



"Successful marketing begins with understanding why and how consumers behave as they do."

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Report Begins After This Brief Message:

"Are You Watching Your Website Counter Climb Higher And Higher - Yet With No Sales To Prove Anyone Was Actually There?"

"Who Else Wants To See Their Stale Traffic Morph Into Cash In Your Bank Account - With A Professionally Written Sales Letter From The Cheapest, Smooth-Penned, Copywriter Online"

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"Wow! I really think you're a copywriting genius!" - **June Yeap** of InstanteBizSaver.com

"Your sales letters are impecable, Stephen. When I first read your magic tricks sales letter, it inspired me to buy more than 99% of other sales materials I read." - **Charles Lewis**, author of Complete Online Education

My name is Stephen Dean and I can only take on a handful of projects each month - they go fast! (That's what I get for being the cheapest copywriter online.) [Get your project in to me today so you don't have to wait!](#)

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<http://www.hdcreations.com/stephendean>

Inside The Purchase Process

By Stephen Dean
the eBizKnowItAll
February 1, 2002

▶ "If you learn how to walk your customer through step 1... step 2... step 3... and right up to step 4 you will watch your sales ratio go through the roof."



Photo: The Green WaterMelon ready to teach his loyal readers about the "Purchase Process"

Listen for a moment - this is life changing.

The fourth step in the customer purchase process is buying the product. If you learn to walk your customer through step 1... step 2... step 3 and right up to step 4 you will watch your sales ratio go through the roof. Follow up with step 5 and you will have a residual income for life. Ladies and gentleman, it all starts with your copywriting.

How many times have you been told, "Know your customer?" Knowing your customer means knowing their background, their motives, etc. But it also means knowing the thought process that all customers and potential customers go through. We call this the Purchase Process. Let me introduce it to you:

The Purchase Process. The Purchase Process is made up of 5 steps that the customer goes through. And they are: Recognizing a Problem, Searching for Alternatives (Internally and externally), evaluating alternatives, making the purchase decision, and purchase anxiety. Know those five steps... and you can lead people from the visitor line to the customer line.

Step 1: Recognizing a Problem

It is amazing that "selling" can be so hard. Because the truth is, people want to buy things. And that is why we buy based on emotion - not logic. We as a race, have the drive to want more. Granted, we purchase our basic needs of survival: shelter and food. It is easy to rationalize our needs for what is truly needed. But think about how often we "rationalize" and "justify" the purchase of things that are not needed.

There are three rationalizations for buying a product. Rationalization one, and we already talked about this, is because we realize we may not live longer without making the purchase - i.e.

paying for our daily bread.

Rationalization two is buying a product out of fear. For example, if you're afraid the sky might fall down you might buy an industrial strength umbrella to save your life. Sometimes this rationalization can turn out to be a necessity - sometimes it is an overly cautious excuse to make a purchase.

Which brings us to rationalization three, which is the most irrational reason of them of all. The third rationalization is simply that we do not have it. I don't need Bill Cosby's new book Cosbyology... but I also do not have it. And by golly, I must have it.

What rationalization does your product fall under? Rationalization one (R1), two (R2), or three (R3)?

If it's R1, well then you have it made. Your customer needs you. It will take less convincing, just more convenience to capture loyal customers.

All I can say for someone who falls under R2 is I hope you're an honest person. Your job is to solve a person's fear. Which also means, creating the fear in your ad copy. If I ever purchase dehydrated water from you because you threaten me with the latest H2O statistics - I will be very upset. Your job is only a bit more troublesome than R1 - your customer will believe that they need your product, as long as they believe that there truly is something to fear.

And the hardest job of them all - is writing ad copy for R3. Buying something you do not need is a guilty pleasure. If a customer is going to abuse this privilege with your product, there's going to have to be some GREAT convincing going on.

Our job is to guide the reader into thinking through one of the three rationalizations. And the trick to doing that every time - is presenting this potential customer with a problem. To get a customer to start the Purchase Process, we must get them to the first step: Recognizing a problem.

PRESENTING A PROBLEM

Each rationalization requires a problem to be presented. Problems make for good drama. A problem will draw a reader to start reading your ad copy; and while we're on it, possibly to finish reading your ad copy as well. So give the problem early. Here is a three sentence

template for giving a problem every time:

[begin template]

There's a problem - there are way too many [books, videos, dishwashing liquids? specify for your product] out there that don't live up to the name. And they are wasting people's time. I am sick of it - and here is my solution:

*** Your Product Name ***

[end template.]

Start your sales letter off with that paragraph and you will set the stage. Now the reader is involved - they recognize the problem, "[books] out there that don't live up to the name." The reader WANTS your product to be the solution - they will keep reading to find out if it is.

You can't start off every sales letter you write with that paragraph. Eventually, you will have to create your own. The easiest way to do this is to realize your customers' problem and live in it. Put yourself in a world without your product - and explain what is missing and what is wrong. I call this the, "Actual Situation."

Here is an example from a sales letter I wrote for a product of mine:

"The problem is too clear - there are way too many tricks out there that don't make people freak out. They're all over the Internet, free magic tricks that no one wants to watch. David Blaine did it right. His tricks got reactions. Magic should get REACTION."

The "actual situation" in that letter is less than ideal. I took my product out of the scene - and saw that what was left were lame magic tricks, and I painted that picture for them.

It is the same for each rationalization. There's a problem - you can't live without food (Kraft Mac & Cheese). There's a problem - mosquitoes are everywhere (Mosquito Repellent). There's a problem - they don't make entertainers like they used to (Cosbyology). You can present each rationalization in the same way - and begin your sales letter with a clear purpose.

After you present the problem, the rest of the sales letter will be painting the "ideal situation." You've given the reader a problem - now you're announcing that you are the solution. But...

Do you think they're going to take your word for it? Not a chance.

To Be Continued...

**Take a break from Inside The
Purchase Process to read this article
on Pricing Strategy...**

**Pricing
Your
Products**

By Stephen Dean
the eBizKnowItAll
February 25, 2002

▶ "If you are selling a unique product, a price increase of 30% could go unnoticed by your customers and make you thousands more by the end of the year."

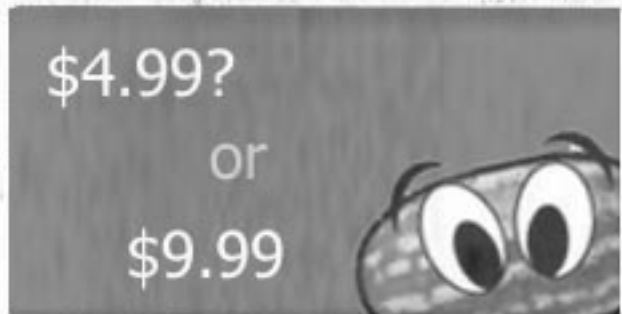


Photo: Pricing Strategy is contemplated by the Green WaterMelon for his readers.

Look - changing the price of your product by just a few dollars could make you thousands in the long term. There's no reason to leave the amount of money you make on each sale up to guesswork! If you are selling a unique product, a price increase of 30% could go unnoticed by your customers and make you thousands more by the end of the year. Yes, of 30%.

The truth is, reader, that most persons do not have a solid idea of what things should cost. Think about it for a second - how much does the Ketchup cost at your local grocery store (this assuming you buy Ketchup!)? Say a 36. Oz bottle of Heinz. \$1.99? \$2.99? \$3.99? Would any of those prices surprise you?

The average price for a 36 Oz. Bottle of Heinz Ketchup where I live is \$2.49. But the point is most people, given a few options, will have a hard time coming up with the right price. Ever watched the "Price is Right" with Bob Barker? And this is even for items that they purchase routinely.

There is a zone in which a product can fit in comfortably. Take pizza for example, not the kind you buy at the grocers freezer, but straight-from-the-restaurant pizza. There is a definite price zone that a pizza falls into. And customers DO have a good feel of what this zone is.

For example, I can see myself buying a pizza at a price anywhere from \$10 to \$35. I could buy a \$35 large pizza at a nice sit down

restaurant. I could buy the same sized pizza for \$10 at a take out shop. I could even buy a pizza that was only one fourth the size of that same ten-dollar pizza for \$15 if I was at a gourmet pizza shop. Because this is a zone that I am comfortable with for my pizza.

If you tried to sell me an entire pizza for just \$5, I'd say "What's wrong with it?" And I'd probably be too suspicious to go for it. Likewise, if you charged me much more than \$35 for a pizza, I may accuse you of highway robbery. Both of those numbers are out of my zone. I WANT to pay between \$10 and \$35 for my pizza.



"A price increase of 30% could go unnoticed by your customers and make you thousands more by the end of the year. Yes, of 30%."

Do you remember me writing that at the start of this article? Your product has a price zone. Figure out that price zone, and you are free to roam about.

I recently took Card Hijinks, a product I sell at magictrickman.com, and DOUBLED the price only to find that I was still within my zone. The only difference is, I'm now making twice as much money.

All products have a bit of room to maneuver. But even within your zone - there is a place your product belongs. I wouldn't find a "Large Take Out" pizza at the high end of the price zone because the product and service doesn't warrant that. The fact that the pizza is "Take Out," declares the products worth.

Declaring Your Products Worth

Dominoes Pizza does not cost \$35. Why? Because they don't want to sell a \$35 pizza. Their market is cheap "Take Out" pizza that anyone can afford.

You CHOOSE your price.

The way Dominoes "Packages" their pizza reflects their chosen price. And I don't mean the box they put the pizza in before they deliver it. I mean their entire operation. The fact that they DO deliver.

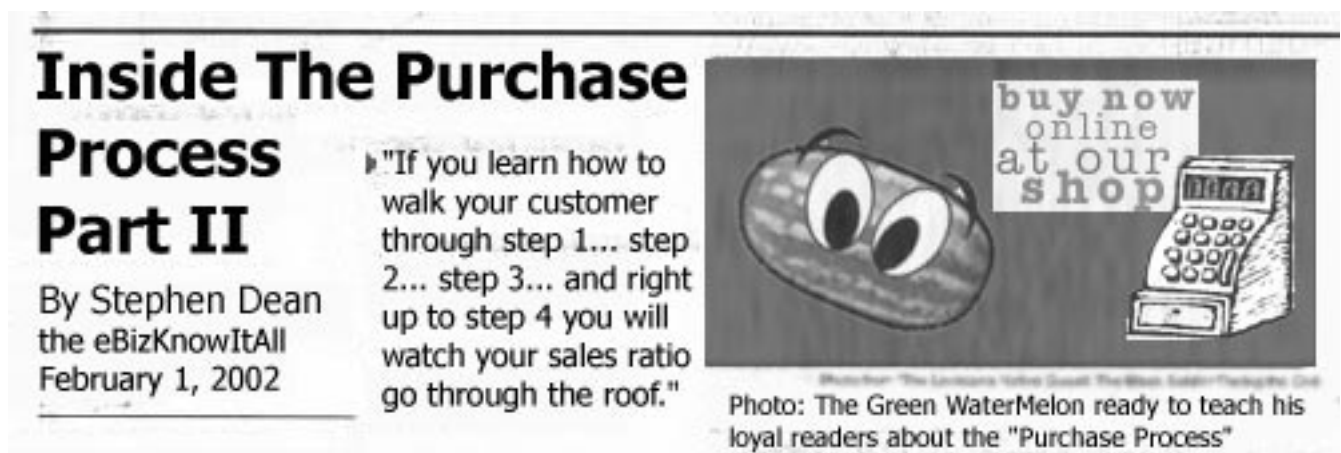
The fact that don't have a place for you to eat inside. The fact that they sell soft drinks by the 2 liter instead of by the glass.

Package your product to reflect the price you want to choose. Do you want to be priced like a Dominoes Pizza? or Gourmet? Your web site will reflect that choice.

A Dominoes Pizza web site consists of the bare essentials. A mini-site with a sales letter and a bunch of "great" bonuses at the end.

A Gourmet web site does not stop impressing the customer. Whether it be through great web design, great navigation, free information that is worth reading, outstanding ad copy, or whatever - it must impress the customer undoubtedly. Do that, and you can reach the high end of your product's price zone.

And now back to Inside The Purchase Process...



Inside The Purchase Process
Part II
By Stephen Dean
the eBizKnowItAll
February 1, 2002

► "If you learn how to walk your customer through step 1... step 2... step 3... and right up to step 4 you will watch your sales ratio go through the roof."

buy now
online
at our
shop

Photo: The Green WaterMelon ready to teach his loyal readers about the "Purchase Process"

You told them to take your word for it. You've told them, "My product will solve your problems." Do you think they're going to take your word for it? It's doubtful.

Chances are, they are going to look around before committing to you. This means going through an Internal and External search to find alternatives, and evaluating those alternatives against your solution. You better learn how to fight alternatives - or you'll be blown out by your competition.

Step 2: Searching for Alternatives

When a customer finds a product they are interested in buying, they don't always jump on it. It is more practical for them to evaluate all of their options. Commencing in an internal search, a question

runs through their mind: "Where have I seen something like this before?"

The internal search takes place within the mind. A recollection of past memories that relate to the situation. For example, what comes to mind when I say, "Make money placing tiny classified ads?" Does a certain infomercial come to mind? Starring Don Lapri, the millionaire that started from his tiny one bedroom apartment?

Most entrepreneurs have seen this guy at one time or another on their Television set. The internal search is most always used - and is sufficient for frequently purchased or low-risk items.

What if I was selling a "Make money placing tiny classified ads" package? While looking into my product, you immediately start your internal search. Your thought process kicks in, "I've seen something like this before - this is just like Don's package!" That is how the Internal Search works for the customer.

The external search is used when the internal search is not sufficient. Usually for high risk products - when a wrong decision could have heavy consequences. An external search comes from outside of the individual person. Think of it as a customer researching before buying. Or for example, actually going back to the television to find the Don Lapri infomercial to match it up against my product.

The external search, like the internal search, is just another way of checking out the competition. And if you are going to survive, you need to make sure you've outdone your competitors. The customer is going to evaluate the alternatives - blow the alternatives out of the water.

Step 3: Alternative Evaluation

Your customers are going to check out your competition. If you're going to battle them, you must know who they are.

Know your marketplace. Read, listen, and/or watch everything you can about your competition. Because the best way to take on the competition is to acknowledge them, say they are great, and say you are better.

Back to my Classified Ads Product. In my example, they started their internal search and decided that they should go check out Don Lapri's infomercial again first. They've left your product for a while to check out the competition. This is very important in the battle against your competition. Are you ready?

Let them know that checking out the competition is a waste of time.

You should know your competition. If I was really selling "Make Money Placing Tiny Classified Ads," I would have watched that infomercial 46 times to learn everything I could about it - noting it's strengths and weaknesses in comparison to my product. When I'm ready to sit down with my ad copy, I put this into my mind, "Tame the strengths, attack the weaknesses."

It's been proven, customers are more likely to purchase when you surprise them with honesty. Admit the strengths of your competitor's product. Admit the weaknesses in your own. And say, "But." I would write:

"You may have seen similar products on television next to beautiful women. And I've never been on TV a day in my life. But I have been placing classified ads for over 10 years, I've made a fortune doing it, and I can show you how I did it without saying 'You have 60 seconds left to order.'"

Throwing that into the body of my copy, I have just told the reader that, "Checking out the competition is a waste of time. I already did. They are good. We are better." That statement thrusts a major blow into both the internal and external search. They are beginning to be loyal to your product.

Of course, that doesn't mean they are going to buy. They are not sold yet. It would still be easier to just... not make a decision at all. If they don't make a choice - they can't make a wrong choice. You need to make sure they stay at the purchase table. And you need to make sure you read the final segment of this three article series on the Purchase Process.

To Be Continued...

**Take a break from Inside The
Purchase Process to read this article
on writing tempo...**

Short Sentences

By Stephen Dean
the eBizKnowItAll
February 1, 2002

"Convicts are not the only ones who like Short Sentences."



Photo: The Green WaterMelon pleading with his readers to use Short Sentences.

Make no mistake, visitors to your site are not determined to read your entire ad copy. Nor are they determined to skim it. You only have a small window of time in which to grab their attention, interest, and curiosity. And the first way to lose that window is to use long, time consuming sentences. Let me tell you something...

Convicts are not the only ones who like Short Sentences.

The world has become very fast paced. The Internet is even faster than that. And your sales letter MUST keep the pace. That means keep your sentences, your paragraphs, and your ideas short. Let's take a look at a sales letter I wrote for one of my products, The Tombstone Sales Letter:

First off, if you think I'm joking - I'm not. There really is such a thing as the Tombstone Sales Letter and it really has mastered the art of catching emotion. It's down to a science.

First sentence, 9 words. Second sentence, 21 words. Third sentence, 5 words. Twenty-one words in the second sentence? That doesn't sound short? Let's look at the second paragraph of the same letter:

Second, you better throw everything you've "learned" about writing sales letters into the back of your head and save it for a rainy day. Because this is brand new. No longer will you sit in front of a blank screen trying to figure out how to put emotion into your sales letter.

First sentence, 24 words. Second sentence, 5 words. Third sentence, 23 words. Twenty-four and twenty-three word sentences? That doesn't sound right.

Well, look again. It goes like this: short sentence (9 words), long

sentence (21 words), short sentence (5 words), long sentence (24 words), short sentence (5 words), long sentence (23 words).

You may not have been searching for patterns since elementary school... but did you see the pattern?

For writing in general, you should mix up your sentence structure. For writing ad copy specifically, you should move between "short sentence, long sentence" frequently. This picks up the tempo of the reading.

I'm sure you've heard the saying, "Time flies when you're having fun." Now, I don't know if reading ad copy is considered fun- but if the tempo of the writing is quick, chances are the reader won't mind continuing with the letter. On the other hand, if the writing is heavy and time consuming, you might as well try and make a 6 year old sit through church. So that's why they invented "Sunday School."

This same idea can be applied to paragraphs as well. I remember when I was in high school; I was taught that every paragraph should have 5 sentences. And this was the rule that I broke more than any other. Above, I showed you the first two paragraphs to a sales letter that I wrote. Both paragraphs had only three sentences. If you look at the entire sales letter, very rarely do I have a paragraph with five sentences. Because the *tempo*... is quick.

Visitors are not looking for large paragraphs to delve into. They don't want to jump into anything that will require too much effort. Keep the paragraphs short and they will seem less obtrusive and more inviting. "Skimmers" will find a place to latch back onto.

A good rule of thumb is to have one idea for each paragraph. Let's take a look at another paragraph from the sales letter:

Others have preached emotion. The Tombstone Sales Letter teaches it.

Yes, those two sentences were the entire paragraph. And still I achieved exactly what I was going for - to convey one idea in one short paragraph, "The Tombstone Sales Letter teaches emotion."

The Internet is a fast world. You only have a short amount of time to reach your customer. Short sentences, paragraphs, and ideas are the best way to get it done right. And this four sentence paragraph... has just ended.

**And now back to
Inside The Purchase Process...**

Inside The Purchase Process

Part III

By Stephen Dean
the eBizKnowItAll
February 1, 2002

▶ "If you learn how to walk your customer through step 1... step 2... step 3... and right up to step 4 you will watch your sales ratio go through the roof."



Photo: The Green WaterMelon ready to teach his loyal readers about the "Purchase Process"

If you don't jump, you can't fall. It is easier for a customer to just not make a decision than it is to risk making a wrong decision. Therefore, the easiest thing to do for the customer may just be to walk away instead of buying your product. That's not good for your business. And if you have a good product, it's not good for them either.

Step 4: Making the purchase decision

It's proven, when a customer is on the verge of buying it is often the extra incentives that pushes he or she over the edge.

Find a Sales Letter and read it. I could make a bet for a thousand dollars that the Sales Letter you found ends with "bonuses" for buying the product. And I would come out on top of that bet 99% of the time. Who doesn't give away bonuses? How many sales letters have you seen without bonuses at the end? Bonuses are incentives and they are at the end of every sales letter for a reason. Incentives often give the last push towards the purchase.

Say I've read your sales letter, I know about your product, and I've been checking out the alternatives. Your product pops back into my mind, for whatever reason. I go back to read your sales letter - I read the incentives to buy whatever you are selling... I think for a second... and "Ok, I'm going to get it."

The bonuses, the incentives, are that powerful. But before you go adding the story you wrote in the 9th grade as a bonus to your info product on building a deck, listen up for a minute.

Adding incentives does not mean adding 17 bonuses to the end of your sales letter. It means adding a few quality bonuses for your reader to drool over. In fact, some of my best sales letters have only had one bonus.

Bonuses are not just anything you can "find around the house." Incentives need to push the customer over the edge to buy your product. The bonuses should be DIRECTLY related to what you are selling. Say you do have an info product on building a deck - why not throw in a free report on what needs to be done to make sure the deck remains in great shape for years to come. You know the customer is already interested in your product - if you can throw in a bonus that he or she will be equally interested in, chances are you will have found your incentive. Chances are you'll push them over the edge.

Step 5: PURCHASE ANXIETY

There are two ways to look at this situation. Once you get the customers money, you've done your job. Games over. Or, once they buy your product, you make your customer feel that they have made the right choice so that they will come BACK to you to make more purchases. If you want to be in business long term, please choose option number 2.

After a customer purchases a product, they go through "Purchase Anxiety." This is the point where they decide if they made the right decision. They will take a look at your product and make sure it lives up to what they expected. If it does, you have a happy customer that will be with you a long time. But if you do not deliver, you have an upset customer. An upset customer means they are not coming back, and neither are any of their friends, acquaintances, and co-workers.

Make sure your product lives up to your sales letter. Make sure they can find every benefit, every bonus. And here is a tip, give them something that WASN'T in your sales letter. Surprise them with your generosity. But most importantly, be sure to reply to any questions, comments or complaints they might have right away. Impress them with your customer service, and their "Purchase Anxiety" will be short lived. They will realize they've made a good decision. And...

they'll be back to read your next sales letter.

THE END



Who in the world is this
Green Watermelon
character?

Visit www.greenwatermelon.com to find out what
he can teach YOU about Internet Marketing.