

What the home shopping networks can teach us about online marketing.

By Hans Klein

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Who would have thought that a TV network dedicated to selling products on a cable network could become a success?

Besides most people hate commercials... What would make them sit down, watch a shopping network and, ultimately, buy?

Simple... the networks applied principles that have been selling products for hundreds of years.

1. Get targeted prospect's attention. The networks have a matter of seconds to grab those people flipping the channels looking for something to watch.

- Their solution is an excited host and an attractive display.
- These images say a thousand words, but, on the internet, this task is quite daunting. That is why you must have an exciting headline to get people's attention, yet leave out the fancy graphics... they take too long to download, while a headline pops up on the screen in a matter of seconds...just like on the home shopping networks.

2. Handle the customer's objections. The first

thing the prospect sees, after his interest is perked, is the price at the bottom of the screen. He is now asking, "Is this product worth the price and will it meet my needs?" This is where the salesmen and women show their expert sales skills.

- Before they get on air, they have done their research and know potential customer's needs and objections.
- They know that for each need and objection you ignore, you may be missing out on a sale.
- This same concept can be applied to the internet. By writing to your customer in a way that he feels that you have the perfect product for him, you can make a sale.

3. Show the benefits and justify the sale with features. My favorite products to watch being sold are clothing. They have been selling the same types of clothes for years, but they are able to sell thousands and thousands of clothes that would never sell in a department store.

- They do this by citing benefits, like, "You will look beautiful, and you will receive lots of compliments." This gets the potential customer's attention, but they are still hesitant because they want to make sure they are opening up their pocketbook for a quality product.

So the sales person will say, "This shirt is different because it has original stripes, and it is a perfect fit." Now the customer will have the justification he needs to make the purchase.

- On the internet, this step is absolutely vital, and the customer must know why he should buy your product. Do this by making him picture what it would be like for him to use your product.

4. My favorite part... testimonials. On the home shopping network, they always have people calling in to explain why they made their purchase. The customers are doing this so they can justify their purchase to themselves. Everyone wants to make sure he has made the right purchase and so he calls in, so the sales person will say, "Yes, you were absolutely right, and everyone else should take your advice."

- I like the testimonials so much because I always have to laugh at the various reasons people will use to justify their purchase.

As I am writing this article and listening to QVC, a woman just called in and gave an extremely detailed explanation of why she purchases from QVC and not from department stores. The woman says she has been buying from QVC since the inception of the network and she likes it because she does not have to go outside to buy her clothes.

- This example shows that you need to give testimonials that allow prospects to find reasons to justify their purchase. People want to buy, but they are not going to, unless they have a reason.

All this information is just a touch of everything you can learn from the home shopping networks. So get tuned in!

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