

THE GARY HALBERT LETTER

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The Boron Letters - Chapter 9

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Dear Bond,

Well, kiddo, I don't exactly know what I'm going to write about today so what I am going to do is just keep putting words down on paper until I start to get some direction.

It occurs to me that I need to tell you that just because I told you how to pick the very best lists doesn't mean that the less responsive lists are not valuable. Never forget the coat-of-arms promotion. That was mailed (and very successfully) to names taken from the white pages of the telephone book.

I guess what I want to start on today is how to think about developing a mail order campaign. And, as I said earlier, from now on a good part of your working life should be spent reading the "SRDS" list book and newspapers and magazines that carry a lot of MO advertising.

Hey, by the way, I jogged the hill 4 times (non-stop) yesterday!

Well, anyway, I myself, have recently been thumbing through the "SRDS" book and an interesting idea has occurred to me. There is, as you shall see when you start using the book, a big section devoted to compiled lists. All compiled lists are, by the way, names and addresses of people or businesses or institutions or whatever that have something in common.

For example: brick layers, architects, chiropractors, churches, businesses who do a \$500,000 gross every year, business who do \$1,000,000 every year, YMCA's, police stations, veteran purchasing agents, etc., etc.

O.K., here's my idea: What if you took the following headline:

**How You Can
Make Extra Money**

and then you customize it to something like: "How Architects Can Make Extra Money" or "How Churches Can Make Extra Money" or "How Chiropractors Can Make Extra Money" etc., etc.

Now, let's say that we hire somebody to write a little report for us. The first part of the report tells about certain little-known techniques for making and investing money that anybody can use. The second part of the book would contain money making techniques that would uniquely apply to a particular group of people such as architects or chiropractors. (By the way, chiropractors are greedy so they would be one of my first targets!)

Anyhow, let's say our report is finished and so, now, we write a letter incorporating the idea that I previously expressed in those sample headlines. Perhaps the letter would start out like this:

Dr. Charles L. Davidson
1016 Ocean Ave.
Santa Monica, CA 90402

Dear Dr. Davidson,

I am writing to you because I have discovered a great new way for doctors of chiropractic to make a great deal of extra money.

It's really incredible and I am surprised no one has thought of it before.
Here's what it is all about: blah, blah, blah.

The letter would, of course, go on to describe the report and ask him to buy a copy.

Now, let's supposed we sell the report for \$20.00 and let us further suppose that when we mail our letters we find that we get a very modest 4% response.

Now for the numbers. I'm going to stop here a moment and check the "SRDS" and see how many bone snappers there are.

That took 4 minutes. There are more than 33,000 chiropractors we can mail to. Now, let's figure it will cost us \$400 per thousand (M) to mail out our letters. That's \$400 per M

x 33M or a total mail out cost of \$13,200. Now at a 4% response we will get 1,320 orders. Multiply 1,320 orders times \$20.00 per order and we will have total sales of \$26,400. When we subtract our mailing cost of \$13,200 from our sales revenue we have left \$13,200. Now we must also subtract our cost of filling the orders. Since it shouldn't cost more than \$4.00 apiece on the outside our total fulfillment cost will be \$4.00 per order times 1,320 orders or \$5,280.00. When we subtract this figure from the \$13,200 we have left we will be left with a net profit of \$9,920.00.

Not a fortune but not to be sneezed at either. Especially when you consider that what I have described is less than 30-days work.

But, if this idea actually works, we have something much more valuable than our \$9,920.00 profit. Yes indeed, my boy. You see, if this idea works what we have is a "winning formula"!

You see, my son, what we can do is keep the first section of our report the same and then customize the last half of the report (it will probably be more like the last 1/3) for different groups. Then, of course, the first line of our letter will talk about a great new way for plumbers to make extra money. Or architects. Or brick layers. Or preachers. Or dentists. Etc., etc.

Mucho bucks!

What'dya think of that? Right here before your eyes your old man has, during his lunch hour, come up with a brand new money maker!

No wonder they call me "The Legend."

Seriously, what I have just described seems to me like a good idea and, more importantly, it helps a little to illustrate, as I said earlier, how to think about mail order!

It also illustrates the important concept of customization. As a general rule, the more "custom tailored" your promotion is the more successful it will be.

For example, suppose you get a letter in the mail that says: "Dear Occupant, Here is news about a great new way to make money. Etc., etc., etc."

Mildly interesting. But now read this!

Dear Bond,

Here is a great new way for 16 year old kids to make money!

Blah, blah, blah, etc., etc., etc.

Quite a difference, right? Just imagine that you were to receive such a letter on or right after June 26. It sure would get your attention much more than the first letter, wouldn't it?

And notice this: The second letter is not only customized (at is for 16 year olds) it is also personalized because it refers to you by name.

The "Dear Bond" and the "16 year old kids" part of the letter really zeroes in on you, doesn't it?

Here's another example of customization. Suppose you were writing an ad about a book that tells how to buy real estate with no money down. Your headline might look something like this:

**How To Buy Real Estate
With No Money Down**

Now let's boogie. Try this on for size!

**How To Buy L.A. Real Estate
With No Money Down**

Much better, eh? As a matter of fact I did write an ad for such a book and I did customize the ad and it did work much better.

Know this: Ideas breed other ideas.

For example, it just occurred to me that in addition to offering chiropractors, plumbers and so on a customized way to make money, we could also offer them a customized way to buy real estate. And, in this case, perhaps the first line in our letter might be: "Dear Doctor X, Here's a unique way L.A. chiropractors can purchase California real estate with no money down. Etc., etc."

I Love You and Good Luck!

Dad