

HUBBARD COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE
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Remimeo

Marketing Series 14

VIEWPOINT

Before successfully doing or okaying copy or materials for marketing purposes, one must learn the skill of assuming the viewpoint of the eventual reader or public who will be expected to react to it.

The essence of marketing is to create want and sell services or products. The only reason one writes copies or prints fliers or handouts, handbills or posters is just that.

Any pictorial or written material is done or written for the sole purpose of being viewed by the eventual consuming public.

To execute or authorize material which does not bring about the basic purpose of marketing is of course extravagant. It may even be destructive. It costs money to print and distribute material. So material which does not bring about the purpose of marketing in the public for which it is intended is a waste of money and time.

Further than that, unless one learns to assume the viewpoint of the eventual viewer of the copy, one can make quite destructive mistakes which, in addition to losses and waste in printing, actually destroy income for the organization by preventing people from wanting or trying to acquire the products or services.

One must learn to shift from the viewpoint of a copywriter or layout person to the beingness of the eventual viewer. In this way, one can estimate, quite accurately, the impression that will be made by the pictures and copy when they are released to that public.

A thetan is quite capable of momentarily shifting his identity to another identity and get an idea of the impressions or ideas that will occur to the identity shifted to. This skill is easily acquired. In a simpler sense, let us say one is writing a letter to Aunt Mamie. One can go on and on and write the letter from the viewpoint of self, which in this case let us say is Joe. And the letter can be sent off and totally bomb out because Joe had not the least concept of how Aunt Mamie would view his letter to her. He may be later dismayed to find out that Aunt Mamie now believes that he has taken to drink. Actually, all he put in the letter was that he had attended a lot of parties lately. Now, you could say that he would have to have an intimate idea of the character of Aunt Mamie before he could assume her viewpoint. But the truth of the matter is, Aunt Mamie is just a garden variety, unmarried, middle-aged person who is quite critical of the gay side of life. It isn't vital to know much about the character of Aunt Mamie in order to assume her viewpoint, but it helps. Joe is not writing this letter with the tools of surveys but he knows from family discussions that Aunt Mamie is a fairly straight-laced person. What he failed to do is read his

letter back from the viewpoint of Aunt Mamie. Had he done this, he would have seen that his glowing descriptions of parties he was going to lately and having a good time at would have registered an entirely incorrect impression that he had entered upon a career of debauchery.

So what impressions do people get when they read copy or see posters or are exposed to ads? They get the impressions from their own viewpoint, of course. These people, by and large, do not exercise the tech of assuming the viewpoint of the copywriter. That is not part of the requisite of watching TV or looking at billboards. It is the responsibility of the person conceiving, planning or executing or approving such copy or pictures to assume the audience viewpoint.

In this, one is helped by surveys. One has some idea of what his audience likes or doesn't like. The survey will permit him to get into agreement more quickly so as to get his message across. But a survey is not a substitute for assuming the audience viewpoint.

One can take a glowing, marvelous, beautiful, carefully executed piece of copy, design a marvelous, glowing, beautiful flier and then leave in it something which would be viewed totally incorrectly from the audience viewpoint. When the flier is issued, if it is not planned and done with the audience viewpoint in mind, don't be surprised if there is a sudden crash of stats when it's issued. The audience might get an entirely wrong impression out of it.

Let us give a case in point. Flag acquired new quarters as an addition to their already extensive quarters. Somebody wrote a poster and sent it through for approval and it came all the way along the line without anyone noticing that, when viewed from the audience viewpoint, it definitely stated that Flag had moved. This would have caused considerable consternation. But Flag hadn't moved. The message was that they were getting so much business that they had had to acquire new property quite in addition to their existing property and that they now were running an annex. And people also would have wondered "Is this 15 miles away from the service center?" and had to be told that it wasn't. But the person who ordered it, planned it, those who okayed and authorized it all missed the point that that poster all by itself could have cost Flag a half a million dollars or more in lost business and could have started a Black PR campaign of "See? They got chased out." And all of this because nobody anywhere along the line assumed the viewpoint of the audience and looked at the poster with a brand new, fresh eye to see what it actually was saying. Now, it didn't say anything destructive. It simply announced a new resort hotel, but it omitted to say that Flag was still there. It also omitted, in boldface, where it was located. This new resort hotel might have been conceived to have been in North Africa.

Another example is copy which said that the NED Course was now being offered to Class IV auditors, which meant that you had to have done the Class IV Course in order to do the NED Course.

One has to be aware of what impression the consuming public is going to get from any ad copy, picture, offering of any kind whatsoever.

There is more to it than just assuming the viewpoint. One has to assume the viewpoint as though he knows nothing whatsoever about the copy. One has to un-know everything he knows about the copy and assume the viewpoint without knowing anything about the copy and then look at it. It is, as I say, a skill. This skill is possessed by any writer worthy of the name. Actually, a trained writer can read one of his own stories from the viewpoint of a future reader without keeping anything that is going to be said in the next two words. Then he can get an estimate of exactly what the reader will think or see. Not only that, a well-trained writer can rewrite the whole thing and then turn around and not know what it was in the first place and what it was in the rewritten state and read it all over again, totally from the viewpoint of a future audience as though he knew nothing about it. An excellent composer can also listen to his own compositions as though he knew nothing about them and from the viewpoint of the eventual listening audience.

There is another aspect of this which is of interest. A lot of people who wish they could write stories or music or ad copy or do some creative work of this character are so solidly audience that they can never assume the viewpoint of the originating professional. In other words, they're too much audience in the first place to assume the creative role. This shows up when you ask such a person what about a piece of music. He answers you with an idiot answer from a professional viewpoint, "I like it". To a professional, that is an idiot answer. An audience is no more articulate about art forms or its technique than, "I like it. I don't like it." Really educated.

So for some who are trying to write marketing pieces or design or present or authorize them, one is already in an audience viewpoint and has never assumed the professional viewpoint in planning, writing or executing or approving. This shows up particularly on an approval line where the person on the approval line cannot say what is wrong with the piece or what has to be corrected about it but only can say, "I didn't like it". This is not very helpful.

So there are probably three stages one has to go through. One is to uneducate oneself as an audience, then take the viewpoint of a professional and do his job, and then reassume the viewpoint of an audience to see what they will think about it or like or not like it. And then one has to be enough of a technician or creative professional to fix it up so that it will be accepted or liked.

What we're examining here is simply the facility to shift from one viewpoint to another. It is also the facility to see something newly.

Unless this is mastered, people on marketing and promotional lines can actually now and then cause a catastrophe.

There are two ways a catastrophe can be caused in marketing. The first is to not write anything at all and leave something unmarketed and unpromoted. The second is to market it or promote it in such a way that the marketing is destructive of the offering.

Both of these are a matter of failure to assume a viewpoint. The person who isn't writing up or marketing anything at all has not assumed the viewpoint of a professional. A

professional marketing or copy or advertising man who would sit around without marketing anything would be so ashamed of himself he probably couldn't even look at himself in a mirror. He would cringe. He would think of himself as an incompetent boob. Because he wasn't producing anything, his morale would be in the basement. He would have nothing to be proud of. If he assumed the viewpoint of a professional and found he wasn't doing anything, he'd get busy. He'd learn the tools of his trade and start batting it out.

The second viewpoint, that of the eventual public for whom the piece is intended, has to be assumable at every step. Only then can one achieve marketing items that actually do create want in that exact public for which they are intended and sell products and services.

One can practice this. Just walk around for an hour or two being Joe the Ad Copywriter and think what he would think and do what he would do. And then open some magazines or walk through some stores and for a couple of hours, just be a middle-class public and think all the things about everything that is seen that that public would think and see. And then go through the same operation as a downstat bum and think and see all of things that a downstat bum would see. And then go around as Mr. Got-bucks and see all these things or even new and different things as Mr. Got-bucks would see them.

One can keep up such actions until one actually can do it in the flash of a second. It's actually quite fun. It gives one a brand new world. In fact, one can have a lot of new worlds - one for every public he assumes the viewpoint of. You would be utterly amazed.

The ability to do this is quite valuable. In fact, it is the difference between success and failure in marketing.

L. RON HUBBARD
FOUNDER

for the

BOARDS OF DIRECTORS
of the
CHURCHES OF SCIENTOLOGY

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