

An Excerpt From...

# The Marketing Diary!

My 90-Day Apprenticeship with Marlon Sanders

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# Friday June 3, 2005

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## **Forget everything you ever knew about features and benefits -- why they're NOT POTENT ENOUGH**

Most people just talk about features and benefits. But let's take that one step further. To create the most engaging and the most "oh-man-I-really-gotta-buy-this-thing" sales messages, you need to add a third component – the advantage. So you have three – features, advantages, and benefits.

- 1) A feature regards something specific about your product, and what that thing is.
- 2) An advantage is what that feature does.
- 3) A benefit is what that feature does for your customer.

So let's say I was writing a bullet for a new truck. Here is what that bullet would look like with just the feature stated:

- *Our new truck has a carbon fiber bumper.*

See the feature? The carbon fiber bumper is what the feature **is**. Next let's add the advantage to that benefit:

- *Our new truck has a carbon fiber bumper, which lessens the weight of the truck by 300 pounds!*

So the truck has a carbon fiber bumper. What does that **do**? It lessens the weight of the truck by 300 pounds! – That is the advantage. Now let's look at adding the benefit:

- *Our new truck has a carbon fiber bumper, which lessens the weight of the truck by 300 pounds! This makes the truck handle way better and also allows it to get the best highway/city gas mileage of any other vehicle in its class (which ultimately saves you money)!*

Always explain every little nuance about your product, explain what it does, and explain what it will **do for your customer**. Always write as if you are writing to a 12-year-

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old. Don't ever expect them to deduce why and how a feature will benefit them on their own. You have to spell it out for them.

And remember: all that your customers care about is WIIFM – **“What's In It For Me?”**

By using convincing and effective FAB's, you can sell anything to anyone.

You can make anything look as if it's the greatest thing since sliced bread. Marlon told me that in order to get a job in sales, many people are asked to “sell” the hiring manager a pen – that is, a writing pen! It may sound silly, but if you're good you can do it.

Marlon gave me a 15 minute presentation on why I should buy a random pen he found. And it worked so well! By the end of the presentation I *needed* that pen! And yet the whole time, all he did was speak with FAB's – he would pick out a feature of the pen and, through his own personal experience, explain why and how this feature would benefit me.

“Hello Matt how are you doing today? Well listen, the reason I'm here today is to show you what I've discovered! This pen, this patented Marlon-mark pen is jammed to the hilt in features that make life easier for you.

Let me show you... First off we have the handy dandy grip-tronic hand grip on the pen that virtually eliminates hand fatigue and slippage. Have you ever been taking notes at a very important meeting and your hand just got so tired that you could no longer write? Well the patented Marlon-mark pen curbs that problem! Not only that, but there will be no more slipping and sliding during those vigorous note-taking sessions!

You see this clip Matt? Well, see here is the Nev-R Break pocket clip. Have you ever had a clip break off of your aver-

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age pen when you try to put it in your pocket? Well that's because they're made of metal. And metal will only bend so far before it snaps off. Well the Nev-R break pocket clip is made out of stretchable, manipulate-able plastic that will never break, even when under the most extreme pressure you can give it!

Now next I want you to notice the semi-transparent outer pen casing. This is my favorite part of the pen. Have you ever had an important phone call and grabbed the first pen you saw. And when you went to jot down some notes the pen was out of ink?! Now what are you going to do?! Well the patented Marlon-mark pen eliminates that problem by conveniently allowing you to see inside the pen so you can check and see how much ink is left. No more frantic running around and trying to find a pen that works! It's right there for you to see!"

"Now on the top of the pen we've got the E-Z-Clicker clicky-dealy on the top of the pen. This is so important. I used to always lose pen caps. Every time I turned around, I would lose another one. And you know what happens when you leave a pen too long without a cap? It dries up! And that winds up costing you money! But with the E-Z-Clicker clicky-dealy you can quickly and easily switch the pen from "use" mode to "non-use".

Not only that, but on the old traditional pens – when you lost a cap and tried to put the pen in your pocket, one of two things would happen – either:

- 1) the pen would leak out all over your fine slacks and cause you to have to buy new ones, or
- 2) The pen would poke a hole in your pocket. You would lose the pen, change, and even get your leg all marked up.

So do you see the value in this pen? It will save you hundreds over the years in pen-fees with these amazing features. So how many can I put you down for?"

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And that's the abridged version! But do you see how great the pen looks to the average person? And yet every pen in the world has these same features, but the key is to be the **FIRST** person to tell everyone how these features will benefit them.

It's really not as hard as all that. Just speak from personal experience. All of those things – ruining pants, poking holes, drying up pens without caps – all of those things happened to Marlon at some time in his life. He just regurgitated those tidbits and used them because he knew that they probably happened to me too in the past. Relating to your customers increases your affinity with them and helps to move the sale.

The point is that he truly made you feel that this was the greatest pen in existence! He had never tried to "sell" a pen before, but when he randomly grabbed a pen he immediately thought about all the problems that he has had in the past with certain pens and related them to the pen he was trying to sell to me.

Notice the use of the **FAB** technique for every feature. He stated each feature and how/why it will benefit YOU.

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A reservation that most people get when marketing info products on the net is "what right do I have to teach people?".

Sometimes it's a confidence issue. But regardless the reason, you have to put aside this objection. If there is something you know, there are many people willing to pay for that information.

*But what if I'm not an expert?*

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Then do some research! If you spend some time, say 30 minutes a day for a week or two, pretty soon you will know more than 95% people about that topic.

Then you can create an info product on that subject.

Thing is - you're saving people time. And they're willing to pay mucho dinero for that luxury. That's not a bad thing either. You're helping people. People want the information and are willing to pay a price to save the time, energy, trial, and error.

And just by creating that product, you mark yourself as an "expert". Think about it: if you see that so and so wrote a book on X topic, wouldn't you think that they MUST be an expert. I mean hey - they wrote a book! The same thing applies to other info products as well.

It's all about taking ACTION.

But most people are also accustomed to thinking that a book costs \$20. When you go to the book store, how much are the books? \$20? \$30? The perceived value of books is not very high.

But you can deliver the same information through a different media, and boom - problem solved.

**What other ways, besides books,  
can you deliver information?**

Teleseminars

Webinars

E-Courses

Home Study Courses

Audio

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Video

PowerPoint Presentations

Manuals (*instead of producing a book, put the same pages in a 3-ring binder. Now you've got a manual with higher perceived value!*)

Seminars

Monthly Newsletters

Private Sites

Coaching

Personal Email/Telephone Consultations

These should also give you ideas of how you can back-end your lead product. So no matter what you sell as your front-end product, think about what you could sell on the back-end.

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