

# PRspective

A publication of Mustain Consulting

Melissa Mustain, Editor

## Keeping It Real

By Melissa Mustain - President, Mustain Consulting

All of us small business owners are feeling the impact of our country's economic conditions. There are business and industry leaders that tell us things are looking up; and yet, there are others who tell us we're just at the beginning of a wild ride. So whom should we believe? Well, as industry experts ourselves, we know both can be true depending on what development cycle your business is currently experiencing. It's at this time that we need to be sure where our priorities lie and on what we need to continue to focus. Setting priorities and keeping our focus is essential to our business successes.

Many people who know me well know that it is easy for me to be distracted by the desire to "do good" and help others succeed. Recently, I've had to re-evaluate the priorities I had previously established for my business in order to continue experiencing growth and progress in those areas I have now chosen to provide service. As I evaluated the nature of my business and established new goals and priorities, I considered some key points in setting sensible priorities – whether professionally or personally. I thought I'd share them with you and perhaps invoke some thoughtful analysis for your growth and progress.

**Time is a primary priority.** Your own time is of great value. Organizing your schedule, your day, and your workspace to maximize efficient time consumption is vitally important for continued growth and progress. In these times, squeezing eleven dimes out of a dollar is not just magic, but a near necessity. When organizing your workspace, place everything you use regularly throughout the day close to you – including staplers, phones, paper clips, adding machines, writing utensils and scratch pads. This will cause fewer interruptions in your workflow because you don't have to get up from your desk to retrieve these things or to answer the phone.

Time efficiency is also a way to **make money a priority.** Reinvesting profits back into your business is required. These reinvestments, however, should be for something that will lead to more profits. Before you make a purchase or negotiate an agreement, be sure your actions will lead to a boost in the bottom line for you, your business, or your organization. This should be a priority in your personal life as well – be sure your actions move you toward achieving your goals.

**Your customers' time is also of great value.** You should devote the greatest amount of time on the customers who bring the greatest value to you, your business, or your organization. Keep in mind that the customers who bring the greatest value may not be the biggest spenders. Value is subjective in this case, and values such as loyalty or network are worthy considerations as well. It is also important to tactfully let people in your world who take up much of your time and add little value know that you are no longer available to them without time considerations.

**Maintaining healthy relationships – business or personal – is never a waste of time or money.** These relationships should always be based on trust. The foundations of your relationships should start with honesty. A good reputation will undoubtedly lead to increased profit as well as to personal growth.

Hard-working, loyal employees are recognized for their contributions. You recognize the value of your suppliers by paying them on time. You show how much you value your customers by extending the best prices possible for your goods or services. **Don't forget to give your best to those who help you move closer to your goals every day** – your loved ones. Let them know how much you value them as well. Most importantly, keep your eyes focused on what's most important to you, establish your priorities accordingly, and set your sights on the vision.

**Make it real, keep it real. Every day.**

## PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

*PRspective* is published on a bi-monthly schedule six times per calendar year. Back issues of *PRspective* are available on our website, [www.mustainconsulting.com](http://www.mustainconsulting.com).

Contact Editor Melissa Mustain, President of Mustain Consulting, to submit information or to inquire about future publications of *PRspective*. You can reach Melissa by sending an e-mail to [mmustain@frontiernet.net](mailto:mmustain@frontiernet.net) or by calling her at her home office studio 618-498-3209 or cellular at 618-789-4626.

Your questions and success stories are welcome, as are letters to the editor. Any submissions are subject to editing and appear at the discretion of the editor.

# Does Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Govern Your Life?

By Daiv Russell (<http://www.articlesnatch.com>)

Psychologist Abraham Maslow came up with a theory which described the hierarchy of human needs. Whether or not your product is essential to human survival, it will fall into one of the categories in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. If you know which of these needs you should market to, it will be that much easier.

The first tier of Maslow's hierarchy is that of physical needs. Without these, humans could not survive. These are things like oxygen, water, food, and shelter, and also homeostasis regulating activities like sleep. The hard part about selling a basic product or service that everyone needs is the immense competition from commoditization. For example, everyone needs to eat. However, what are you going to do to make your food appeal to more people than the burger joint across the street? Some of the solutions to this dilemma might be offering lower prices, tastier food, pleasant service, or a more hospitable eating area than the competition. Of course, the food you are offering should be such that it automatically becomes high on a customer's list of choices.

After that, the next stage of Maslow's hierarchy has to do with safety and security. Watch a few minutes of television and you will be inundated with advertisements for security companies, life insurance, and all manner of "safety nets." How would your product make your customers feel safer and more secure? Letting them know how your product can make them and their family safer gets to their root emotions and can be a main selling point.

Maslow's pyramid maintains that love and belonging is the third basic human need. Everyone can relate to the longing for intimacy, whether among friends, family members, or a significant other. If you own a personals web page or singles club, use this knowledge to your advantage. Make sure to play up the social benefits and increased levels of friendship they will gain by using your service, and cite user testimonials. Reading real peoples' positive feedback is a decision-maker for most potential customers.

Maslow also makes note in his hierarchy that esteem is another driving human need. Esteem really has two areas. One area is satisfied by receiving recognition, appreciation, rewards, or respect; the other area is self-esteem, which really requires a person to feel good about himself, be independent, and have a healthy sense of self-respect and self-confidence. I am reminded of a shampoo commercial in which the lead actress walks through an office building with the admiring eyes of many workers following her around. At the end, she walks into a board meeting and states that she doesn't even work for the company, and all the attention must be the result of her shampoo.

The ultimate level of the Maslow Hierarchy is that of self-actualization. This is the "be all that you can be" attitude that encourages individuals to strive and make an effort to be responsible and participatory citizens in the world today. So long as you don't go too far, you can get your customers to notice you by making it clear how you can satisfy their needs. It will be helpful if you know what means of psychological motivation are effective on you and on your target audience.

*About the Author: Daiv Russell is a marketing and management consultant with Envision Web Marketing.*



# Copy Critical in Ad Campaign

By Kaye Z. Marks – <http://www.articlesnatch.com>

Most people assume that effective advertising is based on the actual size of the advertisement and its flashiness. While these do help get your ad noticed, the actual copy and words that make up an ad are critical. Saying the right thing can bring customers into your store, whereas they might dismiss the ad as being irrelevant without accurate and substantial content that they find appealing. This is why it is critical to get your copy to stand out when you are running an advertising campaign, and there are a number of different ways to do this.

## Use Critical Words

Bringing attention to the critical words in your ad campaign is a great way to get noticed and draw customers into your business. Words that jump out of the ad gather attention as people pass by your shop windows or glance at your advertisements on television, billboards or even in the newspaper. Chances are if you catch the attention of your customer they will take the time to learn more, thus requiring them to read your entire ad or even visit your business.

## Use Commercial Color Printing

Using commercial color printing can be another excellent way to ensure advertising copy is effective in promoting your campaign. Using black and white flyers makes it difficult for the copy in your ads to stand out to consumers.

While it may save money now, it could prove costly later if the campaign fails and no customers seek out your services or products. If you employ commercial color printing in your advertising campaign, you can develop flyers, brochures, ads and other materials that look professional and contain copy that draws people in to learn more.

## Be Accurate

Of course, when developing copy for your advertising campaigns it is important that it is accurate. This is especially true if you are trying to project a professional image and seek a high-class clientele. Your copy should have correct grammar and spelling. If writing clear English is not one of your strengths, consider spending a little extra money to get a professional writer or advertising company to create the copy for your ad and ensure that it will look neat and professional to all customers.

Even though images, bright colors and animated objects may draw attention to your advertisements, the copy is the critical piece that has the potential to draw someone in and make them a customer of your business. The next time you prepare an ad campaign for your company take the time to ensure the copy for it is accurate and noticeable before putting it in front of prospective clients. Doing so will not only make your ad campaign as effective as possible, but it will also help your bottom line by increasing your profits.

*About the Author:*

*Kaye Z. Marks is an avid writer and follower of developments in commercial color printing industry and how these improvements can benefit small to medium-scale business.*



## Company Newsletters a Valuable Publicity Tool

By Joan Stewart, *The Publicity Hound* ([http://www.publicityhound.com/free\\_publicity/Articles/companynewsletter.html](http://www.publicityhound.com/free_publicity/Articles/companynewsletter.html))

When you distribute your company newsletter, how do your employees react? Do they drop what they're doing and read every word, then laugh hysterically about the funny photo on Page 2? Or do they throw it on a pile of junk on their desk, to be read whenever they get around to it?

Too many corporate newsletters are almost painful to read, some with entire front pages devoted to the newest widget. So many of these stories have dull headlines, poorly scanned photos, and copy more potent than a sleeping pill. Here are eight ways to liven up your newsletter and make it a key tool in your publicity campaign:

1. Write about your employees and include lots of good-quality photos, even if they're just small head shots. This makes employees feel special and helps with retention.
2. Make it fun. Recruit the most fun person from each department and ask them to write articles about their co-workers, or report on what their team is doing. The amateur reporters will look like stars. It will take work off the editor's back. And interest will probably soar. Fun newsletters make your company look like a fun place to work. And fun places to work get lots of ink and air time.
3. Include fresh news. Articles about a product that was created six months ago or an event that is ancient history make the newsletter stale. Be sure each issue includes at least one new announcement.
4. Have periodic contests. Print a brain-teaser, or ask employees to guess which artists wrote obscure songs from the fifties and sixties. You can also tie these contests to new products and services you are offering. Award great prizes. Be sure to send copies to your clients and let them enter, too.
5. Send your print newsletters to the media, preferably to the reporter who covers your industry. This is one of the best ways to feed ideas to syndicated columnists who write about your topic area, without pestering them with phone calls and e-mail messages. Newsletters can be a wonderful source for news tips and a great way to keep your name in front of reporters. Include a cover letter that pitches a specific story idea about your company.
6. Let reporters know if you publish an ezine, and ask their permission to put them on your mailing list.
7. Write about new trends in your industry. This flags reporters to interesting story ideas, and is valuable information for your own employees.
8. Each year, send a postcard to everyone on your mailing list and ask if they want to continue to receive your newsletter. If too many people ask to be removed, it might be a sign that you need to inject some life and excitement into it.

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**Editor's Note:** *Mustain Consulting offers professional copywriting, marketing, publicity, and office support services designed to meet all your business or organization's needs. Send us an email or call today!*



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