



PaperChain[®]

LINK & LEARN[®]

Drawing to a close

When you are shopping for a new vehicle, a sharp car salesperson will ask good questions to determine what kind of vehicle you want and need. Their next step will be to get you behind the wheel as soon as possible for a test drive. Once you are behind the wheel you will mentally take ownership of that shiny new car, long before the title is transferred. You will imagine your kids sitting quietly in the back, your spouse looking lovingly at you from the “shotgun” position and the look of envy in the eyes of your neighbors. With the new car smell filling your nostrils, you won’t be thinking of the price or a two-inch thick payment book. This is a successful technique we can borrow to close sales in our industry. In this article I will share a technique I call the “Copy-sheet Close” that can help your prospects visualize their ads and the benefits they will reap by advertising with you.

Like any good closing technique, the “Copy-sheet Close” is only as good as preparation for it in the body of the sales interview. It is critical to ask good probing questions to learn about the prospect’s business. You need to learn the “what” of their business—what they sell—what their hours are, etc. You also need to learn the “why” of their business—why people come to them—why they are better than the competition. You will find the “what” is easy to reveal and that many customers find the “why” much harder to express. I often ask a prospect these questions to extract this information from them:

“If I was in the market for a _____, why should I come to your business to get it?”

“Imagine I’m the toughest comparison shopper in the world and I had you and all your competitors sitting around a table and I said: ‘Tell me in one sentence why I should spend my money with you instead of these other guys. What would you tell me?’”

The first question will let you know what key benefits your prospect offers and the second will describe his/her primary competitive advantage. The second question is also a great way to develop a compelling headline.

Write down the information you collect on your notepad. As you uncover key points underline or circle them for future reference. Once you’ve collected the information, it’s time to re-cap with the client. As you do this, write the key points on another sheet of paper in the form of a rough thumbnail sketch ad. You don’t have to be Picasso, a very rough sketch will do. To illustrate this I’ll go through the process for the “Frank ‘n Stein” restaurant and six-pack shop.

You may download this and all issues of Link & Learn at www.paperchainnetwork.net



PaperChain®

LINK & LEARN®

After completing the probing:

Mr. Jones, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to share so much information about your business with me. You really do some great things here at Frank 'n Stein. Let me make sure I have everything down right. You told me that the main reason people come to you is because you have great food and the area's best selection of beers, right?

In fact you said that you have over 70 different beers. I have a couple of friends who are beer lovers, I'm sure they will want to check you out when they hear about your shop.

You also said it is important that you tell people about the quality of your food, the all beef hot dogs, the Angus burgers etc.

I agreed with you that you should promote your carryout service. People are really busy today and a lot of my advertisers have had great success pushing take-out orders.

I have to tell you, I really like the way you've named your specials, they're really clever and you offer some great deals.

Here is what I came up with to tell people about all the great things you offer...

THE BEST DOGS IN TOWN
THE BEST BEER IN THE WORLD
FRANK 'N STEIN

OVER 70 IMPORT & MICRO-BREW BEERS FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT

- 100% ALL BEEF HOT-DOGS
- BLACK ANGUS GRILL BURGERS
- COMPLETE SANDWICH MENU.
- LEGENDARY "FRANK" FRIES

IN A HURRY CALL AHEAD WE HAVE 6-PACKS & FOOD TO GO

000-000-0000
OPEN 7 DAYS - M-S 11-11 SUN-11-7

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| DOUBLE DOG DARE BUY 1 DOG GET 2ND FREE | DOG PACK 12 DOGS & SIX PACK TO GO ONLY \$00 | BULL-DOG 1 BLACK ANGUS BURGER & 1 BIG FRANK DOG ONLY |
|--|---|--|



PaperChain[®]

LINK & LEARN[®]

You'll notice I made your logo very prominent; this ties the ad to your sign out front and gives you instant recognition. Of course I'm no artist, but I wanted you to have an idea of how your ad would look. Did I miss anything?

Oh I'm sorry, your address is important. I was so wrapped up in describing your food I almost forgot. Is there anything else I missed?

Great, I think we could fit this all in a half page ad and I still have time to get it into the next issue.

Sure we could do a smaller ad if you'd like. We'll have to take some of the information about your business out...here take another look, what's not important for potential customers to know about your business?

I think that's a good decision, this is all good information; I'll have an artists proof tomorrow.

You'll notice when recapping the information for the ad I use words that reinforce the reason for advertising (*The main reason people come, important to tell people*) I also tell the customer how much I like the ad (clever specials), this will help the customer "fall in love" with the ad. I also worked in a success story when discussing the take-out specials to help the prospect visualize his future success with the ad. Referring to the layout as "your ad" also helps the customer take ownership of it.

I usually make a glaring omission in the ad sketch. This usually results in the customer telling me about the correction. By doing this they become involved in the process of building the ad, which also helps them take ownership.

By justifying and explaining the reasoning behind the ad layout it becomes very difficult for the customer to cut the ad back. If you sell space, the client will only see the lower cost when they cut back. If they are looking at the information, the ad copy, they are cutting back on the reasons people may come to them. Remember each line of a good ad represents a sector of the advertisers market. Perhaps I don't eat hot-dogs, so if we take out the line about "Black Angus Burgers" the ad loses all appeal to me. I've actually had situations where clients have wanted to put in additional copy and asked for a bigger ad.

I've used variations of this close for over twenty years. I believe it works better today than ever before because people are becoming more and more visually oriented. The "Copy-sheet Close" is a powerful technique for gaining advertisers commitment. It also has the collateral benefit of developing

You may download this and all issues of Link & Learn at www.paperchainnetwork.net



PaperChain[®]

LINK & LEARN[®]

strong ads that clearly communicate the customer's message. The salesperson benefits by having the ad layout done when they return to the office to turn in their paperwork.

Like many things in life, the "Copy-sheet Close" is much harder to describe than to perform. Rehearse it a few times with your co-workers and practice this sort of sketching with some of your existing ads. With just a little practice you'll quickly become a master at "drawing sales to a close."

This article was written by Jim Busch of the Pittsburgh Pennysaver.

Link & Learn is brought to you every month as part of PaperChain's[®] mission to provide educational material to the free paper publishers. Be sure to check out www.paperchainnetwork.net for past issues, electronic ready promotional ads and much more to help you remain competitive.

You may download this and all issues of Link & Learn at www.paperchainnetwork.net