

# The Movie Die Hard's Copywriting Lesson ...

## *By John Wood*

It's a very common plot device near the end of action movies ...

The good guy, after annihilating all the lesser bad guys, comes face to face with the main bad guy.

After a long and drawn-out battle, the hero eventually triumphs.

But after his victory, he lets his guard down a little. He celebrates inwardly to himself or with a loved one.

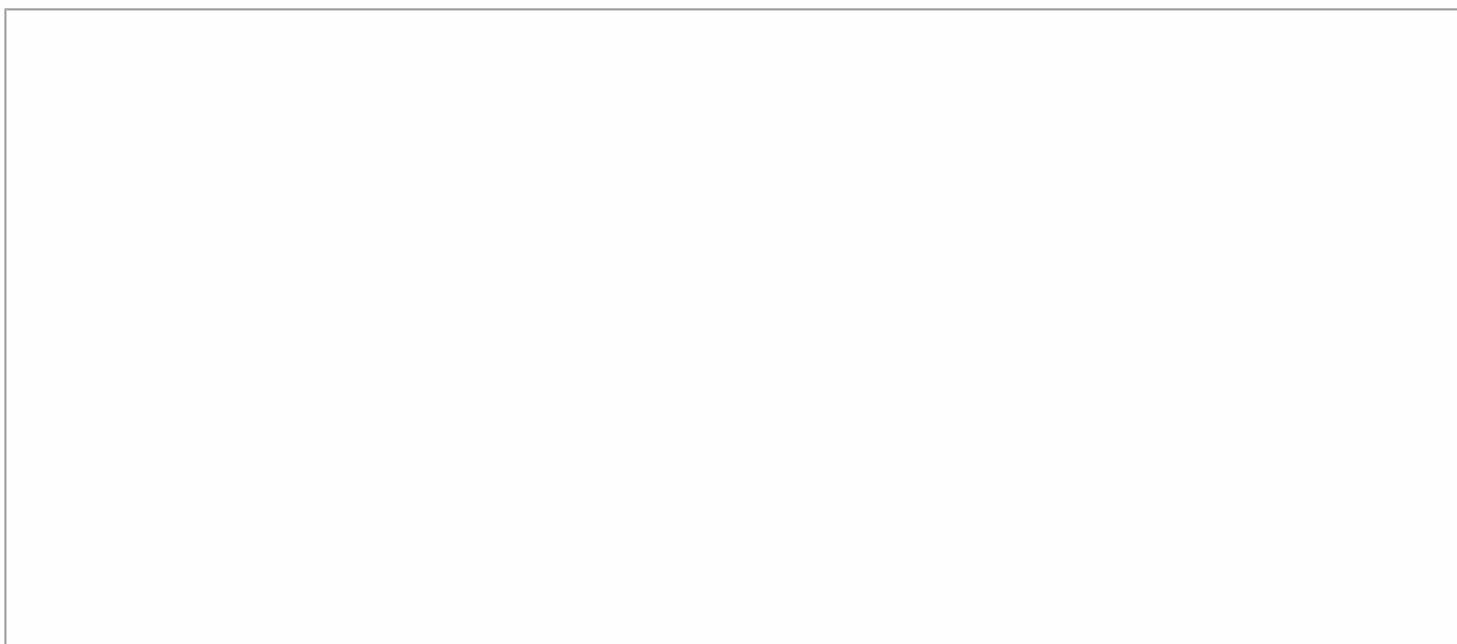
Then out of nowhere, the bad guy appears again to threaten the hero.

It turns out the evildoer wasn't dead after all. So our hero finishes him off for good in short order.

This plot device is more or less the equivalent of what's known as a "false close" in a sales letter.

Like in a movie, you think things are about to wrap up, but then your attention is diverted to something you weren't expecting. Instead of the writer asking you for the order, you are presented with another reason to buy the product or service being promoted.

Here is an example of a false close:



*Not only does it come with a 10-year warranty, but the Trigger 2000 is also one of the most affordable exercise machines on the market today.*

*Before I tell you how to send away for the Trigger 2000, I want to share a letter I received from a man name Stanley Kaiser, who lives in Vermont.*

*Stanley wrote that since his early teens, he's always been 50 to 100 pounds overweight.*

*He described his lifetime struggle with his weight. He'd always be the first one to try out the latest diet ... he joined countless gyms over the years ... he even considered liposuction.*

*Nothing worked.*

*Until his Trigger 2000 arrived at his door. Stanley says that the Trigger 2000's no-effort exercise feature, where you just strap yourself in, hit "Go," and the machine exercises your arms and legs for you, literally changed his life.*

*He is currently 180 pounds, which is the perfect weight for his height. He no longer lives in fear that six months to a year from now he will gain the weight back – like he did with so many diets. He recently met the girl of his dreams and got a promotion at work at twice the salary.*

*If you can relate to Stanley's story, the timing couldn't be better to experience the Trigger 2000 for yourself – an experience many of our clients call "exercise heaven."*

The false close in your sales letter serves three purposes:

- **It breaks up the linear nature of your sales letter** – In copywriting, there's something called the Secret of the Categorical Imperative. In a nutshell, it means if your reader can anticipate what's coming up next in your letter, he or she will recognize it and dismiss your letter. So while your reader may be expecting you to ask for the order, by using a false close, you surprise him, which keeps him guessing and keeps his interest.
- **It lets the reader off the hook** – Because the reader is expecting to be asked to part with his money soon, he has his guard up. He's expecting the close, and when it doesn't come, he feels a sense of relief and lets his guard down.
- **It gives the reader another reason to buy what you're promoting** – If you've written a good sales letter, the reader should be excited by the benefits in store for him and ready to buy what you're selling. So when you divert his attention to yet another (and unexpected) benefit or reason to purchase, it heightens his desire for your product.

I've read quite a few sales letters over the course of my copywriting career and many of them do not contain false closes. But they should because your sales letter's false close just might be the added push that turns your reader into a paying customer.

Do you use false closes when writing sales letters? Do you have any comments you'd like to share regarding false closes? If so, please comment below

I hope you've enjoyed this week's copywriting tips. But no matter how many tips you learn, your writing career won't get off the ground unless you have one key ingredient: enthusiasm! If you're looking to give your career and life an enthusiasm boost, check out my article "[16 Ways to Put More Enthusiasm in Your Work and Life](#)."

Published: February 24, 2012

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## 1 Response to "The Movie Die Hard's Copywriting Lesson..."

I agree the "false close" can be a good tool, but many use it to a fault. I know I often get bored by the length of a sales letter and skip paragraphs to get to the end and see the cost. If the cost isn't too great then I have been known to go back and see a few extra details.

*Guest (Margaret )* – over a year ago

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