

How To Make Your Print Advertising Successful (part 2)

Here's an example of a Direct Marketing advertisement.



You can click on http://www.flyingkite.co.uk/free_tutorials/images/dogstrust_large.pdf to enlarge it as a PDF.

This Dogs Trust advert was printed in the Daily Telegraph. The design is original but if you look closer you'll see it uses a number of tried-and-tested Direct Marketing and Copywriting techniques.

I found six “selling devices” on display within this advert.

How many can you spot?

Have a good look...

Finished?

Read on to see if you got the ones I found. Here are my six “selling devices” ...

1. Get Your Attention

Do you know this old marketing acronym? **A.I.D.A. – Attention, Interest, Desire and Action.** This advert immediately goes for the reader's attention by setting the design over a striking orange background.

The word "**Love**", which is big and bold, is also an attention grabber.

2. A Relevant Headline

"Small Dog Seeks Big Love" is a headline that treads a fine line between humour and heart-felt emotion. Not an easy task to do. But more importantly, the headline is **relevant** to what Dogs Trust are "selling".

This is a good example of how a direct headline doesn't have to be boring.

A quick tip about capital letters: a copywriter would never usually advocate the use of capital letters throughout a headline. CAPITAL LETTERS SLOW THE EYE DOWN AND CAN BE ANNOYING FOR SOME READERS. It's usually better to use Title Case.

3. Body Copy To Grab You From The Start

"Looking for love?" is a fun way to start the body copy and provides immediate interaction with the reader.

"For just £1 a week..." gets directly to the point of the advert – we want you to make a donation. There's no beating around the bush here.

"...you can sponsor an abandoned dog like me..." - at this point we realise it's actually the dog in the picture talking directly to us. By taking on the Point-of-View of the dog, the advert becomes more personal, heart-warming and emotive.

Remember: emotion always outpulls intellect.

4. Incentives To Respond

By offering additional incentives - a sponsor's certificate and updates on "your" dog - it helps push the reader into making a decision to donate.

5. A Clear Response Device

"Yes, I'd love to sponsor a dog". This is what I call a Direct Marketing cliché that works. "Yes, I'd love to..." has worked time and time again for many direct marketers. It's positive, upbeat and reader-focused. ("if it ain't

broke don't fix it" – to coin another cliché.)

Have you heard of the marketing acronym – **K.I.S.S.**? It means **Keep It Simple Stupid**. When creating a response device – always keep it simple.

The Dogs Trust advert has three very clear and simple ways to respond: a bold, large telephone number, a web address and, of course, a cut-out response device. Giving the reader control over their preferred medium of communication is a great way to boost response.

6. Taking Financial Control

In the bottom right-hand corner of the response form there is a special code. This is a unique number that will notify Dogs Trust as to which magazine the response-device came from. In this way, a definitive **Return On Investment** can be measured from this advert. That means that the people at Dogs Trust will always know if they're wasting money or making money on these adverts.

To learn more about Return On Investment, see my article [How to Market Your Small Business](#)

Well, there aren't many things in life that can't be improved. So here are some **ideas to improve this advert's response rate**:

1. Make the response device easier to cut out, so the outline fills the bottom of the page.
2. Test a similar advert that says "for just 15p per day" rather than the £1 per week. Research shown that a "seemingly" lower financial amount can get you a better response. (Think about it... which would you rather pay for a mobile phone? £359.68 a year or £29.99 a month?)
3. Test the advert with a white background. This will lose the striking attention of the orange background but it will make reading the copy easier.
4. Try using more copy and images. "What do I get in my sponsor a dog pack? What does an update look like?" And how about suggesting that this sponsorship could be used as a gift for friends and family.
5. Finally, try justified text over two columns for the body copy. Justified text and shorter lines have been proven in research^{1,2} to aid reading comprehension.

In part three of this series, I'll be looking at amazingly-good examples of Direct Marketing using modern printing technology. Happy Advertising!