

Using Lift Notes to Give a Lift to Your Sales

By Will Newman

The various components of a direct-mail promotion are called "gates" ... because they bring prospective buyers into the sale through different points of entry. This is crucial, because many of your prospects don't start reading the package with the main sales letter.

Today, we're going to discuss one gate: the lift note (or lift letter). So-called because its purpose is to lift response.

Your Lift Note Does Double Duty

First, the lift note should provide the prospect who's already read the main letter with additional rationale for buying the product. It can restate your promise, reiterate some of the product's benefits, add a new benefit that's especially powerful (maybe your #2 benefit), or do all of these.

The second job of the lift letter is not so obvious. Since some prospects haven't yet read your main letter, your lift note must convince them to do so – perhaps by discussing the benefits and promise of your product in a kind of shortcut way) ... or by tantalizing them with a description of a particularly interesting premium.

And you have to do both of these things on the same note. You cannot decide that your lift note is only for prospects who've already read the main letter ... or only for those who haven't. You must write one letter to appeal to them all.

A good way to do this is to acknowledge that the lift note is doing double duty. Say something like, "If you've already read Malcolm Johnson's letter and want to start making your lawn the envy of your entire neighborhood, go to our easy-to-use acceptance form right now."

"But ... if you haven't yet read what the nation's top expert on lawn care has to say ... why don't you read his letter right now. When you do, you'll learn how you can get \$247 in lawn care products ... absolutely free!"

Make It Look Friendly

It's usually – though not always – best for the lift note to be printed on a piece of paper that's smaller than letter-sized paper (for example, 4" x 6" or 5" x 8"). But if need be, increase the paper size to keep the contents to two sides of one sheet of paper.

Make the note look informal, if that tone suits your product best. Instead of a full heading, you could use something like "From the Desk of Bart Starr." Or use an easy-to-read script font.

But use a more formal-looking lift letter if that fits your product. If you're selling an alternative health product and have a doctor's endorsement, you could use a full-sized letter with the doctor's letterhead.

Who "Writes" It?

The person who's supposedly writing the letter must be a real person. And you must get permission to use his or her name.

Generally, it's best to have someone other than the signer of the main letter "write" the lift note. Good candidates include a satisfied user (culled from testimonials). Or an outside expert. Or the owner of the product.

Take your time when writing the lift note – or constructing any of the other gates to bring your prospect in. Your effort will be rewarded with a stronger DM package ... and bigger sales.

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1 Response to "Using Lift Notes to Give a Lift to Your Sales"

I loved the fact that he included an example for us to follow. It makes the structure much more clear.

Charlotte W – over a year ago

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