

Classified Magic

How To Make Your Small Ads
Pay Off BIG!

*The Complete Guide To Classified Advertising... Everything You
Need To Create Classified Ads That Generate Huge Results,
Consistently... Including:*

- ◆ The Secrets To Selling Virtually Any Product Or Service With Classified Ads...
- ◆ Shortcuts To Success Making It Easier Than Ever To Write A Winning Ad...
- ◆ A Super-Effective Research Technique That Accurately Proves What Works & What Doesn't...
- ◆ Tips That Can Save You Money On Every Ad You Place...
- ◆ Fill-In-The-Blank Charts That Make Accurate Record-Keeping A Breeze...
- ◆ The Secret Of Creating An Irresistible Ad... And... Much More!

Robert D. Boduch

Classified Magic

How To Make Your Small Ads Pay Off BIG!

by Robert D. Boduch

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Robert D. Boduch
Success Track Communications

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Introduction

It's true, classified ads really can work magic week after week, month after month, year after year. The classifieds' section is a hidden vein of gold, that most people overlook. They simply don't understand the power of this unequalled marketing tool. But with the key information you have in your hands, you'll be equipped to not only find the gold, but to mine it for all it's worth.

When correctly applied, classified ads can deliver automatic success and open up new vistas of opportunity in the marketplace. When misused, the result is almost always the same; little or no response, in other words, failure. The difference between those who achieve outstanding results with classified advertising and those who fail, boils down to these two essentials; preparation and execution. Those who succeed first seek the knowledge and then apply it, before they spend a lot of money on advertising.

There is only one reason for investing in advertising and that is to earn a profit. Most advertising costs money. Even the tiniest classified ad usually costs something and that's an expense that must be paid regardless of the response an ad produces.

If you are paying to advertise a product or service, then it's obviously to your advantage to do whatever you can to generate the best possible response. That's the way you maximize your profits. Poor response equals zero profit. Fair response may only keep you in the game. But, good response can bring you continuous profits for years! Failure to get a profitable rate of response is simply a waste of your time and effort, not to mention your money.

Classified ads can be used to sell virtually anything. These small ads consisting of only a handful of words, have been used to sell everything from business and investment opportunities to surplus inventories of an unlimited variety of products. Classifieds have been used profitably to market industrial products, business equipment, unique hard-to-find products as well as a variety of service businesses and information products.

Take your time to absorb these ideas, and then incorporate them into your next ad. Do this and your best results will soon follow. Use the step-by-step guide provided in chapter eight, only after you have read the complete text. It's a quick outline for creating ads that yield responses.

You now have everything you need to know to make money with classified ads. Use it accordingly and you're certain to benefit. Read and apply this information before you invest another dollar in classified advertising. You'll quickly see the value of the information itself and the wisdom in your decision to acquire it.

Chapter One:

What Classified Advertising Can Do

For You

The Huge Hidden Potential In A Small Ad

Classified ads represent one of the best values in advertising today. They're usually quite inexpensive and you can test your ad, your product and your market, with only a small investment. Specific audiences can be targeted, one at a time, by selecting a publication that fits a definable group. Nearly anyone can employ this great advertising vehicle efficiently with only a single phone call. It's the quickest and safest method known to enter into a given market.

While there may be no better buy in the advertising world, there is a catch. It's very easy to fail with classified advertising. Perhaps the reason for the high failure rate is the relative ease with which anyone can play the game. Most people fail miserably early on and then leave the classified arena altogether, convinced that "they just don't work". But you can experience great success if you apply the secrets that I'm about to share and you persist long enough until you have a real winner.

It's my purpose in this booklet to give you every bit of information you need to get a profitable result immediately... starting with the next ad you place. It's not complicated, but it does require some work on your part. It's time well-invested though, because once you've got that magical combination of audience, message and medium figured out, it's just a matter of running your ad for a period of time. When the profits start to roll in, you roll out by expanding to other publications. The end result: steady growth of profits and a continuous stream of cash for you.

Classified ads can work magic for you when you work them methodically. To make your ads pull a huge response, follow the steps that have proven successful for others. I recommend that you begin to study classified advertising by reviewing publications that carry classified sections. Look for outstanding ads that reach out and grab you. Which ads capture your attention? What is it about a particular ad

that caught your eye? If you were in the market, would you respond to that ad? Observe also the weak ads and think of the ways you would improve it.

Ten Common Reasons Why Classified Ads Fail

Reason #1: Trying to close the sale in the classified ad itself.

This is the most prevalent of the serious mistakes classified advertisers make. The problem is that you just don't have the space, in a classified, to convey all the benefits of even the most basic, or lowest cost product. To try to shortcut the sales process by trying to close the sale right away, can only result in a less than spectacular rate of response. You may sell a few, but I'd be willing to bet that this strategy will cause losses far more frequently than profits.

Many entrepreneurs start out this way convinced that their product or service is the greatest thing since the invention of the wheel, only to become dismayed by a lack of sales. Any ad that lists a price for a product or service is guilty of making this mistake. Try using your classified ad only as a lead-generating tool instead. Make the sale with your follow-up material where you can provide qualified prospects with all the advantages you offer in far greater detail. This puts you in a much better position to sell virtually anything.

Reason #2: Pushing your product instead of the great benefits the customer gets as a result of having or using the product.

People respond because of what they "get". They never buy products, services or businesses... instead, they buy advantages or helpful results. It's the benefits you promise in your ad that triggers response. Don't talk about the features of your product or service, communicate all the great benefits your customer can have when he takes advantage of your offer. Leave it at that. If he's interested, he'll respond. If the biggest benefits doesn't compel your reader to respond, touting a feature surely won't do the job either. With every response you'll have a qualified prospect you can work with until he's converted to a customer.

Reason #3: Not providing enough information to trigger qualified readers to respond.

If you don't tell enough about what your product can do for the reader, your results will not satisfy you. You may generate response,

but, it likely won't be of the high caliber, qualified kind. In fact, the only response you're likely to get will be those people who respond to any ad, particularly those that offer something "free". Don't skimp for the sake of a few dollars. Nor should you get too wordy. You've got to say just enough to arouse interest and generate response, or you might as well not advertise at all.

Reason #4: Not using your biggest bang as your headline, thereby running the risk of losing prospects who might otherwise be interested in your offer.

What is the greatest benefit you offer? Why is your prospect better off buying from you, versus the competition? Or, what could you say that would command the attention of the greatest numbers of qualified prospects? Focus your lead on the answers to these questions, and nothing else.

You've got to use your strongest attribute right up front, or you risk losing the scanning reader, who may just be a good prospect for your offer. Don't hold back! You only have a fraction of a second to capture the attention of the only person who can make you and your ad successful; your prospect. If your strongest appeal doesn't work to command attention -- a lesser lure surely won't work either.

Reason #5: Not providing a strong, compelling offer to call, fax, write, E-mail, or otherwise connect with you.

The world is one huge, competitive marketplace. Your prospects don't need you as much as you need them. They have a multitude of choices available, even if what you're offering is a totally unique, one-of-a-kind product. You need prospects to become customers and the first step to converting prospects into customers is capture their interest. Woo them in, attract them, gently prod them along. You have to interest them enough so they take action and that action should always lead eventually towards a sale.

Apparently, some classified advertisers assume that anyone who reads their particular ad is automatically going to respond. Most ads have no incentive for the reader, no enticement to inspire action, no huge promise. Without the appeal of a meaningful reward, how likely is it that your prospect will get out of his comfortable chair and do what is necessary to connect with you?

Inaction is always easier for the prospect. It's called the *inertia factor* and it can be fatal to your business. In order to move the

prospect to action, you've got to dangle a "carrot" and tell him precisely how his life will be better in some way with your product or service.

Reason #6: Not addressing what's most important to your prospect.

This mistake is easily preventable by knowing your audience. The wrong appeal simply won't work. This should seem obvious to anyone who's prepared to spend hard-earned cash on a classified ad, but I see it all the time.

Some ads have no apparent appeal at all, they just take response for granted. You may get a trickle of replies this way, but higher levels of response can only be obtained by utilizing intelligent marketing strategies. You can only do that with a strong appeal that is interesting, inviting and appealing to your target audience. The key is to know your market and how your product or service represents the ultimate solution.

Reason #7: Offering something that seems to be readily available elsewhere.

Nothing can take the place of uniqueness in terms of what you offer in the marketplace. If generating a huge response from your classified ad is your goal, then you need to offer some sort of solution to a problem... one that's not readily available to your target audience.

If what you have to offer can be found through any number of alternate sources, and this is common knowledge to your audience, than whatever you offer has no original advantage. If your product or service can be obtained elsewhere, possibly with less effort and expense, perhaps even through a source that is well-known... why would a prospect even be interested in responding to your ad?

A competitive advantage would certainly help, such as a bargain price, but that in itself may not be enough to move your audience to contact you. Re-package, re-invent or re-engineer your product or service so that you can position it as something that is unequalled in the marketplace. By being different you'll gain a competitive advantage and that gives you a unique edge to promote in your classified ad.

Reason #8: Using someone's name (a name that's not of the household variety) in an attempt to attract attention and interest.

Assuming your audience will immediately recognize a name and hold that name with the same reverence that you might, is arguably the biggest mistake on the list and the easiest way to kiss your advertising dollars bye-bye. This mistake is most common in the multi-level or network marketing field.

Here is an actual ad that appeared in a major international magazine:

**“MLM - Bob Wieland challenges America,
'Join Me Step-By-Step to Freedom'
Information: (800) 000-0000”**

What's wrong with this ad? Well, there's plenty, but the point I want to drive home here is this: using names as drawing cards in classified ads can never work as effectively as a direct benefit statement. This advertiser assumes that his or her prospect not only knows the *Bob Wieland* name, but will want to take action simply to join along with this individual.

Where's the benefit in this ad? You might say the benefit lies in the *"Step-By-Step to Freedom"*. Although it's a weak generalization, at least it offers some promise to the reader. For that reason alone, this particular advertiser would have fared better to lead with that benefit, instead of *"MLM - Bob Wieland challenges America..."*

Reason #9: Having an 800 number, or some other limited option, as the sole means of response, when it may not be accessible to the entire potential audience of your classified ad.

This can be very frustrating to a prospect; I know from personal experience. Living in Canada, I have often been shut off from an advertiser simply because I could not make the connection to an 800 line. In many cases I was anxious; I really wanted what the advertiser promised. I was already sold! But alas, I was also stuck... there wasn't much I could do about it.

What options did I have? I usually tried to place the call more than once, only to hear the same recorded voice tell me the number wasn't accessible from my area code. As a prospect, this is very

frustrating. As an advertiser, it's quite costly in terms of lost sales. To what extent? Who knows.

The easy solution is to give your audience alternate means of contacting you. All you need to do is provide a mailing address, a fax number or even an E-mail address; anything that would allow any possible prospect to respond.

You never know from where in the world a response may come. I've personally received replies from many distant lands, several months – even years – after the ad ran in a national publication. Libraries everywhere are one source of international newspapers, trade journals and magazines. This means that responses – and sales -- can come from any corner of the world, if those people can reach you easily. This is particularly true with on-line marketing, but it also applies to any major publication you may choose to advertise in. Be available to anyone who may want what you have to sell.

Reason #10: Making a claim that is too general or too unreal.

To proclaim that one can "*make a fortune*" or "*earn six figures*" overnight by performing some simple task rarely works for an advertiser. Instead, such claims trigger doubt, disbelief and inaction. Everyone has heard it all before and many have been fooled, at least once, into replying, only to be deeply disappointed at some point.

Anyone can make a general claim, but you can enjoy a far greater rate of response by being specific, with actual numbers that also appear to be more realistic. In no way am I implying that you should manipulate the numbers so that your statement of claim seems very real to your prospect. What I am saying is that whatever claims you make must appear to be truthful in the eyes of your prospect. Real, actual figures can help you achieve this objective.

Overworked Ads Usually Under-perform

Most of the classified ads that I see are ineffective for one primary reason; they try to accomplish too much. An ad of two or three lines isn't enough to make the sale. It doesn't provide enough space to expand on all the virtues and benefits of even the most basic product or service. So don't waste your time trying. "*Sell*" your reader on taking the next step towards the sale by requesting additional information from you.

The fact is, it would simply cost too much money to run a classified ad that could do the complete selling job in one shot. Your “classified” as would quickly become a full page or more. Therefore if you want to succeed with classified advertising remember this; never try to close the sale in your classified ad. Concentrate instead on getting “hot” prospects to identify themselves by contacting you to express an interest.

Here’s an example of a classified ad that tries to close the sale:

**“Easy Fat-Free Cakes & Pie. For Recipes
Send \$20.00 & SASE To: Diet Delight,
200 Fast Lane Ave., Woodland, NB
10000 *Bonus* FREE Calorie Counter”**

What are the chances of success with this ad? My guess is that this ad failed, despite having some strong points like a bonus offer and a decent headline. The thing that killed this ad was going for the sale right away.

Is there enough in the above ad to make you want to mail in your cash? I highly doubt it. There is too much left unsaid for this ad to command direct sales. It asks for the sale without providing enough reasons for it. This approach almost never works with classified advertising.

The Two-Step Method To Success

Fortunately, there is a better way. All that you need to do to get outstanding results from your classified ad is to get your readers to contact you for more information. That's it. You want qualified prospects to stand up, identify themselves as being interested by requesting your free report, free details or free information. This is the ultimate function of a classified ad, step-one of the *Two-Step* approach. To generate inquiries from those most interested in the benefits you offer. The second step is to reply to every inquiry with a powerful marketing package that completes the selling job and produces the order.

The *Two-Step* is how every successful classified advertiser does it. You have only to look at repeat advertisements to prove this to yourself. The ads that run month after month, year after year, do so for one reason and one reason only: they produce profitable results. And, they always use the *Two-Step* technique.

Compare the *Two-Step* method of finding quality leads to mailing the same marketing package to a cold list. I bet you'll find a huge difference in your results, with the *Two-Step* technique winning every time. With this technique, the person who receives the follow-up package has actually requested it, and therefore is anxious to get it. He is on the lookout for your mailing piece and can't wait to devour it!

Here's an example of the *Two-Step* approach in action:

“Millionaire Mail Order Expert Reveals Money-Making Secrets! Free exciting cassette. Melvin Powers 12015 Sherman Road, North Hollywood CA 91605E”

This ad is expertly crafted to maximize its powers of attraction. Notice how every word has power -- there is absolutely no waste. It's obviously working, too. This exact ad, or an almost identical variation, has been running continuously in multiple publications for at least the last nine years!

The Little-Known Secret That Could Be Worth A Fortune To You

The greatest advantage of classifieds is this; almost every respondent to a well written ad has a sincere interest in acquiring the benefit promised in the ad. This means that a good classified ad achieves an unparalleled rate of qualified response. A well-constructed classified ad also achieves another remarkable feat; it creates a strong anticipation in the mind of the individual who has submitted his name and address. The “*hot*” prospect can't wait to get more information. He anxiously anticipates receiving the follow-up package. He's emotionally excited about what the ad promises and often has already made the decision to buy. Your follow-up package containing all the details often works as the logical support and justification for the already established decision to buy.

The best thing you can do for an eager prospect is to satisfy the desire at once. Send your complete marketing package as soon as you get the request. Act immediately while the promise of a huge benefit tugs at the heart and occupies the mind of your prospect and you'll close more sales that way.

The Most Profit-Certain Way To Use Classifieds

Use your classified ads to generate solid leads, and then follow-up on those leads with an irresistible sales package that provides all the additional benefits, advantages, facts and proof.

Get your reader involved. Help him to play the role that he truly wants. Stir up the emotional excitement in the minds of those most likely to buy. Plant the seed of possibility. Give him hope. Reassure him that he too can make it a reality and enjoy the benefits and get the same kind of results. Performing this task well enough to get large numbers of people to take responsive action, is the most effective way to use classified advertising. This is the strategy that will maximize your profits.

By involving your reader, you'll reach your best target audience, the one you're specifically appealing to. What this method enables you to do is to follow up with the right people; those who can buy and are most interested in acquiring the benefits you've offered them. It also screens out, for the most part, those that are not really interested, so you don't waste your time and money marketing to those who have little or no interest. You want to share the benefits that your product or service provides, but only with those who are capable of buying. Anything else is a waste of your precious resources.

Chapter Two: **What You Must Do First Before** **Writing A Word**

Four Steps That Will Save You From Certain Disaster

There is some preliminary work which must be taken care of first, before you start to create your winning ad. What's required is a little market research. You want to be informed first, before you invest any money. Planning and preparation are critical steps. Most advertisers skip these preliminaries and fail as a consequence. You can avoid this pitfall by taking the time to do the necessary research. It always pays off.

Step 1

The easiest way to begin your market research is to take out a blank sheet of paper. Draw a line down the middle from top to bottom. On the left, list every FEATURE of your product or service. On the right, convert that feature into a strong, prospect-centered BENEFIT.

Features are the characteristics of the product itself such as size, color, function, etc. A benefit is the advantage or the helpful result of the feature itself. The benefit is what gives the feature meaning to the prospect. It's the benefits that your prospect is most interested in.

Features are always about the product or service being offered. Benefits are always about the customer or prospect – it's what he gets out of the product. Prospects are most interested in themselves. When you talk about benefits, you're talking about what's most interesting and important to him... therefore, you have a much more attentive and receptive audience.

Here's an example of a feature turned into a benefit:

In front of me is a stapler. One feature of this stapler is that it has soft, thick rubber feet on

both ends. The benefit is that the rubber cushions the stapler, allowing it to be safely used, on any surface, without damage, even when extra pressure is applied. The rubber feet also act as stabilizers that help to ensure stapling accuracy by preventing accidental slipping. See how easy it is?

Step 2

Now that you've listed all the benefits, consider this. What's the single most compelling reason you can come up with, for a prospect to buy from you, rather than someone else? In other words, what's the biggest -- the ultimate -- benefit you can offer your prospect?

Try to reduce this big benefit to a phrase. While you do this, it may help to keep in mind that sometimes you can create an ultimate benefit that is actually the culmination, or end result of all the other benefits combined.

When you know your ultimate benefit, you know exactly what you have to promote. This is the real reason that people buy from you, to get that big benefit! Keep this foremost in your mind. This is what you really have to offer, an important advantage or helpful solution to a pressing problem. It's the only reason a prospect is ever going to be interested in your product or service. This benefit answers the one question that's on the mind of every prospect: "*What's in it for me?*"

Step 3

Once you've clearly defined and prioritized the benefits of your product or service, the next step is to identify your target audience. The following questions are designed to help you pinpoint your market.

- (1) Who uses this product or service now?
- (2) Who else could really benefit by using my product or service if they were made aware of its' advantages?
- (3) Why does my target market need this product or service now?

(4) What is this markets' main concern when purchasing this type of product or service? (Price, Convenience, Reliability, Availability, Performance, Quality, Efficiency, Service, Security)

(5) What characteristics best describe the typical buyer of this product or service?

The answers to these questions will provide a solid basis for understanding the market niche you want to reach. Imagine yourself as the prospect and think through the answers from his or her perspective. Use this information in all your marketing work as it's certain to point you in the right direction, towards the audience you want to reach.

Now, there's one more piece of the puzzle to solve. When you've got it, you'll know exactly what to appeal to in your classified ad.

Step 4

The final step of your preliminary work is to uncover the most compelling reason to get prospects to respond to your ad. The reasons people respond are based on emotion. Emotion is the one driving force behind all human action, including the act of inquiring or buying. We all are moved, often without our conscious awareness, by this powerful, driving force within us.

Every decision we make to buy, to inquire or to respond to a marketing offer, is based on emotion. When the right emotion is activated with sufficient power, we are driven to take the suggested action. Our emotional "hot-button" has been stimulated, and the degree of stimulation determines the strength of the desire generated within.

The stronger the desire, the more important it becomes to acquire the benefit offered in the ad. It becomes a "must" for us and we no longer question the action required. We just do it -- whatever it takes -- to get what we've been promised. Then we rationalize these emotionally charged decisions later, after the fact, through logic. But the decision to take action is always triggered by emotion. Please remember this.

Every ad you create should stir up some kind of positive emotion. Figure out what your prospect wants emotionally, and then speak to him on a down-to-earth, human level.

Here are the two keys to successfully using emotion in your classified ads:

- (1) Find the emotions that control your prospect's "hot-button"
- (2) Communicate clearly that what you offer will give your prospect exactly what he wants

Somewhere on the following list is the emotional reason for acquiring or buying into your offer. Find it and you'll have the secret for getting what you want out of your ad, for it is essentially what your customer wants when he or she buys. No one really buys a product or service. They "*buy*" the emotional benefit of that product or service. Emotion is the motivating force that drives your prospect. Use it and your chances of success improve significantly!

I've included 99 reasons why people respond on the following two pages. May I suggest you reference this list every time you sit down to create a new ad.

The 99 Reasons Why People Respond To A Given Marketing Proposition

To satisfy curiosity
To make money
To save time
To avoid effort
To achieve comfort
To enjoy health
To be popular
To gain pleasure or enhance enjoyment
To feel clean
To be praised and admired
To be in style
To satisfy an appetite
To own beautiful possessions
To attract the opposite sex
To be an individual, independent
To emulate others
To take advantage of opportunities
To get a surprise
To be successful
To make work easier
To gain prestige
To be sociable
To express creativity
To be efficient or more efficient
To protect oneself and family
To protect the future of a family
To be a good parent
To be liked
To be loved
To express a personality
To be in fashion
To avoid embarrassment
To fulfill a fantasy
To be up to date with the latest "thing"
To own attractive things
To collect valuable things
To satisfy the ego
To be "first" at something
To enjoy exotic tastes
To live in a clean atmosphere
To be strong and healthy
To renew vigor and energy
To get rid of aches and pains
To find new and rare things
To be more beautiful or attractive
To win the affection of others
To satisfy sexual desires
To bring back pleasant memories
To be lucky
To live longer

To feel important
To gain knowledge
To improve ones own appearance
To be recognized as an authority
To enhance leisure
To save money
To have security in old age
To overcome obstacles
To do things well
To get a better job
To be your own boss
To gain social acceptance
To " keep up with the Jones"
To appreciate beauty
To be proud of possessions
To resist the domination of others
To relieve boredom
To gain self-respect
To win acclaim
To win advancement
To seek adventure
To satisfy ambition
To be among the leaders
To gain confidence
To escape drudgery
To gain freedom from worry
To get on the bandwagon
To get something for nothing
To gain self-assurance
To escape shame
To avoid effort
To have safety in buying something else
To protect reputation
To "one-up" others
To be in style
To replace the obsolete
To add fun or spice to life
To work less
To conserve natural resources
To protect the environment
To avoid shortages
To relax
To avoid criticism
To protect possessions
To avoid physical pain
To avoid loss of reputation
To avoid loss of money
To avoid trouble
To prevent unemployment

The underlying reason why your prospect wants what you've got exists somewhere on this list. It's highly likely that there are several motivating forces on the list. Here's a secret: make it your job to come up with the biggest, strongest, most compelling, single reason. Focus on this only. Keep this single idea in mind throughout the ad writing process. This is your strongest emotional trigger; get it working in your favor.

How To Choose The Best Location For Your Ad

Okay, so you've uncovered your biggest benefit. You know your intended audience and where to reach this target. And, you've selected the most likely "*emotional motivator*" for responding to your ad. At this point, you should give careful attention to the placement of your ad.

Classifieds are everywhere. Your choices are numerous, but your best, most profitable opportunities must be found, one at a time, and then mined for all they're worth. The only way to find these nuggets of gold are to sift through the waste. Always test a publication with just one ad first and accurately record the results. When profitable, repeat and expand your marketing. If not, test and test again until you have the right message in a venue that's pulling many responses.

You can place classified ads in local or national daily newspapers, weekly community papers, popular consumer magazines, trade and industry journals, interest-specific magazines, newsletters, electronic bulletin boards such as those available from CompuServe or America On-line (AOL), as well as the World Wide Web.

What you should be looking for is the ideal match between the readership of a chosen medium and the ultimate benefit that a reader could get by having or using your product or service. The better the match, the better your response.

Continually ask yourself:

“Where could I find the largest number of qualified people who could genuinely benefit by using my product or service NOW?”

Let's break down this question even further. The "*largest number*" is that which you can comfortably afford to access. You want

to reach as many interested and qualified people as possible, but some markets are more expensive than others, so your budget becomes a significant factor. The "*qualified people*" are those who have the means to purchase what you offer and would clearly benefit by having or using your product or service.

Every single product or service appeals to, or could appeal more significantly to a very specific, definable group, than to the masses. A huge secret to your success lies in finding the best media for reaching your specific group of prospects.

Most daily newspapers have a large circulation, but their readership is often too general in nature to yield substantial returns for classified advertisers. The shelf life of a daily paper is about one day -- not much time for your single classified ad to catch the eye of any additional browsing readers.

Weekend editions tend to linger for a few days at a time when most people are winding down from the work week, and this makes it more likely that larger numbers will see your ad. This accounts for both the better results that I've observed, as well as the higher advertising rates paid for weekend insertions. The daily papers that have larger classified sections may draw an adequate response to your offer to warrant an extended stay.

The greatest advantage daily papers give you is the relative quick turnaround time. You get instant feedback. An ad placed today could appear in tomorrow's edition. You can get results immediately with newspapers, which makes this route an excellent choice for testing your ad, or various components of your ad.

Placing your tiny ad in the large consumer and special interest magazines often gives you world-wide exposure. I've received responses from sixteen different countries from one single twenty-three word ad! But that's not all. Responses continued to trickle in for over five years after I last ran the ad! These publications enjoy a much longer shelf life. Some individuals, as well as public libraries, collect these publications, keeping your ad around for years. I should also mention that much of the later response that I received from this ad came from developing nations. What may seem to be "*old news*" to some, is "*hot stuff*" to these emerging areas of the world.

The downside of this advertising vehicle is the higher cost. In most cases you pay by the word and the rate per word is dependent mostly on the magazines' circulation numbers. Circulation is only one

statistic that you should look at. Examine the size of the classified section. A large classified section is large for one reason -- it works for its' advertisers, so that's exactly where you want to be.

Industry and trade journals, newsletters, as well as smaller classified sections, may have a smaller readership, but, they can actually represent the best value for your advertising dollar.

Every business, profession and hobby has at least one and perhaps several, of these specialized periodicals or newsletters, devoted solely to the interests of that particular business or hobby. These publications have a very limited circulation, some with only a few hundred subscribers, but every one who subscribes reads it from cover to cover. The reason for this is simple. It's about and written for a very specific and identifiable reader. The reader knows this and so absorbs every word. And, if your ad communicates effectively to this reader, you're sure to enjoy a huge response!

Your key in achieving success with these specialized media is to target your offer specifically for the reader of a publication. Tailor your message to the reader; his interests and his desires. Make your ad seem as though it was written by the same type of person as is likely to read it. If you're advertising in *Sales Leader*, your ad must "speak" with an understanding of common experience; direct selling. This builds credibility and rapport. It's one sales professional speaking to another.

Know The Rules Before You Play The Game

Not only is every publication different in audience and circulation, but also by their rules and rates. Knowing the insertion regulations and guidelines is a "must" before beginning the ad creation process. Most large-scale magazines and tabloids charge by the word, but the rate can vary widely. Newspapers on the other hand usually charge by the line. Here it's important to know not only the rate per line but the maximum number of characters that could fit on a single line. Trade publications for the most part charge either by the line or by a pre-set size such as one inch by column width.

Knowing the rates and rules in advance helps you compile some vital information:

- (1) Your approximate cost to deliver your marketing message
- (2) How to get the most value for your money

If you're paying by the word, strive to communicate your message in about twenty-five words or so. If you're paying by the line, try this little experiment with your ad. Start with a five line ad. Include all the information you feel is important. Now, try to reduce it to four lines. Eliminate all unnecessary words. Try different words, other ways to describe your offer. Read your ad again and measure it for loss of impact. If there's no noticeable loss, congratulations, you've just saved yourself the cost of one full line. Now, see if you can reduce it even further.

Observe The Work Of Other Classified Users

The best place to see what works in a classified ad and what doesn't is to browse through various publications and highlight anything that catches your eye. Look at every publication you can get your hands on: national newspapers, local papers, tabloids, magazines, trade publications and newsletters. What was it about a particular ad that made you pay attention to it? Do you think this ad will be profitable to the person who placed it?

Here's a sure-fire way of identifying the most successful magazine ads:

- (1) Study the current editions of a dozen different monthly publications.
- (2) Circle every classified ad that looks as though it could be pulling a good response for the advertiser.
- (3) Visit the library and locate the same publications. Find the issues of the same magazine that are approximately one year old.
- (4) Turn to the classifieds and see if any of the ads in the year-old issue are the same as the ads in the current issue.

Each ad that appears in both issues is guaranteed to be profitable. Classified advertisers are in business to earn a profit, so any ad that doesn't pull its own weight with a good rate of return, will not run for more than a few months, let alone a full year.

You'll also discover the publications that work best for various offers. You may find the identical ad in two or more different publications. A quick check of the current issues may reveal fewer placements; evidence of the publications that are pulling better results.

You'll also discover the offers that work on different audiences. Keep a notebook handy and record all observations.

This important research can be done in half a day without spending any money. You'll quickly learn what works, by observing what has worked for others. This information will give you valuable clues about what to say and where to say it, regardless of the medium that you ultimately select. Successful classifieds reveal key advertising concepts that are yours for the taking.

Learn From Others But Be Your Own Unique Self

Studying the methods and approaches that are used by other advertisers should become a part of your routine as a classified advertiser. When you see a great example in use, think of how you might adapt a similar approach to your ad.

Never duplicate the exact words used in another ad, however perfect the “*fit*” may appear to be for your product or service. I've seen many imitations of good ads that try to model the original too closely. While the original ads may profit for years, the knockoffs mysteriously disappear soon after their debut. My own feeling on this is that the reader senses that the ad is somehow fabricated or inauthentic, and he simply doesn't respond. This leaves the bewildered advertiser with no choice but to withdraw the ad. Often such an advertiser then vanishes, abandoning this profitable marketing medium altogether.

Instead, try combining winning ideas into a new package that is uniquely yours and your chances of success are much greater. Instead of copying word for word, examine the approach that is obviously working for another advertiser. Repackage the good ideas found elsewhere into a powerful combination of your own. This will give you a solid starting point in which to begin your task of coming up with a winning ad.

How To Select The Best Category For Your Ad

Remember what you sell. It's not a product or a service, but a solution to a problem... or... a big benefit, or helpful result that can only be obtained by acquiring your product or service. Keep this in mind as you select the category or classification in which your ad will run.

Here's an example. Let's suppose you've produced a course (consisting of a text and workbook) on starting a business from home. You've identified your market as people interested in being their own boss and you've singled out *Entrepreneur* magazine as your advertising vehicle. The next thing to decide is where to place your ad, among the thirty-five or so different categories listed to achieve the best results.

In this example, what you're really selling is vital information for the entrepreneurial type... the kind of information that would help such an individual establish a home-based business of their own. You're selling an opportunity; the opportunity to establish a business, to be one's own boss, to make money and to create an unlimited future for the buyer and his family. Therefore, "*business opportunities*" or "*money-making opportunities*", would be a much better classification than "*books*" or "*education/instruction*". "*Books*" or "*Education*" are too broad – too general – to be an attractive match for your targeted audience.

The reader who is interested in starting a home business isn't looking for a *book* to further his *education*. He wants to fulfill a lifelong dream of self-employment and anything that could help him to reach that goal sooner, with less difficulty, would be welcomed, indeed. Place your ad where your intended reader is likely to be focused. What does he really want that you can give him? Think like your prospect. Remember that it's the benefits, not the product that sells, and locate your ad in the category that best communicates a meaningful benefit.

Chapter Three: **How To Extract The Maximum Profit** **From Every Ad You Write**

The Secret Of The Most Successful Classified Ads

I encourage you to forget trying to make the sale within the classified ad itself. There are two reasons for this:

- (1) You don't have enough room to tell of all the benefits your product or service offers...
- (2) There seems to be a psychological dollar limit (usually \$3.00 -\$5.00) to what people will spend on a marketing offer from the classifieds alone.

The solution? Always use the *Two-Step* method for best results. The first step is the placement of the classified ad, designed only to generate inquiries. The second step is to follow-up on the interest generated by the classified ad with a strong sales message, usually in the form of a sales letter or direct mail package. This acts as your sales closer.

If you have a product that sells in the price range of \$3.00 - \$5.00, than it may be possible to sell your product directly from the ad. To do so profitably though, will require a very high rate of response. Again, testing is required. This approach may work effectively in one area such as the tabloids, and not in another. But there is only one way to find out for sure. Test it first. If you want to stay on the most likely course of success, I would strongly advise that you stick with the *Two-Step* method. With this technique and a strong marketing package, you can sell just about anything!

Most successful classified advertisers employ the *Two-Step* method relentlessly. Why? Only because it delivers consistent results - the kind of results they can deposit at the bank.

Use Classifieds To Generate Leads

This is the most effective and profitable use of classified advertising; to generate quality leads. A good ad pulls at the heartstrings of its' reader in such a way that they are driven to respond to get more information. That's all you can ask of any classified ad. When properly utilized it has one job only: to get every reader who is qualified to stand up and identify themselves by asking for additional information.

The beauty of this system is that a well designed ad will not only attract response from high-quality leads, but it will deter the unqualified from responding. This enables you to channel your marketing efforts and dollars on only those most likely to buy. This is marketing efficiently, a more direct and certain route to success. This is the way to extract the maximum profit from every classified ad you create.

Here's an example of a good lead-generating ad:

“ATTENTION: ANYONE SERIOUS ABOUT BEING THEIR OWN BOSS WHO'S FED UP WITH GIMMICKS, FALSE PROMISES & HIDDEN COSTS. Former CEO & Private Tutor To Serious Entrepreneurs Reveals 7 Simple But Powerful Insider Secrets To Instantly Assess The Viability Of Any Business Opportunity. For My FREE REPORT: Sound Plan Or Crooked Scam? Write: BizPlan 378 Rock Rd., Bronte, Ont. 11111 Canada”

In this example, the headline clearly flags down its intended target reader. It touches a nerve in anyone who's been led down the “*garden path*” of business opportunities. It offers to solve a problem -- to protect the victim from experiencing the pain of being misled again, while still encouraging him to pursue his dream of “*being his own boss*”.

The reader is able to request the free report without any obligation on his part. He wants to solve this problem and he's interested in the benefit of the promised information. Even though this sample is quite long for a classified ad, I doubt that a large number of people would be willing to pay cash up-front for this report. After all,

the ad sounds good, but the readers don't know the advertiser. They may have been fooled before. This is why a free offer is so effective; it gives the advertiser an opportunity to show his stuff, to build credibility and to establish a relationship with the prospect, first.

Only Send Your Complete Sales Package To Those Who Request More Information

This system allows you to select the recipients of your main sales message. It gives you a willing, eager and very receptive audience to “hear” your message. You can make available all the details of your product or service by sending your complete sales package to everyone who responds to the ad.

The function of the ad itself is to draw responses from good, solid prospects. Then you have a list of names that you can deliver the details to. As you collect responses, it's important to get the essential information from each prospect who responds, so that you can get your sales material into his hands quickly. The essential information means the correct, full name, address, company name and position (if you're selling to a business).

The Sales Closer

Part two of the *Two-Step* method is the follow-up sales package. While it is not within the scope of this booklet to examine the complete process of creating a follow-up package that sells, here's a few ideas that will help.

(1) Respond immediately to every request. This means that all your marketing materials must be ready to go into the mail at any time. Your prospect is waiting to hear from you. At the same time he is gauging you on the credibility scale with the swiftness of your response. To the prospect who receives your package promptly, you remain in good standing, someone who is worthy of his or her business. If you're late in replying, your credibility is damaged.

(2) Talk about what your prospect wants to hear: "What will it do for me?" is the dominant thought of the reader of your ad. Promote the benefits. Pile on benefit after benefit after benefit. A sales letter gives you all the room you need to promote every benefit, provide proof and deliver a compelling offer.

(3) Differentiate yourself from all competitors. Be unique. Stand out from the rest of the pack by being original. Package your sales proposition in a way that no one else could. Create a unique selling proposition that puts you in a favorable position in the mind of your prospects.

(4) Make your prospect an irresistible offer. Make it easy for him to acquire your product or service. Offer financing, credit cards, 24-hour ordering. Most of all, offer such value compared to the asking price that buying your product becomes a “*no-brainer*” -- a given.

(5) Always ask for the order. Leave nothing to chance. Make the ordering the natural conclusion of a friendly conversation between two friends; your prospect who has a need and you, that supportive voice with the ultimate solution.

If At First They Don't Buy ...Try And Try Again

Many times people who indicate serious interest in your offer by requesting information, don't immediately buy with the same enthusiasm. That's why you need to market continuously and relentlessly in pursuit of the sale to these individuals. You've got to reinforce the benefits again and again, until these people are moved to make a purchase.

Many people just don't “*get it*” the first time around, or even the second or third time, for that matter. However, a continual system of marketing to these individuals is perhaps one of the better investments you can make. The reason for this is obvious; these individuals made the effort to respond to your classified ad in the first place. They are by virtue, most likely interested in obtaining for themselves, the benefit offered in the ad. In order to enjoy that benefit, they need to get the product. They must take action. Keep reinforcing the benefits until those slothful souls are spurred into action to get the big benefit you've been promising them.

How many times should you “*hit*” a prospect with your marketing message? Most experts seem to agree that you should not write-off any qualified prospect without exposing him to your message at least seven times. Many times I've made sales with my second or third sales letter. Unless there's an indication to the contrary, these

folks are genuinely interested in your product, so you need to remind them of all the benefits only you can supply.

Chapter Four:

Copywriters Secrets To Creating Great

Ads

The Three Essential Components Of An Ad That Works

The first thing every winning ad needs is an attention-arresting headline. Your headline has to scream out to your target prospect that this is something of vital importance, something that he needs to pay attention to. Your headline should flag down your prospect so it's immediately recognized as something for "*him*". You want your prospect to be thinking "*this is important and it's for me*". You've got his attention for a brief moment --- now you've got to deliver your best shot, quickly and precisely.

No ad will work unless the headline captures the readers attention. The headlines that work best are headlines that promise a benefit. Why not hit them with your ultimate benefit right up-front? If you can't hook them in with your most appealing bait, nothing else will do the trick either. Longer headlines, although more expensive, generally produce higher rates of response. Longer headlines are less generic and pack a bigger wallop of benefits.

For your ad to pay off big, try luring, seducing or wooing your reader into your ad with your power-packed headline. This is the essential first step. No prospect will ever take the action you want if he isn't pulled in first by your headline.

The offer is the second essential component of your classified ad. The offer is the thing that you make available to the prospect for his making contact with you. It could be in the form of details, plans, a booklet, even a cassette or video.

The offer serves two purposes:

- (1) It gives the inquirer all the details he needs to get the benefit promised in the headline.

- (2) It gives the seller (you) the opportunity to deliver a package that is carefully crafted to induce the sale.

The third component your ad needs is the contact information, the details the prospect needs in order to reach you. That includes your complete address, and/or whatever other means you choose to make yourself available such as by phone, fax, e-mail, etc.

You should always include as part of your address, some kind of “key” or “code”, which indicates for your information only, the publication and issue from which the inquiry originated. This will prove invaluable as you expand your advertising to several outlets. You’ll know with precise accuracy, the pulling power of every publication and issue that you advertise in.

“Keying” is easy. Simply add the word department (dept.) following your name or street address and then assign a number to it. For example, an advertisement in the April edition of Mother Earth News might be coded Dept. M4. The “M” represents the publication, Mother Earth News, and the “4” indicates the fourth month of the year.

The Easiest Place To Start

Begin at the end of your ad and work backwards. Start with your contact information. Your name and address doesn’t require any concentrated effort on your part, yet they are essential ingredients in your ad, unless you decide to only use an 800 telephone service. In either case, this gives you an easy way to get started writing your ad. Remember to make it easy for your reader to contact you. Multiple choices make it that much easier.

Make Every Word Pay Its’ Own Way

A classified ad is nothing more than a handful of words that are assembled for the purpose of generating response. The greater the response, the more prospects you have to work with. With classified advertising, words are the only tools you have to elicit these responses, and very few words at that. Every word of every ad must do its’ job. If any single word that appears, doesn’t make your ad stronger, it should be deleted. Every word either inspires action, or it doesn’t. Look closely at each and every word of your ad. Is that word necessary? Does it help to move the prospect to take the action you want him to take?

Empower your words. Use attention-grabbing, riveting action words that command your prospect to first focus in on your ad, and then take the necessary action to get what you're offering. Here's a secret: keep a thesaurus on your desk as you write your ad. Carefully examine each word and then use your thesaurus to experiment with other word choices. Select the word that provides the greatest impact in your ad.

Wherever possible, employ words that instantly paint pictures in the mind of the reader. Words that evoke vivid mental images inspire positive feelings and spark the creation of imagined possibilities. This is an automatic emotional reaction to a word from your ad. You want to take advantage of that instant imaging and emotional reaction. How? Pepper your ad with image-words like *millionaire, beautiful, attractive, scenic, successful, secrets, rich*. Just make sure that you're being authentic when using such words, otherwise they may backfire.

Try replacing inactive, static words with action verbs like; *Stop, Create, Make, Eliminate, Win, Start, Attract*.

Employ strong descriptive words to describe your offer, words like; *Startling, Incredible, Revolutionary, Easy, Amazing, Bold, Simple, Shocking*.

How quickly can your prospect enjoy these results? How about; *Immediately, Overnight, Within Thirty Days, Now, Instantly, In a few short weeks, or In only three minutes a day*.

What do you want to share with your prospect? Is it a *New Discovery, a Plan or Method, a System, a Special Report*? We all seem to be drawn to the new idea, product or service.

If you know something that your prospect would benefit by knowing, you've got a *Secret to Reveal, Uncover or Unleash*. Perhaps it's *astounding* or *astounding*.

Avoid words with negative connotations like *Disaster, Death, Dead, Hopeless, Fatal* and *Terminal*. It's the positive emotions that you want to stir in your prospects, not the negative ones.

The most important word you can ever use in any advertising copy is the word *You* or a derivative of it such as *Your*. This simple word addresses your message to a Very Important Person, *you* (the

reader of your ad). It draws your prospect into your ad. It projects him into the picture, allowing him to realistically imagine himself enjoying or profiting from the benefits you offer.

Another great word to use is *how*. We seem to have an insatiable appetite for learning *how* to do things better, faster, cheaper or with greater ease and less stress. Show your prospect *how* to get the big benefit your product provides and you're certain to be on the right track.

Impact words are emotional words. These words are generally smaller in size and therefore quickly understood by most people. Words that instantly trigger an emotional response, are always a better choice. Below are two groups of words. Each line illustrates two different ways of saying basically the same thing. Which group of words creates a stronger gut-level response?

investment	money-maker
concerned	worried
fortunate	lucky
large	big
experiment	test
manufacture	make
pleased	happy
preserve	save
receive	get
sufficient	enough
superior	better
fearful	afraid

The column on the left could be termed the intellectual, while the one on the right is the emotional. Think about each pair of words and the visual images that immediately come to mind. Measure the strength of these images line for line and you'll quickly see that emotional words have stronger image-invoking qualities, which makes them a better choice for classified ads.

Replace stodgy, intellectual words with words that create an immediate emotional response, the instant they are read. You can expect a favorable increase in response when you use emotional, feeling words in place of those intellectual words your high-school English teacher demanded of you.

Always Leave Your Prospect Wanting More

You want to tempt and excite your prospect enough so that he takes action by stepping forward and contacting you. What you really want is to whet his appetite, to give him an indication of what he can expect, if only he takes the required action.

This shouldn't be hard to do if you've done your homework. You should have at least one emotional trigger switch that you can activate to get the reader of your classified ad to do whatever is necessary to get more of what you've promised. Understanding what your prospect really craves is the secret to creating an ad that fuels his desire for more.

The Power Of A FREE Offer

Whether you offer an information kit, details, a special report or cassette, always make your information offer FREE. "Free" is a magic marketing word; a strong drawing card. Everyone understands that "*there's no free lunch*" yet, most people simply can't resist a free offer, especially if it's something of importance to them. A free offer makes it easy for the reader to try you and your product or service out.

The key to making "FREE" work for you is this: whatever is offered for free must be linked to a significant prospect benefit and preferably be offered in limited quantity only. The clear benefit to the prospect stimulates his desire to have it and the limited availability urges him to take action now.

Make It Easy For Your Prospect To Respond

Unfortunately, it matters little how good your offer is, to some people. It still means that your prospects have to "do" something. Many people who could clearly benefit by taking you up on your offer, people whose lives could be better by taking this little action, still won't get off their backsides unless you make it very easy for them to connect with you. This means giving them a choice where possible of reaching you by phone, fax, mail or E-mail. This means answering all requests right away with your follow-up package. It means making your offer available 24-hours-a-day by fax through electronic ordering (a simple answering machine or voice mail will do the trick).

Whenever your prospect gets the urge to contact you, that's the time when you have to be available to take his order.

If your prospect makes an attempt to reach you and he is unable to, for whatever reason, you may lose him for good. Don't take that chance. Be prepared and make it easy at every step. What you are doing, in effect, is being prospect-friendly. Remember, every customer was first a prospect. Customers are the only people who can help you to reach your profit objectives.

Even though you have something of great value, something your prospect could benefit from significantly, unless it's really easy for him to respond, when he chooses to respond, he won't respond. It's that simple. You've got to make it as effortless as possible in order to get your prospect out of his comfortable chair to connect with you. Call it laziness. Call it fear. Call it lethargy or inertia. Call it comfort-zone conditioning. Whatever it is... know that it exists. It's human nature, and whatever can be done to overcome this detriment to your success, must be done.

To make it easy for your prospect, try giving him a number of options to make connect with you. Try offering an 800-line phone service that can be accessed immediately at no cost to the prospect. Or, perhaps offering your fax number as a means of responding, may get action from those who fear getting follow-up sales calls. A response by fax enables the inquirer to provide as much information as he wants, in order to maintain control over how he receives your material. Testing will indicate the optimum strategy you should be using. Consider all possibilities.

Always present your offer as something of value to the prospect that he can have, *free*. Don't just send sales material. Your prospect won't be fooled. Instead, try sharing a sampling of what your product can actually do for him. Always include some useful information that will be appreciated by any recipient.

Here's some ways to offer your follow-up material:

free details	free booklet	free plans
free information kit	free trial package	free seminar
free video	free sample	free gift certificate
free cassette	free guide book	free personal analysis
free report	free catalogue	free sample issue
free chart	free consultation	

The possibilities are almost endless. A “*free offer*” makes it easier for your prospect to inquire. After all, it doesn't cost anything, except perhaps a postage stamp and it's something he could really use right now.

If You Want To Get Action You Must Be Specific

Whatever product or service you promote in your ad, the key to your success is to focus on a specific benefit for a specific audience, with a specific offer. Never make your offer open to everyone. To write for everyone is to write for no one. Offer the single biggest benefit that you can possibly imagine, to the highly targeted audience that could gain the most from it.

Avoid the trap of thinking that everybody could use what you have to offer. “*Everyone*” represents too large an audience, too vast a spectrum. Speak to your selected audience only – those who are specifically interested in your offer. Give them the huge benefit they need, want and crave. Offer them an easy means to get what they want most; a no-obligation, free package that provides valuable, usable information.

Talk To A Single Individual

Instead of thinking of your entire potential market when you create your ad, think of your audience as one individual. Think of how you would communicate with a single human being. What would you say? How would you connect? Then, make that connection. Speak to one live reader as though you were a friend with something of vital importance to share. You'll come across to your audience as more credible, because you are speaking their language, communicating with rapport. Your reader will sense your sincerity and be more open to contact you and ultimately to buy from you.

How To Attract The Eye Of The Scanning Prospect

Depending on your chosen publication, you may have some options available to help make your ad stand out and separate it from all competing ads. These points of emphasis include: upper case letters, exclamation marks, bullets, dashes, underlined words and boxed text. They can all be effective in setting off one ad competing for attention from the others.

You'd like to be different, to stand apart from the crowd, but sometimes that in itself can be challenging. You can study the current issue of any publication before you place your ad, but there's no way of knowing what else you'll see when your ad appears. Someone else could conceivably use the exact same point of emphasis that you have, thereby negating your efforts to stand apart. How do you prevent this problem from occurring? Easy. Here's the key: Use points of emphasis sparingly. Use them only in addition to strongly worded, effective copy. Make your word offer so inviting that its apparent value to the reader is so great that he simply can't refuse to respond.

Points of emphasis almost always cost you more money. My advise is this: try out one or two of these devices and test your results against the same ad without the devices. One approach may bring a larger response, but if the ad costs more to run, is it worth it? The only way to know for sure is to test it.

Often, a publication will make available various design keys such as graphic impressions of stop signs or exaggerated arrows, that are supposed to make your ad stand out. Again, testing will tell you if it's worth the extra expense.

Your Strongest Claim Is Always Your Biggest Benefit

Classifieds are tiny ads bundled with many more of the same type, so, for yours to work you've got to "*make it scream*". It does absolutely no good to "*scream*" for the sake of getting everyone to listen. You can command undivided attention by shouting "*fire*" in a crowded theater, but that's hardly the attention you'd want. What you really want is to get the attention of only your select audience, and no one else. These are the only folks who can put money in your pocket. These are the people you've clearly identified as a niche market, with sizable potential. It's these people who are most interested in what you can do for them.

Precisely what you can do for your prospects, the greatest possible benefit your product or service offers them -- your ultimate benefit -- is probably the greatest appeal you can use in a classified ad. This is what you must shout to your audience so that every single reader who is interested to any degree and is capable of buying... in other words, every qualified prospect, moves into action by responding to your advertisement.

The ultimate benefit is the biggest advantage or helpful result your customer gets as a collective and cumulative result of all the other benefits. When you stack benefit upon benefit, you in essence create a larger, stronger, more compelling benefit because you've created an overall situation that makes life easier, happier, or more successful for your customer.

Here's an example. The publisher of one of the most successful books of all time, *"How To Win Friends And Influence People"*, wanted to come up with the strongest appeal for an ad. Scanning the book revealed many benefits that it offered readers. The challenge was however, to come up with the one great big benefit that would pull the best response.

Browsing through the table of contents one could easily see how the reader could benefit in several ways. He could learn: *"The Biggest Secret Of Dealing With People"*, how to *"Do This And You'll Be Welcome Anywhere"*, *"A Simple Way To Make A Good First Impression"* or *"How To Make People Like You Instantly"*. All of these chapter titles, as well as numerous others are significant benefits by themselves, but when combined, stacked one on top of another, create a huge benefit of irresistible appeal. How did the publisher do it?

The greatest benefit was revealed in the very title of the book itself. Nowhere in the book was there a specific set of directions for *"winning friends"* or *"influencing people"*. However, the cumulative effect of all the other benefits that one would gain by reading the book, was exactly that, winning friends and influencing people. This proved to have a huge appeal as many millions of copies of the book have been sold. Although written in 1936, it continues to sell today. A large part of the early success of this book could be attributed to the ad that boldly offered in its headline, the ultimate benefit of the product, *"How To Win Friends And Influence People"*.

Every Word Counts

Every single word of your classified ad either helps attract response or repels it. Every word counts in some way. It should either excite, get the attention of, or motivate the prospect to make the next move. Whether your prospect contacts you immediately to get more information, or skips your ad and moves on, depends to a large extent on the words that you choose for your ad. Be specific, honest and down-to-earth and realistic in your choice of words and you'll succeed in being heard. Choose your words carefully.

In Order To Be Heard - You Must Be Believed

Whatever you say must be believable. An ad that boasts a vague, general opportunity for reward or gain, no matter how appealing it may seem to its writer, doesn't work. It doesn't work because it's unsubstantiated and unclear. *"Make Millions From Your Answering Machine"* seems too unreal, too easy, and not specific enough, even though most people would relish the opportunity to make *"millions"* without contributing the actual labor they're accustomed to. It just doesn't *"feel"* right. After all, how difficult could it be to operate an answering machine? This headline appears a little too easy. The prospect has already been conditioned to be on guard for such questionable offers and operates from the belief that *"if something seems too good to be true, it probably is"*.

What if this headline instead proclaimed: *"Earn \$2,479.00 Extra Monthly Using A Simple Household Appliance You Already Own"*. Perhaps the actual wording is too long for the application, but look at what it accomplishes that the first headline does not.

The figure of \$2,479.00 a month is more realistic... it's something large numbers of people can relate to. It's achievable and therefore believable. The word extra implies additional income apart from ones current income from a source like a regular job. This tells the prospect that he doesn't have to risk his job... this is *"extra"* money.

The simple household appliance, implies that an expensive new piece of equipment isn't required and that the reader likely already owns everything he needs. This causes the reader to think: *"What do I now own that could be earning me this extra money every month? Nothing that I own is earning me this kind of income. Therefore if it's true that I do in fact own this equipment, than it must be lying dormant, or at least not being used to its potential. I must do something about this at once. I need to find out more so I can put it to work for me and collect some easy, extra money"*.

Speak Clearly

A common problem advertisers have with classifieds is having a finished ad that doesn't communicate clearly and effectively with the prospect. Know your prospect, don't just assume you do. Get a good feel for his experience and then write your ad on his level. Make sure

you *speak* the prospects language. Communicate in a way that builds rapport and reassurance and that makes the reader feel that you understand his needs. Never assume that abbreviations will be understood; use plain English that leaves no room for misinterpretation. If it requires effort to “*translate*” what you're trying to say, you'll lose the interest of the person you worked so hard to attract in the first place. Once gone, a prospect rarely returns.

The Most Important Part Of Every Ad

Remember, the most profitable way to use classified ads is to use them to generate solid, highly qualified leads. Yes, I know I've mentioned this before, but I can't stress it enough! You want to attract the attention of the people you can help. If you fail to attract attention, your ad fails. Use your ad to capture the attention and interest of your best prospects.

Attracting attention is the function of the headline, therefore, it's the headline that's vital to the success of every single classified ad. It's the headline that pulls the reader in to “*hear your offer*”. It's the headline that stops the scanning reader from flipping the page and causes him to re-focus on what caught his attention. **It's the headline and particularly the first few words of a headline that determines whether the remainder of a classified ad is ever read.**

The Seven Types Of Headlines That Work In Classified Ads

Since the headline is critical to the success of your ad, this is where most of your time should be invested. Here are seven different headline approaches that can work effectively in classified advertising.

(1) The DIRECT Offer

The “*direct offer*” gets right to the point without delay. It attempts to grab interest immediately by offering something of unusually good value, or something totally unique.

*** 11 Cassettes For Only A Penny!**

*** Name-Brand VCR's Up To 73% Off!**

(2) The COMMAND

The “*command*” technique involves giving a specific and very direct order to the reader. The purpose is to inspire action so that the prospect can acquire the benefit. The use of a simple action word (be,

get, put, do, take, gain, etc.) implies that the benefit is only one small and easy-to-take action away.

- * **Join Us And You're Guaranteed To Sell More Products!**
- * **Give Me Two Minutes And I'll Show You The Money-Making Secret That Doubles Your Profit On Every Sale!**

(3) The REASONS WHY approach

The “*reasons why*” approach works well in many cases because it presents a convincing (and specific) number of reasons to get what is being offered. The implication here is that the evidence is overwhelming, and therefore the prospect needs to find out about it.

- * **Nine Reasons Why You Should Ban This Common Ingredient From Your Kitchen!**
- * **Seven Ways To Increase Your Profits With Sales Letters.**

(4) The NEWS method

The relaying of “*news*” can be a strong headline technique. For this to work you must have something that is truly new or newsworthy. A “*news*” headline implies something new and improved or something never done before. Words that can be effectively employed to announce news are; *introducing*, *announcing* and *presenting*. Words that convey a feeling of newness are; *revolutionary*, *suddenly*, *remarkable* and *new*.

- * **New Gardeners' Hat Actually Repels Irritating Insects!**
- * **The Simple Idea That Turned My Donut Shop Into A Huge Success!**
- * **Warning: Record Number Of Phony Bills Circulating In Chicago Area -- Protect Yourself And Your Business From Fraud!**

5) The HOW TO approach

The “*how to*” headline is great for revealing “*inside*” information that your prospect would dearly love to be privy to. Here’s the formula for making “*how to*” work successfully for you:

How To (get) a big benefit quickly and easily.

- * **How To Compel Your Past Customers To Eagerly Buy Again Within 12 Days!**
- * **\$1156.00 A Month Extra Cash From Your Hobby – Here's How!**

(6) The interesting QUESTION

The “*question*” headline draws the reader in by asking a provocative or intriguing question that demands an answer. Properly executed, this approach can work very well for you, as long as your offer provides the solution.

*** What Will You Do When Revenue Canada Demands An Audit?**

*** Are You Losing Out On Business Because You're Not On-Line?**

(7) The customer TESTIMONIAL technique

The “*testimonial*” headline commands credibility because it represents a third-party user and is not merely an advertiser pushing a product. Testimonials signify the approval of others. They imply that a product is recommended, endorsed, approved and proven.

*** “Last Month I Earned \$4859.96 Using Your Simple Plan And A Spare Room In The Basement!”**

*** “With XLT's System I Have Something That's Invaluable, An Easy Way Into My New Clients Office.”**

Once you've chosen your biggest benefit, try out several different headline possibilities. Try a few different formats to see what works best. Using your thesaurus will give you a broader choice of words. Take the best words or ideas from your various headlines and create a new, stronger headline. Rewrite and re-work it until it's attention-gripping and easily understandable.

The successful headline delivers (or implies) a powerful prospect-centered benefit. It often must achieve this result in a brief, concise and compelling few words. Your goal in creating a headline that puts money in your pocket is to draw the attention of every possible prospect, so that he reads on and takes action. In order to achieve this, your headline must be readily identified as something of critical importance to the prospect.

You may choose to “*flag*” your reader by identifying, in billboard fashion, exactly who your message is for.

Here's an example: “*Inventors' Protection Kit Safeguards Your Idea*”. The “*flag*” is the word “*Inventors*”. “*Flagging*” acts as a qualifier; it clearly identifies who should read the message... who it's

written for. It also helps to deter those who like to respond just to get something free, but could never be considered serious prospects for our offer. This saves you time and money in marketing to those “*lost causes*”.

Build Upon Your Prospects’ Desire

You know what your product or service can do for your prospect. You know what it is your prospect really wants. You have the solution to a pressing problem. This is the carrot that you need to dangle in front of him. When you can touch a nerve, when you can get him excited about what is actually possible for him, you've stoked the fire of desire within him. There's a deep emotional want that he craves and he'd really like to just “*go for it*” and do what is necessary to get what you've promised. But he's been burned before by some unscrupulous dealer who made similar claims in the past. So now he's cautious and skeptical. He really wants what you've offered him, but the sting of that bad experience lingers on and reluctance sets in. He doesn't want to get hurt again.

So how do you use desire to get this apprehensive prospect to respond to your offer? Simply fuel his desire by giving him a sample of what you offer, FREE, without any obligation. Who can resist the temptation of getting something for nothing, especially when it's something that we really desire emotionally? This gives you the opportunity to establish a relationship with your prospect, and to prove yourself, or your business, worthy of his patronage. When you do that, you'll have a customer who's more than willing to part with his money in exchange for what you can give him.

Chapter Five:

How To Save Money On Classified Ads

How To Reduce The Cost Of An Ad

Here's how to cut the cost of a classified ad:

(1) Take a look at how your chosen publication determines classified ad rates. Are you charged by the word, by the line or something else? If you are charged by the line, you'll want to know how many characters are allowed in one line. In order to cut your costs you'll need to reduce your ad by a full line. When charged by the word, word reduction means you save money.

(2) Write out your name, address and any additional contact information you want to include.

(3) Examine your contact information. How can it be reduced without losing clarity or impact?

(4) Try these ideas with each ad you create:

* Reduce your name to a single word. (Supersellers Publishing Company = Supersell)

* Reduce your street address to a single word (Queen Street = Queen)

* Use abbreviations for State or Province (Ontario = Ont.)

* Make your key a part of your street address. Here the "186" indicates the address and the "-C" signifies the code of a particular publication. (186 -C Broadview Toronto, Ontario)

The above ideas may not work in every case but any one that does, will save you money. Make sure your word or space reductions don't impair comprehension and readability. Also, check with your local post office to ensure acceptability.

Eliminate Wasteful Words

When you place a classified ad, you're actually buying a very small piece of advertising space. The more space your ad occupies, the greater your cost. When you pay by the word, the cost is obvious. When paying by the line, every word costs you a percentage of the total line cost. Therefore you must edit your ad. Weed out any word that doesn't pay its' own way.

The words that should be wiped out wherever possible are impact-costing words such as *can, may, could, the, maybe* or *if*. Trim only words that do not detract from the meaning or confuse the clarity of your message.

Any unsubstantiated modifiers such as *very, lots, fairly, or excellent*, should be deleted. When these words are used to describe what your product or offer can do or has done for others, they actually weaken your statements because they are words of unsubstantiated puffery.

You're asking your prospect to trust you, but why should he? These words, and others like them, are too general and it almost seems that the writer is trying to make the offer appear better than it actually is. This strategy may have worked on unsuspecting readers at one time, but it doesn't work anymore. Audiences today are much too sharp to be fooled by any of these weak-kneed words. They won't help your cause and they cost you money. Eliminate them at once!

Your intention in revising your ad is to get your best message across for the lowest price possible. Be thrifty with your words but always double check any cut against possible impact loss. Don't cut for the sake of a few dollars if it potentially depletes your ads' power. One lost customer would cost you considerably more in the long run than one extra word in your ad.

Multiple Insertions Save You Money

Some publications offer a reduced rate of 5% to 10% when you order multiple insertions. Often a three-issue order will give you a savings per issue over a single insertion. And, a six or twelve-month commitment will often give you even further savings. The best price per issue is obtained when you place your ad "*till forbid*", which gives

the publication authorization to run your ad continuously until you cancel it or “*forbid*” them from running it anymore.

For you to take advantage of this cost savings concept there is only one pre-qualifier; your ad must prove successful first. Failure to prove your ad first will not produce a savings for you but an extended loss and considerable frustration. Tinker with your ad until it pulls a consistently good response. Then go for multiple insertions to save money.

Chapter Six:

How To Know When You've Created A Successful Ad

Always Test Something

Whenever you place a classified ad, you have an opportunity to test some element of it. This can provide you with valuable insight for future reference. You've given considerable effort and time to composing the best possible ad. But all that really counts are the results your ad produces. Nothing else matters. In order to know with precise accuracy how each ad performs, you need to measure and monitor the results on an ongoing basis.

“*Keying*” is vital to your success as a classified advertiser. It's absolutely critical that you know what publication and preferably which issue of that publication produced each individual response. “*Keying*” allows you to test accurately, any changes in your ad copy. You'll know what approach pulls the best response, after you've tested several.

What Can You Test?

Some of the components that you may choose to test are:

- the headline
- the offer
- the price
- the publication
- the classification within a publication
- the copy
- the “flagging” device
- phone, fax, e-mail, or address combination

Always test some element, but never more than one thing at any given time. If you try to test more than one element of your ad,

you'll never know for sure which variation is responsible for which particular result.

To ensure that you've created an ad that is easily understood, hand out a copy of the ad to half a dozen people. Ask them to read the ad once, then put it down. Now ask them what it means. Can they describe what you're trying to communicate? If the majority can, great, your ad is likely to be understood by your audience. If there's a lot of difficulty, or hesitation, it may mean your ad needs to be re-written.

How A Database Can Help You

Organizing a database of responses gives you a tremendous advantage:

- (1) You'll know where you are getting the best response for your classified dollar.
- (2) You'll know who among the inquiries actually purchased your product and when.
- (3) You'll be able to easily analyze your results so that you can focus in the areas where results are the most promising and most profitable.
- (4) A database of respondents becomes a valuable asset with as few as one thousand names. These names can be sold to a list broker, or even swapped for another list that might prove profitable to you.

A word of warning: your customer list is now, or will one day become the most valuable asset that your business possesses. Protect it at all costs. Never sell your customer list, although you might want to make available your list of inquiries, only after you've marketed to them first. You can often win a sale later on by approaching these prospects again, but you might as well make some money by offering your prospect list to others.

A customer, properly treated and nurtured can be worth a huge amount of money to your business over a period of time. By protecting your in-house list of customers, you have a valuable base of proven buyers who you can continue to serve and market to for years.

The Vital Statistics

The two most important statistics to an advertiser:

- 1) The cost per inquiry (CPI)
- 2) The cost per sale (CPS)

The cost per inquiry is easily calculated by dividing the total cost of your ad by the total number of inquiries. For example, an ad that cost \$45.00 to run, and generated 38 inquiries would have a cost per inquiry of \$1.18. ($45 \div 38 = 1.18$)

The Cost Per Sale is determined by dividing the total cost of your ad (including the cost of marketing to all inquiries) divided by the total number of sales produced. Using the example above the ad cost \$45.00. It produced 38 inquiries, therefore, added to our costs are the cost per package of the follow-up material, including postage, (for example 62 cents each) multiplied by the number of inquiries, in this case 38. So, the total cost becomes \$45.00 plus \$23.56 or \$68.56. ($.62 \times 38 = 23.56$)

Let's say the follow-up material to these 38 people generated six sales immediately. The cost per sale than would be:

Total marketing cost of \$68.56, divided by the total sales generated (6), leaves us with a total Cost Per Sale of \$11.42

Chapter Seven: **Secrets Of Classifieds Most Advertisers** **Don't Know**

You Only Have A Split Second To Attract Your Prospects' Attention

To get the highest rate of response, your ad has to work quickly. It must win the attention of readers instantly, or your ad fails. That means you've got to reach out starting with the very first word (the most important word of a classified ad) and grab the attention of your prospect. Your ad must communicate to your target in unmistakable terms. In effect your ad needs to say *"Hey prospect, this is very important and it's for you; so pay close attention... for your own good"*.

Spend most of your creative effort in coming up with a few meticulously chosen words that will instantly be recognized by your prospect as something that could benefit him... something that he truly wants on an emotional level.

Base Your Marketing Strategy On What Your Prospect Is Thinking About

For your ad to pull an exceptional response, you need to base its appeal on what is weighing heavily on your prospects mind.

What's your prospect focused on? What's he thinking and what's he concerned about that your product or service could help reduce or eliminate?

If you appeal to what your prospect is already thinking about, your words become instantly *"in tune"* with his thinking. It's almost as if the miracle solution to his heavy burden is right there in front of him, by means of your ad. In order to pull this off, you really need to

understand your target market and position your offer as the almost magical solution to a problem that has caused considerable concern, frustration, disappointment and anxiety.

Talk Only About Benefits -- Not Your Product Or Service

Nobody wants a product for the sake of the product itself. What everyone wants is the benefit that they get by having or using the product. It's the feeling or the end result that everyone wants -- not the product, itself. Therefore, it's critical that your ad speaks only about the benefits -- the helpful results -- one can only get by taking further action. With classified ads, you need to "sell" the "sizzle" of acquiring your free offer. In other words, you have to sell the reader on taking action... the next step towards the sale. Never, ever try to push your product in your ad. Promote instead the end result it delivers to those intelligent enough to contact you to get the complete story.

Respond To Every Inquiry Immediately

Once you've got your prospect to inquire, your classified ad has done its' job. When your ad generates a huge response, its done its job quite well. But, the real profit potential of your business lies in your effectiveness at converting inquiries into sales.

Your ad has stimulated an emotional reaction in every single prospect who responds to it. This prospect is anxiously awaiting your reply. He can't wait to get his hands on your free kit or whatever you've made available in your offer. He knows exactly when he responded and mentally establishes a date when he can reasonably expect to here from you. If you miss that pre-conceived date you can pretty well forget about making a sale to that prospect for now.

You see, your prospect wants to believe you, he wants to know that all that you've promised him can be his too. But he's judging you - - testing your credibility the only way he can at this time, by monitoring your reply time. He knows that once his money is on the line, there's little recourse... after all, he's never heard of you before. He wants to be assured that you're reputable and honest and sincerely looking out for his best interests. When your reply is delayed, for any reason, whether it's your fault or not, it costs you dearly. The prospect quickly loses faith in you and your proposition and his image of you becomes tarnished. You've gone from being the "*knight in shining armor*" to just another opportunist out to "*get his money*".

You can prevent this scenario from happening to you by replying to every request for information promptly, and then following up soon after to make sure the promised information arrived.

Focus Your Ad On A Single Offer Only

As mentioned earlier, a classified ad should have a single purpose; to get as many qualified leads as possible to identify themselves by requesting additional free information. Always keep this one purpose in mind when creating a classified ad. Never give the prospect a choice in your ad between buying your product or service, and getting more information. Offer the additional information only. You'll have a far better chance of closing the sale with your follow-up information package than you ever could with your ad alone. A split offer may only confuse your prospect, and confusion causes inaction. Keep your offer singular and make it very clear, and you'll enjoy a better result, every time.

What Are Classified Readers Looking For Anyway?

Most readers of classified sections are looking for something specific. They look over the headings for subjects of interest and then scan the ads in that subject area for that special something that enhances their lives in one way or another.

Most display-type ads in publications, are placed randomly throughout the pages, without any apparent categorical order. These much more expensive ads are inserted by advertisers who are all seeking the best possible location for their ad. With classified ads, you don't have to worry about placement, other than by classification. Your goal is to attract a response from every reader who has an interest in your subject area.

Stimulate Action NOW!

Your ad only works when it gets your prospect to respond immediately. That means NOW! If he doesn't respond right away, chances are good that he never will. Even if the magazine or newspaper is put aside with the intention of responding later, that seldom happens. Newspapers are easily tossed out in the trash, people forget where they saw your ad, or their interest simply fades away. You've got to prevent any sort of delay from happening if you want to get the most from your classified ad.

Here are four ways to spur immediate action:

- make your offer available for a limited time only
- limit the number of free offers that are available
- add an additional free premium to the first “x” number of responders
- attach a time to when one could reasonably expect to get the result promised in your ad (for example; within 30 days)

In short, what you must do is make your offer so appealing that your prospect does whatever is necessary to get what you've offered him, immediately.

5 Keys That Virtually Guarantee Your Ads' Succeed

Key #1: Open with an Eye-Popping, Attention-Grabbing Headline.

This is the most important element of every classified ad. It's the opener; the very first component of your ad that is seen by the prospect. The scanning reader makes an instantaneous decision whether to read your ad based on the appeal of the headline. Every word is critical here, but nothing is quite as important as the very first word. That first word or compact phrase, needs to be different from all the competing ads clamoring for readership. Your headline must command attention; it must win its own audience. Keep it concise and direct it at your specific target market.

Key #2: Arouse curiosity and wonder in the mind of your prospect.

Whatever lofty promise you make can be greatly enhanced with a dash of credibility. Avoid vague generalities like "make millions" or "unlimited wealth in only 3 months". Instead, use actual numbers that you, or one of your clients has achieved. Here's an example: "*Last month I earned \$4,379. 58 from my own home-based business*". Real numbers appear more authentic, more genuine, particularly if this number changes to reflect continuous growth and profitability, in the case of this "*business opportunity*" classified.

You want to take your prospect on a mental journey of possibility... where he can indulge in a little fantasy by imagining

himself enjoying the same benefits. You want your reader to privately wonder, “*can I do this, too?*” Make it very appealing, yet realistic. In advertising, perception means everything. Whatever you promise must reside within the realm of possibility -- in the eyes of your prospect -- in order for him to respond.

Key #3: Specifically define what you have for your prospect.

Make your prospect aware of the exact details concerning your offer. Tell him what you've got. This makes choosing to reply an easy decision. Precisely identify what you have to offer.

If you're prospecting to sell a janitorial franchise, make that very clear in the beginning. Sure, many people will turn away at the mere mention of such detail. But, that's exactly what you want; those who move on, aren't real prospects for this kind of offer, anyway. Those who do reply are interested, pre-qualified candidates for this offer.

Any individual who might answer your blind ad, unaware of what you represent, rarely, if ever, becomes a buyer. You may get a higher number of inquiries, but your sales won't rise comparatively. People do appreciate getting a little more detail in the ad, so they have some idea as to what you're actually offering.

Key #4: Make your offer so attractive that your prospect simply can't resist!

You want interested, capable prospects to respond to your ad. This is your target market, so your job is to get as many of them as possible to respond to your ad. These folks are most interested in what you can do for them. You can then focus your marketing effort on those most likely to buy whatever product or service you sell.

Make it easy for your prospect to follow through; to take you up on your offer, and there's no more effective way to do this is to offer something free.

When you offer something free, even if it's a one page flyer providing details about your product, you eliminate the risk to the prospect in responding to your offer. It's something your prospect wants. Something he could benefit from. And it's FREE. It cost nothing to respond, with the possible exception of postage. A compelling free offer gives you a proposition that's difficult for the qualified prospect to ignore.

The prospect gets something in return for his effort in contacting you. In addition, he doesn't feel obligated in any way to buy from you. **This takes the pressure off.** He has simply requested your “free report” or “free sample”. He's interested in what you can do for him. The “freebie” allows him to “check you out”, in the same way he would evaluate a product in a store, prior to purchasing. The freedom of decision this creates in the mind of your prospect, can only help you with increasing returns for your advertising efforts.

Key #5: Use prospect anticipation to your advantage.

When your prospect responds to your classified or small space ad, he eagerly awaits your reply. He thinks about the huge promise... the dream... the ideal that you suggested could be his own. The more he thinks about it -- the more he wants it. You've created anticipation in the mind of your prospect; he anxiously waits for your reply. Don't delay -- answer swiftly! “*Strike while the iron is hot*”. Give him what he intensely desires, and you will get the order more often than not.

It's often at this stage, while awaiting your response, that a subconscious decision to buy is made. Even before your free details arrive, the pull of the promise has cast its captivating spell. Often, the materials you send simply provide the logical justification for buying. Now, all you have to do to ensure customer delight is to deliver more than you promised.

If your ad contains all of these components, you're virtually guaranteed to have a winner. That is, as long as you've selected the appropriate medium and kept your costs to the bare minimum.

Conclusion

Now it's time to proceed; you have what it takes. You're much better equipped to profit than the huge majority of classified advertisers. You've got all the vital information you need to achieve the highest possible level of success. This new knowledge gives you a distinctive advantage over all competitors who advertise in this medium.

Most other classified advertisers know little about marketing. They write an ad by looking at the other ads in a publication by basically saying they same things. Drab, boring, and void of inspiration

to the reader, this kind of marketing doesn't generate record-breaking responses, if any at all.

Fortunately, you'll never have to face the frustration and disappointment that naturally follows a poorly conceived advertising strategy. You know better. You have the inside secrets of classified ad writing.

You NOW know :

- * how to use classifieds profitably
- * the critical information you need before you start
- * what to appeal to in order to get the result you want
- * tricks-of-the-trade to make your ad even stronger
- * how to save money on every ad
- * the importance of tracking your responses
- * how to create an irresistible offer

All this information can... and will... put money in your pocket if you make a concentrated effort to apply it without let-up. Do the necessary work and the rewards will follow. Use this information, I know it will help you. I wish you every success imaginable in your classified advertising endeavors.

Finally, I always look forward to getting feedback from you, my valued reader and customer. Tell me about your results and experiences with classified advertising. And, please share your ideas and input on how I could make this booklet better and more helpful for future readers.

For all those who provide feedback, I'll send a FREE copy of my SPECIAL REPORT: *Sales Letter Success Secrets!* Please be sure to include a mailing address with your reply.

I wish you the best with all your classified advertising!

Robert D. Boduch
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Chapter Eight: Shortcuts To Success

Your Step By Step Guide To Creating Super-Responsive Classifieds

Here's ten easy steps that will help you compose a great ad quickly. Complete each step in sequence and you'll put together a winning ad right before your eyes. Two samples follow.

- (1) What product or service are you ultimately marketing with this classified ad?
- (2) From all of its' unique characteristics, features and advantages that are helpful to customers, pinpoint the single most appealing benefit from the prospects' viewpoint.
- (3) What is the strongest motivating force underlying the purchase of your product or service?
- (4) List the title of your chosen publication. Identify how the rates are calculated by the publication. Estimate your total cost. If you're charged by the word, estimate your cost at twenty-five to thirty words. If charged by the line, base your estimate on three or four lines. Create a unique *key* that identifies the publication as the source of the inquiry.
- (5) List all the contact information a prospect needs in order to reach you. Your name and address, telephone, fax, 800 number, E-mail address, are all possibilities, but your space is limited. How do you want your prospect to respond? Include the *key* in this section.
- (6) Create an irresistible FREE offer. Make it relevant. This is your response generator. Make a huge promise to your prospect and offer it *free*. Make the prospect feel that he has absolutely nothing to lose by contacting you for more information.

(7) Write three different possible headlines. Appeal to the interests of your prospect while promising to improve his or her life in some very important way. Select the headline that most effectively arrests the attention of your target prospect.

(8) (Optional) Extend your headline into a sub-heading. Add more benefit-rich descriptors to create an even stronger appeal. A subheading can only be used where space allows. When you're paying by the word, it's likely more profitable to go with only a headline.

(9) String together the three (four if you're using a subhead) essential components of your ad.

(A) The Headline -- to attract attention

(B) The Offer -- to stimulate a strong response

(C) The Contact Information -- to enable the reader to reach you, thereby identifying himself as a qualified prospect.

(10) Refine your ad. Fit it into the amount of space you planned for. Pare it down to contain only the most vital words. Edit for power. Edit for clarity. Edit for waste. Now you have an ad that's ready to generate response.

Classified Work Sheet -- Sample #1

- (1) **Product Or Service:** Do-it-yourself residential alarm system
- (2) **Most Appealing Benefit:** Economical peace of mind, comfort and protection
- (3) **The Strongest Motivator For Buying:** to protect ones' family and home
- (4) **Chosen Media:** New Homeowner Magazine
Key: A
- (5) **Contact Information:** Futuresafe 628 Northwest, Pittsburgh, PA 12345
- (6) **Irresistible FREE Offer:** Free Home Protection Kit
- (7) **Three Possible Headlines:**
 - (A) How You Can Burglar-Proof Your Home and Protect Your Loved Ones.
 - (B) WARNING: Burglaries Up 37% Right Across The Country!
 - (C) Burglars Six Secrets For Choosing A House As The Perfect Target.
- (8) **Possible Sub-Heads:**
 - (A) Six Simple Ideas To Protect You And Your Family From Being Victimized.
 - (B) Is Your Family Safe?
 - (C) Former Police Investigator Reveals Inside Information

From The "Pros" – How They Pick Houses and Families To "Hit", and What You Can Do Now To Safeguard Your Family.

(9) Compiling The Components:

WARNING: Burglaries Up 37% Right Across The Country! Is Your Family Safe? FREE Home Protection Kit Reveals Six Easy Ways To Safety. Futuresafe, 628-A Northwest, Pittsburgh, PA 12345

Total: 27 words

(10) The Edited Version:

WARNING: Burglaries Up 37% Nation-wide! Is Your Family Safe? FREE Home Safeguard Kit Demonstrates Six Easy Ways To Prevention. Futuresafe, 628-A Northwest, Pittsburgh, PA 12345

Total: 23 words

Classified Work Sheet -- Sample #2

- (1) **Product Or Service:** Accounting & Tax Service For Small Business
- (2) **Most Appealing Benefit:** Legal Tax Saving Strategies
- (3) **The Strongest Motivator For Buying:** To Save Money
- (4) **Chosen Media:** York County Business Journal
Key: YB
- (5) **Contact Information:** Profitfinders, 963 Bleeker St., York,
Ontario L1M 2G2
- (6) **Irresistible FREE Offer:** Free Money-Saving Report For Small
Business

(7) **Three Possible Headlines:**

(A) How To Legally Reduce Your Tax Bill To The Absolute Minimum!

(B) Attention Small Business Owners Fed Up With Paying Exorbitant Big-Firm Fees For Second Rate Service:

(C) "Last Year We Saved An Extra \$1127.42 By Using An Allowable Deduction That Our Former Big-Name Firm Never Suggested!"

(8) **Possible Sub-Heads:**

(A) Secrets Revenue Canada Prefers To Keep To Itself.

(B) Local Small Business Specialist Guarantees You'll Find At Least One Profitable Idea In This New Special Report: "Seven Overlooked Ways To Reduce Your Taxes --Legally"

(C) Most Firms Save At Least \$700.00 By Using One Of These Often Overlooked Deductions.

(9) Compiling The Components:

Attention Small Business Owners Fed Up With Paying Exorbitant Big-Firm Fees For Second-Rate Service: Local Small Business Specialist Guarantees You'll Find At Least One Profitable Idea In This New Report: "Seven Overlooked Ways To Reduce Your Taxes -- Legally" FREE Money-Saving Report. Write: Profitfinders, 963 Bleeker St., York, Ontario L1M 2G2

Total: 6 lines

10) The Edited Version:

Attention Small Business Owners Fed Up With Paying Exorbitant Big-Firm Fees For Second-Rate Service! Local Small Business Specialist Reveals FREE Money-Saving Secrets: "Seven Overlooked Ways To Reduce Your Taxes -- Legally" FREE Report: Profitfinders, 963 Bleeker St., York, Ontario L1M 2G2

Total: 5 lines

The Classified Advertising Resource Directory

Visit your local library for these gems of information that can provide you with the ideal outlets for your ads.

The Encyclopedia Of Associations
Gale Research Company
1400 Book Tower
Detroit, Michigan
48226
USA

This directory lists thousands of special-interest groups including businesses, hobbyists and professionals. This directory lists key information such as a groups mission or purpose, the number of members, any publication it publishes or circulates and important contact information. Not all publications accept advertising, but some do. Call or write to your selected targets and request a current copy of their publications.

Canadian Advertising Rates And Data (CARD)
Maclean Hunter Publishing
777 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5W 1A7
Canada
(416) 867-9500

This comprehensive directory is jam-packed with valuable information on every Canadian publication available today that accepts advertising. The information found here is very accurate because the entire directory is updated every month. Included are complete listings of business, farm and ethnic publications, as well as community and daily newspapers. Subscriptions cost about \$500.00 a year, but you can be spared this expense by using the copy found in your local library. Great for discovering those hard-to-find industry and trade journals.

Standard Rates & Data
National Register Publication Company
5201 Old Orchard Road
Skokie, IL
60076
USA

This directory is the American equivalent of C.A.R.D. It should be one of the first sources you seek if you plan any advertising in the USA

Standard Periodical Directory
Oxbridge Communications Inc.,
183 Madison Avenue
New York, NY
10016
USA

Here you will find the key information on approximately 70,000 American and Canadian periodicals. This includes several hundred different subject categories in a variety of formats including newsletters, consumer magazines, special interest magazines, trade publications. This directory will help you identify potential markets for advertising that you may never have heard of before.

Oxbridge Directory Of Newsletters
150 Fifth Avenue, Room 301
New York, NY
10011
USA

Some newsletters accept classified advertising, others do not. Review this directory to identify titles with marketing potential for your particular offer. Request a sample copy. Ask this of every potential advertising medium: *"Is this publication a good match for my offer?"*

A classified service agency can distribute your ad to a larger tabloid or magazine audience with a single order. Some packages are available that give you the opportunity to advertise in a number of

different, but related by subject, publications at the same time. The idea is to efficiently expand your market reach with additional exposure. Some large publications such as *Entrepreneur* and *Success*, require you to place your advertisement through its appointed service agency.

National Mail Order Classified
Post Office Box 5
Sarasota, FL
34230
USA

Russell E. Palmer Inc.
Post Office Box 570
Clearwater, FL
24617
USA
1-800-762-3555

Key Point Summary And Additional Tips For Profitable Classified Advertising

The following points (presented in no particular order) are the essential concepts, strategies and profit secrets of classified ads. Review them whenever you're about to write a new classified ad.

1. Spend most of your creative time in developing a strong headline for your ad. The headline is the most important element and has the greatest impact on your results.
2. Capture attention and speak directly to the reader about something that's important to him immediately in your headline.
3. Think of a classified ad as consisting of three main components: *Headline*, *Body Copy* and *Contact Information*.
4. Use the body copy of your ad to present a compelling offer and (space permitting) to add additional benefits.
5. Start writing your ad with the easiest step first; your contact information.
6. To produce a great headline, try writing 10, 20, even 30 different versions. Chances are, somewhere in there, you'll have a winner.
7. Think like your prospect and write your ad from his point of view. Benefits are what your prospect is most interested in.
8. Write out at least one headline using each of the seven formulas. This will give you different angles to use in attracting response.
9. Inject your ad with as many powerful marketing words as you can.
10. Never try to close the sale in the classifieds ad. Use the two-step technique for best results. Use your classified ad to find hot leads. Close them with your sales letter or direct mail package.

11. Make it easy for people to respond to your ads. If possible, give them more than one way to reach you. This is the only place to offer a choice.
12. Write your ad as though you're talking to an audience of one. Speak directly to your prospect to build rapport.
13. The most important words of any classified ad are the first few words in the headline. The first two or three words deserve careful consideration. If they fail to get the reader to read on, than any other words you've composed are meaningless.
14. Take full advantage of any design options that may be available to you. A few enhancements can really make your ad stand out.
15. Be positive and upbeat. Offer a helpful solution to a problem.
16. People who read classifieds are curious – they're searching for that special something and are therefore open to suggestion. Give them what they want and make it easy to get more of it.
17. Use words that are proven advertising dynamite. Don't worry about finding "original" words that sell. Go with what has worked for others, until something else gives you an even better return.
18. Always strive to offer something FREE. Make it relevant and something that your prospects want. Make it something of value and importance to those you want to reach. Free offers can work magic.
19. Check your positioning with every ad you place and record this information with your results.
20. Carefully plan your strategy ahead of time. There's simply no replacement for a well-designed plan. Planning increases your chances of success.
21. Know your competition; what they offer, how they market, their Unique Selling Proposition, where they advertise, and why customers buy from them.
22. Start with a huge ad and then refine it. Write out everything that could possibly make your prospect respond. Include all benefits and a strong offer. Then, reduce it down to its bare essence.

23. Make your classified ads concise, but complete. Too few words or too little information won't give you the response you want.
24. Never make your classified ad larger than it need be to elicit maximum response from qualified prospects. Sometimes less is more.
25. The body copy of your ad is the one real variable in terms of size. It could consist of a brief offer of only a few words, or it could extend for several sentences, packed full of benefits.
26. Help your prospect play the role he wants. Address that desire in your headline and you'll have his undivided attention.
27. Whatever you promise in your advertising, if you can add "Fast And Easy" to the mix, you'll be utilizing a strong force; human nature. Generally speaking, we've become impatient and lazy. We want the benefits NOW, WITHOUT EFFORT.
28. Test, record and monitor your results. Tracking response rates can help keep you on course.
29. Edit your ads for unnecessary words that take up space and cost money without contributing to the marketing effort.
30. Use emotional words that compel action. Avoid boring intellectual words as well as empty adjectives.
31. Slight adjustments in wording can dramatically effect your results.
32. The basis of all successful advertising is a "huge promise". You must make an appealing claim that captures interest.
33. Limit your free offer in some way to stimulate immediate response. Make your offer limited in quantity or time. This gives your prospect a valid reason to reply now.
34. Create ads that are unique and specific. Unique ads stand out. Specific ads target your ideal prospect and appear more realistic.
35. Involve your reader by telling him what he longs to hear. Knowing your market is essential to communicating with the right combination of words.

36. Know that you'll be competing with potentially hundreds of different ads. Never take response for granted. Pull out all the stops to get maximum results.
37. Stop the scanning prospect with an attention-getting headline that touches a "hot-button" and compels him to read on and take action.
38. Involve prospects by illustrating that they too can achieve the same results that others have achieved.
39. Fuel desire for your special promotion by encouraging your reader to take advantage while the offer is still available.
40. Elaborate on your offer wherever space permits. There may be several other ads on the same page, all competing for the same prospect. Your challenge is to make the reader want to take action on your offer, more than the others. Make yours more promising, more compelling, more irresistible.
41. Remove doubt by offering a 100% guarantee. Whenever you can, guarantee your claim and you'll likely increase response rates.
42. Keep the AIDA method in mind when crafting classified ads:
 - A = Attention -- catch your prospect's eye
 - I = Interest -- appeal to his/her wants
 - D = Desire -- make them hunger for more
 - A = Action --compel immediate action to get the benefits promised
43. Avoid "blind" ads that attempt to appeal to nearly everyone. You may get loads of replies, but they won't convert into orders.
44. Avoid confusion with clarity. Don't try to be "cute" or "clever" with words or phrases that have double meanings, or words that could be misinterpreted in some way. Make it clear.
45. Study classified ads currently running in your chosen venues. Look for advertisers who run the same ads repeatedly and determine what makes those ads successful.
46. Key every ad so you can easily gauge its' performance.
47. Use a reply name that ads power to your ad. Company names rarely work to serve this purpose. The name you provide could also act as the "keying" device.

48. Minimize the size of names and addresses to reduce the cost of your ads.
49. Insist upon response mechanisms that are completely accessible to your total potential audience.
50. Ads that offer something unique pull the best response. When you offer something your target market wants, that isn't readily available elsewhere, you command better results. Exclusive offers always work best.
51. Provide just enough information and detail to get qualified prospects to respond. Don't try to tell them too much in your classified ad – leave the details to your sales piece.
52. Speak to your prospect -- tell him what you've got that he wants and deliver a strong offer. Those are the important details. A lack of sufficient detail, or failing to specifically appeal to a target audience, will bring poor results.
53. If you use specific names of people or products, make sure they're well-known to your whole audience.
54. Never make a claim you can't back up with solid evidence.
55. Capitalize on the enthusiasm and anticipation of your prospect by answering all inquiries immediately.
56. Use classified ads to plant "seeds of possibility" or offer solutions to pressing problems. Offer a positive, helpful antidote – a means to improve life in some way.
57. Look for publications that have plenty of classified ads. Lots of ads usually means the publication pulls favorably for those advertisers.
58. Choose the more popular categories of classified areas. Higher readership usually means higher response.
59. Know the rates and guidelines of each chosen publication before writing any ad.
60. Calculate the desired word/line count, as well as the approximate cost to run the ad.

61. Generate high-quality leads by “flagging” your specific prospects.
62. Avoid trying to make the sale in the classified ad. Save your “sales close” for the package you send to all respondents.
63. Make each and every word of your classified ad pay for itself. Edit for words that don’t directly contribute to response. Ask of each word: Is this word necessary? Does it add anything to the message? Would another word be stronger or more effective?
64. Get your prospect to hunger for more. Tempt him with your best lure. Offer something different that he really wants because it’s specifically beneficial to him.
65. Offer something FREE. The appeal of “free” is still very strong and can make all the difference in your ads. Tie it into something your prospect really craves and your chances of success increase substantially. “Free” removes all risk for the prospect.
66. Your best lure is always the biggest benefit you can deliver.
67. Give your ad a reality check. Make it believable. A claim that appears questionable, even though it may be 100% factual, will not pull as well as one that is “toned down” to seem more realistic.
68. Samples can be great offers; they allow your prospect to actually get a taste of your product or service, without any risk.
69. Once you have a winning ad in a publication that’s generating a steady flow of good leads, save money by placing multiple insertions over several issues with a single placement order.
70. Intensify the power of your ad by giving your prospect clear, specific directions to follow. Never confuse things by providing multiple choices. Keep it simple and direct.

Free Bonus Section: **Sample Classified Ads For A Variety** **Of Products & Services**

Book Publisher

“Tradesman’s Inside Secrets To Pro Home Improvements. Save Big Money Doing It Yourself! Free Newsletter: Inside Tips, Box 222 Freelton, CA 99999”

“FREE REPORT: 5 Easy Steps To A Guaranteed A Healthy Garden Without Harsh Chemicals. SafetyGrow, 387 Sunshine Dr., San Diego, CA 11111”

“Revealed!!! Your Favorite Stars Secret Addresses! Receive Rare Autographs, Photos, Letters! DiCaprio, Pitt, Cruise, Thousands More! FREE LIST: 123-456-7899”

Private Training

“You Can Master “Word” In One Day! FREE Consultation And Certified Course Outline: 800-888-8888”

“Discover 3 Keys To Windows 98 & Make It Easier Than Ever To Do Far More! Complete, Power-Packed, Hands On Personal Instruction – Results Guaranteed! Free, No-Obligation Details: 416-111-1111”

Cleaning Service

“WARNING: Your Time’s Too Precious To Spend It Cleaning! Leave That To Us! We Guarantee You’ll Be Delighted With The Results & The Extra Free Time You’ll Have To Enjoy! Call Today For A Free Preview Of Our Services: 444-444-4444”

Word Processing Service

“We Make You Look Great On Paper! Prompt, Professional Quality Work, You’ll be Proud To Put Your Name On. Free Sample Portfolio: 800-123-9876”

Advertising Specialties

STOP LOSING SALES! Keep Your Name In Front Of Prospects & Clients A Customized Gift They’ll Use Every Day! Free Catalogue & Guide Helps You Choose The Best Way To Leave A Lasting Impression! FREE Business Guide, 123 Enterprise Lane, Hampton, Ontario”

MLM

“Start Your Own Business With Less Than \$50! Unlimited Wealth Potential. First 250 Leads Supplied Free! I’ll Show You Step By Step How To Make Real Money This Month! Call For Details: 800-876-9999”

“Build Your Own Automatic Income Stream By Sending Out These ‘Magic Marketers’ for Just 30 Minutes/Day! You’ll Be Astounded How Easy It Is! Want A Second Income? Then Call NOW for FREE Information Kit: 222-222-2222”

ATTENTION ENTREPRENEURS: Cash In Big On Growing Health-Conscious Market With Exclusive, Proven Product! No Inventory Required. Solid Money-Maker! Free Training & Marketing Support. Ideal Product For Homes & Businesses. Rare Opportunity For 3 People To Create An Extra Income Stream. Details: 111-1111.”

“Last Month I Earned \$4,657.38 Working Just 18 Extra Hours Per Week. Let Me Show You How To Do The Same, Or Better. Invest Your Time – Not Your Money! FREE Income Builder: 111-111-1111”

“THE 5 SECRETS Of BUSINESS SUCCESS: (1) An In-Demand Product (2) Large, Untapped Market (3) No Direct Competition (4) Low Start-Up Costs (5) Free Training And Marketing Support. Get All 5 & More With This Rare Opportunity! Call NOW: 800-333-3333”

Internet Service Provider

“FREE Internet Seminar For Beginners! Learn Firsthand, Simple Tricks From The Experts. Experience This Exploding New Resource For Yourself! Call The Net Shop @ 555-5555”

Computer Retailer

“Congratulations – You Win! Just Show This Ad Before September 1 And Receive A Free Computer Game! You Can Also Enter Our Free Draw For A Color Scanner. No Purchase Necessary – Drop In Today & Fill Out Your Ballot! ComputerGeeks Stone Road Mall, Ottawa”

Lawn & Garden Service

“WEED PROBLEMS? Get Our FREE REPORT: 5 Things You Can Do To Turn Any Property Into Beautiful Lush Greenery. Drop By Today! 186 Rose Hill, Scarborough”

Restaurant

“Your Business Card Could Win A Free Lunch For You And A Friend! FREE Draw Held Daily. One Monthly Winner Of A Weekend Getaway! Other Prizes Too! Drop In Today! Carly’s 999 Bayly Street, Mount Forest”

Dental Practice

“Sit Back In Our Easy Chair. We’ll Take Care Of Your Teeth While You Relax To Your Favorite CD’s With Our Comfy New Headphones. Gentle Dentistry Guaranteed! Free Consultation: 111-1111”

Information Marketer

“Make Homemade Crafts From Discarded Materials. Mine Have Earned Me \$109,749! Free Report: Trash Into Cash! 563 Exeter Lane, Smalltown PA”

Catalogue Marketer

“150 Gifts Under \$20! Practical Gifts That Save You Money And Make You A Hit With Family & Friends! Do All Your Shopping The Easy Way! New, Free Catalogue: 000-000-0000”

Financial Planner

“Financial Expert Reveals Wealth-Building Secrets Anyone Can Use To Create A Worry-Free Financial Future! FREE REPORT: 416-444-4444.”

“WARNING: Here’s What You Need To Know Before It’s Too Late! FREE REPORT Reveals 7 Simple Steps To Creating Total Financial Independence. Take Charge NOW, Call: 416-111-1111.”

“You Deserve More! Discover The Secrets To Creating Wealth On Any Income! Money Expert Reveals 7 Powerful Strategies For Building Financial Security Without Sacrifice. Free, Special Report: Money Secrets, 123 Town Street, Middletown, OH.”

The Record Keeper

Prospect	Publication	Date Of Inquiry	Response By	Reply Date	Date Of Sale	# Of Sales Attempts Rqcd.
Name	Identified	Date that you	How the	Exact date	Date that you	the number of marketing
Address	by the	received the	inquiry was	that you sent	received the	contacts made in order to
City	"key"	response	made (phone,	your follow-	order	produce the sale
Prov./State			mail, fax, etc.)	up material		
Postal/Zip						
Country						

This chart format can simplify your record-keeping from day one. Use it starting with your first response. You can duplicate the blank chart on the following page as often as you need and collect them in a binder. Or, you can set up something similar on your own computer, and store your database on disk. Keep in mind the value of your mailing list as it grows and protect it as the valuable asset that it is.

The above chart tells you the important information about each prospect. Next, you'll want a record of performance of each ad that you place. This chart represents a one-page analysis of an ad, a handy guide to determining your future strategy. A blank duplicate follows for your easy use.

Ad Key	Publication	Ad Date(s)	# Of Inquiries	Cost Per Inquiry	# Of Sales	Cost Per Sale
The actual	Name &	Exact dates	Exact number	Divide the cost	Exact number	Total ad cost
code used to	location of ad	in which the	of responses	by the number of	sales to date	divided by
ID media		ad ran	to date	inquiries	to names from	the number of
					ad source	sales to date

Prospect Publication Date Of Inquiry Response By Reply Date Date Of Sale # Of Sales Attempts Rqd.

Ad Key Publication Ad Date(s) # Of Inquiries Cost Per Inquiry # Of Sales Cost Per Sale