



What The "Personals" Ads Can Teach Us About Effective Advertising

Is any advertising more closely monitored by the advertiser than a "personals" ad? I don't believe so. If ever an advertiser wanted results, and wanted them now, this is it.

Personals ads demonstrate some of the best, and the worst, techniques in advertising. Let's look at these examples and see what we can apply to advertising in general.

1. Stop trying to reach everyone.

Personals ads immediately need to focus on prospects, and eliminate non-

prospects. All too often, business advertisers try to make their ads appeal to "everyone."

If you're a single woman posting in the personals, though, you don't want responses from everyone. Other women are probably of no interest to you. You likely don't want to hear from married men, either. If your objective is dating, it's pointless to attempt to reach people that aren't potential dates.

Trying to reach everyone is a fool's strategy in business, too. You probably don't have any

interest in people who can't afford what you have to sell. You also aren't likely to want to reach the idly curious. As a business your objective is to reach people who could become good customers.

Make your ads speak directly to those people.

2. Your Headline Is Critical.

Get your prospect's attention. Get it immediately. If you don't get your prospect's attention, will he even notice the rest of your ad?

"Relationship wanted" will never get as much attention as "North Texas filly looking for stable mate."

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Mower Shop Looking for \$\$ Rich Customers \$\$
Do you have the money we need? Spend it here so we can profit. Our service is friendly and fast — we'll say thank you for your purchase as we speed you out the door.

Marketplace Weather Forecast



February 2007
1st-3rd. A spell of generally fair, tranquil weather. **4th-7th.** Gusty winds. Snow parts of Nevada, Utah and northern Arizona. **8th-11th.** Drier, but noticeably colder. **12th-15th.** Showery and windy. **16th-19th.** Fair at first, then stormy weather develops. **20th-23rd.** Mostly fair weather returns. **24th-28th.** Milder, then some rain, over higher terrains snow, then clearing and colder.

February 2007
1st-3rd. Fair weather. **4th-7th.** Powerful storm pushes across Pacific Northwest, bringing heavy rain, strong winds to coast and valleys, and heavy snow—a foot or more—to highest terrain areas. **8th-11th.** Drier, but colder. **12th-15th.** Gusty winds, scattered showers. **16th-19th.** Fair initially, then turning very unsettled. **20th-23rd.** Mostly fair skies. **24th-28th.** Milder, with some rain showers; some snow over higher elevations.

Points of Interest:

- You can learn a lot about effective advertising from studying personal ads that work — or don't
- All Your Mower in Rosamond treats customers right
- Forty five rules ladies want men to follow all year long
- Valentines Day humor from the male perspective
- You've seen the quality of Bahco Pruning tools demonstrated at our schools, now sell the best at an even greater discount

What The "Personals" Ads Can Teach Us About Effective Advertising (cont.)

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Draw the business parallel. Your retail ad shouldn't say "We want your business." Instead, it should say "Everything you need to make your garden grow is waiting for you at Mineral Wells Hardware."

3. Make me want to learn more.

The objective of personals advertising is to find someone to date. The objective of mass media advertising is to find new customers for your business. In neither case will you benefit from skimping on the descriptions. "Single woman desires long term relationship" is less likely to get the attention of gentlemen reading the ads than is "Witty, flirtatious, and outgoing. I smile easily and enjoy laughing, am open-minded, honest, and like to talk about ideas. I would like to get to know a man who is confident of who he is and what he wants out of life. I'm single, have never been married, but like the idea of finding my soul mate."

By the same token, "Bedding plants in stock" is weak when compared to "Brighten your yard with salvia, iceplant, petunias, and pansies. Color your flower beds with all the hues of spring, ready to take home today from the Nolan River Nursery."

4. Tell potential customers what you give them that your competitors can't.

Nobody spends advertising dollars in hopes of being ignored, and yet every day business owners manage to fade into obscurity by making their ads sound exactly like other ads.

Consider an all-too-typical personals listing: "I love sunsets, long romantic walks by the ocean, and candlelight dinners." A woman who likes sunsets, romantic walks by the ocean, and candlelight dinners? No kidding. Is there a woman alive who doesn't like sunsets, long romantic walks by the ocean and

candlelight dinners?

By the same token, does there exist any business that doesn't offer helpful, courteous service and years of experience? Helpful courteous service doesn't make you special. It's the minimum entry-level behavior that customers expect.

Statements like "helpful, courteous service" make your ads fade into background as noise. Your store ad could just as well say that you "love sunsets and long romantic walks."

When your ads sound like everyone else's, you're not likely to be noticed, let alone be remembered.

5. Tell me what's in it for me.

If you met a stranger who opened the conversation with "I want to tell you all about myself," how much interest would you have in talking to that stranger?

Here's the personals ad which takes that posture: "I'm looking for a long term relationship. Honest men only. I'm tired of fakes and game players. And if you are looking for someone to hang on your every word, keep on looking. No mama's boys need apply."

Think she gets many replies?

No, I don't suppose so. The business equivalent is: "We need to sell one hundred cars to meet our sales goals, so we're going to be making the best deals we can remember. Limited to items in stock. Limit one per household. Not valid with other offers. You must take delivery

from dealer stock before close of business Friday."

"We, us, our." "We" again. Aren't we something? Just ask us. Bleh.

Stop talking about you, and what you want from me. Instead, start telling me why I should want to do business with you.

Here's a better example from the personals: "Would you like to spend some time with someone who's optimistic and fun to be around? I hope you're comfortable in jeans, you know what you want, and aren't afraid to show it. You'll find me open-minded, non-judgmental, and loyal."

Much more effective, isn't it? In the business community you'll get substantially better results when you drop the "we/us/our" verbiage, and replace it with "you."

"Have you ever noticed that you walk a little bit taller and you even feel better, when you know you look good? We promise that you'll turn heads when you've had your hair cut at the Singing Scissors Salon."

Use these five rules as a starting point. Study the personals, and take note of those that get your attention. The basic principles will make good business ads, too.

Good ads don't scream for attention, they seduce, whether their purpose is personal or business.

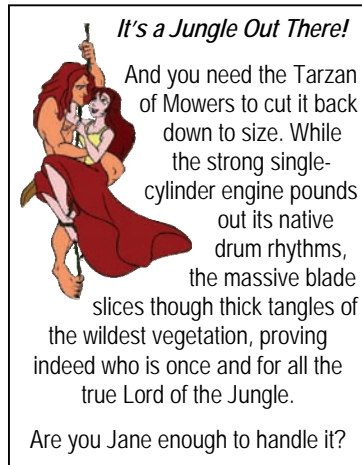
Submitted by:
Chuck McKay

This fine article and many more like it are available online to help you achieve your

advertising and marketing objectives at:

www.americansmallbusiness.com

Definitely a great roadside stop on the information superhighway.



All Your Mower in Rosamond Takes Good Care of Customers

When I returned to the office this week after doing a round of dealer update schools, I found a newspaper clipping on my desk originally appearing in the **Rosamond Tribune** celebrating **All Your Mower in Rosamond, CA**. Jerry and Misty are awfully good people, so I thought I'd share this article with you.

Articles like this in local newspapers or magazines lend a warmth and credibility unmatched by any paid advertising. Do you have opportunities like this in your own local marketplace?

All Your Mower

by: Robert Clifton "RC" Goodman Jr.

It's that even cut that you want when cutting grass. But, sometimes the ole mower just doesn't seem to be working properly; the grass looks more like the backend of a camel...humps and all!

All Your Mower located at 2501 Sierra Highway in Rosamond can help get that worn-out mower back in shape. They also

repair gas generators, weed eaters, chain saws (they make their own chainsaw blades), basically All Your Mower can repair just about any gas powered, air cooled engine on the market today.

Service is quick, and out-of-towners can expect same-day repairs. Having problems with your mini-bike? They repair most models in a jiffy.

So your push mower, weed eater, riding mower or generator is out-dated, and most likely repairs will be more than a good used unit will cost... no problem!

Used and refurbished equipment is on site and available for sale at reasonable prices.



All Your Mower, owned and operated by Jerry & Misty, recently relocated to Sierra Highway from their previous location on Diamond Street in Rosamond.

"We enjoy our work," Misty said. "It's our loyal customers that keep us in business. And, meeting people and making new friends is what it's all about."

Got a problem with bringing your non-working equipment to their shop... Again there's no problem. Pickup and delivery for local residents can be arranged. Now, that's top quality service you won't get at most small engine repair shops!

Stop by and chat with Jerry or Misty regarding your repair needs. You'll be glad you did.

Just in Time for Valentines — Women's 45 Rules For Men

Okay, guys. Treat your lady like an angel and she'll make your life heavenly.

1. Call.
2. Don't lie.
3. Never tape any of her body parts together.
4. If guys' night out is going to be fun, invite the girls.
5. The correct answer to "Do I look fat?" is never, ever "Yes."
6. Ditto for "Is she prettier than me?"
7. Victoria's Secret is good. Frederick's of Hollywood is bad.
8. Ordering for her is good. Telling her what she wants is bad.
9. Being attentive is good. Stalking is bad.
10. "Honey," "Darling," and "Sweetheart" are good. "Nag," "Lardbutt," and "Witch" are bad.
11. Talking is good. Shouting is bad. Slapping is a felony.
12. A grunt is seldom an acceptable answer to any question.
13. None of your ex-girlfriends was ever nicer, prettier, or better.
14. Her cooking is excellent.
15. That isn't an excuse for you to avoid cooking.
16. Dish soap is your friend.
17. Hat does not

equal shower, after-shave does not equal soap, and warm does not equal clean. 18. Buying her dinner does not equal foreplay. 19. Answering "Who was that on the phone?" with "Nobody" is never going to end that conversation.

20. Ditto for "Whose lipstick is this?" 21. Two words: clean socks. 22. Believe it or not, you're probably not more attractive when you're all sweaty. 23. Burping is not sexy. 24. You're wrong. 25. You're sorry. 26. She is probably less impressed by your discourse on your cool car than you think she is. 27. Ditto for your discourse on football. 28. Ditto for your ability to jump up and hit any awning in a single bound. 29. "Will you marry me?" is good. "Let's shack up together" is bad.

30. Don't assume PMS is the cause for every bad mood. 31. Don't assume PMS doesn't exist. 32. No means No. Yes means Yes. Silence could mean anything

she feels like at that particular moment in time, and it could change without notice. 33. Never let her walk anywhere alone after 11pm. 34. Chivalry and feminism are NOT mutually exclusive. 35. Pick her up at the airport. Don't whine about it, just do it. 36. If you want to break up with her, break up with her. Don't act like a complete jerk until she does it for you. 37. Don't tell her you love her if you don't. 38. Do tell her you love her if you do. Often. 39. Always, always suck up to her brother.

40. Think boxers. Silk boxers. 41. Remember Valentine's Day, and any cheesy "anniversary" she so names. 42. Don't try to change the way she dresses. 43. Her haircut is never bad. 44. Don't let your friends pick on her. 45. The rules are never fair. Accept this without question. That she has to go through labor while you sit in the waiting room isn't fair either, and it balances everything.



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Rick Groves,
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The Service Solution



**"Cut UP" the Competition with
BAHCO Professional Tools**



P160-75

List: \$92.99
Cost: 60.44

SPECIAL \$50.00

The P160 Series is specially designed as an orchard lopper and is also recommended for landscaping. Long and light aluminum handles with long reach for overhead cutting.

Specially designed cutting head and forged counter blade to stand the stress of intensive use.

**Pricing effective through
February 28, 2007**



P55-25-W

List: \$64.29
Cost: 41.79

SPECIAL \$24.16

The P55 Series of Shears are reliable for all types of hedges and sticky or resinous shrubs. Maintenance-free operation. Xylan coated blades for rust protection, less cutting friction and easier cleaning. Robust, oval steel handles. Stamped and fully hardened blade. The P55-25 has a straight blade and a partly serrated edge to cut branches up to 0.4".

Humor is, As Humor Does

Things not to say on your Valentine's date...

- ◆ I really don't like this restaurant that much, but I wanted to use this 2-for-1 coupon before it expired.
- ◆ People say I remind them of Eddie Haskell.
- ◆ I used to come here all the time with my ex.
- ◆ I never said you NEED a nose job. I just said it wouldn't hurt to consider it.
- ◆ Could you excuse me? My cat gets lonely if he doesn't hear my voice on the answering machine every hour.
- ◆ I like clay. It's mushy.
- ◆ I really feel that I've grown in the past few years. Used to be I wouldn't have given someone like you a second look.
- ◆ And I won that trophy in the interfraternity belching contest.

- ◆ I know you said you don't eat anything with a face. But a good butcher will cut that part off for you if you ask.
- ◆ It's been tough, but I've come to accept that most people I date just won't be as smart as I am. ☺

Excuses Why Men Forget Valentine's Day

- ◆ The Florist couldn't find your house, did you move?
- ◆ I sent a candygram. Someone must have eaten it.
- ◆ The Hallmark Store was closed, and I didn't want to send less than the best.
- ◆ I sent an e-mail card. You never got it? AOL must have messed up again!
- ◆ I left a message on your answering machine to meet me for dinner. Where were you?



- ◆ I didn't know you liked jewelry.
- ◆ I thought Saint Valentine's Day was a Catholic holy Day.
- ◆ I thought we would do something different this year.
- ◆ I thought it would mean I was making a commitment.
- ◆ You didn't remind me! ☺

Making it in Marriage

After my husband and I had a large argument we ended up not talking to each other for days. Finally, on the third day, he asked where one of his shirts was.

"Oh," I said, "now you're speaking to me."

He looked confused. "What are you talking about?" he asked.

"Haven't you noticed I haven't spoken to you for three days?" I challenged.

"No," he said. "I just thought we were getting along." ☺