

Psephology Today

Campaign Secrets, Hot Tips & How-to Strategies for Winning Candidates

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Psephology (see-fol-oh-gee) *noun* - The study of political elections



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Muth's TRUTHS

Dear Winner's Circle Member,

Let me remind everyone again that a campaign is a business. No, you're not technically out there looking for "sales," but in your business "sales" come in the form of votes and donations. So best marketing practices for businesses absolutely, positively apply to your campaign.

As such, you'll find a number of business-focused marketing items in each issue of *Psephology Today*. Read them and just substitute "campaign" for "business" and "donations/votes" for "sales" and apply the principles, programs and systems outlined.

In addition, bear in mind that it's not just candidates who subscribe to *Psephology Today*; a number of campaign managers and political consultants also are Winner's Circle members and these sales/marketing tips and columns can be of enormous help in their businesses - and YOURS if your "day job" isn't politics.

* * *

Hey, here's a little tip you might want to consider: Most of the people who can vote for you are **NOT** reading National Review or Human

(Continued on page 14...)

How to Vastly Improve Your Campaign Website Designs

There are some pretty darned ugly campaign websites up on the 'net. And candidates who are that far gone probably can't be helped.

But there are others whose websites are "close, but no cigar." And with just a couple of subtle changes, could be winners.

Ryan Deiss is managing editor of DigitalMarketer.com. He is recognized as a leading expert in, get this, digital marketing. (*Who'd o' thunk it, right?*)

Anyway, here are a few specific graphic design tips from Ryan that might just help improve your campaign website, and especially your donation pages and fundraising emails.

TIP #1: Font selection/size

"While the typeface you use on your webpage may seem trivial, we've seen up to a 30% higher conversion rate by simply using a sans serif font. For those of you not familiar with typographer terminology, that means a font without those little 'feet' at the bottom.

"That means OUT with Times New Roman, and IN with Arial. We've found that Arial with a size 12pt font (or larger) gets the best results. Remember, readability is everything. If a prospect has trouble reading your message, you're screwed."

I will only add to this the fact that the demographic most likely to vote is OLD. And many of us geezers over the age of 50 have diminishing eye-sight!

Of course, you might delude yourself into thinking that oldsters aren't on the Internet and don't visit campaign websites.

You are, of course, dead wrong.

TIP #2: Background Color

"Here's another variable we get asked about time and time again. For some reason, people are just fascinated with the psychology behind background colors.

"We were too, so we tested this variable pretty extensively. Robin's egg blue (Hex={64,95,ED}) was the clear winner. We actually saw a 31% increase in conversions over dark backgrounds. White and gray backgrounds are also effective.

"The theory here is that blue and brown are 'trust colors,' i.e. colors that trigger feelings of confidence and, in turn, increase conversions. That's why so many news agencies use blue and/or brown on their sets."

I will only add that this might just be something you want to bear in mind when choosing the background color for your campaign signs, as well.

TIP #3: Big Header Graphics

"This one's easy; big headers suck. Even though they may look more polished and professional, our testing has shown that they almost always decrease conversions. They just seem to detract from the headline."

Speaking of which...

Tip #4: Headline Font/Color

"Tahoma Red 36pt. This font just seems to work great in headlines, partly because it's sans serif and partly because it scrunches up more than a font like Arial, fitting more words per line. Red 36pt Tahoma outperforms all other fonts, increasing conversions by 17%. Readability is key. Adding a drop shadow to your red Tahoma font can give you another 5% boost."



JOIN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE!

In addition to each month's Winner's Circle newsletter package, all members get access to archived issues of your exclusive Winner's Circle e-newsletters, our "House Calls" tele-interviews and archived issues of your monthly "Psephology Today" newsletter.

To access all these great features and benefits, you should have received a user name and password shortly after joining the Winner's Circle.

If you did NOT receive your login information, please shoot an email to me and I'll take care of it: Chuck@CampaignDoctor.com



Folks, if you're running for political office you are, by definition, a politician. So STOP saying, "I'm not a politician." It doesn't resonate with anyone and only makes you look and sound foolish, self-serving and amateurish.

"Spend time browsing other campaign websites. If you see a feature you think is worthwhile, consider adding it to your site. Add poll results, new photos from recent campaign events, and articles that would be of interest to your visitors."

- Winning Campaigns

Your Boredom is a Bad Way to Measure Success

by Kivi Leroux Miller

I get this question a fair amount, and it came up in the Direct Mail for Small Nonprofits E-Clinic this week:

“Once we find the voice and style that works for us, how much do we need to get creative every month? By that I mean, as long as we have the high energy and conversational tone and compelling story, do we just keep replacing the story and hook, and saying the same message again and again? We pretty much have the same ask month in and month out for our organization.”

Here is Tom Ahern’s answer:

“Short answer: yes. Getting creative is NOT a high value goal in direct mail. (I could argue the other side of that, but let’s keep this simple for now.) The goal of direct mail is to find a “formula” that works and then do it until it stops working. You’ll know you’ve succeeded if your appeals make money and you’re bored with them.”

When I talk about messaging and especially about repurposing content, I’ll often say that if you aren’t personally bored with it as the communications pro, you haven’t said it enough times.

Your personal level of boredom with something is a terrible metric for when you should stop talking about it or doing it — at least in marketing.

Granted, this isn’t necessarily the easiest rule to live by. It can make parts of your job boring or annoying.

But you have to resist the temptation to make it all about you and how much fun you are having.

(Kivi Leroux Miller is president of Nonprofit Marketing Guide.com and the author of "The Nonprofit Marketing Guide: High-Impact, Low-Cost Ways to Build Support for Your Good Cause")

GREETINGS!

“Last week I walked out to my mailbox, opened it and started going through the mail,” writes marketing expert Dave Dee. “Like you, I started sorting my mail over the waste basket, throwing away junk mail. Then I come across a blue envelope - a greeting card envelope to be exact. It is hand-addressed to me and there is a real stamp on the envelope.”

Inside the blue envelope? A Hallmark card with a handwritten note from Dee’s sister that read, “I have been thinking about you and please remember don’t work too hard, have fun, relax and enjoy a treat of two.” Also inside the envelope was a Dunkin’ Donuts gift card.

“Wow,” Dee writes. “This deeply touched me. In fact, it blew me away.”

Lesson and Advice: Think about your best donors and supporters. Then go buy some Hallmark greeting cards TODAY and follow Dave’s sister’s example.

“By the way,” Dee advises, “don’t include any type of ‘sales pitch.’ You are not going for direct (contributions) here. You are showing appreciation in a very real way. The rewards from doing this simple act will be enormous - on many levels.”

Boost Your Credibility by Writing a Book

By Chuck Muth

Barack Obama has one. Mitt Romney has one. Ron Paul and Newt Gingrich have several. Herman Cain has one. Rick Santorum has one. Michele Bachmann has one. Tim Pawlenty has one.

Heck, even I have one!

What is it? A book.

And there’s a darned good reason. Being able to say you’re an “author” dramatically boosts your credibility...and let’s face it, candidates...especially first-time candidates who no one has ever heard about...need all the credibility boosting they can get!

Now hold on, hold on. I’m not saying you have to write a 250-page hardback *New York Times* best-seller...because you don’t. In fact, thanks to modern technology, you can affordably self-publish a small-quantity paperback book.

Indeed, for around \$1 each, you can self-publish 500 copies of a 32-page paperback book (4.25x7 inches) with a full-color cover page and jacket.

Of course, the subject material for your book can be an autobiography of your life. Or you can write about a particular public policy issue or issues. But you don’t have to.

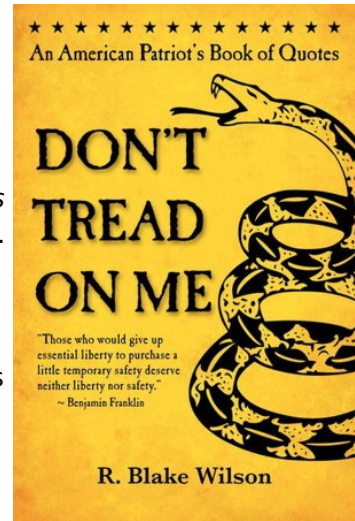
The important thing is to have a book - any book - that you can carry with you on the campaign trail and legitimately say you are an author.

And ANYBODY can do it.

Here, I’ll share with you a simple little secret: Write a “quote book.” What’s a quote book? A book that simply reprints quotes from other people.

Seriously, folks. This is **NOT** rocket surgery. Don’t make life more complicated than it needs to be.

As an example, consider going to Amazon.com and ordering a copy of “Don’t Tread on Me: An American Patriot’s Book of Quotes” by R. Blake Wilson. I’ll let the book jacket of AUTHOR Wilson describe the contents of the pages therein:



“Contains over 150 quotes by Patriots of Liberty and Freedom - plus the full text of the Declaration of Independence.”

In total, there are 205 pages. On the bulk of the pages, all you’ll find is one quote by one individual. For example, here’s all you’ll find on page 39:

NO. 21
A great empire, like a great cake, is most easily diminished at the edges.
- Benjamin Franklin

That’s it! That’s all that’s on the page.

On page 47, however, AUTHOR Blake gets a little fancy. The text on the page reads:

NO. 29
Collecting more taxes than is absolutely necessary is legalized robbery.
- Calvin Coolidge

The fancy part is that at the top of the page he includes a black-and-white stock photograph of President Coolidge with a caption noting his name, that his lifespan was from “1872-1933,”

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9 Mistakes We Make with Our Email Marketing

By Kim Stiglitz

I've compiled a list of 9 mistakes we make with our email marketing and quick tips to fix them. Read on.

1. Buying or renting an email list

When a customer or prospect opts in to hear from you, it's their own choice to receive communication from you. Think about your own inbox and how you manage it. It's likely that you look at the From Line and see if you know the sender. If not, chances are the message ends up in your trash or reported as SPAM.

2. Frequency - mailing too little or too much

When a customer or prospect opts in to your mailing list you should have a statement about how often you plan to send email. If you do this you'll manage your subscribers' expectations about how often they'll hear from you.

3. Having a lame subject line.

Your subject line is the single most important component of your email. Did you know that more than 50% of subscribers base their decision to open your message based on the subject line alone?

4. Not following best practices

Being in the email marketing business, I get a lot of email. And, I'm a picky reader/subscriber because of it. There are a few things I immediately scan an email for once I open it.

Is there preheader text? The preheader serves as a secondary subject line to give your reader more context and more reason to open the email in the first place.

Every component of your email should be working toward your goal. Waste no space.

"If there's anything that's become clear in fundraising, it's that no single channel is a silver bullet. Email alone - or direct mail alone or social alone - aren't enough. What works best is using them in combination. Donors are channel agnostic, so you can't give them only one way to give."

- Katya's Non-Profit Marketing

Also, is your email optimized to render on mobile devices? Sounds complicated but it's not that hard.

Lastly, proofread your email from beginning to end. That includes the subject line. Read one word at a time so any mistakes will jump out at you. Recruit a diligent coworker or friend to be a fresh set of eyes for a final edit. Ask them to check for typos and grammar, and to click on every link. Use this handy checklist to make sure all your bases are covered before you hit launch.

5. No call-to-action

You take the time to build an engaged list of subscribers and then you create an email. But is it crystal clear to your readers what you want them to do with it? Is there a clear call-to-action?

6. Your links stink

How frustrating is it when you click on a link in an email and it's broken? C'mon folks, we're better than that. You want your subscribers to have a flawless experience so they can help you meet that goal. So test every link, every time you send an email.

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Also, go ahead, get bold and link your images. People want to click them, so allow them to and have them link somewhere relevant.

7. Target your list

Does every person on your email list need to receive every message you send? Or can you get more strategic and target different offers or messages to different segments, or portions of your list based on location, prior purchases, etc.

For example, we recently wanted to invite customers to a special conference that was taking place in Austin, TX. Instead of sending it to every customer, we targeted those that lived in the closest proximity to where the conference was and would have the greatest propensity to attend.

8. You're not social

Adding social to your email mix can do a ton of good. You can expand the reach of your message to your social networks and possibly the people in your readers' social networks when they share or like your message.

We know none of our emails get a 100% open

rate, so posting your messages to your Facebook Timeline, LinkedIn, or Twitter allows people to interact with your message in different ways. Providing many channels for your message to be interacted with greatly increases your chances of people reading it and following the call to action.

9. Your content isn't great

Content is king for a reason. Because no matter what else, from your subject line to pretty pictures and perfect links, if your content isn't great, no one is going to continue to read, let alone take your intended action.

The best messages tell a story and tell it in a compelling way. One of my favorite examples is a winery that shot a video of a day in the life at the winery to link to from their email. The hook? The video was shot from the point of view of the winery's dog!

There you go. 9 Mistakes We Make with Our Email Marketing. I'm sure now your emails will have a newfound sense of purpose and deliver great results.

(Kim Stiglitz is the Director of Lifecycle Marketing at VerticalResponse. Connect with her on Twitter at @Stiggy1.)

Does Your Campaign Marketing Suck?

"Look at your current marketing materials. Take any one at random. And read the first 50 words starting from the very *first* word.

"Does your (voter or donor) prospect know what you can do for him? Do you tell him what he's getting and why it's important to do it (whatever your call to action is) NOW?"

"Unless your answer is yes, the documents are wrong and should be secretly burnt at midnight as an embarrassment to you!"

- Dr. Jeffrey Lant, "Cash Copy"

52 Tips on How to Write Good

By Mark Nichol

The contents of this post are an alphabetical arrangement of two lists that have been circulating among writers and editors for many years. In case you have missed out all this time, I'm sharing here the wit and wisdom of the late New York Times language maven **William Safire** (*Rules for Writers*) and advertising executive and copywriter **Frank LaPosta Visco** (*How to Write Good*).

1. A writer must not shift your point of view.
2. Always pick on the correct idiom.
3. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
4. Always be sure to finish what
5. Avoid alliteration. Always.
6. Avoid archaic spellings.
7. Avoid clichés like the plague. (They're old hat.)
8. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky.
9. Be more or less specific.
10. Comparisons are as bad as clichés.
11. Contractions aren't necessary.
12. Do not use hyperbole; not one in a million can do it effectively.
13. Don't indulge in sesquipedalian lexicological constructions.
14. Don't never use no double negatives.
15. Don't overuse exclamation marks!!
16. Don't repeat yourself, or say again what you have said before.
17. Don't use commas, that, are not, necessary.
18. Don't be redundant; don't use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
19. Eliminate quotations. As Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
20. Employ the vernacular.
21. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
22. Eschew obfuscation.
23. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
24. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.
25. Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
26. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
27. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
28. Hopefully, you will use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.
29. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is.
30. If you reread your work, you can find on rereading a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing.
31. It behooves you to avoid archaic expressions.
32. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
33. Never use a big word when a diminutive alternative would suffice.
34. No sentence fragments.
35. One should never generalize.
36. One-word sentences? Eliminate.
37. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.
38. Parenthetical words however must be enclosed in commas.
39. Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of ten or more words, to their antecedents.
40. Placing a comma between subject and predicate, is not correct.
41. Poofread carefully to see if you any words out.
42. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
43. Profanity sucks.
44. Subject and verb always has to agree.
45. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixing metaphors.
46. The adverb always follows the verb.
47. The passive voice is to be avoided.
48. Understatement is always best.
49. Use the apostrophe in it's proper place and omit it when its not needed.
50. Use youre spell chekker to avoid misspelling and to catch typographical errors.
51. Who needs rhetorical questions?
52. Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.

This article first appeared on DailyWritingTips.com

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and that he was the “30th American President.”

Yeah, that’s real tough.

So how do you find quotes to include in your book. Simple: Google.

I just went in and typed “Famous Political Quotes” in the Google search engine and got back 79,800 results in 0.12 seconds! Is this Internet thing Al Gore invented great or what?

Now here’s something else to consider.

Understandably, it’s more expensive to print a 200-page book than it is to print a 32-page or 64-page book. But as far as building credibility as an author is concerned, it doesn’t make one whit of difference whether your book is 200 pages long or 32 pages long.

So go with 32. Or maybe 64. Or something in between. And it can be a smaller size than the standard 8.5 x 5.5 inches.

And while you don’t *have* to, you can beef up the content of *your* 32-page quote book by including more than one quote per page. Indeed, you could still do a 150-quote book like Mr. Wilson...but on fewer pages in a smaller book. Same end result, though:

You’re an author!

Just remember, the purpose of this particular book is as a tool for your campaign, so don’t forget to put your campaign information on the back cover, including (ESPECIALLY) your website address where people can find you to get more information.

Now, can I give you a bonus idea...one that’s even simpler than a quote book and a heckuva lot more fun?

Remember, ridiculing your opponent can be a

very effective campaign messaging tactic. So let’s say a big issue in this upcoming election is jobs.

Let’s just say.

And let’s say you’re a business owner who has actually created jobs and your opponent isn’t and hasn’t. So you “write” a book titled something like: “Everything (insert opponent’s name here) Knows About Small Business and Creating Jobs.”

Inside? All 64 pages are blank!

Sure, it’s considered a “gag gift.” But the fact remains, it **IS** a book and you **ARE** the author. And man, what an ice-breaker at any public speaking event you attend. And since “fights make news,” you’re likely to get some earned media on your book, as well.

By the way, take copies of your book with you EVERYWHERE...even walking door-to-door...and insert a contribution envelope in-between the pages. If someone wants to “buy” a copy of your book, you “sell” it for the price of whatever level contribution you find appropriate.

Last point: As for the cover, it doesn’t have to be fancy. If you’re even semi-accomplished using Microsoft Word, you can design a cover. But if not, any local graphic designer could do this in their sleep. It does NOT have to be fancy.

As public speaking expert James Malinchak says, “My ugly book is better than the one you ain’t got.”

Who can print your book at a reasonable price and in small quantities? Well, when I published my first book in 2004 (“*Ketchup with Your Crow, Mr. Moore?*”), I used InstantPublisher.com. And the fact that they’re still around tells me they know what they’re doing and are good at it.

Author! Author!

20 Mistakes that Will Undermine Your Call to Action and Cost You Sales

by Greg Digneo

Okay, show of hands.

Who else is wondering how to turn website traffic into actual sales [donations]?

We spend a lot of time obsessing over increasing traffic. It's the sexy thing to do.

However, the number of leads fails to match our expectations because we don't spend enough time creating a killer call to action.

A call to action is the most effective tactic to convert random traffic into loyal readers and paying customers.

The most profitable sites use this tactic to convince readers to sign up for a newsletter, download an ebook, attend a webinar, or purchase a product.

This is the difference between a highly profitable website and a failed marketing initiative. Yet most screw it up.

Dozens of call to action mistakes can doom your efforts to convert traffic into leads or sales.

Below, I've gathered 20 of the most common. Don't make these beginner mistakes:

1. No Call to Action

You spend countless hours guest posting, in social media, and formatting your website for search engine optimization purposes.

But your effort is wasted if you don't ask your readers to take action. They may come to your site, read your information, and never come back.

Give your readers an opportunity to subscribe.

2. Below the Fold

When you visit the most popular sites in the world, you will notice that you never have to scroll to find the call to action.

The most valuable real estate on any website is the top third of the page. Too often, marketers waste that space with a large image of their logo or random images that distract readers from taking action.

The truth is, many of your visitors will never

scroll down and view all of your content.

If you want to increase conversions, put your call to action at the top of your blog where every reader will see it. (Take a look at the Generate WordPress child theme for a very clear example of this.)

3. Not Authoritative

If you don't speak with confidence and authority, your readers won't have confidence to take action on your site.

Tell them exactly what you want them to do, and do so with conviction.

4. Not Specific

Your readers lead busy lives and don't always have time to think about what you want them to do.

Your job is to spell it out for them.

If you want them to enter their email address, tell them in your call to action. If you want them to click a link, include the words "click here" in the link.

Always connect the dots for your readers so taking action is a no-brainer.

5. Too Much Self Proclaimed Hype

Unless a recognized third party says your blog is the largest, best, or any other superlative, leave it out of your call to action. The last thing you want to do is look like a used car salesman.

Consequently, a great way to increase subscribers is to have an industry authority quote how much they enjoy reading your content.

6. Multiple Calls to Action

What's the one thing you want readers to do on your blog?

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Do you want them to sign up for your list? And click on ads? And buy your products? And go to your social media profiles?

When you have too many calls to action on your site, your readers become paralyzed by the choices and leave your site.

Pick one or two actions you want your readers to take, and build your design around that. Don't leave readers confused about what they're supposed to do next.

7. Puny Call to Action

If you have a call to action and no one can find it, you may as well have no call to action at all. Make it big enough so people can't miss it.

I've never seen a website with a call to action that is too big.

Fix these intermediate mistakes and watch your list grow

8. No Social Proof

One of the most effective ways to get someone to take action on your site is to prove that others have done it too.

Here on Copyblogger, you can see how many of your fellow content marketers have joined the email list. Over 75,000 people can't be wrong.

If you have a new blog with less than 1,000 subscribers, you should omit this figure. But think about other creative ways to use social proof to lend credibility to your site.

9. No Benefit to Signing Up

Calls to action such as "Call for a free consultation" or "Sign up for our newsletter" don't motivate your readers.

The words "free consultation" have come to mean "sales pitch," and signing up for your newsletter is giving you permission to sell stuff.

Highlight exactly what your readers are going to receive when they take action. How will they benefit?

10. Too Risky

If your call to action involves a financial transaction, then offering a free trial or a money-back guarantee will boost conversions.

If something is free to download or subscribe to, mention that immediately.

11. No Urgency

People are extremely motivated to take action out of fear of missing out on an opportunity.

One reason webinars work so well at getting people to take action is because the software only allows for a limited number of seats.

You can create this urgency in other offers as well.

For instance, if you want more readers to download your ebook or free report, try offering it for a limited time only.

12. Colors Blend In

Pop quiz: Does your call to action jump out at your readers the moment they arrive to your blog? If not, you might want to rethink your color palette.

For instance, if your blog has a blue background, having dark blue text is a big mistake. The contrast is too close and most of your readers will have a hard time immediately finding your call to action.

13. No Credibility

If you are a brand new blogger, earning the credibility that will entice people to take action is difficult.

You have two quick ways to get around this.

First, put the logos of your biggest customers above your call to action. This shows that the market has validated your products and services. This expertise will extend to your blog.

Second, start guest posting on popular blogs immediately. Once you have a guest post on a popular blog, you can put their logo above your

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call to action following the words “As seen in.”

(A quick note: you will want to ask for permission to post third party logos on your site.)

Can you imagine how much more appealing your call to action will be if the words “As seen in Copyblogger” follow it?

14. Loaded with Jargon

Too many marketers load their content with industry jargon instead of writing in words their readers actually use.

If you sell software with a 128-bit encryption key, the only people likely to understand what that means are software developers and IT professionals.

Unlike English class — where you got points for using big words — simple words work best when trying to persuade someone to take action.

Advanced mistakes that keep your list from exploding...

15. Wrong Offer

If your offer doesn’t interest your readers, how convincing the copywriting is or how beautiful your buttons are won’t matter. They won’t take action.

This sounds like common sense, but it happens more often than you can imagine.

Think about the number of websites with ebooks and software that never get downloaded.

The bottom line: The best way to create a killer call to action is to offer something your readers really want, when they want it, the way they want it.

16. Undefined Sales Funnel

You need to understand your sales funnel in order to make the most out of your call to action.

Typically, a blog is great for getting readers to sign up for a free report to build your email list. However, it’s not so good at selling expensive consulting services.

In many cases, your job as a content marketer

is to build an efficient sales funnel that will convert your readers into subscribers, and your subscribers into customers.

17. No Empathy

Do you know what keeps your readers up at night? What do they desire more than anything else in the world?

Chances are it’s not exactly what you are offering.

For instance, Jon Morrow offers a free report called “52 Headline Hacks that shows bloggers how to create headlines”. But the headline on his call to action is “A cheat sheet for writing blog posts that go viral.”

Few bloggers dream about crafting the perfect headline, but every blogger dreams about a post that goes viral. And headlines are a key ingredient to making that happen.

Dig down deep into the soul of your readers and discover how to make their dreams come true.

18. No Tangible Benefit

If you’ve been selling products or services for any length of time, you’ve probably heard that you need to sell benefits, not features.

But now you need to take that a step further and create *tangible* benefits.

For instance, the benefit “get more traffic” can

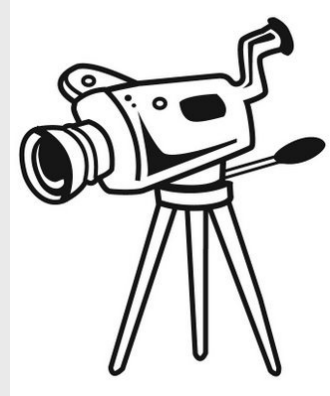
(Continued on page 13...)

“Be sure to include a variety of good photographs on your campaign website that help visitors get a sense of you as a person. Site visitors, like people everywhere, are interested in other people, and the Internet allows them to indulge their ordinary curiosity...”

- Winning Campaigns Online

From the Branded Out Loud blog, five reason online videos don't work: **Too many bad videos, not enough popcorn to make up for it.** Here they are:

1. The quality of the actual video.
2. The person being filmed does not have a dynamic personality.
3. Lack of sound and visual effects.
4. Uninteresting content.
5. Not enough information to make a watching decision.



I'll add two more:

- **It's aimed at yourself, not your audience.** (You might say this is covered by #4 above.) Too many nonprofit (campaign) online videos are look-at-us, aren't-we-great brag pieces. They should instead strive to connect the viewer with the action.
- **It doesn't go anywhere.** No call to action. No "so what." Even if you're not trying to raise funds, you should have some kind of next step in mind. "We want viewers to be more aware" is *not* an action.

- *Jeff Brooks, FutureFundraisingNow.com*

(...continued from page 12)

become "Double your traffic in 30 days."

Or the benefit "save money" can become "save \$932 a month."

This allows your readers to vividly imagine a better life if they take action on your site. Just be sure you're absolutely honest in your claim about what your product or service will do.

19. No A/B Testing

At least once a month, you should test your call to action to improve your subscription rate until you've deemed it good enough.

Test your headline, copy, buttons, location, and your offer to determine what gets more people to take the most action.

20. Never Studied Copywriting

Let's get perfectly blunt here.

Although trying to create a killer call to action

without studying copywriting is possible, it's highly unlikely.

If you've never studied copywriting, you need to start right now. Use the free resources on Copyblogger.com, and pick up a couple of the most important copywriting books.

A scary fact

Every time a reader leaves your site without subscribing, you've lost a sales lead.

And you know what? You may never get that lead back.

A killer call to action can mean the difference between building a popular website and toiling with one that lingers in obscurity.

Review the tactics I've listed above and start testing them one by one until you've created a call to action your readers can't resist.

What are you waiting for? Wasting time is literally costing you money ...

About the Author: Greg Digneo teaches businesses how to capture traffic, increase conversions, and generate more sales leads

Muth's TRUTHS

(...continued from front page)

Events. They're reading Rolling Stone and Entertainment Weekly. While you personally may have no interest in the latest in Hollywood or pop culture, your potential voters **DO**.

So if you want to relate to them and get them on your side, you might just want to pay a little bit more attention to the things they're paying a lot more attention to. Which is why I just subscribed (in my wife's name!) to *People* magazine. You might want to consider doing the same.

* * *

How would you like to mail your campaign flyer/literature to every voting household in your district for **FREE**? Would that be of any interest to you?

It's actually quite simple...and an old and time-tested method. You *will* have to do a little legwork, though.

Ever heard of Val-Pak?

That's right. All you have to do is get a solid mailing list of voting households for your district. Then recruit a half-dozen or so other candidates who are running in the same district for other offices to join you in a mailing co-op.

Everybody splits the postage cost equally...except you. You get to insert your campaign brochure in the envelope for **FREE**. And as a bonus for doing all the work...you get to put your brochure on **TOP**.

There you go. That one little idea could very well save you **100 times** the annual cost of your Winner's Circle membership! Doggone if you weren't smart to join.

* * *

Ask anyone about going to a political fundraising event and you'll likely face, at best, yawns. In fact, almost all political fundraising events follow the same boring pattern: boring cocktail reception, boring chicken dinner, boring political speeches...go home with your wallet considerably lighter.

So you'd not only do your campaign a favor, but a favor to your financial supporters if you'd just put on fundraising events that weren't so predictable and, well, boring. And one of the best ways, according Yanik Silver of

(Continued on page 15...)

"Just because you're in nonprofit (campaign) marketing, you don't need to sound like a marketing claim on a store shelf. Stop saying what people expect: that you need money, that we should give, that your cause is the best. If that's all you have to say, you might as well be selling soap. Start saying what really matters: that you have a story that touches us, that we can become a part of it, and that together we can change the world. Don't write like you're making a brochure. Write like you're making a difference."

- *Katya's Non-Profit Marketing Blog*

(...continued from page 14)
Maverick1000, is with “themed” events.

“People really jump into themes and enjoy them,” Silver writes. “Everything from spy-inspired opening productions to the black-tied ‘Casino Royale’ Casino night. It adds to an event that has great content but also makes it fun for attendees to return over and over again.”

Silver shares “a cool example” of how to jazz up a wine-tasting event...

“You’ve seen wine-tasting events that are pretty much me-too and same-ole, right? Well, this one had a great theme, ‘Around the World in 80 Sips.’ This is obviously borrowed from the great Jules Verne novel.”

For his spy-themed event at the - where else? - Spy Museum in Washington, DC, Silver even went so far as to hire Boris and Natasha impersonators (if you have to ask, ask Google).

“People want that fun and they want that experience since other events are pretty plain vanilla,” he says.

Amen! So what’s the theme for YOUR next event?

* * *

Zig Ziglar is a giant in the sales world, and he has a saying: “Timid salesman have skinny kids.” So true. Ditto timid candidates who don’t aggressively raise money or ask for votes.

* * *

Most local, down-ballot campaigns do NOT make effective use of direct mail fundraising, and one of the impediments seems to be the high cost of starting out. But part of that feared high cost is based on a fallacy: Mailing to a LARGE number of strangers.

“When I first started writing my sales letters, I thought I had to send out 5,000 mailing pieces to get a good sample of my market,” writes Doc Nielsen, a chiropractor who has written several national sales letters that have produced close to a million dollars each.

“Seriously? What if I only have 100 patients? This is why I use the ‘Roll of Stamps Test.’ If you don’t get a response from 100 clients who know you, then what makes you think sending more than 100 pieces to complete strangers will be even better?”

Good question.

Which is why Campaign Secrets founder Mark Montini advises first-time candidates to first scour their Christmas card list and business cards to come up with an initial Top 100 “friends and family” mailing list. After all, if your closest family and friends won’t contribute to your campaign, why would/should complete strangers, right?

“I buy a roll of stamps,” Nielsen continues, “send out a 100 mailing piece test to people who know me, and wait a day or two for results. If we get a good response, then we roll it out. If we don’t get any response, then I change the headline (or the offer) in the next mailing of 100. The smart marketer does a small test first, then rolls out big.”

And for you procrastinators out there, a final piece of advice from Doc Nielsen:

“Just mail the damn letter already. Quit screwing around and get your sales letter to the Post Office. And stop analyzing your masterpiece to death. It will never be perfect. So, just get it in the mail as quickly as possible. If you think of something you want to add to your letter, then simply include it in your next mailing.”

(continued on page 16...)

“Our brain is literally wired for story – we think in story, it’s how we make sense of the world. And yet, so often when we want to communicate something we feel is serious we shun story. Instead, our first impulse is to marshal all facts and explain it in great graph-strewn, statistic-studded, pie-chart detail so that other people really, really understand it. Unfortunately, unless you have a captive audience whose very life depends on it, not only won’t they understand your presentation, chances are they’ll sleep right through it.” - *Lisa Cron*

(...continued from page 15)

As Nike says, “Just do it.”

* * *

If you have a campaign website, it does you no good unless you regularly post new content on it. If you don’t post new content on your website on a regular basis, there’s no reason for people to come back to the website again and again. Make sense?

OK, the best way to keep your campaign website fresh with new content is to include a blog. But try to include subject material that is more than typical political pabulum. Make it both informative and entertaining. And anytime you can work in the names of people who are registered to vote in your district...vunderbar!

So what do you write about?

On the occasion of her 1,182nd blog post (remember, using SPECIFIC numbers is FAR more effective than rounded off numbers), Katya Andresen shares one of her secrets.

“Sometimes people ask me about my blogging, and how I manage to do it each day. So I thought I’d tell you how it works. Around 10 or 11 pm the night before I schedule a post to be published, I sit down and reflect on what meaningful thing I heard, read

or thought during the day, and I write about it. It’s that simple...”

Of course, writing in an interesting and compelling manner isn’t simple. But if you’re having trouble just trying to figure out what to write about on your campaign blog, try following Katya’s example.

* * *

On a related note, marketing guru Dan Kennedy writes, “If you’re not regularly arriving in peoples’ mailboxes, you are making a big mistake.”

Now, Kennedy is talking about business customers; however, the same applies to your donors. Email, for all kinds of reasons - some practical; some psychological - doesn’t cut it. Not that it’s not important; it’s just not enough.

Consider the following: The key to successful fundraising isn’t so much getting someone to donate to your campaign the first time, but to continue giving to you again and again and again.

Now...if the only time they ever hear from you is when you mail them another fundraising letter, it won’t be long before the spigot gets turned off.

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A good 4– or 8-page paper-and-ink newsletter will cost you less than a buck per donor household—and that includes first-class postage. So if someone gives you even just a \$25 donation, you can mail that donor a monthly newsletter for an entire year and it'll "cost" you less than half of what the donor gave you.

But the real payoff here is that a donor who receives a monthly newsletter from you, rather than ONLY additional solicitations, is much more likely to give you even MORE money.

So don't think of a monthly mailed campaign newsletter as an expense; think of it as what it really is...an investment. A solid one, at that, which could pay huge long-term dividends for you down the road.

* * *

When it comes to recruiting new volunteers via your website, embrace gradualism.

Too many campaigns have the standard check-off box on their Volunteer pages that usually includes one or more of the following options:

- Host a Meet & Greet
- Help at Events
- Make Phone Calls
- Campaign Door to Door

Now think about it. Someone new comes to your website who has never worked on a campaign before. And while they may be inclined to join and help out, the options seem pretty big and complicated to them...which suppresses response.

What's involved in hosting a meet-and-greet?

What do they mean by "helping" at an event?

Making phone calls to strangers? Sounds like tele-marketing. No, thanks.

Campaign door-to-door? Sounds like, well, door-to-door sales. No, thanks.

To effectively recruit new volunteers, it would be far better to ease them into the campaign one small step at a time. A better Volunteer option might be to simply ask if they'd be willing to put a campaign sign up in their yard.

Heck, anybody can do that - even in most HOA's! It's simple, painless and easy to understand.

Then AFTER they agree to put the sign up - or maybe agree to add their name publicly to the campaign's website as a supporter - you have your Volunteer Coordinator follow up and ask them to do something else; something simple, easy to understand, painless, not too time-consuming, and non-threatening.

If you gradually ease new volunteers into the program - much the same way you ease small donors into major and repeat donors - you'll have a lot more success than overwhelming them with lots of scary volunteer options right off the bat.

* * *

Things we don't think about: Why would Paul Revere ride through town yelling, "The British are coming!" when just about everyone in the colonies at the time was...British? Something tells me history may have been embellished a bit in this story.

* * *

Katya Andresen recently wrote about the timing aspect as it relates to marketing a product or service that especially applies to

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undecided voters in campaigns.

If you are marketing on a shoestring, you need to focus your resources on one point in time: your audience's open-minded moment.

"What's an open-minded moment? It's a time, place or state of mind when people are most likely to hear your message, find it relevant and act upon it."

Katya notes that March "is an open-minded month for TurboTax marketers," as the April 15 Tax Day is right around the corner.

Pop Quiz: What's the open-minded period of time is for general election voters? **Answer:** Post-Labor Day.

* * *

I attended a four-day "boot camp" on public speaking and marketing in Los Angeles a couple weeks ago, and one of the points drilled into us by our "drill instructor," James Malinchak, was:

"Nobody will ever hear you until they know you."

So, so, SO true for candidates. In fact, ESPECIALLY for candidates since so many of those who have gone before you have so poisoned the well of public opinion.

Anyway, the point is you HAVE to tell your audience about yourself - your "story" - in a way that makes them feel like you're "one of them."

This is actually easier than you might think, as marketing expert Yanik Silver explains:

"We all have a 'creation story,' but few of us use them in our marketing. Think of it like a comic book character.

"If I asked you, 'Who was bitten by a radioactive spider and started fighting crime to avenge his

"If you get a favorable write-up in a newspaper or magazine, post the article (with permission), or a link to it, on your campaign website. If you want to increase the coverage even more, send an email message to all your supporters and include a link to the article."

- Winning Campaigns Online

Uncle's death?' You'd probably know that was Spiderman.

"This is all part of the creation story and every business, brand and personality has that creation story that should be made more public."

Ditto candidates.

For your campaign, ask yourself some questions. How did you start in politics? What was your reason or inspiration?

"Share this with your customers (voters/donors)," Silver says, "and you'll create a deeper connection." Absolutely.

One other tip in this regard: Talk about your experiences in your youth - something everyone can relate to. Your first job. Your challenges in high school. Your first car. Your childhood sweetheart. Etc.

In fact, here's a Gold Star public speaking secret: If you REALLY want to get your audience involved and relating to you right off the bat, tell them what your favorite television show was while growing up.

One of mine was "Dallas." I all but idolized J.R. Ewing. The guy had no conscience and never

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failed to screw an opponent. I guess that explains how and why I got into politics!

Anyway, after telling the audience what your favorite TV show was when growing up, ask the audience to tell you what some of *their* favorite TV shows were...and watch the room come alive with audience participation!

They'll be eating out of your hand. You're no longer "Joe Candidate, Politician." You're a regular guy (or gal), just like them. And NOW that they've gotten to know you a little better, they'll be more inclined to listen to your message.

* * *

Almost every candidate's brochure and website I've seen is, well, all about the candidate...and only occasionally about the voter or the donor;

what the voter or donor "gets" by giving their business - their vote or contribution - to the candidate.

Marketing piece after mailing piece after webpage is all about the candidate. Me, me, me, me, me, me, me.

Which, of course, is the exact OPPOSITE of what your campaign message *should* be. Every communication with every voter and every donor should answer the question that is foremost in the minds of those potential donors and those potential voters...

"What's in it for me???"

If you're not answering that question in every communication...fail.

(Continued on page 22...)

It's About THEM...the DONOR and the VOTER!

"It is your responsibility to do everything you can to let your audience know just what you can do for them...how much you have for them...how many benefits are available for them...and how easy it is for them to get these benefits...if only they act NOW!

"If your marketing is to succeed, you must fully focus on the prospect and what you can do for him...and show him, to the furthest extent possible, just how far you will go to make his life better. Then to this already potent formula, add the last crucial ingredient: your passion.

"Do not act impersonally...indifferently...with cool reserve. Act as if what you're doing matters. Act as if it matters to you that the life of each of your prospects is improved...and that you will do what is necessary so it will be. Act as if each contact with each prospect counts...as if every one is of very real consequence. As indeed it must be."

- Dr. Jeffrey Lant, "Cash Copy"

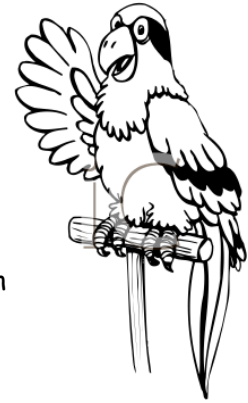
BEWARE OF JESUS!

So this burglar breaks into this house one night. And as he crept down the hall he heard a voice say, "Beware of Jesus braaak! Beware of Jesus...braaak!"

Now, as you can imagine, the burglar was startled, but also puzzled because he was certain that the people who lived there were not at home.

Well, he continues down the hall, even more cautiously than before, but then he hears it again, "Beware of Jesus, braaak! Beware of Jesus, braaak!"

So he turns on his burglar's flashlight - a little pen light - and shines it around the room. And over in the corner he spies this parrot.



The parrot looks at him and says, "Beware of Jesus, braaak! Beware of Jesus, braaak!"

So the burglar says to the parrot, "Are you Jesus?" And the parrot says, "No, my name is Moses, braaak!"

To which the burglar asks, "What kind of person would name a parrot Moses?"

The parrot replies, "The same kind of person who would name a Rottweiler Jesus. Get him Jesus...braaak!"

MORAL OF THE STORY (and lesson for campaign communications):

"BE FUNNY...RAISE MORE MONEY!"

What is Your Biggest Campaign Problem?

Do you have a campaign problem that's giving you a headache, especially one where you're getting 15 different suggestions for fixing it from 15 different people? Need a referee to relieve your pain once and for all? Then shoot your question to The Campaign Doctor and maybe we'll help you solve it right here on the pages of *Psephology Today*.

Email them to Chuck@CampaignDoctor.com

Recommended Reading

Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion

By Robert B. Cialdini, Phd

The Art of War

By Sun Tzu

The Prince

By Niccolo Machiavelli

Bad Boy: The Life and Politics of Lee Atwater

By John Brady

Development Today: A Fund Raising Guide for Non-Profit Organizations

By Dr. Jeffrey Lant

The Mercifully Brief Real World Guide to Raising \$1,000 Gifts by Mail

By Mal Warwick

Secrets from the Lost Art of Common Sense Marketing

By Brad & Alan Antin

22 Immutable Laws of Marketing

By Al Ries & Jack Trout

Direct Mail: Secrets of Direct Mail Fundraising

By Benjamin Hart

Resource Directory

Campaign Websites

www.CampaignSiteBuilder.com

Campaign Literature/Signs

Dottie Ward

M2M Strategies

980 Lakes Parkway”

Lawrenceville, GA 30043

(678) 942-8416

dward@m2Mstrategies.net

Voter Contact Mail

Jim Bieber

Bieber Communications

3609 W. McArthur Blvd.

Santa Ana, CA 92704

(714) 210-3630

info@biebercommunications.com

www.biebercommunications.com

Automated Phone Calls

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Opposition Research

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[http://www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/TCBPoliticalConsulting)

[TCBPoliticalConsulting](http://www.facebook.com/TCBPoliticalConsulting)

Book Self-Publishing

www.InstantPublisher.com

(800) 259-2592

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To come up with an example of what I'm talking about, I went completely RANDOM. I typed in "state legislative candidate" in Google and surfed over to Page 12 where I found the campaign website - again completely at random - for Connecticut Secretary of State candidate Mike DeRosa. Here's what I found...

- 1.) At the top of the page was the headline "Mike DeRosa for Secretary of State," next to a picture of...Mike DeRosa. In other words, right from Jump Street, this is all about...Mike DeRosa.
- 2.) The sub-headline is titled, "About Mike." In other words - no, IN THOSE EXACT WORDS - this is all about Mike DeRosa, not the potential voters or potential donors.
- 3.) We then read about "Some of Mike DeRosa's experience." Again, it's all about Mike.
- 4.) What follows are 8 things about Mike's experience. Let's take just one relatively short one for demonstration purposes - especially since a similar "feature" is found on many, many, many candidate bios (maybe even yours?)...

"Graduated from the University of Connecticut with a BA in History. Many post-graduate courses in Education from Southern Connecticut State University. Taught school for three years in New Haven and was head of counseling at O.I.C. in New Haven."

To which the collective voting and contributing

"Typically, the most popular pages on a campaign website are those featuring that candidate's biography and statements on the issues. Not surprisingly, fewer visitors make it to the Donation and Volunteer pages, but enough of them do to make a big difference to your campaign."

- *Winning Campaigns Online*

population can and understandably will ask: "So what?!!!"

What the hell does this mean to the average voter or potential donor? How does this help THEM. What's the BENEFIT of Mr. DeRosa having a BA in History? And how does teaching for three years have anything whatsoever to do with the job of Secretary of State?

In short...**SO WHAT???**

If you really want to VASTLY improve your campaign copy, every "I have" you list or detail should be followed by a "You get." In other words, "I have a BA in History, and as such you get (fill in the blank)."

Everything you have listed in your candidate bio, your walk-card, your mailer, your website should offer the voter or prospective donor a serious and valuable benefit. If it doesn't...cold-heartedly cut it out. It's a waste of space and a waste of your potential voter's and donor's time.

Every relevant feature, qualification, experience and bona fide should be listed...but then immediately follow it up with the answer to this simple, two-word question: "So what?"

Maybe teaching for three years *has* a benefit to potential voters and donors to your campaign. But don't *assume* they know what it is. You MUST spell it out for them. "I have; you get."

You start subjecting every aspect of your campaign's communications network to the "So what?" test and pretty soon you're gonna have a campaign message that SIZZLES with your audience.

"So what?" you ask. So that means you'll get more votes and more donations, that's what.

Until next month...

Dr. Chuck Math

Famous Last Words

“If you always do what you’ve always done, you’ll always get what you’ve always had.” - **James Malinchak**

“Action begets action. It's what you'll find with all activities that you are procrastinating on. Scientific research supports it. The only thing that helps you overcome procrastination is to actually do the thing you are procrastinating about. That's it. You must take action.” - **Craig Ballantyne**

“Tell empowering stories that cast the audience in the role of the Hero. It’s what made our earliest stories great, and it’s what inspires us to be bigger than ourselves.” - **Katya Andresen**

“For the marketer, the freelancer and the entrepreneur (candidate), the challenge is to be comfortable with the undone, with the cycle of never-ending. We were trained to finish our homework, our peas and our chores. Today, we're never finished, and that's okay.” - **Seth Godin**

“Success is doing what I want to do ... when I want to do it ... with the people I want to work with ... and getting paid very, very well for it.” - **Bob Bly**

“Very, very few things are actually impossible. But the existence of possibility is not the same as viability and practicality.” - **Dan Kennedy**

“There are entire industries devoted to making their products look prettier. They send employees to conferences to listen to average performers describe what they do to maintain average results. That’s like seeking marital advice from Tiger Woods or Charlie Sheen.” - **Robert Skrob**

“Raise a lot of money.” - **Newt Gingrich's advice for 2016 presidential candidates**

“Fundraising is a time-consuming, slow-moving, intrusive, and often frustrating process. It’s also a crucial activity...” - **Dr. Jeffrey Lant**

“You can write the greatest fundraising copy in the world, but if no one notices your letter in the mailbox, your appeal is doomed.” - **Ben Hart**

“I might suggest that success is frequently determined by how much you listen and learn from your (donor) meeting. Because, after all, how will you know what to sell to your customer until you fully understand what it is they wish to buy?” - **Kevin Gentry**

“As of this writing, Facebook had lost about 25 percent of its value since its highly hyped initial public offering on May 18. I am using Facebook as a metaphor for Obama's first term: Highly touted. Enormous interest. Massive promise. Thud.” - **Rich Galen**

“Most entrepreneurs and business people fail not because they are lazy or because they don't work. They fail because they work on the wrong things. You need to understand what is important and what's not. Which tasks, projects, meetings, emails, and phone calls will yield revenue and which will not? Unfortunately, most people work on things they are comfortable and confident doing.” - **Mary Ellen Tribby**

“You sleep with 'em.” - **Former Louisiana Gov. Edwin Edwards says he's finally found a use for Republicans. The 84-year-old Democrat, out of jail, has married a blonde Republican more than 50 years his junior (h/t Politico)**



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