

By shifting its focus upstream from purchasers to users, Bloomberg created a value curve that was radically different from anything the industry had ever seen.

- Look at how Starbucks transformed a functional product into an emotional one. Whether you agree with their politics or not, an undeniable fact is that their market dominance is impressive. In the late 1980s, General Foods, Nestlé, and Procter & Gamble dominated the U.S. coffee market. Consumers drank coffee as part of a daily routine. Coffee was considered a commodity industry, marked by heavy price-cutting and an ongoing battle for market share. The industry had taught customers to shop based on price, discount coupons, and brand names that are expensive for companies to build. The result was paper-thin profit margins and low growth.

Instead of viewing coffee as a functional product, Starbucks set out to make coffee an emotional experience; what customers often refer to as a "caffeine-induced oasis." The big three sold a commodity—coffee by the can; Starbucks sold a retailing concept—the coffee bar. The coffee bars offered a chic gathering place, status, relaxation, conversation, and creative coffee drinks. Starbucks turned coffee into an emotional experience and ordinary people into coffee connoisseurs for whom the steep \$3-per-cup price seemed reasonable. With almost no advertising, Starbucks became a national brand with margins roughly five times the industry average.

All these companies (and many more), have found new market space by looking across strategic groups; they found those grooves between immovable objects and discovered prosperity. Again, find those areas where your competition isn't and delivery your service in a way that isn't currently being met.

You found your niche; now, how are you going to communicate your uniqueness?

Traditionally, accounting firms have not done much in the way of self-promotion and advertising. Therefore, if this is relatively new to you, I would urge you to take your promotional efforts seriously!

Think of it this way; you wouldn't attempt a 3,000-mile road trip without a map. Why then would you embark on your firm's public awareness platform by "winging it" when it comes to the manner of your business enhancement campaign?

As marketing strategists, we are constantly dismayed when a new client tells us that they are frustrated by their lack of promotional success as they explain that they went to a superstore, like Staples or Office Depot, and bought some variation of the marketing plan in a box. You know any one of the thousands of pre-packaged software programs that are available for purchase at these establishments.

It is imperative to stress that we have no problem with Staples or Office Depot (or any other superstore), nor do we have a problem with marketing software products. These marketing products serve a purpose because even these "one size fits all" programs are better than not having a marketing plan at all.

The critical factor here is that an effective and genuinely superior marketing plan should be based upon a series of what we call "brilliant questions." These are the questions that help you establish what being offered on a mass scale, and what your clients genuinely want. Plus, how can you provide a better option if you don't know what your clients need?

These questions are designed to dig deep, uncover true pain and problems, and will empower your firm to find true strategic breakthroughs. It's not that much different than auditing a client's books. You simply can't make an appropriate diagnosis without interviewing and examining the client!

Again, the reason you want to go deeper with your questions is that you're trying to find things out that best benefit your clients. Essentially, your entire goal is to identify that seam that represents the underserved need within your industry and

create a chasm between your expertise and your competitor's services. Moreover, as you begin to promote yourself, and your unique differences, it would be unrealistic to assume that you won't be speaking to people who already have relationships with other accounts. Therefore, you will need to break those ties of loyalty.

Said differently, as you develop your promotional and platform, you must develop a noticeable distinction between your practice and your competitor's practice. In marketing terms, this describes the fundamental strategy known as "**Gap Marketing**." This promotional strategy has been around for hundreds of years. Business owners the world over have always sought ways to create differences between themselves and their competitors. Therefore, gap marketing strategy is a long-term, forward-looking approach to planning with the fundamental goal of achieving a sustainable competitive advantage.

To create that disparity between you and everyone else, your focus should be on creating an experience. Take for example the Disney Corporation, when most people are asked about their experience at the park they invariably respond with "it was incredible!"

They are often overlooked standing in long lines, the humidity, or ever rising ticket prices, etc.

It is this trusted customer experience that has allowed Disney to have attendance growth over 30 years. Returning customers trust the Walt Disney brand and know what to expect when they plan to visit for the coming summer.

You see, Walt Disney figured out that he wasn't in the amusement park industry; he realized that he was in the experience industry. The company has mastered customer service. Their entire mission is to transform its visitors from a "49-year-old, with a mortgage, kids to put through school, car expenses, and the everyday pressures that life brings, into a carefree 12-year-old who still recognizes magic and wonder in everything that's around them.

This is the reason why Disney finds hundreds of ways to make sure that the customer experience is beyond compare, allow me to provide you a very brief example:

- The water features in Disneyland are green or brown to hide the vehicle tracks and filtration systems.
- The parks have speakers throughout their facilities and they pump-in ambient sounds to enhance the visitor experience (for example, jungle noises for several yards near and around the jungle ride).
- Upon visiting several amusement parks, Walt Disney noticed that visitors would throw their trash on the ground. So, besides the standard cleanup crews, all Disney parks have trash cans no further than 30 steps away from any visitor. When you consider how many millions of people visit the parks, it is astonishing how clean they keep their facilities.
- The props in the Indiana Jones office on display when you're waiting in line for the ride, these are the real props from the movie franchise.
- Disneyland uses more than 100,000 light bulbs to outline the buildings on Main Street, USA.

The Disney Corporation leads with their motto of being "The happiest place on earth!" to separate from all other amusement parks. They have completely dominated the marketplace by creating a vast difference between an expectation level and an experience level of a person; and so can you.

The strategy offers the most profound insight and explanation for human behavior and reactions imaginable. The reason this marketing model works is that all people make decisions by comparison. You will literally move the conversation and perception from "what you say" to "where they are."

If the difference between these two perspectives is significant enough, so that they [clients] begin to feel that their current condition is unacceptable, or in the case of an unproven company (that gets on your radar by way of a promotional campaign) the proposed offer is unacceptable, then they will react positively and you will generate a new client.

In fact, we are applying Newton's third law of motion to demonstrate the gap between you and all your competitors. As you remember, the law goes as follows, "every action produces an equal and opposite reaction." Therefore, you will not get

a lead, an appointment, a trial offer, or a sale if the prospects' comparative differential is too small.

So, every emotional breach produces an equal and opposite reaction which directly affects your promotional campaign. Principally, this strategy focuses on the delivery of Maslow's second level of the hierarchy (as we discussed in the previous chapter) which deals with your clients' sense of safety; because, you will be positioning yourself in a way that best solves your clients' biggest financial concerns. However, before you can convey your vital message, you must affect your clients' sense of equilibrium. In other words, if a client perceives that their footing is steady and stable, then they see no reason to look at other alternatives.

For example, it's like when your leg falls asleep. The pressure on the nerves makes your leg go numb; makes your toes or ankle tingle, and if you don't reposition yourself, pain will eventually ensue. However, if the symptoms did not occur, you have no reason to reposition your leg.

The same is true when you employ gap marketing. Your objective is to point out how firm is so far superior to everyone else in your industry that the client has no choice but to make a change in their business behavior.

Here is a brief list of possible outcomes to illustrate the point:

- If no emotional divide is created – this equals no reaction, because there is no gap to fill between where they are and where they could be. Their leg hasn't fallen asleep.
- Too small an emotional break – this produces an acceptable disequilibrium, and little or no action is taken to close that gap. Or, if you prefer, if the differential is too close to where they already are in their minds. There will be no reason to react.
- A large emotional chasm - produces a state of unacceptability; a vast difference necessitating a need to fill the gap in order to regain emotional or conditional equilibrium. If you prove your service is a solution to the situation, a business relationship occurs. Their leg is asleep, and they need to reposition to recapture a position of comfort.

The inability to communicate and demonstrate those crevasses will affect every promotional effort that you ever make. Why? Countless sales and marketing studies point out that a sale is 90% emotion and only 10% intellect. This being the case, what we want to measure with this strategy is the amount of emotional imbalance which directly correlates with brand loyalty.

As we discussed in the previous chapters, your advertising should be approached from the standpoint of being your clients' ultimate solution. Remember, "Your clients and prospects have a problem they don't want; and, there's a solution they want but don't have."

That being fresh on your mind, let me take you back to the first chapter on headlines for a second. When looking at advertising content, we consciously think of the size of the emotional differential that is being created. Again, No Discernible Disparity, No Sale! Since Headlines are 85% of the reason why someone will decide to read or reject your copy, creating a significant division between you and others in the headline, is absolutely critical.

Allow me to dwell on this portion, for just a moment (in the spirit of creating a more in-depth understanding), so that you can appreciate why this strategy works so well. So, A Small GAP – Produces an Acceptable Differential (i.e., no reason to reposition the leg):

A small GAP is a condition where the differences are disturbing but only to the point where the prospect feels that they can safely ignore the problem. The prospect will typically cope with the problem or initiate a quick fix that allows them to wait until later for a permanent fix.



Here is how it affects you and your business growth: The problem is that you have set your advertising budget, and you have paid for ads, which will not motivate readers to call you ---

IMMEDIATELY! To make matters worse, you are now probably caught up amongst many ads that all look alike, sound alike, and from the reader's

perspective, there is no discernable difference between any of the accountants on the page.

Conversely, A Large GAP Produces An Absolutely Un-acceptable Differential:

When the prospects' perception reaches the point where they deduce that their current conditions are absolutely unacceptable, then there will produce a business opportunity. Further, your message of differentiating yourself from others also solidifies your relationship with your current clients. In effect, you are reinforcing the reasons why they should stay with you rather than be tempted and lured away by someone else's fancy ad.

Your prospects and clients will begin comparing their current professional relationships to the size of the chasm you created in their mind. The emotional divide must also be so unacceptable that action is required to bring them back to a condition of equilibrium (i.e., reposition their leg to regain an acceptable level of comfort).

Mainly, your copy has to create emotional responses in the reader.

Responses that will initiate enough interest that they will need to call you, rather than anyone else. Think of it this way; you want to create a sense of urgency in your ad copy. A client of ours shared an example with us, it's a bit extreme, but it makes the point.

What would you do if you went somewhere, and while you were inside dealing with those things you were intending when you arrived, suddenly you noticed that your car is being towed away? That's a sense of urgency!

We all face situations each day, even if we are not conscious of it, where have to make decisions between different influences. We decide which item to choose based on the discernable (aka the GAP between the benefits of

one over the other); we make those decisions and carry on. Therefore, all your marketing and sales copy should facilitate a prospect's comparative process and when done, leave the prospect with an unacceptable crevasse (ideally the size of the Grand Canyon) between you and your competitor.

In conclusion, according to Pamela Wilson, who is the author of “**Avoid Wishy-Washy Design with Decisive Contrast**,” if you give too much extraneous information to process, your reader becomes too busy looking for differences to make a proper decision; make choices obvious, because a confused mind always says no!

Granted, though Ms. Wilson’s article is written for graphic designers; however, the narrative speaks volumes for clarity and decisiveness as it relates to differentiation. Plus, as an admitted Sesame Street lover, she presents a brilliant insight on demonstrating the differences between your firm and everyone else’s.

Sesame Street had a few regular features that were great training; my favorite was “One of These Things is Not Like the Other.”

In this feature, the screen was divided into four sections. In each section, an image would appear. All of the images would be part of a “group,” except one. Our job as viewers was to decide which image didn’t belong in the group (for example, they may present three images of fruit and the fourth of a vegetable).

“Be direct and decisive; don’t make things different arbitrarily: do it with a purpose in mind. And if you’re going to make them different, make the difference really obvious. Otherwise, it looks like a mistake.”

Additional Reading/Resources:

Avoid Wishy-Washy Design with Decisive Contrast: <https://www.bigbrandsystem.com/avoid-wishy-washy-d...>

Competitive Advantage: <https://stevenvonloren.com/2017/05/competitive-adv...>

Gap Marketing: <https://stevenvonloren.com/2016/01/gj/>

Harvard Business Review: <https://hbr.org/1999/01/creating-new-marketspace>

Maslow's Hierarchy: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

"It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed."

--- Theodore Roosevelt

Brought to you from the desk of, Claudio Gormaz, Co-founder, [StevenVonLoren Marketing Strategists](#); my personal email: gormazca@gmail.com; [Amazon profile](#), [Facebook](#), [Google+](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Twitter](#)

Chapter Five

PROVIDE SPECIFIC BENEFIT "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." --

Thomas Edison

Let's Talk



Other Specific Benefits

To succeed in your practice, you must attract the "best" clients! Therefore, you need to create irresistible value in your marketing to compel clients to take immediate action!

In a quest to understand what drives consumers' decisions, marketers turn to psychology to understand what could make an unforgettable impact, build a reputation, establish authority status, and ultimately, increase sales.

So, let's begin with the obvious, people buy goods and services to solve wants and needs. The challenge becomes, how do you differentiate yourself, your services, from your competitors? What is that you can do to motivate the viewer of your promotional piece to pick up the phone and call you first?

What do you say to get the recipient of your ad to think, "I don't know this provider, but I'm intrigued, and I think I want to take the next step and find out more?"

Before we proceed much further, let's understand how marketing defines wants and needs:

A **"want"** is the desire for products or services that are not necessary, but which consumers wish to own. The five-step consumer decision process includes need identification, information search and processing, identification and evaluation of alternatives, the purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior.

"Needs" range from basic survival needs (common to all human beings) satisfied by necessities, to cultural, intellectual, and social needs (varying from place to place and age group to age group) satisfied by necessities. Needs are finite but, in contrast, wants (which spring from desires or wishes) are boundless.

Marketers are faced with the challenge to fill those wants and needs through the creation and delivery of their expertise via an irresistible, compelling and persuasive offerings. The three major components often utilized by companies when promoting some item are the manipulation of the product, price, or service.

Take for example what would become a thunderous event in 2001 when Apple created the iPod (portable media players and multi-purpose pocket computers). They developed a product that offered better access to music, which looked cool, highly transportable, and allowed the owner to download immense amounts of music. The offering of these products and their services were designed to deliver value to customers, and to either fulfill their needs, satisfy their “wants,” or both. Plus, the successful launch of this product changed both Apple’s fortunes and the consumer’s perceptions of the company --- Essentially, making it the company we know today.

Mashable.com said: The Macintosh, despite increasing popularity with the introduction of the iMac, was still a niche product. After the roll-out of the iPod, consumers saw the Apple as a company where the technology just worked, and you didn't need a Ph.D. to listen to a song.

Marketing is one of the most commonly misunderstood concepts available in modern promotion. A marvelous example of this previous statement occurs when reading a job posting requesting a “marketing” person.

Too often, what is actually being sought is a salesperson and not a marketing person. The thinking appears to be that salespeople and marketing people are interchangeable. In fact, and in theory, both salespeople the marketing people can sell; however, that’s where the similarities end --- principally, each requires different skill sets.

Marketing is the understanding of how and why people think, act, and buy the way they do. At its core, marketing is the understanding of human behavior and psychology; then inserting that knowledge into the successful promotion your professional practice, service, or product.



Therefore, profitable and predictable marketing campaigns consist of finding the “right people” and providing the appropriate message for those peoples’ desires.

As such, understanding some fundamental principles of psychology can take your marketing from good to fantastic, all because the right audience is reading and identifying with specific needs they have.

What is being discussed here is the understanding human behavior and tendencies and NOT manipulation; this said, it is important to stress that a perfect, sure-fire, “guaranteed to attract and convert every prospect within earshot,” formula hasn’t been devised. The goal is to align as many components to enhance the probability of your promotional success.

Robert Rosenthal explains the tactic above in this manner, “The vast majority of marketers aren’t psychologists. But many successful marketers regularly employ psychology in appealing to consumers.

Smart, skillful, honest marketers use psychology legally, ethically, and respectfully to attract and engage consumers, and compel them to buy.”

Here are a few tips Mr. Rosenthal proposes for using psychology to your own marketing campaign’s advantage:

RUN EMOTIONAL IDEAS - Studies have shown emotional and psychological appeals resonate more with consumers than do feature and function appeals. In advertising copy, benefits, which often have a psychological component, generally outsell features. For example, demonstrating how that new computer will improve a potential customer’s life tends to have more influence rather than merely explaining how it works.

Salespeople have long understood the power of emotional appeals. In the 18th century, when the contents of the Anchor Brewery were being auctioned off, the auctioneer said: “We are not here to sell boilers and vats, but the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice.”

REPOSITION YOUR COMPETITION - In **Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind**, Al Ries and Jack Trout delve into the limited slots consumers have in their brain for products and services, and the importance of positioning one's business in the ideal slot.

They also write about repositioning --- changing the position a business occupies in consumers' minds. A prominent example of repositioning the competition is when, for nearly four decades, the Jif brand launched the "Choosy moms choose Jif" peanut butter campaign, competitors were suddenly repositioned as products for mothers who didn't give a damn about the food their kids consumed. What mother didn't want to think of herself as a choosy mom?

PROMOTE EXCLUSIVITY - Near the top of **Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid** sits self-esteem. People want to feel important; like they're part of an exclusive group.

*** That's why advertising copy sometimes says: "We're not for everyone."**

The U.S. Marines ran a very successful campaign for years with the tagline: "The Few. The Proud." Perhaps the most famous modern example of exclusivity in advertising is the American Express tagline: "Membership has its privileges." But to make an exclusivity appeal work, in the long run, marketers must mean what they say. Empty claims tend to be counterproductive.

Everything that has been said so far leads us directly to the concept of powerful content (the things you write about in your promotional pieces, your website, your blog and/or articles, your special reports, etc.). You must establish a connection with your viewer; incidentally, it needs to touch the recipients of your material deep inside them --- you need to bond with people on a visceral level. You want people (after they have read your material), to walk away saying "these guys are one of me; they totally get me!"

Only when you achieve this bond with your readers, you can increase the effectiveness and profitability of special offers, like special discounts for a members-only workshop, special reports, exclusive copies of affiliate podcasts, and so on.

In fact, **Ginny Mineo** also weighs in on the subject of offering specific benefits, She wrote a piece for Hubspot.com titled, "**Marketing Psychology: 10 Revealing Principles of Human Behavior**," where she lists a couple of very subtle, yet very crucial, things that you should never forget when providing specific benefits to your clients.

She confirms that a crucial part of being a great marketer is the understanding of how (and why) people think and act the way they do. Further, it's much harder to create captivating content marketing, for example, if you don't know why it would be fascinating to your audience in the first place.

RECIPROCITY - Introduced by Dr. Robert Cialdini in his book, "**Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion**," the concept of 'reciprocity' is simple -- if someone does something for you, you naturally will want to do something for them.

If you've ever gotten a mint with your bill at a restaurant, you've been a recipient of reciprocity. According to Cialdini, when servers bring a check to their patrons without a mint, the diners will tip according to their perceptions of the service given. With one mint, the tip jumps up 3.3%. Two mints? The tip jumps "through the roof" to roughly 20%.

CLUSTERING - People have a limited amount of space in their short-term memory. In fact, most people can only remember seven pieces of information (plus or minus two pieces in any given situation) at a time.

To cope, most people tend to cluster similar pieces of information together (in this case, the benefits you offer). For example, if you had a whole grocery list of random items, most people would tend to mentally group items into specific categories (dairy, grain, meat, etc.) to remember better what exactly was on the list.

So when you're creating content, keep clustering in mind. How can you design and layout your content to increase memory retention? One way to do it is by grouping similar topics together -- either under numbered bullet points or with different header sizes. Besides being much smoother to scan, your writing will be much

easier to remember and recall down the road -especially if you're creating long lists of content.

SOCIAL PROOF - Most marketers are aware of this concept already, but it was too important to leave out from this list. If you're not familiar with it, social proof is the theory that people will adopt the beliefs or actions of a group of people they like or trust. In other words, it's the "me too" effect. Think of this like an awkward middle school dance -- few people want to be the first one on the dance floor, but once a few people are there, everyone else wants to join in. (Keep in mind, this desire to conform doesn't go away

when you get older and less bashful about your dance moves.)

Allow me to return reciprocity for just a moment. In your marketing, there are a lot of ways to take advantage of reciprocity. It doesn't require a massive budget to give something away; it can be your latest book, an exclusive special report, to your expertise on a complicated subject matter. Even something as simple as a hand-written note can go a long way in establishing mutual benefit. Just be sure you're giving away the free thing before you ask for something in return.

"What's In It for Me?"

According to **Amy Bucher**, Ph.D., "there's a concept in sales and marketing called the WIFFM ('whiff 'em'), meaning 'what's in it for me?' Successfully getting someone to purchase your product or service depends on their believing that there's a valuable benefit for them if they do so. The harder someone has to work to figure out the WIFFM, the less compelling your sales pitch will be.



Skillful marketers have the ability to figure out the unique value proposition(s) of their product, and to articulate them in simple and powerful ways which are easily communicated and memorable. The best marketers do thorough research and rely on cues to tell them what a target's priorities are, and then tailor the WIFFM accordingly, so it's

as relevant as possible."

Webmagazine.com describes WIIFM brilliantly:

"One thing is for sure, when your website, display ad, radio spot does not tell people what you can do for them, and the competition does, you are at a competitive disadvantage. Never require the reader to figure out your message!"

The fact is that you are competing in an arena where there are multiple competitors for a finite number of available clients. How you design your ad will make the difference between an investment in attracting more clients, and an item of expenditure that destroys your return on investment ratio.

In fact, highly successful and profitable promotional pieces share very specific things in common. Though many media forums provide the essential elements of these critical ingredients, too often, they [the media outlets] simply offer some variation of a "cookie-cutter," "pre-packaged" formula for "advertising success." Hence, your success depends on your input!

As we've been discussing all along, you must approach your promotional message from the standpoint of, "your client has a problem they don't want; and, there's a solution out there they want, but they don't have." If you want to increase the profitability of your promotional piece significantly, you must present the specific advantages in this format.

Tell them [prospective and future clients] what's in it for them. The only thing potential clients want to know is how they will benefit from using your services.

In another example, as a highly regarded and excellent accounting professional, it is in your best interest to let as many people as possible know about your particular skills. Therefore, when you provide your "superior service," incentivize your client with the value they can expect to receive from you.

It's an interesting fact that humans have one thing in particular when shopping for anything. We all buy based on our own self-interests --- you must speak to that common denominator.

By speaking to people's self-interest, you as the service provider, reach them more effectively than by just pushing your own agenda. There is a well-established and

wisdom-rich axiom that states that “everyone wants to buy, no one wants to be sold!” Honestly, it’s in your best interest to know what your future and current clients want and lead with that knowledge in your promotional pieces.

Recently, I read an excellent article in Pixellava.com which illustrates the subject beautifully. They state that WIIFM is the basic idea that we are all, by nature, driven by self-interest. To get someone's attention, your first goal is to demonstrate how your offer benefits them. Now combine that with the fact that advertising is aspirational, and you have a recipe for creating powerful promotions.

The article demonstrates the point this way:

Sarah is a 30-something mom with a full-time job. Her house is clean, but cluttered. One day the Ikea catalog arrives, and as soon as the little one is in bed, Sarah luxuriates in leafing through the glossy pages enjoying looking at the clean, well-organized homes. Hmm, that bookshelf with the sisal baskets would keep toys off the floor but leave them easy to get to. Soon enough she's typing in her credit card information.

Ikea's goal is to sell things, but instead of shouting "Buy my thing, it's great!" they provide a solution that helps Sarah towards her aspiration of being a together mom with an orderly home. What's the WIIFM factor for Sarah to pick up that catalog? Browsing the high-quality images is enjoyable, and there is satisfaction in finding something that will improve her home for her family.

In fact, you may also direct clients to your website to take advantage of special offers and promotion on your print ads. Your print ad may say something like: "Check out our website and read what people just like you say about us... While you're there, review our special offers." At the end of testimonial section, invite them to ask questions or make suggestions to improve their experience; because the only way you can answer those essential accounting questions, is if they provide you with their e-mail information, their first and last names, etc.

* Again, the information provided in the previous paragraph works best with more than intuitive camaraderie with the recipient of your promotional piece. Use the company like Harley-Davidson as a practical example of that gut-connection with your reader. There are people walking around with Harley-Davidson tattoos on

their bodies; many of whom do not even own the product --- now that's an intuitive relationship.

After they [the respondent(s)] reply, within seconds, they will receive a return email (from you) with valuable answers. Perhaps you can include an informative special report that gives them a bit more information about their particular topic, as a gift for asking such a great question or make such a useful suggestion. It will also include a warm letter of introduction from you and your assistant (if the situation applies).

To conclude, offering discounts and special incentives for your services can be a powerful weapon in your conversion arsenal to drive client loyalty. But, used haphazardly, you can do significant damage to your brand or, worse, become unprofitable.

Offers and discounts aren't right for every business. If you start with a clear goal in mind, a firm understanding of the brand, and willingness to experiment, you can most effectively use offers to meet your objectives, build client loyalty, and increase revenues.

Further, follow up is critical for building your accounting business. Very likely clients are turning to your promotional piece to make an informed decision about whom to use, and who provides the most significant benefit to them.

By effectively utilizing your website and following-up with email, you will provide the information your clients are looking for to make an informed decision quickly. Best of all, the whole process can all be fully automated. Automation creates an immediate impact and is different than what other accountants do to endear themselves to future clients.

Additional Reading/Resources:

Amy Bucher - <http://www.amybucherphd.com/winning-on-a-wiifm/>

Ginny Mineo - <https://twitter.com/ginnymineo>

Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion <https://www.amazon.com/Influence-Psychology-Persua...> Marketing Psychology: 10 Revealing Principles of Human Behavior <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/psychology-mark...>

Maslow's hierarchy - <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Pixel Lava - <https://www.pixellava.com/blog/wiifm-using-simple-...>

Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind <https://www.amazon.com/Positioning-Battle-Your-Al-...>

5 Psychological Tactics Marketers Use To Influence Consumer Behavior <https://www.fastcompany.com/3032675/5-psychologica...>

"You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you." -- Dale Carnegie

Brought to you from the desk of, Steven Cox, Co-founder, [StevenVonLoren Marketing Strategists](#); my personal email: stevenvonloren@gmail.com; [Amazon profile](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#)

Chapter Six

CALL TO ACTION "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." --
Thomas Edison

Let's Talk



Create Platforms So Clients Call You Now!

You want to succeed in your practice? You must induce your viewer to take action and call you immediately.

As you have seen/read in the previous chapters, the entire point of advertising is to have your viewer pick up the phone and call you. Something in your promotional piece has to prompt the recipient to make a decision.

If you have approached your advertising from the standpoint of: "your client has a problem they don't want, and you have a solution they want but don't have," then your next step is to facilitate the "solution" process.

As you read on, we will demonstrate how you can make this process works smoothly and efficiently; more importantly, makes a substantial impact on your conversion rate.

The aforementioned step is known as "a call-to-action" (CTA). A CTA is a statement designed to get an immediate response from the person reading or hearing your ad. Your CTA is an integral part of a marketing strategy; because you want your target market to respond through action.

There is much written on the subject, with varying opinions, about when a call-to-action should be included in your promotional piece. Many would argue that placing your CTA at the end of your advertising piece is best; others believe in the theory of small "hooks" throughout the promotional piece. Much of this will depend upon the medium you are using to promote your services.

CTAs tell your visitors what actions to take, what path to travel through your website, "how to accomplish their goals!" Ultimately, they are designed to increase

your promotional pieces' conversion rates, clickthrough rates (if we're discussing an ad on your website), quantity and quality of your leads.

However, you must include a CTA in your promotional pieces. **Mindy Lilyquist** wrote an insightful article titled "**What is a call to action and how I make one?**" In her article she states that "many business owners leave calls to action out of their marketing materials or sales pitches usually for one of two reasons:

- 1) They believe that the prospect already knows what to do if they're interested in learning more, or
- 2) Several business owners are concerned that calls to action are obnoxious.

Whatever the reason, leaving CTAs out can mean losing money. Calls to action are essential in directing a prospect to the next step of the sales funnel or process."

Ms. Lilyquist stresses that "it is essential for businesses not to assume that the target audience automatically knows what is expected of them. You'll get more significant results by being clear about what the prospect needs to do. Make sure each page of your website, each sales conversation, and every piece of printed material (i.e., direct mail or brochures) contains a clearly defined and easily identifiable call to action. For ideas, check out established businesses marketing materials and websites to see how they convey their call to action.

PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS FOR CTAs

Whenever we go to a page on a site, we expect some form of direction concerning what to do next. And the same is true for your potential clients. They want something on the page that'll satisfy them on a psychological level.

According to **WebpageFX** Incorporated, there are four main parts to the psychology behind calls to action, and when you know them, you can make your CTAs more effective than ever before.

Call to action creates a sense of anticipation. On the Internet, for example, anticipation begins the moment some lands on a page. Whenever they start

reading, skimming, watching, or whatever they're doing, some part of them is anticipating a payoff based on what they want to know.

It's like a comedian telling a joke — they have to go through the setup before they deliver the punchline. If the setup takes too long, people lose interest. And if the punchline comes too soon, it won't have the same effect. The key is building the anticipation of your customers to the point where you've given them enough information and you know you can wrap it up.

Most people anticipate positive events — it's just how the brain works. That means you can get the most out of anticipation by creating a positive experience for your user.

Using agreeable language in your text, a comfortable design scheme for your page and a positively-worded CTA are all ways that you can make the most of your readers' anticipation. And agreeable language doesn't have to pander to an audience — you can state something that you know your demographic will accept.

When you have anticipation, you also have an expectation. An audience expects a punchline at the end of a joke. A reader expects a resolution at the end of a story. And your readers expect a call to action at the end of your post. Satisfying these expectations is what makes the anticipation worthwhile.

The thinking behind this is the same as the psychological principle of a "perceptual set," and it means that people have a set of expectations based on the context of what they see.

Similarly, your website's visitors have a set of expectations when they read a page. If it's a signup page, they expect a CTA that says something like

"Sign Up." If it's a product page, they expect a CTA like "Add to Cart" or

"Buy Now."

Basically, no matter what page a user visits, they expect to be told what they can do next in the context of the page they're reading.

The best way to satisfy a visitor's expectation of a CTA is to give them one. But it shouldn't just be pure text — it has to jive with the rest of your page contextually, and it has to stick out against the backdrop of the rest of your site.

You can do this by using big buttons in an intense color that's noticeably different from the rest of your website's color scheme, like red.

When you have anticipation and expectation, you also need to have a reward. In this case, the reward is having the viewers' expectation satisfied by finding (and clicking) on your CTA.

A reward is one of the most fundamental functions of the human brain, and it's one of the most satisfying experiences of being a person. It's also a considerable part of motivating people to do pretty much anything, including their jobs. And for some reason, reward seems to be more intense with buttons.

Also, use rewarding language on your CTA. Short, simple, and practical statements that use words like "get," "start," and "discover" provide a sense of excitement that capitalizes on a user's anticipation, satisfies their expectations, and drives them to get their reward.

Last, promise the user that they'll get something for their time. Everyone loves a little somethin'-somethin' for free, whether it's a trial of your software or a PDF download.

Your focus on the user doesn't always have to be about a user's experience with your product, service, or company — you can reflect your attention in your actual text. The most common way to do that is to address the reader in what you're writing.

The idea (in theory) is that you set the reader up by having a conversation

with them (in first-person), and then you give them a choice to click your CTA. So while you're directly addressing the reader on your page, your CTA is you backing up, handing the reader the controls, and letting them decide for themselves.



⚙️ **Homes for sale?**
Explore properties like a pro.

Start Right Now

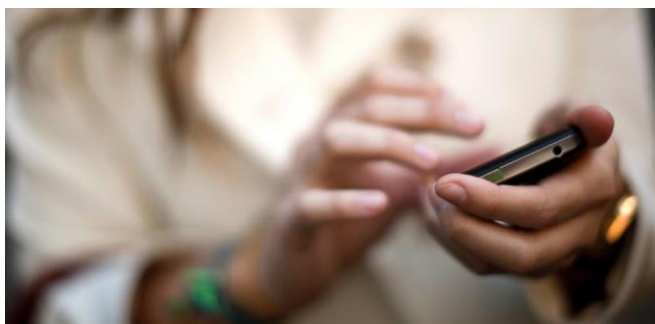
CTAs work best when they're not

complicated. Don't make your potential clients go through a maze or jump through hoops. While offering an option (i.e., "Call or email us") is good, don't give them so many options or make it difficult for them to follow through on what you want them to do."

- Still not convinced? Protocol80.com provides exceptional statistics regarding the benefits of CTAs to your advertising. This is what they have to say about "website and blog post advertising:
- More than 90% of visitors who read your headline also read your CTA copy. (source [Unbounce](#))
- Emails with a single call-to-action increased clicks 371% and sales 1617%. ([WordStream](#))
- Adding CTAs to your Facebook page can increase click-through rate by 285%. ([AdRoll](#))
- By providing visitors an informational video on your services before presenting a CTA, [Kimberly Snyder](#) increased conversions by 144%. ([QuickSprout](#))
- For KISSmetrics, a CTA within a video gets 380% more clicks than their normal sidebar CTAs. ([QuickSprout](#))
 - [Grow & Convert](#) estimates conversion rates for certain CTA locations:
 - Sidebar: 0.5 - 1.5%
 - Generic, end-of-post: 0.5 - 1.5%
 - Pop-ups: 1 - 8%
 - Sliders and bars: 1 - 5%

- Welcome gates: 10 - 25%
- Featurebox: 3 - 9%
- Navbar: varies
- **Brafton** made design changes for a client that focused on relevant, wellplaced CTAs.
- **HubSpot** found that anchor text CTAs increased conversion rates by 121%.
- **ContentVerve** saw a 90% increase in click-through rate by using firstperson phrasing: "Start my free 30 day trial" vs. "Start your free 30 day trial."
- Helzberg Diamonds saw a 26% increase in clicks by adding an arrow icon to their CTA buttons. (**Marketing Tech Blog**)
- SAP found that orange CTAs boosted their conversion rate over 32.5%. (**QuickSprout**)
- Performable found that red CTAs boosted their conversion rate by 21%. (**QuickSprout**)
- Making CTAs look like buttons created a 45% boost in clicks for CreateDebate.com. (**Copyblogger**)
- Personalized CTAs convert 42% more visitors into leads than untargeted CTAs. (**HubSpot**)
- Neil Patel found that users prefer to learn about the offer before clicking a CTA - placing his CTA above the fold decreased conversions by 17%. (**QuickSprout**)
- Reducing clutter around their CTA increased Open Mile's conversion rate by 232%. (**VWO**)
- FriendBuy increased signups by 34% by adding anxiety-reducing content and explaining key benefits next to their CTA. (**Copyblogger**)
- **Brafton** made design changes for a client that focused on relevant, wellplaced CTAs.
 - Adding CTA buttons to article templates increased revenue by 83% in one month.
 - E-commerce conversion rate increased 22% quarter over quarter. Average order value for blog readers increased 49% quarter over quarter.

What works for other people may not work for you - and what works for you may be something no one else has tried. Successful CTAs require a ton of experimentation, A/B testing, and a willingness to keep trying new things, even when you're getting "good" results. "Good" can always be better."



Finally, your CTAs primary function and design is to get your audience to call (ideally, immediately!!). So, if your CTA does what it is supposed to do, have an end goal for each call-to action and how that call-to-

action may fit with other parts of your marketing plan or get them into your sales funnel.

For example,

- You may have a call to action to get a free special report, e-book, a book from an industry leader, etc. by signing up for your email list, which is the initial goal.
- Clearly explain what the viewer needs to do to respond (i.e., Subscribe here).
- Offer a compelling reason for the client to engage now or by the deadline (i.e., this report is free only for the next 24 hours).

As you can see from these examples, the goal is to have your viewer take action. A call to action requires a series of steps within the ultimate goal of creating a sale. Therefore, focus on benefits of taking action (i.e., save money now). Offer an "automatic upgrade": If you order within the next 30 days, receive an automatic upgrade to the premium package. Use discount deadline such as "Order by the end of the week to receive 10% off."

Like many other marketing strategies, testing different options ensures you're getting maximum results. The same is true with calls to action. For example, do you get more email sign-ups with "Subscribe Now" or "Get Your Free Report Now?" Test out a variety of options, switching them out one a time and then checking to see if one leads to more responses and sales than another.

I know that I make this sound simple; maybe it's because we've done so many, for so many years. But if you need help, we will gladly assist you with whatever your firm needs. Our firm is responsible for the creation of multiple successful marketing campaigns for a great many firms over the last three decades.

Additional Reading/Resources

AdRoll: <http://blog.adroll.com/content/cta-infographic.pn>

Brafton: <https://www.brafton.com/blog/content-marketing/whe...>

ContentVerve: <http://contentverve.com/10-call-to-action-case-stu...>

Copyblogger: <https://www.copyblogger.com/call-to-action-buttons...>

Grow & Convert: <https://growandconvert.com/conversion-rate-optimiz...>

HubSpot: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/blog-anchor-tex...>

Kimberly Snyder: <https://kimberlysnyder.com/>

Marketing Tech Blog: <https://martech.zone/wpcontent/uploads/2012/03/ca...>

Mindy Lilyquist: <https://www.thebalance.com/call-to-action-1794380>

Protocol 80.com: <https://www.protocol80.com/blog/16-kick-ass-call-t...>

QuickSprout: <https://www.quicksprout.com/2013/03/14/click-here-...>

Unbounce: <https://unbounce.com/landing-pages/threats-to-your...>

VWO: <https://vwo.com/blog/call-to-action-buttons-ultima...>

WordStream: <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2015/06/10/digi...>

"Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go." -- T.S. Eliot

We're Here To Help You!

At Chain Reactions Marketing® we teach Accountants superior Sales & Marketing strategies that grow their businesses. They learn how to fine-tune their brand to dominate their marketplace. You'll learn how to establish Endorsement Marketing relationships and how to motivate your competitor's best clients to switch alliances and use your firm instead.

Through our Endorsement Partnership with, Steven Cox and Claudio Gormaz, we have access to an incredible wealth of knowledge and proven strategies that our collective clients are using everyday to generate high quality leads and revenues.

Steven and Claudio's problem-solving articles have been featured in over 103 publications such as Entrepreneur Magazine, The Washington Post, Plastic Surgery Products, Chiropractic Economics, Attorney at Law and others.

Our single-minded goal is to elevate our clients so that they can realize their dreams.

We want to be your ally for success. To learn how we can work together, just send me an email at the address below so we can start a conversation.

To your success,

John Weisenberger

Founder, Chain Reactions Marketing®

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"You get a competitive edge by doing something every day your competition don't or won't." --- Billy Cox