

Hitch a Ride on the Marketing Train:

THE SCIENTIFIC INGREDIENT THAT WILL BUILD CUSTOMER FAITH

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The Write Exposure

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Who Says This Works?

Three years ago, I found myself really frustrated with my business. I had just lost a huge client. I thought I'd done everything right—I responded quickly to their calls, answered all their questions, threw in extra perks from time to time, and sent cookies. And yet, one mistake cost me the account. (My mistake? An email somehow got lost and I didn't follow up by phone to make sure it had arrived causing their newsletter to be a day late.)

It was a huge blow—to have worked so hard for a client, only to have them decide to hire someone new due to a technical glitch.

I was determined that it wouldn't happen again.

So, I spent the next few months planning out customer loyalty campaigns. Meticulously detailing gifts and consulting sessions. Carefully crafting email announcements and letters.

And, I got to the end of this complete campaign, sat back, looked it over, and thought “So What?”

Yep, I ran smack-dab into the “So What?” factor. And round and round I went—I'd think of an idea that seemed like it might be a good way to market my company and then I'd think, “Yeah, but so what?” I'd come up with a way to make my customers happier, and again, “So what?”

Fortunately, it was right around this time that a friend gave me a copy of *The Story Factor* by Annette Simmons. Though it's not exactly the kind of book you'd think of first when grappling with customer loyalty and management, it was precisely the resource I needed. And it explained why I kept stumbling over “So What” perfectly.

To put it plainly, customers have lost faith. They're used to lousy service, crummy products, and dreadful salespeople. And until we find a way to re-capture their imaginations, regain their trust, and renew their faith, business owners continue to beat their heads against a brick wall.

“So What” is Always There

The final question is always “So What?”

Simmons writes: “People don’t want more information. They are up to their eyeballs in information. They want *faith*—faith in you, your goals, your success, in the story you tell. **It is faith that moves mountains, not facts.**”

Aha! So, it wasn't about programs or data or gifts or goodies. **It was about faith.**

How do you help renew their faith? Simmons has the answer to that as well: “Story is your path to creating faith.”

Are Articles the Solution?

What better way to tell your story and build that faith than with a powerful article? A widely published article can easily expose your message to hundreds, thousands, or even

millions of readers.

Unfortunately, most business owners disregard this opportunity and create articles that are fluffy, unstrategic messes that, at best, impart a single lesson for readers.

By following the advice in this report, you'll write articles that rise above the others to engage readers, activate their imaginations, and restore their faith.

Your Marketing Train

Your marketing is a series of train cars that have all been left at different stations. You want the conductor (or customer) to be able to pick up all the cars and put them back together into one long train.

What's the easiest way to let them know which cars belong to your train? If you want the conductor to find all the cars, wouldn't it make sense to paint all those cars the same unusual color?

Your personality is that paint. It's the way you make it clear to customers that that aqua car is part of your train while the one with orange stripes is not.

Once you've mastered personality, story should just fall into place. After all, it's easy to know which stories to share about your experiences when you know your audience and how you want them to see you.

All Aboard,

Jessica Albon

The Ingredient You Need For Article-Writing Success

Every bit of promotion and advertising you do for your company (article-writing included) must have one important element: a common personality.

Consider each of your articles as a car on a toy train. Any one article might be adorable all by itself, but without that locomotive up at the top, it can't get anywhere. It just stays stuck on the tracks.

Your Personality is the Locomotive

When each article you write lets your personality shine through you've got a powerful engine to pull each train car down the tracks. Don't be afraid to develop your own unique way of saying things. It's this approach that will help your customers start to put that train together.

Hitch each of your cars to that personality and they'll build on each other. Pretty soon, you'll have a very impressive train.

How Do I Develop a Personality?

Focus

Start by really, really focusing in on a topic. For instance, instead of web design, or even color in web design, you might focus in on using the elements of color to influence website visitors.

Narrowing your focus to a topic so precise you're the only one writing about it means readers will quickly associate your articles together--building that train all by themselves. They'll see your byline and think, "Here's another article by that color-as-a-sales-tool expert."

Put Your Personality Everywhere

Once you've focused in so intently on one topic that you'll be the only one there, start to structure your website around your personality. This way, as people read your articles and visit your site, they'll begin to feel like they're getting to know you.

By putting your picture on your website, you'll help readers associate your name and face. By using writing that's consistent everywhere, you'll strengthen the impression left by your articles.

And it's not just your website that should display your personality. Put your personality everywhere--on your business cards, in your press releases, on your voice mail message. Every contact someone has with you should help them get to know you a little better. Every contact must build on that consistent personality you're creating.

Define Your Style

The third step to building a personality train is to define your writing style. Write every article in the same way. Some writers develop a gimmick--maybe they always include a story about Aunt Bertha in their articles--while others take a more sophisticated approach.

You should develop this writing style however feels most

comfortable to you. By staying in your comfort zone, your writing will be much more authentic and appealing to your readers. Places to work on building your voice include choices about sentence length, depth of information covered, word choice, and use of metaphor.

Some writers may find they want to consistently use examples in their articles. Others may find they prefer telling dramatic stories. You might find you're most comfortable with short sentences.

Whatever your style, work to define and refine it. Think of the writing style as the paint on the train car. Paint all your train cars in the same color (even if it's tangerine) so that readers will be able to assemble your train and hitch it all to your locomotive.

Use an Invented Personality

What if, after going through all the steps, you still feel like you're not standing out enough?

Invent a personality.

An invented personality can take any shape or form. You can use a cartoon, a compilation of several people in your company, an office pet, or whatever you're comfortable with.

Won't That Make Us Look Bad?

Sure, there are matters of professionalism to consider.

Make sure your choices are appropriate for your audience. The younger or less formal your audience, the more leeway they're likely to give you.

Realistically, as long as the personality is well done and

has appeal, your audience is likely to enjoy it. Most people are receptive to whimsy. And, really, don't you think there are enough "serious" companies out there already?

Make Sure It's Relevant

When inventing a personality from scratch, it's tempting to give this person all types of fascinating mannerisms and quirks. Beware. Defining your characters with one or two specific characteristics is much more effective than listing dozens of interesting but not particularly telling details.

Your readers may be happy to add a dose of amusement to their days, but they will not be happy if they feel you've wasted their time. So, don't add character for character's sake. Rather, make the character an intrinsic part of the articles you write.

Specifically, if you're writing a newsletter for home buyers and invent Sam, the great-deal-finding hound, giving him a love of Sherlock Holmes mysteries makes sense; having him start each article with a story about a fire hydrant he's found around town, not so much.

Taking Personality to the Next Level

Once you've worked to construct a basic personality complete with what you look like, what you write about, and how you write it, you have two options for your train.

Start Another Route

You can take it to the next town--target a new market--and expand your audience. This is easiest to do if you focus on a specific industry as part of your profile. Then you can simply choose a new industry and follow the steps you took to build your first train.

If you choose this approach, be prepared for some extra work--you have to keep both trains maintained. But, if you choose your second focus wisely, you may find that each train serves as advertising for the other, easily making the extra work worth it.

Upgrade Your Train

Your other choice is to add extra features to your train--luxury upgrades like in-depth research reports. Your reports can be available only to clients, or you could make them more widely available.

The trick is, though, to not upgrade all your passengers. Rather, upgrade only those who express a genuine interest. Leaving a bit of mystery behind that curtain will pique your passengers' interest until they simply *must* know what you're hiding.

Perhaps the biggest benefit of offering these upgrades is how they'll get people talking. Soon, everyone will want to ride on your train because that's the only place they can get the full-course meal delivered straight to their cabin.

Where To Next?

Welcome aboard the personality train. Now that you've mastered the thinking behind successful articles, you're ready to get out there and start telling your stories.

Teaching you to tell stories is beyond the scope of this report, but I don't want to leave you stuck thinking you can't go any further with the concept. So, I've gathered the following resources that I think you'll find helpful in starting to tell your own stories.

And, remember, having a personality is enough of a first step. Once you've mastered it, then you're ready to start telling stories. Until then, just focus on painting your train cars—you can learn the step-by-step process of building those train cars yourself later.

Recommended Resources

The Story Factor: Inspiration, influence, and persuasion through the art of storytelling by Annette Simmons

45 Master Characters by Victoria Lynn Schmidt

Dynamic Characters by Nancy Kress

More Fabulous Resources

This free report was chock full of information, without the fluff. And that's precisely how all of our reports are—you get the easy-to-apply information you need, broken down into a system. All without tons of fluff.

Because you don't have time for fluff.

Check out the complete selection of products and resources we've carefully created for business owners and other newsletter publishers. You're sure to find the targeted resources you've been looking for. Visit <http://www.designdoodles.com> for more.

Need help writing?

The Write Exposure also provides custom newsletter writing and HTML design services. You'll find details at <http://www.designdoodles.com>.

About Jessica



Let's Play Ball!

Two years ago, Izzy (appros name meaning, “A Gift”) tumbled into Jessica's life. The yellow ball of fur (a Labrador puppy) chewed up her shoes before she even got a chance to take him home!

Once she did get him home, though, he left her shoes alone in favor of unstuffing every stuffed animal anyone has ever given him.

Want to get his attention? All you need is a tennis ball and he'll be your friend for life. At the moment, he's snoring (loudly) with his favorite purple ball under his chin.

At Home by the Sea

A native Californian, Jessica seldom left the Santa Barbara beaches. Now that she makes her home on the opposite coast, she's still trying to decide which is better: the predictability of hurricanes or the spontaneity of earthquakes. Also still under debate: big city restaurants and attractions or small town quiet.

Appendix

Once you've written a couple articles, how do you get them into circulation? There are three great approaches to leverage those articles into more exposure.

Joint Venturing

The most effective way to get your articles published is by establishing joint ventures with other publishers who have the same target market as your own. Contact these people personally and directly and ask them about swapping articles.

Email Lists

In order to submit articles, you'll need to first subscribe to the group. Familiarize yourself with the rules of each group before submitting.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/aageneral/>

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/article_announce/

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/article_announce_list/

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Free-Content/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Free-Reprint-Articles/>

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/netwrite-publish-announce/>

<http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/publishyourarticle/>
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/QC_Reprint_Articles/
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/submyourarticle/>

Article Submission Sites

The third best way to get your articles published is by submitting them at these hand-picked sites. Each of these sites has been selected for its effectiveness in getting your articles published.

<http://ezinearticles.com/>
<http://www.jogena.com/articles/content.htm>
<http://www.goarticles.com/>
<http://www.marketing-seek.com/index.php>
<http://www.netterweb.com/submit/>
<http://www.articlesbase.com/>
<http://www.article-hut.com/>
<http://submit-your-articles.com/>
<http://top7business.com/submit/>
<http://www.marketingsource.com/articles/submit>
<http://www.ideamarketers.com/>
<http://www.article99.com/>
<http://www.submyournewarticle.com/>
<http://www.article-hangout.com/>
<http://www.articledashboard.com/>
<http://www.stickyarticle.com/>

<http://www.articlesubmission.com/>

<http://www.postarticles.com/>

<http://www.articles-galore.com/>

<http://www.articletrader.com/>

http://www.articlecity.com/bulk_submit_articles.shtml

Article Submission Services

If you'd rather not do it yourself, there are a lot of services out there willing to do the submitting for you. Among those options are these three services.

<http://www.submyarticle.com/main.php>

<http://www.greenchair.net/article-submission.htm>

<http://thephantomwriters.com/>