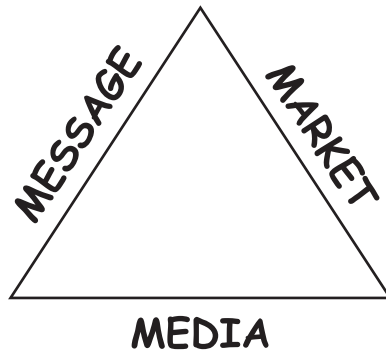


Putting Together the Right Message



In 1978, when I started my career as a professional speaker and seminar leader, one of the venerable deans of public speaking, Cavett Robert, sagely cautioned: “Don’t be in too much of a hurry to promote, until you get good. Otherwise you just speed up the rate at which the world finds out you’re no good.” Harsh but good advice. It’s been my observation since then that large numbers of businesspeople in all fields rush to promote without stopping long enough to be sure they have something really worth promoting.

A different expression of this same idea is contained in this anonymous poem for advertisers:

*A lion met a tiger
As they drank beside a pool
Said the tiger, "Tell me why
You're roaring like a fool."*

*"That's not foolish," said the lion
With a twinkle in his eyes
"They call me king of all the beasts
Because I advertise!"*

*A rabbit heard them talking
And ran home like a streak
He thought he'd try the lion's plan,
But his roar was just a squeak.*

*A fox came to investigate—
Had luncheon in the woods.
Moral: when you advertise, my friends,
Be sure you've got the goods!*

Marketing—and *The Ultimate Marketing Plan*—begins not with any particular media or strategy; it starts with putting together the best, most promotable message possible that truthfully represents “the goods” you’ve got.

I’m going to suggest a little exercise to you. Stop reading here long enough to get your Yellow Pages telephone directory out and open it up to the business category in which your present or planned business best fits. Start with the first ad and a thick pad of paper. Write down each promise, feature, benefit, and statement in the first advertiser’s ad. When you find one of these same statements in the next advertiser’s ad, just put a mark next to it, and keep stick-counting the number of times the same statement appears in all of the ads in the section. If you find a new or

different statement in any of the ads, add it to your list, then stick-count the number of times it recurs in other ads.

This exercise is instructive for two reasons. First, the Yellow Pages is the most competitive, toughest advertising arena there is. Today, the Internet offers comparable clutter, but there are ways to “pick off” searchers and direct them to looking only at your site. Only in the Yellow Pages is your ad surrounded by your competitors’ ads. Your billboard stands alone. Your sales letter or brochure, in the recipient’s hands, has exclusive, if momentary, attention. But in the Yellow Pages, your ad is next to, above, below, and/or grouped with all of your competitors’ ads. All of you are presenting your messages simultaneously to the same prospective customer. Here, only the strong survive; only the strongest prosper.

Second, in spite of this obvious, extreme competitiveness, your stick-counted list will glaringly reveal one astounding fact: Everybody is saying the same thing. Everybody is delivering the same message.

While this seems to be the way to do things, because that’s the way everybody is doing things, it is definitely the wrong approach if you seek exceptional success, even dominance, in your marketplace.

Contrary to all this me-tooism, the “key to the vault” in marketing in general and in this tough medium in particular is a message that differentiates you from all of your competitors in a positive, appealing, preferably compelling way. Many marketing pros call this a “Unique Selling Proposition.”

ULTIMATE MARKETING SECRET WEAPON #1 The Great USP

A Unique Selling Proposition (USP) is a way of explaining your position against your competition. When a supermarket chain or big-box retailer like Wal-Mart labels itself as “THE Low Price Leader,” it’s made a positioning promise.

A USP is also a way of summarizing and telegraphing one of the chief benefits, often *the* chief benefit of the business, product, or service being marketed. When I wrote the first edition of this book in the early 1990s, Chrysler was making much out of being the only American carmaker to include driver's-side air bags as standard equipment. That briefly worked for them as a USP, but competition quickly caught up. As I am finishing this new edition, the Subway chain has enjoyed great success repositioning itself as a weight-loss business, first with the story of Jared, one of its customers, and currently by comparing the number of fat grams in its sandwiches to those from McDonald's. How long the company can sustain this is open to question.

Your USP may express the "theme" of your business, product, or service. Think: Which coffee is "mountain grown"? Which beer is made with "the cold, clear water of the Rockies"?

These examples show that a USP can be based on just about anything: price, product ingredient, positioning. There are USPs based on color, size, scent, celebrity endorsement, location, hours of operation, and on and on.

As you concentrate on developing a new USP for your enterprise, you'll be newly aware of the USPs of other businesses, and you can learn from their examples. To hone your marketing mind, you need to become USP-sensitive and ask these questions about every business, product, and service you encounter in your daily activities:

1. Does this business have a USP?
2. If not, can I think of one for it?
3. If so, is there a way I can think of to improve it?
4. Is there any idea here I can "steal" for my use?

How a Terrific USP Built an Entrepreneurial Empire

I've used this example for more than ten years—it's that good. Once upon a time, two young men determined they would put themselves through college by running a small business. Early on, the business was woefully unsuccessful, and one guy bailed out on the other. The one who stayed and stuck it out came up with a USP that revolutionized his entire industry and made him a multimillionaire. First, his little business grabbed dominant control of the local market; then, rapidly, the state, America, the world!

His USP was: "Fresh, hot pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less, guaranteed." Ten words that brilliantly incorporate two product benefits with the meaningful specific of delivery within thirty minutes—not quick, fast, or soon, but precisely in thirty minutes—and a guarantee. This USP has passed into advertising history, but it fueled the growth of an empire, and thoroughly frustrated competitors large and small. In fact, in its heyday, I played word association with people and asked them to say whatever first popped into their minds when I said "pizza"; 85 out of 100 said "Domino's."

Question: If we went out into your marketplace and asked 100 or 1,000 people to play the game, gave them the generic name for your type of business, and 85 percent of them responded by naming you, how well would you be doing?

I had the privilege of interviewing Tom Monaghan for a magazine article some years ago, and there's no doubt that his success and that of his company have been linked to a complex list of factors, notably including his personal success philosophy and his ability to instill it in his franchisees. But there's also no doubt that his USP was largely responsible for the rapid rise and dominance of his company in the pizza industry. It generated enough wealth to let Tom indulge his lifelong fantasy of buying the Detroit Tigers (with a \$53-million-dollar price tag), collect classic cars, give most generously to his church and favorite charities, and be financially independent and secure at a relatively young age.

That is the power of a truly great USP. It *is* worth working on the invention of a strong USP for your product, service, or business. And it's not necessarily easy. I know clients who've taken months, even years, to finally hit on a USP that they liked and that really worked. For each, the months of frustrating brain strain have paid off handsomely.

A good source of ideas is the public library. There, free of charge, you can wander through Yellow Pages directories and newspapers from cities all across the country, as well as hundreds of consumer, business, trade, and specialty magazines. Another source of ideas is the Internet: As you roam cyberspace, visit Web sites within and outside of your business category in search of inspiring USP ideas. Then you can boldly go where few others go, into the marketplace with a really exciting USP of your own!

Products That Have USP Power

The Christmas shopping season always brings forth a crop of interesting new kitchen appliances; one recent year, it was the Iced Tea Pot. When I first saw this advertised, I burst out laughing. Its manufacturer, the Mr. Coffee Company, went laughing all the way to the bank. Imagine: we can no longer make iced tea in any old kettle; we must have the precisely correct Iced Tea Pot.

It reminds me of a funny phenomenon we have here in the Southwest: the Sun Tea Jar. Because we have searing sunshine every day, it's easy to sun-brew tea just by putting a large jar of water outside for a few hours with tea bags in it. Obviously, any old glass jar will do the job. But on store shelves you'll find large glass jars with the words "Sun Tea Jar" silk-screened on them for sale at four or five times what unmarked jars in the next aisle sell for. And you'll find people cheerfully buying them. After all, what kind of goofball would brew sun tea in a pickle jar?

Some years back, I was president of a fairly large manufacturing company with its own in-house print shop. One day I noticed how much

paper was going to waste in the shop, and I brilliantly decreed that the waste be kept and made into pads for the office staff to jot phone messages on, thus eliminating the need to buy those square pads of pink paper imprinted “Phone Message” from the office-supply store. Why, I reasoned, should we buy little pads of paper at retail when we’re already buying large truckloads of paper at wholesale?

I almost had a mutiny on my hands. Pointing to the odd-colored, odd-sized pads we got free from our own print shop, the secretaries said, “Those are scratch pads.” Holding up the pink imprinted pads from the office-supply store, they said, “These are phone-message pads.” End of discussion.

Purely through customized or proprietary appearance, these products have taken on USP POWER that is almost invincible.

If you really want to see this at work, visit an athletic-shoe store. I’m not much of a casual dresser, but, immediately before a day of walking at Disney World, I decided it would be smart to get some comfortable “sneaks.” Forty minutes and 85 bucks later, I left the store with a thorough education: there are shoes for walking on pavement, for walking on grass, for walking a lot, for walking a little, for jogging, for tennis, basketball, soccer, football, baseball, trampolining, with pumps, without pumps—but there are no more “sneaks.”

Consider these products with USP POWER:

- Microwavable dinners for kids to make for themselves
- Clarion Cosmetics’ “computer,” which tells you which colors are right for you
- Luzianne iced-tea bags
- A stress management seminar for career women
- A shampoo and conditioner for “swimmer’s hair”

Resource!

For a much longer list of USP ideas, and actual examples from many of my Inner Circle Members and clients, sign up for the free 12-Week Ultimate Marketing Plan e-mail course at www.UltimateMarketingPlan.com. USP is covered in Lesson #2.

And watch the TV commercials for the appetite suppressant products: there's one for people with the urge to binge late in the day, another for people who need help all day, and yet another "extra strength" one—presumably for people with not even a smidgen of willpower.

It's even possible for a mundane product to get USP POWER purely from its package. In 1991, when I wrote the first edition of this book, McDonald's did just that for the cheeseburger with its McDLTs and their hot-side-stays-hot, cold-side-stays-cold, two-bin Styrofoam containers. I think Yuban was the first to provide premeasured filter packs for automatic coffeemakers so you don't have to count out scoops. More recently, cereal companies have put premeasured, single servings of cereal and milk in side-by-side "pockets" of a plastic container stored in the refrigerator.

To the Prospective Customer's Question, Your USP Is the Answer

When you set out to attract a new, prospective customer to your business for the first time, there is one, paramount question you must answer:

***“Why should I choose your business/product/service versus any/
every other competitive option available to me?”***

I invented this question to help businesspeople “get” USP, and to use as a crowbar to pry ideas out of their heads, to dig out the makings of a good USP. If you can't answer the question, you won't get a USP, but you also have bigger problems; typically, it means that you've been getting your customers only because of the cheapest price, a convenient

location, your personal charisma, or the good fortune of being the only provider, and all of these leave you very, very vulnerable to new competition. You need a USP.

I choose to buy Domino's pizza because it's gonna get to me hot, and quickly. I chose the McDLT because my lettuce and tomato stayed cool and crisp. (As you can guess, I miss the McDLT.) I chose Yuban so I didn't have to count scoops. I choose Minit-Lube because I hate hanging around greasy, dirty gas-station waiting areas. Why do I choose the chiropractor I go to? The restaurants I regularly patronize? The dealership where I buy my cars? More often than not, it's because each has USP POWER that appeals to me.

Boosting USP Power with an Irresistible Offer

I grew up in Ohio and briefly owned an ad agency in a rural community halfway between Cleveland and Akron. At least a dozen times each winter there was enough snow and ice on the country roads to make it ill-advised if not downright impossible to go anywhere. Those days the office stayed closed and I stayed stuck at home.

On one such day, in the midst of a severe blizzard, I stared out my apartment window and watched a neighbor slog through the snow, struggle through the wind, scrape ice from his car's windshield, unfreeze the car's door latch with a cigarette lighter, fight to start the car, and finally slip and slide off into the storm. "I wonder," I asked myself, "what would motivate a guy to go out in weather like this?"

Then I remembered a very similar storm just a couple of winters before when I had quite literally risked my life and badly banged up my car driving all the way from Akron, Ohio, to Murray State University in Kentucky to spend a weekend with my girlfriend of that time. For hours, it snowed so hard I honestly couldn't see past the hood ornament of my car. Every bridge was so icy I spun my way across it. Yet I pressed on.

Waiting for me in Murray, Kentucky, was "an irresistible offer!"

If you can come up with an offer that's irresistible, you are really on to something! Try this one on for size: for \$198.00 per person, \$396.00 per couple, I'll put you up in a luxurious minisuite in an exciting Las Vegas Hotel, right on the famous strip . . . give you tickets to a show with name entertainers . . . put a chilled bottle of champagne in your room . . . let you drink as much of whatever you want whether you're at the gaming tables, playing the slots, or in one of the lounges . . . give you \$1,000.00 of my money to gamble with . . . let you keep all your winnings . . . and as a bonus, guarantee you'll at least win either a color TV, a VCR, or a faux-diamond ring. Obviously I'm not going to give this incredible deal to everybody in the whole world. There can only be a small number of these vacation packages available, first come, first served, and the race is on. Assuming you trust the offer, how fast can you get to a phone and call in to reserve yours? Would you go out in a blizzard and drive to the post office to get your order form in the mail before the deadline?

Well, this was a real offer, from Bob Stupak, the entrepreneurial owner of the original Vegas World Hotel and one of the savviest marketers I know of to take on Las Vegas. For years, Bob kept his hotel filled to capacity, kept a waiting list going, and got paid months, even years in advance by his guests—all thanks to his invention of this irresistible offer. He used the cash flow generated by selling that “package” to grow his hotel from a tiny, slots-only joint to a huge, two-towered showplace. A few years ago, he sold his interest to a bigger corporation, and Vegas World became the Stratosphere. The Stupak-style marketing ended, and financial troubles multiplied like rabbits in spring.

The Embassy Suites hotel chain has flourished for years and sparked much competition thanks to its offer of “every room a suite,” free evening cocktails, and free breakfast.

One of the mail-order catalog companies I occasionally buy from recently sent me a “preferred customer catalog” from which I could buy

anything I wanted with “no payments for six months.” I confess—I went through that darned catalog looking for something to buy!

One of the classic, often-used irresistible offers is the book and record clubs’ “Choose 6 for 10 cents,” like the offer shown in Exhibit #1 (page 12).

This exact same offer dates back to records, then eight-track tapes, then cassettes, and now includes CDs. It has stood the test of time for decades! In the marketing of my own *No B.S. Marketing Letter*, I used a knockoff of this “bribe offer” for about ten years, inviting new subscribers to choose any six Special Reports as the free bonus with their subscription. You should make a mental note of this—bonus gifts often drive sales. Now, we’ve beaten that offer with an even more powerful, outright free trial. The old offer is shown as Exhibit #2 (page 13). You can see the current offer at www.UltimateMarketingPlan.com.

Membership as a USP

What I call “membership concept marketing” has been a very important part of my own business, and it can be a pathway to a USP.

Gold/VIP Member Kevin Fayle, a top marketing consultant to the kitchen remodeling industry, teaches the remodelers in his coaching program to use “membership concept.” The remodeler/dealer sells for a fee a Preferred Client Membership, which entitles the members to free design service, free delivery, on-site consultations, decorating advice—and a money-back guarantee on the membership. This is important, because it is impractical to advertise and offer money-back guarantees on customized kitchen installations costing upward from \$15,000.00, which cannot readily be resold. With the membership, the dealer gets to use “money-back guarantee” as part of his marketing arsenal.

Kevin says, “Don’t dismiss ‘membership concept’ or guarantees, just because you can’t easily see how they apply to your business.” And that is very good advice.

Exhibit #1

this jazz

ANY 8 CDs FOR ONLY 1¢

with membership in the Club. See details below.

PLUS A CHANCE TO GET ONE MORE CD—FREE!

Don Cherry—Art Deco (ASM) 401-505
 Larry Carlton—On Solid Ground (MCA) 383-691
 Dave Grusin Collection (GRP) 378-398
 Maceo—Day By Day (EM) 371-856

Stanley Clarke—If The Bass Could Only Talk (Pony) 371-823
 Kenny G—Schoutte (A&A) 371-559
 David Sanborn—Close Up (Warner Bros.) 370-304
 Bobby McFerrin—Simple Pleasures (EM) 369-306
 Basia—Time And Tide (ECM) 368-043
 Oscar Peterson—The Trip (Prestige) 367-288
 The Manhattan Transfer—(Back) Again! 363-548
 Duke Ellington (GRP) 357-350
 Chuck Mangione—The Best Of Chuck Mangione (A&M) 350-547

Joe Sample—Spellbound (Warner Bros.) 378-224
 Garret Aldbright—Bernuda Nights (Aspic) 377-903
 Al Jarreau—Heart's Horizon (Rca/A&R) 378-185
 Michael Brecker—Don't Try To Be At Home (MCA/Aspic) 374-790
 Stanley Jordan—Flying Home (Epic) 373-850
 Bird—Original Moon Picture Soundtrack (Orion) 373-332
 Bob James—Nory Comet (Warner Bros.) 372-789
 Omerie Coleman—Virgin Beauty (RCA) 372-722
 Hiroshima—East (Epic) 372-680
 Take 6 (Rappene) 372-680

Wesley—Where Were You? (Columbia) 404-939
 Diana Ross—Never Too Far (EM) 404-517
 Mike Silver—Jaguar (A&M/C) 404-403
 Ahmed Jamal—403-279
 George Benson—The Best Of George Benson (CBS Associates) 403-246
 Miles Davis—The Pictorial Book (GRP) 402-958
 Dizzy Gillespie—The Symphonic Seasons (Pro Jazz) 401-943
 Jim Faddis—Ino The Faddisphere (Epic) 401-927
 David Bennett—Waiting For Spring (GRP) 401-901
 Happy Anniversary—Charlie Brown—Various Artists (GRP) 400-846

Original Sound Track—Soul No Chaser Music from the Motion Picture Thelma Houston 400-814
 Lee Rittiner—Color Red (GRP) 400-051
 Dave Grusin—Migration (GRP) 400-044
 Michel Camelo—On Fire (Epic) 389-999
 East River Pipe—Solo Out (Warner Bros.) 399-932
 Nancy Wilson—Lady With A Song (Columbia) 389-892
 Miles Davis—Aura (Columbia) 389-312
 Yellowjackets—The Spin (MCA) 388-173
 Lou Rawls—At Last (Blue Note) 387-589
 David Newman—Fare Live at the Village Vanguard (A&M) 387-583
 Randy Crawford—Rush And Flow (Warner Bros.) 401-950

Clara—Lovers (Warner New York) (Epic) 401-752
 Kenny G Live (A&M) 401-505
 Chick Corea Electric Band—Trade Out (GRP) 404-574

POPULAR HITS

Rush—Phish (Atlantic) 401-985
 Chicago—Greatest Hits 1969-1993 (Mercury) 401-166
 Eric Clapton—Journeyman (Warner Bros.) 400-437
 Linda Ronstadt—Cry Like A Diamond, How Like The Wind (Epic) 389-874
 Aerosmith—Pump (Geffen) 388-009

Joey DeFrancesco—Where Were You? (Columbia) 404-939
 Diana Ross—Never Too Far (EM) 404-517
 Mike Silver—Jaguar (A&M/C) 404-403
 Ahmed Jamal—403-279
 George Benson—The Best Of George Benson (CBS Associates) 403-246
 Miles Davis—The Pictorial Book (GRP) 402-958
 Dizzy Gillespie—The Symphonic Seasons (Pro Jazz) 401-943
 Jim Faddis—Ino The Faddisphere (Epic) 401-927
 David Bennett—Waiting For Spring (GRP) 401-901
 Happy Anniversary—Charlie Brown—Various Artists (GRP) 400-846

Billy Joel—Somn Front (Columbia) 387-902
 Don Henley—The End Of The Innocence (Geffen) 383-802
 Michael Bolton—Soul Provider (Columbia) 383-083
 Tom Petty—Full Moon Fever (MCA) 382-184
 Bonnie Raitt—Hack of Time (Capitol) 381-067

Don Cherry—Art Deco (ASM) 401-505
 Elaine Elias—So Far So Close (Blue Note) 387-530
 Victor Bailey—Bottom's Up (Barack Jazz) 387-484
 Freddie Hubbard—Times are Changing (Blue Note) 387-449
 Stanley Turrentine—La Place (Blue Note) 387-158
 Harry Connick, Jr.—When Harry Met Sally—Music From The Motion Picture (Columbia) 386-821
 McCoy Tyner—Revelations (Blue Note) 386-753
 New York Voices (GRP) 386-392
 Janis Siegel and Fred Herch—Short Stories (Aspic) 386-029
 Rippongo—Toussaint in Paradise (GRP) 383-658
 David Murray—Along's Sancta (Pony) 384-875
 David Benoit—Urban Day Dreams (GRP) 384-028
 Chet Baker—The Best Thing For You (A&M) 384-594
 George Benson—Tenderly (Warner Bros.) 384-214
 Dr. John—in a Sentimental Mood (Warner Bros.) 384-040
 Diane Schuur—Collection (GRP) 383-919
 Pat Metheny Group—Letter From Home (Geffen) 383-901
 Steve Davis—Port Of View (MCA) 383-737

LEGENDARY JAZZ PERFORMANCES

Thelonious Monk—The Composer (CJ Jazz Masterpiece) 377-770
 Bill Evans—Walt for Debby (Prestige) 376-335
 Omerie Coleman—The Snake of Jazz to Come (Aspic) 371-541
 John Coltrane—Cool (MCA) 371-591
 The Gil Evans Orchestra—Out of the Cool (MCA) 370-872
 The Best of Chet Baker—Various Artists (Chess) 363-937
 Billie Holiday—From The Hip, Decca Masters (MCA) 354-985

Charles Mingus—Mingus At LHM (CJ Jazz Masterpiece) 354-785
 Miles Davis—Kind of Blue (CJ Jazz Masterpiece) 353-045
 The Dave Brubeck Quartet—Time Out (CJ Jazz Masterpiece) 353-000

Great Moments in Jazz—Various Artists (Atlantic) 378-583286-580
 Bill Evans—Walt for Debby (Prestige) 376-335
 Omerie Coleman—The Snake of Jazz to Come (Aspic) 371-541
 John Coltrane—Cool (MCA) 371-591
 The Gil Evans Orchestra—Out of the Cool (MCA) 370-872
 The Best of Chet Baker—Various Artists (Chess) 363-937
 Billie Holiday—From The Hip, Decca Masters (MCA) 354-985

from Charlie Parker to Kenny G—and all the jazz in between—now all available on CD! As your introduction to the Club you can choose any 8 CDs listed in this ad for 1¢ and make the option together with check or money order for \$1.65 (plus \$1.85 shipping and handling). You simply agree to buy 6 more CDs for regular Club prices in the next three years—and you may then cancel your membership anytime after doing so.

How the Club works: About every four weeks 113 times a year you'll receive the Club's music magazine, which describes the Selection of the Month... plus new hits and old favorites from every field of music. In addition, up to six times a year you will receive offers of Special Selections, usually a discount off regular Club prices, for a total of up to 19 buying opportunities.

If you wish to receive the Selection of the Month, you need do nothing—it will be shipped automatically if you prefer an alternate selection or none at all. Fill in the response and always provide and mail by the date specified. You will always have at least 10 days in which to make your decision. If you ever receive any Selection

without having 10 days to decide, you may return it at our expense.

The CDs you order during your membership will be billed off regular Club prices, which currently are \$12.98 to \$15.98—plus shipping and handling. Multiple-unit rates may be some what higher. After completing your enrollment agreement you may receive membership up to any time. If you decide to continue as a member, you'll be eligible for any money-saving bonus plan. If you buy one CD at half price for each CD you buy at regular Club prices.

10-Day Free Trial: We'll send details of the Club's operation with your introductory shipment. If you are not satisfied for any reason whatsoever, just return everything within 10 days and you will have no further obligation. So why not choose 8 CDs for 1¢ right now?

Extra Bonus Offer: As a special offer to new members, take one additional CD right now for only \$6.95. This discount purchase entitles you to choose an extra CD as a bonus FREE. Just indicate your choices in the coupon, and you'll receive your discount CD and your bonus CD with your 8 introductory CD—a total of 10 all!

COLUMBIA HOUSE, 1400 N. Fruitridge Ave., P.O. Box 1129, Terre Haute, Indiana 47811-1129 739-990

Please accept my membership application under the terms outlined in this advertisement. I am enclosing check or money order for \$1.65 (plus 1¢ for the 8 CDs, enclosed here, plus \$1.85 for shipping and handling). I agree to buy six selections at regular Club prices in the coming three years—and you may cancel membership at any time after doing so.

SEND ME THESE 8 CDs FOR 1¢ (write in numbers below)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

My main musical interest is (check one) (I may also choose from any category)

Jazz Classical Soft Rock Modern Jazz

Soul Funk Contemporary Other

Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms. Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Do you have a VCR? Yes No

Do you have a credit card? Yes No

Extra Bonus Offer: also send me this CD for which I am enclosing an additional \$6.95

...and I'm entitled to this extra CD FREE!

VAN BF VAL RN VAK YZ VAL ZV

© 1990 CBS Records Inc. **COLUMBIA HOUSE, Terre Haute, IN 47811**

Exhibit #2

From Dan Kennedy:

I want to give you the tapes of my latest Marketing & Moneymaking SuperConference, which people paid \$2,487.00 each to attend, free.

FREE:

**6 Audio Tapes, 5 Special Reports,
1 Book, 2 Critique Certificates,
Telephone Consulting & Coaching,
a veritable truckload of
moneymaking information and
assistance.....ALL FREE.....
and all you have to do to get all of it
is say "maybe."**

Have I finally lost my mind?

Dear Friend,

Although you have purchased my books or tapes or attended one of my seminars in the past, and although we have previously invited you to subscribe to my NO B.S. MARKETING LETTER, it has been brought to my attention that you are NOT getting my monthly Letter (full to the brim with advice that directly boosts your income, fast) --- and I cannot allow that situation to continue, so.....

I am going to bury you in "bribes", just to get you to test-drive my Marketing Letter.

Listen to this: all you have to do is say "maybe"try 3 Issues of my Letter. If that doesn't hook you for life; if you can't see the profit from continuing, you can change your "maybe" to an emphatic "no", and get a full refund plus ten bucks for your trouble. (Details later in this letter.)

Now, let's take a look at the pick-up truck load of "stuff" I have piled up, ready to rush to your doorstep - FREE! - "stuff" that will stimulate your marketing-mind, grease your greed glands, electrify your enthusiasm, point you to overlooked opportunities in your business, hand you ready-to-use and incredibly powerful strategies for magnetically attracting lots of new customers or clients.....selling more, more often to current customers.....one way or another, creating a FLOOD OF MONEY rushing toward YOUR door.

Being in the Right Place at the Right Time with the Right USP

Once, over a lengthy lunch, I listened to a client, Ned Allen, president of Florida Communities and Intercoastal Communities, two retirement-community firms, reminisce about his starting the famous Steak and Ale restaurants smack in the middle of a national recession. He had started the first restaurant with just \$2,000.00, made it successful, and committed to the construction and opening of seven new restaurants just as the recession hit.

Ned said: “We had to quickly change our thinking to match the timing we had to work with. We developed new, lower-cost, higher-perceived-value menu items, and by offering the look, feel, atmosphere, and taste of a gourmet steakhouse at a surprisingly low price, we had the right product at just the right time.”

At that time, Ned was not alone in predicting another three- to four-year recession, and he was again busy creating just the right product for it. In this case, the product was a new type of manufactured home for his companies’ communities—this one with several hundred square feet less than any other home and, therefore, a substantially lower cost, but with an interior design that made it seem much, much bigger than it was. The home also had lots of nifty “gingerbread” touches that added to its perceived value.

Ned turned his \$2,000.00 investment in Steak and Ale into millions when he sold out to Green Giant Foods. He’s since made another fortune with his new “Land Yacht” mini retirement home and his inventive approach to low-cost retirement living in Florida.

Of course, it’s no secret that timing is a business success factor. But matching a USP with the right timing can dramatically multiply success.

How “Marketing by Values” Strengthens Your Message

One of my first mentors in business often said: “If you stand for nothing, you’ll fall for anything.” Just about anything—a recession, new competition—can topple a business devoid of values.

Although there are many great success stories in the fast-food industry, none stand above McDonald’s. The McDonald’s empire was built on Ray Kroc’s unwavering, some would say fanatical, commitment to *consistency*—the idea that the food items at a McDonald’s in Iowa are identical to those found under the arches in California. Try to find anything close to this kind of consistency in any other national restaurant chain.

In my opinion, the Holiday Inn chain has lost all touch with its founders’ values, but back when I started hitting the road as a frequent business traveler I preferred Holiday Inns for that same reason—consistency. Kemmons Wilson was determined that travelers could depend—*depend*—on Holiday Inns for the basics: clean rooms, safety, courteous service.

Here’s another example of a company succeeding through a commitment to values: Federal Express invented, built, and dominated an industry because of a commitment to on-time, as-promised delivery. There are many classic stories of FedEx employees going to extraordinary extremes to keep faith with this fundamental value.

I would suggest, incidentally, that a clearly defined quality appropriate to your business be one of your values. *In Search of Excellence* author Tom Peters jokes about the retail executive who became aggravated at Peters’s criticism of his business in a seminar and cried out: “We are no worse than anybody else!” Tom Peters had a graphic artist design a company logo with that slogan in it: We are no worse than anybody else. Unfortunately, many business leaders settle for just this approach.

A client and friend of mind, Don Dwyer, now passed away, built a huge international franchisor organization, encompassing more than 2,000 franchisees in three service industries, from scratch, in just a handful of years—thanks, in a large degree, to his early development of,

adherence to, and enthusiastic teaching of a very strong code of values. It goes like this:

1. We believe in superior service to our customers, to our community, and to each other as members of the business community.
2. We believe that if we count our blessings every day, we will keep the negatives away.
3. We believe success is the result of clear, cooperative positive thinking.
4. We believe that in order to build our business we must re-earn our positions every day by excelling in every way.
5. We believe that management should seek out what employees are doing right and treat every associate in a friendly, fair, frank, and firm way.
6. We believe that problems should be welcomed tranquilly and should be used as learning experiences.
7. We believe our Creator put us on this Earth to win. We will keep faith with His wishes by winning honestly and accepting our daily successes humbly, knowing that a higher power has guided us to victory.
8. We believe in the untapped potential of every human being. Every person we help achieve that potential will bring us one step closer to achieving our potential.
9. We believe that loyalty adds consistency to our lives.
10. We believe in building our country through the free-enterprise system. We will demonstrate this belief by constantly attracting people to seek opportunity.

Don did *not* come up with that code *after* making millions, to have an impressive plaque for his office wall. He developed the code in the very infancy of his business, when he was operating out of a small garage (with one truck), telling the few people who would listen that he was going

to quickly build a \$100-million-a-year corporation. (In short order, he topped \$50 million. I'm sure his companies have gone on to get closer and closer to his remarkable, original goal.)

One Way to Create a Creative USP: Address What Customers *Don't* Like

Steve Fox Plumbing, in California, has this very blunt and straightforward headline in many of its advertisements:

**ATTENTION HOMEOWNERS:
No other plumber makes you this bold guarantee:**

**“My Plumber Will Smell Good
And Show Up On Time
Or I Will Pay You.”**

The company also provides this “Customer Bill Of Rights”:

1. You shouldn't have to wait at home all day for a plumber. You deserve our commitment to an appointment time frame.
2. You should expect our plumbers to leave your home as clean and neat after they've finished with your work as when they arrived.
3. You deserve a plumber who is knowledgeable, efficient, pleasant, clean, neat, and of the highest moral character, in your home.
4. You deserve full satisfaction with our products and services or I will redo the repair, free.

Many of my clients and Glazer-Kennedy Inner Circle Members have done fabulous jobs with similar advertising. One of the best is Gold/VIP

Member Bob Higgins of Higgins Painting; you can see full copies of his successful direct-mail pieces and freestanding newspaper inserts when you enroll in the free 12-Week Ultimate Marketing Plan Course, delivered by e-mail, at www.UltimateMarketingPlan.com.

What's Your Magnificent Mission?

The nature and details of my business interests have changed quite a bit over time, but I've always kept them linked to this mission: to be responsible for getting how-to-succeed education into the hands of more people than does any other individual or enterprise.

At one time I saw the implementation of that mission limited to the mail-order marketing of books, cassettes, and courses. Then it expanded to include speaking and seminars. Then television. Then developing products for other publishers. Then consulting with publishers, direct marketers, and even multilevel marketing companies. And, now, through a network of consultants and marketing advisors to nearly 100 different industries, businesses, and professions, I get success education and marketing systems into the hands of more than 1 million business owners every year. All of this gives most of my business activity some meaning greater than just getting money into the bank accounts. From that comes, I think, a different, superior level of creativity, inspiration, and persistence.

Many moons ago, one of the much-made-fun-of Merv Griffin "theme shows" featured a panel of self-made millionaire entrepreneurs: in this instance, Colonel Harlan Sanders of KFC; William Lear, the inventor of the Lear jet; and several others. Merv asked them: "What was your goal—to make money?"

Each guest answered by describing a mission bigger than just making money. Each had a goal, what *Think and Grow Rich* author Napoleon Hill called "a burning desire." Each wanted to *do* something and to *be* someone.

It's interesting that years later, when he was a fabulously wealthy man by most standards (thanks to the sale of his game-show company), Merv Griffin chose to plunge into new, risky businesses rather than just sitting back and enjoying early retirement. He certainly couldn't have been motivated by money itself.

I'm not necessarily saying that you have to have some hidden, ulterior motive or some saintly charitable motive behind your business activities. And I'm not one who feels any guilt about making large amounts of money. But I do find that business owners who are at least as enthusiastic about the values and mission and processes of their businesses as they are about their bank balances do best.

Walt Disney was thrilled when he finally achieved significant financial success, but he was much more committed to his ideals for his theme park than he was to piling up personal wealth. Once, driving home, he noticed an attractive new car in a showroom window and thought to himself: "Gee, I wish I could afford that car." He drove a few more blocks before realizing, "Hey, I *can* afford that car!"

I think you'll find the challenges of successfully crafting and conveying great marketing messages easier and more fun to meet when you are on a magnificent mission!

It's Time to "Assemble" Your Message

You have undoubtedly had the "joy" of opening a large box and laying out a hundred parts, pieces, screws, and bolts on the floor and trying to assemble it into the beautiful bookcase or computer workstation or whatever was pictured on the outside of the carton. Be honest—how much extra would you pay to get it assembled? (Now there's an idea for a service business: We Put It Together, Inc.)

Well, there you are again, with pieces of a marketing message. Actually, that's where you start. Keeping in mind everything that we've discussed in this chapter, get a large pile of blank 3" × 5" cards and start putting one

fact, feature, benefit, promise, offer component, and idea on each card, until you have, over a series of brainstorming sessions, exhausted everything you know about your business and its competitors. Then do your best to prioritize the items, in order of their probable importance to your customers and their contribution to differentiating you from your competition. Through the exercise, you can come to the creation of the best possible USP, a supporting sales story, and one or more related offers.