

Case In Point: Get A Full-Page Magazine Ad Free

By Karon Thackston

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As you know, I am continually on the look out for innovative marketing ideas that bring a high return on investment. This one is truly creative! Thanks to Roosevelt Best of UK-based Naturally First and Astrology First for sharing his ingenuity – and his results – with us.

KARON: Hello Roosevelt. Thank you for taking the time to give us some details about this unusual (and highly effective) marketing idea.

ROOSEVELT: Good afternoon, Karon. Certainly – always a pleasure.

KARON: Tell me about what you're doing, and how this "package" works.

ROOSEVELT: Oh yes. It began approximately four years back. I was approached by "Woman's Own" [a British magazine]. They inquired as to whether I would be willing to make a free offer to their readers. It sounded like an idea with potential so I devised a way to make it worth my while! The layout was to be a full-page, editorial style reader offer. After a little negotiation, it was agreed that the magazine would use the first 1/4 of the ad space to promote the free offer, and I would use the remaining 3/4 for up selling items.

KARON: So, the magazine would give you a full page of advertising space free if you would provide something free to their readers. And you received 3/4 of the spread to offer paid, up sell items as well, right?

ROOSEVELT: Yes, exactly.

KARON: Did it work?

ROOSEVELT: Yes, it did. The response was excellent. However, I had some tweaking to do to make the up sell offer more appealing.

KARON: What was the free offer? Was it an expensive item?

ROOSEVELT: The free offer was a one-week's supply of a natural energy vitamin supplement I sold on one of my sites at <http://www.naturallyfirst.com> . It was valued at around £6.95

(approximately \$10.50US.)

KARON: Ahhh! So as long as the free offer holds value to the reader, it need not be extremely expensive? That's good to know. Now, how did you tweak the offer to perform better for you?

ROOSEVELT: I decided to change two aspects of the offer. I added several up sell items, and I narrowed the gap between the free offer and the first product offer. So, for example, the week's supply of vitamins was free, the first product up sell was just a few pounds more, the second product was just a few pounds above that, and the last offer was a "bundle" with a substantial discount off the cost of all products.

KARON: So rather like what the mobile phone companies do, right? They always tell you "You can add voicemail for only \$1.00 more, and you can add caller ID for just \$2.50 more" and so on?

ROOSEVELT: Quite right!

KARON: Now you are using this method and approaching other publications, aren't you? How do you get your offer to the right people?

ROOSEVELT: Yes, I do approach others with the offer and it works well. I generally contact the magazine or newspaper's Promotions Manager with a free offer. (Normally, they simply love the word free so it gets their attention.) I suggest that the publication could have the first quarter of the ad to talk about the free offer. The rest of the copy and space will be taken up with my images and up sell copy. To expedite the process and make sure that the offer and information will sell well, I provide the publication with my own copy and images. (Obviously, the copy is the critical element.) I also insist on seeing a proof before publication.

I suggest they include a "splash" on the cover announcing the free reader offer, and include it in the table of contents along with the page number. Keep in mind that the offer should appear to be an editorial, not an advertisement.

KARON: Sounds wonderful! Can you give us some data on the results you've achieved?

ROOSEVELT: Certainly. On a fairly recent offer I included in New Woman [British magazine with a circulation between 370,000-400,000] I used a free report from my Astrology First site at <http://www.astrology-first.com>. The free profile was valued at £5.95 (approx. \$9.50US). The free offers returned totaled around 9,500, and the up sells totaled about 5,200. You can view a sample offer (which Karon wrote the copy for, by the way) by clicking this link: <http://www.ktmarketing.com/images/NewWomanPDF.pdf>

KARON: How fantastic! That is over a 50% return. How wonderful for you! (And thank you for the mention wink.)

ROOSEVELT: Yes, quite! And this return is typical. Most offers – whether for Naturally First products or Astrology First products – pull equally well.

KARON: So with the investment of some time to prepare an offer and contact newspapers or magazines, and a little creative work to develop strong copy that presents your offer well, you can receive a free, full-page advertisement in major publications.

Very innovative, Roosevelt! I thank you so much for sharing this technique with us.

ROOSEVELT: You are most welcome, Karon. All the best! Goodbye from rainy London :)

Most buying decisions are emotional. Your ad copy should be, too! Let Karon write targeted copy and ezine articles for you. Visit her site at <http://www.ktmarketing.com> , or learn to write your own copy at <http://www.copywritingcourse.com> . Don't forget to subscribe to Karon's free ezine! join-businessessentials@lyris1.listenvoy.com

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