

Advertising, Sales and Marketing

Can your PowerPoint Presentation Rival TV Advertising?

by Sean D'Souza

Do you ever wonder why some PowerPoint Presentations are so much better than others? Why do some have amazing powers of persuasion, while others simply bore you to death? TV commercials use these marketing strategies to hold and fascinate their viewers. You can too, if you follow these tried and proven techniques.

Step 1: Kaboom Them Into Waking Up!

Ever noticed how most presentations start with, "Welcome to this presentation...blah, blah, blah." You don't see too many TV ads do that. They slam into you at a zillion miles an hour and make sure you're paying attention.

So How Do YOU Do That When You Don't Have A Moving Picture?

The trick is to start with something that's totally disconnected with the presentation. For instance, you could be selling cars yet you could start with, "One day in heaven..." That's a good wake up call for an audience that's half asleep.

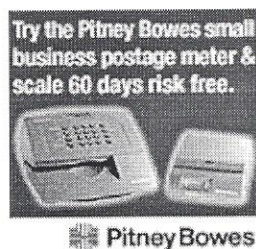
You're selling cars aren't you? What has heaven got to do with cars? The dissonance of the idea has forced their attention. Now that you've got their attention, you've got to gently massage your message into it. For example, you could simply suggest that God created man, woman, and then gave them a car.

And that is only the start.

Step 2: Always Tell A Story

Did you see Titanic, directed by James Cameron? Couldn't you tell that story with reasonable accuracy? Most people can. All our movie and great TV commercials are in a story format.

Do the same with your presentation. Think it through. Build up a story first, then work your presentation into it. It will not only give your presentation some focus (and storyline), but will make it easier for your audience to remember the sequence of what you're saying. For instance, where are Adam and Eve going in the car? Did they have a breakdown? How well does the air-conditioning work as they drive through the desert?



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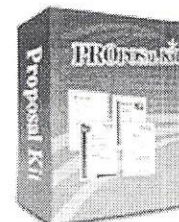
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Step 3: Use Suspense, Not Mystery

Alfred Hitchcock was a master of suspense. He told you who the murderer was right at the start. So you and every one in the audience knew who was going to kill whom. Everyone in the theatre knew, except the hero (or heroine), who was going to get killed.

And that drove you crazy.

How could they be so dumb? You all knew who the killer was. Why couldn't the hero see it? That's what kept you riveted to the screen the whole 90 minutes. If you establish the characters in your presentation early and work in an element of suspense, you can keep the audience on the edge of their seats.

Step 4: Don't Bore Them with Your Solutions. Bring Up the Problem!

Most communication harps languidly around solutions. You don't want to do that.

Look around you. People are obsessed with problems. They don't walk around all excited and happy. Most people walk around with their heads in their hands. When you bring up their particular problem they snap out of their slumber in a mighty hurry, and pay attention to what you're saying.

What you need to do first is bring up that problem -- and bring it up in all its glory! Paint a gory picture. You might want to read my article: [Is your solution your biggest problem?](#) Only after you have made them feel the pain, should you bring out the solution. The best TV commercials always make you feel the pain.

As they say, "No pain, no gain." Learn that, and use it.

Step 5: Reduce Risk

Why do people say, "I'd like to think about it?" The only reason is because you haven't reduced the risk to minus fifty. While there is risk, my brain is still doing a RAM check. If there is no risk, I've got nothing to lose.

So, how can you reduce risk? TV ads give money back guarantees, trial periods, free test drives. Surely you can be more imaginative than some ad guy.

Get that risk down low, like a limbo rocker. How low can you go?

Step 6: Let Your Audience Know They're Not Guinea Pigs

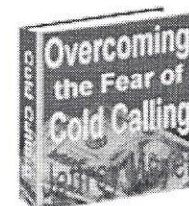
Hey! If you've got a product to sell, and you're not using testimonials, you're missing out big time. Even if the product is yet to be launched, you can have pre-launch tests. It all builds up expectations for your final pitch.

This is also another form of risk reduction. If someone else has used your product or service and fallen in love with it, you need to go into the nitty gritty of that love story.

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Step 7: Close the Sale!

I don't know how many times I've seen a wonderful presentation that takes me to cloud nine, and leaves me there wondering, how I'm going to get back to earth.

You've got to close the sale! Every presentation should end with a call to action and decision on the client's part. There are a zillion books and tapes on closing a sale out there. Brian Tracy has some amazing audio tapes on Winning Closing Techniques (www.nightingale.com). Learn from the pros, and turn a la dee dah presentation into a full blooded sale!

Step 8: Bring on a Quirky Finale!

Every movie and every ad does it. They wrap it up in a way you never expect.

There's nothing worse than building up expectations, answering all the questions, and then having a weak ending. Your end has to be like lightning -- unexpected, brief and brilliant! It will ensure that your product or service (or quarterly report for that matter) gets maximum attention.

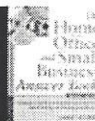
Otherwise you're just making a point with no power!

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