



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Five Secrets of Opt-In Email

Do you scan email subject lines with your finger twitching over the "delete" button? Sure you do.

With all the well-deserved hype touting email marketing as the "the killer app," it's crucial to remember one thing: Content is still king. In order for your prospects to even think about opening a sales pitch, your initial offer must jolt them out of their coffee-wired state and into the here and now. Need help? These five writing secrets will help you create emails that get results:

Secret 1 - Beware of "cheesy" subject lines. We've all received "Did I see you last night?" email messages that simply scream "spam," and we've instantly deleted them. Make your subject line relevant to your promotion and include a benefit statement. "Save \$100 on personal coaching services" immediately tells your prospect what you're promoting and how much they'll save.

Secret 2 - Give your customers what they want. Prospects instantly want to know what's in it for them, and they won't wait long for the answer. Focus on the unique benefits of your product or service and clearly explain how your offer saves time, increases profits, and provides solutions. The more quickly your prospects understand the benefits of working with you, the sooner they'll surf your site.

Secret 3 - Get to the point. Sure, it's easy to wax poetic about your latest offer, but your prospects don't want to read a novel. You have a maximum of 250 words to make your point. If your readers have to scroll through pages of text, they'll drop-kick your email faster than you can say "Bill Gates."

Secret 4 - Give your customers a little guidance. Calls to action (such as "click here for more information," "browse our new selections today," or "e-mail us right now") jolt your prospect from reading into doing. Don't assume that your customers will know what to do next - tell them and use multiple hyperlinks to make it happen.

Secret 5 - Remember, customers are people too. Email marketing is more than a one-way announcement system - it's also a way for you to touch base with your customers. Ask for reader feedback (and respond to their email when they send it). Provide easy ways for them to forward your offers and unsubscribe. Your customers will appreciate the extra attention, and they'll remember you when they're ready to buy.