

# W3

**Wednesday  
Morning**

**Fax**

*from*

**The  
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Press**

## **10** secrets of to-the-point marketing

Ten years ago, marketing consultants (and brothers) Brad and Alan Antin distilled their selling wit and wisdom in a remarkable book, "Secrets From The Lost Art Of Common Sense Marketing." They recommend:

■ **Don't try to answer your own questions.**

Ask your customers. You'll avoid paying the high price of wishful thinking.

■ **Specify the benefit you offer.**

Weld it into all your promotional materials. AOL, for example, makes "it's easy" part of every ad.

■ **Stress your headline.**

"The headline," the Antins write, "is actually an ad for the ad."

■ **Spark customer action—not warm and fuzzy attitudes.**

Generally, the Antins say, image advertising is a waste of money. Good advertising is just salesmanship—multiplied.

■ **Do not assume that your sales prospects know all about your product.**

Most of them do not. That's why they snap up informative seminars, newsletters, and reports.

■ **"Reverse-risk" promotions pull in dollars.**

Consumer skepticism deters purchases. Guarantee satisfaction or money back—and dramatize your offer.

**"The June 30 spike in postage rates could drive Americans away from snail-mail and actually accelerate the U.S. Postal Service's financial crisis."**

*—Direct Marketing Association*

■ **Test.**

Use a detailed logbook to track each and every ad. Include a copy of your ad, its identifying code number, the date(s) it appeared, its page or time placement, and its results—numerical responses and dollar income. Then critically analyze what made your best ads work—and follow the winning factors in future advertising.

■ **Don't mess with winners.**

Many advertisers change productive advertising because they are afraid of boring their prospects. In fact, prospects are much less likely than advertisers to grow tired of an ad. When they do, you will recognize a fall-off in sales.

■ **Make customers feel special.**

Reward good customers with a free gift from time to time. And acknowledge purchases within 24 hours, with a "reassurance" thank-you note.

■ **Always pay attention to fast fulfillment.**

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