



# **The PsychoAnalysis Tests**

## **Three Test Instruments To Gain Valuable Insights Into Your Customer's Mind**

Developed by

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## The PsychoAnalysis Tests

Thank you for your interest in the PsychoAnalysis Tests developed by the Marketing Psychology Group / Scottsdale.

There are three tests, with the analysis of your company and industry combined in one test because the answers generated in the first section are carried over into the second section. They are called “*PsychoAnalysis*” tests because they probe your conscious and subconscious knowledge of your buyers’ thinking, emotions, and decision making.

### **PURPOSE:**

Most small business owners cannot afford professional survey or focus group testing which provides such valuable insights into buyer thinking. These Tests will allow you to gain many of the same valuable insights by tapping into what you know. For that reason, those who have a more intimate relationship with customers will derive the most benefit.

### **BENEFITS:**

Why do you need the tests? Because it is nearly impossible for most business owners to see their products or services, their company, and their industry through the eyes of their customers.

To prove this to yourself, look at some of the ads placed by small businesses in newspapers or sent to you in the mail. Most of them focus on the product or service sold, not the physical and emotional benefits it will give buyers. Yet those benefits are the REAL reason they buy!

It’s like owning a dress shop with a big display window -- the view from inside looking out is a lot different than from outside looking in. But it is that outside viewpoint which brings customers in the door.

These self-administered tests will help you look “outside in.” The answers can’t take the place of good consumer research, but they can help you see through your customers’ eyes. And that viewpoint will help you make much wiser marketing decisions.

### **HELP:**

You’ll find the two articles at the end of these test instruments will be helpful in understanding some of the steps and analysis required. You can also find more information at our Web site: <http://www.marketingpsychology.com>.

This Worksheet will help you understand more about your **customers** and what they really want.

## **Eight Steps to Improve Your Sales Using Buyer PsychoAnalysis**

Please follow these steps in order. Sufficient time and clear thinking are critical factors for best results.

**(1)** Get some paper and pencils and go somewhere quiet. You'll be doing some hard thinking for a while. Turn off your cell phone and pager if possible.

**(2) CUSTOMERS:** Think about YOUR customers. Write down all the specific groups of customers you would most like to have. You will probably have at least several groups. If you expect they have different buying motivations or interests, list them as different groups. Now give that group a descriptive label. It doesn't matter what as long as it is meaningful to you. Visualize them in your mind. Describe them in as much detail as you can. Include all the "demographic" variables you can, like their age, sex, income, education, location, family status, and so on.

**(3)** For each specific group of customers you have or you want, write that group's name at the top of a page. Then write down the answers to these questions: "When they patronize a business, any business, in your industry, what are their specific motives, what motivates them to give up their money, what motivations are they really trying to satisfy? In other words, what are their psychological

- (a) Needs?
- (b) Wants?
- (c) Desires?
- (d) Fears? (Both fears of the Status Quo and fears of Making a Mistake?)

You should have at least two or three answers to each category. Put yourself in their shoes, look at it through their eyes. For more on this topic, see the attached article.

**(4)** Now look at your answers in each category. Check off the two top "wants," "fears" and "desires" which you believe will be the most important for that set of buyers. Check off all the "needs" which you believe will be "make or break" for getting their business.

**(5)** Write down other groups and classes of individuals which might have a major impact on the thinking of each of your target buyer groups. For example, look at their professional groups, government regulations, proposed legislation, what others in their social status think about your industry, and so on. If you don't know, ask a few of your customers for guidance.

**(6)** For each group or class in #5, write down one or two key ways in which it will influence your target buyer group. Now go through the list and check off those which (a) you could counteract or use to your advantage in your marketing messages, and (b) you think are critical enough to your buyers to bother about.

**(7)** Write down all of the motivators which you checked in #4 and #6. As you do, try to put them in some rough order of importance. It doesn't have to be exact. Just put the MAJOR motivators at the top and the rest below them.

**(8)** Now write out a short paragraph describing WHY this set of buyers will act the way they will in making a buying decision. Begin by giving a short demographic description of them (location, age, income, sex, education, etc.) noting all the demographic variables that are relevant (remember, you are doing this for each different target buyer group you want.) Then launch into your analysis of their psychological motives using the checked motives from #9. When you're done you should have a fairly detailed summary of what this target group is really hoping to buy.

Keep all these sheets in a folder. You will use them again. They will also give you the key answers in making most every marketing decision about how to sell to them.

You may find it beneficial to go on to the next psychoanalysis test after taking a short break.

This Worksheet will help you understand more about your products and services, and why buyers REALLY want them.

## Eleven Steps to Increase Sales Using Product / Service PsychoAnalysis

Please follow these steps in order. Sufficient time and clear thinking are critical factors for best results.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

Go somewhere private where you won't be interrupted for at least an hour (this is important; you're going to be doing some heavy-duty introspective thinking). If you think it will help, you may want to bring along one or two other people with the expertise to help you arrive at more specific, accurate answers.

The best place to go is where you can see consumers "in their natural habitat," like a quiet restaurant, coffee shop, mall food court, library, etc. Even if they aren't your target consumers, they make you remember that real people like them are your buyers, not a hazy image in your mind. There's an old adage among African hunters that says, "If you plan to shoot a lion, you better first watch how he moves."

This is also true for marketing **business-to-business**. Remember, a "business" doesn't make purchases, a person does. And that person has a certain set of motivations. Some are corporate ("I can't exceed my budget") and some are personal ("I want to look good on my evaluation.") No matter whether the person is pushing a pencil or a shopping cart, buying decisions are made for one reason: to satisfy important human motivations. Good salesmen find out what those motives are, and show the purchasing agent how they can satisfy those motives. They know if they do that, they're more likely to get the sale, no matter whether they're selling janitorial service or office furniture.

Take a pad of paper, your basic brochures and sales letters. Take some pictures of your product or service and your company, and any other marketing materials you use, including examples of past performance.

The more specific your analysis of what you offer, the better. Specificity is the key to success. Take your time with each question. Please complete each question before going to the next one. Congratulations, you're starting down the right road to more sales!

Please carefully think about these questions, then write down your answers. Try to be specific. Try to avoid fuzzy thinking. Take your time!

**(1)** Think about your product or service and your company for a while. Visualize it in your mind. Imagine your customers. Now write down the features and benefits which you believe are the most important reasons why people buy a product or service from you. This answer will have two parts. First -- why do they buy, period. And Second -- why do they (or should they) buy YOURS?

Look at your sales materials for ideas. If you have several distinct target markets, write down the most important features for buyers in each market (for example, seniors and teens both wear jeans, but make their selection for different reasons and demand different styles. Realtors and contractors both buy laptops, but need different features.)

**(2)** Put each of your answers into one of these four categories of reasons: *Concrete, Abstract, Functional, PsychoSocial*. Review the attached article on "What Are You Really Selling" for details of these definitions. Don't worry about exactly which category to put each reason in, these categories are really there to help you think of more features, and help you to not overlook something important (sort of like the checklist pilots always go through before taking off.) Now put away your answers.

**(3)** Write down six products and services you use every day (such as an electric razor, perfume, taxi, subway, shoeshine, deodorant, etc.). Under each product or service, write down:

**(a)** why you use that type of product or service, and

**(b)** why you use that particular brand. Remember, you are trying to honestly figure out why you spend money for these products and services.

( Example: *Sure Deodorant -- I don't want to smell bad and offend others, or myself. Sure feels good because it goes on smooth, dry and not sticky. And it doesn't leave a white powdery stain on my clothes. It's got a nice, neutral smell, not flowery. It works, my underarms don't smell, and I don't worry about offending other people. It costs a little more than some other brands, but not as much as others. I like the easy-grip shape of the plastic that helps me not drop it when I'm sleepy in the mornings. )*

**(4)** Carefully review your answers and group them into four categories -- concrete, abstract, functional, or PsychoSocial. (*"Sure" Example: Concrete: dry, not sticky, moderately priced, doesn't stain; Abstract: smooth, feels good, doesn't smell flowery; Functional: easy-grip shape, it works; PsychoSocial: stops offensive smells, creates feeling of confidence.*)

Now underline the most important features for you, then rank them in order of importance to you (you may find that you need to group several related answers together. (For example, #1 "stops offensive smells / creates feeling of confidence." #2 "goes on smooth." #3 "dry, not sticky. #4: "moderate price."

Good job! This exercise was designed to show you how to look at a product or service through a buyer's eyes. That's the key to increasing your sales. You should

keep trying to analyze products with your consumer's eyes. I'll bet you didn't write down that you bought a product because it has a hard plastic case and a large roller ball, or can go from 0 to 60 in 10-seconds and had alloy wheels. That's all producer thinking, not consumer thinking

**Don't make the mistake of focusing on the features that are important or meaningful to you, but not to your buyers.**

**(5)** Now think about your product or service again, this time with your buyers' eyes, just like you looked at those six products and services above. Then answer the following questions:

**(a)** If your buyers were asked to do the exercise in #3 above and chose your company, what do you think they would write down? Look through their eyes and write down their answers.

**(b)** Carefully review your answers and group them into four categories -- concrete, abstract, functional, or PsychoSocial. Now underline the features that you believe your buyers would list as most important, then rank them in order of importance to your buyers. Think with your buyers' mind, see with your buyers' eyes!

**(c)** Take out the Buyer Analysis sheets you completed in Chapter Two. In a column on the left side of a page, write down the most important needs, wants, fears and desires you identified as motivating their purchases. Put a star by their four or five most important motivations. Leave several spaces between each entry. On the right side of the page, write down next to each buyer motivation one or more features of your product or service which can best satisfy that motivation. You can use the same feature to satisfy more than one motivation.

**(d)** Look at the starred motivations. Do you have a distinct advantage over your competitors on any of them? If so, circle the star. Now look at the others. Do you have a distinct advantage over your competitors on any of the remaining motivations? If so, put a check mark by each one.

**(e)** If the price of your product or service and all its competitors were fixed at the same amount, what reasons would you give buyers to select your company?

**(6)** Go back and review your answers to questions #1 and #2. Compare them with your answers in #5. Are the answers similar? Do they refer to similar features and benefits?

Rank their overall similarity by checking a blank on the scale below which best reflects their overall degree of similarity.

**ALMOST IDENTICAL** \_\_\_\_\_ **NOT SIMILAR**  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If you checked a number higher than 3, you've been looking at your product or service and your company through the wrong eyes. Should you review your sales materials to make them more alluring to your buyers' real motivations? You should strongly consider it.

**(7)** Write down six separate, single, abstract words which best describe your business. Abstract words are the opposite of concrete words. They create no solid picture in your mind. For example, "shiny" and "square" are concrete words. "Beautiful" and "dependable" are abstract words.

- |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|
| 1. | 3. | 5. |
| 2. | 4. | 6. |

**(8)** Now circle the words that satisfy some strong motive of your customers (look at your answers in 5# for ideas.) For example, a *Cadillac is Stylish, Well Made, Comfortable, Safe, Luxurious, and Expensive.*

If you didn't circle many words, then you are still looking at your product from the producer's viewpoint, not the buyer's viewpoint. Think again. When you have 6 circled words, try to make up a sentence directed at your buyers containing all these words. Practice on the "Cadillac" example above. Once you've completed a sentence for your product or service, think about using this sentence as a theme in your advertising.

**(9)** Based on your answers in #5 and #7, write a paragraph using bullet points to summarize the features of your product or service which will create an image in the minds of your target buyers that your company can best satisfy their key "hot button" motivations.

**(10)** Using the points in #9, write a one page letter to a specific customer you would like to have. Looking at your company through their eyes, persuasively explain what you offer and why they should buy from you. Remember, as you make your case, you are creating an overall perception of your company in their mind. Is it the image you want? Is it the most effective image to make the sale?

**(11)** Do any of the components of your business have some other application or use? Imagine that the bottom fell out of your market. Other than a doorstep or paperweight, could you "reinvent" your business to meet other needs / wants / fears / desires of some set of customers? What would those drives be? How could you satisfy them? Write down your answers to these questions, and imagine new streams of revenue which they may make possible.

This exercise should have given you a new perspective -- the customer's. A survey questionnaire filled out by your customers will give you a far better "reality check" about what is important to them. How close are you to seeing your product or service through their eyes?

Always remember, ***buying first takes place in the mind***. Buyers hearing any pitch always silently ask the same question, "*Why should I care? What's in it for me?*" If they ask you, what's the right answer?

Take a break before going on to the next test. You can even do it at another time.

This Worksheet will help you understand more about your company and industry, and what buyers REALLY think of them.

## **Eight Steps to Increase Sales Using Company and Industry PsychoAnalysis**

Please follow these steps in order. Sufficient time and clear thinking are critical factors for best results.

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

Go somewhere private where you won't be interrupted (this is important; you're going to be doing some heavy-duty introspective thinking). Take a pad of paper, your basic brochures and sales letters, and the other materials you took for the prior analysis. Bring along one or two other people if you need them. Please complete each question before going to the next one.

**(1)** Write down the features of your company which you believe are the most important reasons why people do business with you. Look at your sales materials for ideas. (For example, General Motors might select features like: *“an American company, one of the Big Three auto makers, reputation for quality, many dealerships within easy reach of most people-- both to buy cars and for auto service departments, availability of used cars, policy of taking cars in trade,”* and so on. Don't get your company confused with your product or service.)

**(2)** Put these items into one of the following four categories of reasons: *Concrete, Abstract, Functional, Social*. Don't get “hung up” on which categories to use. The important thing is that these categories will help you think of more features of your company you might otherwise overlook (like GM's PsychoSocial feature “people not embarrassed to drive a GM car.”) Now put away your answers.

**(3)** Write down the names of five companies you regularly do business with, either as a consumer or as a business. After each company, write down ...

**(a)** why you use that company

**(b)** why you don't use its top competitors. Remember, you are trying to honestly figure out why you give these companies your money.

Example: *Staples: "They deliver; they've got a huge selection of stuff; they give us credit; they've got a good return policy; our secretary is treated nice when she calls them."*

Put down as many reasons as you can think of in both (a) and (b).

**(4)** Now underline the most important features for you, then rank them in order of importance to you (you may find that you need to group several related answers together. (For example, #1 "huge selection." #2 "they deliver." #3 good return policy.

Good job! This exercise was designed to show you how to look at a your company through a buyer's eyes. That's the key to increasing your sales. You should keep trying to analyze other companies with your consumer's eyes. I'll bet you didn't write down that you traded with a company because it's stock price is high, or its CEO was featured in a newspaper story. That's competitor thinking, not consumer thinking

**Don't make the mistake of focusing on the features that are important or meaningful to you, but not to your buyers.**

**(5)** Now think about your company again, this time with your buyers' eyes, just like you looked at those other companies above. Then answer the following questions:

**(a)** If your buyers were asked to do the exercise in #3 above and chose your company, what do you think they would write down? Look through their eyes and write down their answers.

**(b)** Carefully review your answers and group them into four categories -- concrete, abstract, functional, or PsychoSocial. Now underline the features that you believe your buyers would list as most important about your company, then rank them in order of importance to your buyers. Think with your buyers' mind, see with your buyers' eyes!

**(c)** Take out the Buyer Analysis sheets you completed in Chapter Two. In a column on the left side of a page, write down the most important needs, wants, fears and desires you identified as motivating their purchases. Put a star by their four or five most important motivations. Leave several spaces between each entry. On the right side of the page, write down next to each buyer motivation any features of your company which can best satisfy that motivation. (For example, "Want feeling of security: Company in business for 20 years.") You can use the same feature to satisfy more than one motivation.

**(d)** Look at the starred motivations. Do you have a distinct advantage over your competitors on any of them? If so, circle the star. Now look at the others. Do you have a distinct advantage over your competitors on any of the remaining motivations? If so, put a check mark by each one.



**(8)** These questions focus on your **INDUSTRY**. Look at the forest, not your individual tree! Be brutally objective. Don't "candy-coat" your assessment, because you can be sure your customers aren't! You may wish to review the attached article "*What Are You Really Selling?*"

a) Write down at least six words or phrases which describe some positive feature or images of your industry FROM THE CONSUMER'S VIEWPOINT. (For example, "Home Furnishings Industry: provide way to beautify the home, provide products of good value, provides opportunity for people to enjoy home decorating, fills up space in people's homes with functional pieces thereby making their lives easier, retail stores provide jobs in community, etc.")

b) Circle the words or phrases which will be of most importance to YOUR target buyers. Write down a sentence or two which incorporates these ideas. Can you use that sentence in your promotional materials to trigger more buyer "hot button" motivations?

c) Write down at least six words or phrases which describe some negative features or images of your industry FROM THE CONSUMER'S VIEWPOINT. If you need an example, just imagine what you'd write down about the Tobacco Industry, or the political consulting industry.

d) Circle the negative words or phrases which you think will be of greatest concern to YOUR target customers. Write a short sentence that could counteract or mitigate the negative ideas in your target buyers' minds. (For example, "*The apartment industry is mostly a bunch of slumlords. People who live in apartments are lower class.*" Responsive sentence: "*Most professional landlords enforce a strict ethics policy which includes prompt repairs of problems. Over 1 in 3 Americans live in rental housing. Most are average, middle class American families.*"

This exercise should have given you a new perspective on your company and industry -- the customers'. How close are you to seeing your company and your industry through their eyes?

Always remember, **buying first takes place in the mind**. Buyers hearing any pitch always silently ask the same question, "*Why should I pick YOUR company?*" What's the right answer? Psychoanalyzing your company and industry are part of the way to find out.

## THE FINAL WORD

Taken together, the answers you have generated in taking these three PsychoAnalysis tests will give you enormous insights into why your customers buy (or don't buy!), and why they select your company's product or service over others.

There's an old joke about making rabbit stew. The recipe begins with "First catch a rabbit." Most small business owners face the same problem in trying to decide how to improve their marketing strategy. The work you have done here should have given you the key insights you need to make effective changes.

You'll find much more information about psychological marketing, online and offline, at our Web site <http://www.marketingpsychology.com>.

We encourage you to visit, read the articles, and sign up for our free, monthly "*Web Marketing Psychology Report*."

You will also find several helpful books there, including "101 Ways To Improve Your Business Web Site," "HIGH IMPACT: How You Can Write Advertising That Sells!" and "Successful Marketing for Small, Home-Based and Web Businesses."

Good Luck!

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. "Meeting Customer Needs is Not Enough"
2. "What Are You Really Selling?"

## **Meeting Customer Needs is Not Enough**

By Gary A. Witt, Ph.D.

Traditional marketing advises you to "Find a need and fill it." Using that approach to create your marketing strategy is too limiting and can even guide you into a disastrous plan. To design a well-focused marketing and advertising plan, you must first understand some basic facts about marketing psychology and buyer behavior.

Here is the most important fact you should understand: People do not want your product or service. They want answers to problems, solutions to needs, pathways to wants, a secret door to their heart's desires. They don't want to give you their money. If your advertising message assumes that they do, you aren't getting the full impact for your advertising dollar.

Gillette doesn't sell blades. It sells a clean shave. Revlon doesn't sell nail polish. It sells romance. Betty Crocker doesn't sell cake mix. It sells, "Gee, mom, this cake is great!" If these buyers could satisfy these needs, wants and desires without giving you their money, they would do it in a heartbeat. Understanding the real motivations of your buyers is the first step in creating a successful marketing strategy.

Each consumer has slightly different motivations. But groups of consumers share some common motivations. For example, one common motivation of parents is to help their children have a better life. Bowlers are motivated to have a perfect game. Many homeowners are motivated to create a house they are proud to show off to friends. It is those inner psychological motivations common to your target buyers that you must ferret out and use.

### **FOUR KINDS OF MOTIVATIONS**

There are four types of motivators which you should seek to discover in each segment of your customer base -- their Needs, Wants, Fears and Desires.

**NEEDS** are simply things that we think we must have. If we're hungry, we need some food. If we are sick, we need some medicine. If you must go to work, you need a car -- but you don't need a Lexus, any reliable car will satisfy this need. A Lexus would satisfy a different type of motivation, as described below. Buyers often unconsciously wrap up different motivations into one general motivating statement: "I've got to get a car." If you don't bother to unwrap this statement into its different, specific motivations, you will miss a golden opportunity to target your appeals.

**WANTS** are things which we would like, but which aren't really necessary. Wants are things which we can get along without. You may want an ice cream cone or the new Tom Clancy book, but you don't need them. You may want a new dress or tie, but you have a dozen perfectly good dresses or ties in your closet now. We sometimes convince ourselves that we "need" something, when it is really just a "want." Many purchases are made to satisfy this type of motivation. It is important to recognize the difference between a buyer's "needs" and "wants" because the resulting psychological stimulators used in your advertising are different.

**DESIRES** are like daydreams. They are things you hope for. Sally may wear a sexy perfume with the desire that a handsome man may ask her to dance and sweep her off her feet. John may buy a Corvette with the desire of feeling special and attracting admiring looks from beautiful women. Winning the lottery is a desire, as is making every traffic light on the drive to work. Desires are seldom met, but they are powerful motivators, which are usually kept to oneself. Taping into a potent desire is a vein of pure gold, as Chanel has shown for decades.

**FEARS** are things which we do not want to happen. There are two classes of Fears for the marketer: The fear of not doing anything, and the fear of making a choice. If a company is losing money, the boss fears the status quo, but also fears that he may select the wrong remedy and be even worse off.

Fears help us to make wise decisions by considering negative possibilities. But fears also hold us back from making decisions which could meet our needs, wants or desires. Sally wants to meet a new man, so she considers buying a new miniskirt and a halter top. She sees the outfit as a stimulus which could create the response she desires: "Hi, I'm Bob and you're gorgeous." But she also fears that her outfit could stimulate an unwanted response: "That woman looks like a tramp!" Like weights on two ends of a teeter-totter, her desires and fears compete to dominate Sally's final decision.

#### **A MENTAL BALANCING ACT**

Consumers mentally weigh their fears against their needs, wants and desires. Take shoes, for example. If a pair of shoes are just a little tight, but they exactly match a dress you're wearing to a party tonight, your **NEED** for those shoes will likely outweigh your fears, and you will buy them. If you just like the shoes, the fear of pain may be more in balance with your desire for them, leading you to think hard about both options. On the other hand, if the shoes are just plain tight, the fear of pain will likely outweigh everything else, and you'll put them back.

The key to a successful marketing plan lies in matching up your buyers' strongest needs, wants, desires and fears with your product's strongest attributes that can satisfy those motivations. Your advertising and other marketing media should stimulate those motivations in the buyer's mind, then promise that your product or service will satisfy them, no matter how minor or loosely related to your product they may seem to you.

Automotive engineers have never understood why the drive train specs don't sell more cars than the soft leather seats. But the Michelin tire people understand that family safety sells more tires than tread wear ratings. Advertising which sells the buyer emotional satisfaction instead of the product will pull customers in like a magnet.

(c) Gary Witt, 1998

## **WHAT ARE YOU REALLY SELLING?**

by Gary A. Witt, Ph.D.

knowing what you're selling is the first critical step in selling it. Sound simple? It ain't necessarily so.

You are not really selling a product or a service. Did you know that? Count yourself lucky -- because people don't want it anyway. And they sure don't want to pay you their hard-earned money for it.

What you are selling is Satisfaction, with a big capital S. Your product or service is merely a means to satisfy some set of motivations your customers currently have, like using a wrench to tighten a leaking faucet. Now if you sell lawnmowers, you might be thinking that your buyer's Satisfaction comes from having a machine which cuts grass well. If you believe that, you are only looking at the surface of the psychological Satisfaction your buyer craves -- and **YOU ARE LOSING SALES** because you are not looking deep enough into his mind

### **THE MOST EFFECTIVE MARKETING APPROACH**

The most effective marketing strategies plumb the depths to locate the hidden motivations of buyers. Remember when you were a teenager and starting to date? On Saturday night you went to the drive-in, paying good money to see a terrible movie, the scarier the better. But seeing the movie was not your motivation for giving up your money. That product was just the necessary means to an end. Having a place to be alone with your date in the dark was the true, inner motivation for your buying decision. Time and privacy were the hidden Satisfactions you were really buying. The product was just the way to get them

Knowing the true, and sometimes hidden, motivations of your buyers is the key to discovering what you are really selling, or, said more properly, what they are really buying. Drive-in owners didn't pay top dollar for films because they knew they weren't selling great entertainment. By discovering your buyers' key needs, wants, fears and desires, you can then highlight the features of your product or service which best satisfies those motivations. In other words, you have to look at life through your buyer's eyes.

Creating ads that captivate your buyer will lead to bigger sales and growth -- all because your ad basically makes this promise: "We will satisfy your true, inner motives if you buy from us."

Perfume ads are a great example. They don't talk about the smell, the bottle, or the value. They know they aren't selling needs, wants or fears -- they're selling desire, for romance, for closeness, for love. And that is exactly what the ads promise with their photos of a handsome man, an attractive woman, and a romantic place. You're practically back at the drive-in. No need to describe the perfume's features because they are irrelevant, just show readers its name.

I believe that every company, at its heart, is really in the business of selling perfume.

### **PROVIDING BUYER SATISFACTION**

There are many different ways a product or service can provide buyer satisfaction. Performing well is the most obvious. Being a bargain is another. Appearance can also give satisfaction -- one of the joys of owning a Jaguar is looking at it, and watching other people admire it.

The first step is to analyze your product from your customers' point of view. Remember, Gillette doesn't sell blades, it sells smooth shaves. 3M doesn't sell tape, it sells convenience and time. Voit doesn't sell exercise equipment, it sells health and appearance. Begin by analyzing your product or service along four lines: What are its . . .

**1) Concrete Features** -- These are the tangible things about a product that a buyer can see, hear, feel. A car's leather interior, front-wheel drive, and racy style are good examples of concrete attributes, as is a good price or loan terms.

**2) Abstract Features** -- These are the intangible things about a product that you can't see, hear or feel, but which exist nevertheless. You can't see "good quality." It is a conclusion derived from an overall evaluation of the product's features by you and others. But that image is a powerful selling tool. Abstract features of ice cream include "rich taste" and "fattening." A lustrous piece of tile may have an "expensive" look, while an attorney may have a reputation as a "tough guy."

**3) Functional Features** -- These are benefits created directly by the product. A car "handles well." A toothpaste "whitens teeth." A lending company gives "two-hour approvals." In each case, the benefit comes directly from the product or service to the buyer.

**4) Psychosocial Features** -- These are psychological benefits that come to the buyer indirectly. A car which produces admiring looks from others, a cookie mix which makes a boy tell his mother, "These are sooo good," or a new hairdo which makes you feel special are all Psychosocial features. These features are important because we want others to approve of us and what we have. It was psychosocial pressures more than anything else that drove many women away from natural fur products.

### **BRAND AND PRODUCT CLASS**

After doing this analysis of your product, you should also do the same analysis of your brand and your product class. Both can dramatically influence a buyer's thinking.

Your Brand (which may simply be your company or store name) can carry some positive or negative features for the consumer. For example, when some consumers look at the label on a bottle of Fantastik cleaner, they may see the Dow Chemical company name and recall some negative stories about Dow. Such associations may be enough to tilt consumers either for or against purchasing the product.

In addition, your product and brand are both colored by the good and bad features of its product class. For example, when Michael Jordan elevated the national popularity of professional basketball, other levels of basketball also benefited. That increased appeal was even enough to spur the formation of a women's professional basketball league, something which would probably never have happened without the high positive image Jordan created for the product class.

### **EXAMPLE**

Let's say you manage a fast food restaurant franchise. Let's do a product class analysis. What are some Concrete features of this class of business? Low price, clean but plain setting, young and bored employees, small variety of food, open late, food smell in dining area, good and well-lit parking, drive-through window.

What about the Abstract features? Fair quality food, usually fattening and high in cholesterol, middle class, generally safe, no "presentation" appeal, little perceived danger of food poisoning, fair value for the money.

Functional features? Fast service, easy in/easy out, can be eaten while driving, easy way to satisfy hunger.

Psychosocial features -- Easy way to please kids, acceptable place to be seen by others, could be eating in same area as people who appear dangerous or unwashed.

You can see even this perfunctory analysis helps to reveal some strong appeals which your particular restaurant may have for consumers simply because of the type of restaurant it is. It also reveals some of the image problems which you may need to address in your advertising in order to position your particular restaurant above the rest.

It is important for you to write down both the POSITIVE and NEGATIVE features and attributes of your product, brand, and product class. The positive features are what you have to build on. The negative features are what you must overcome.

By matching these features with features that buyers require to satisfy their needs, wants, fears, or desires, you have taken an important step toward creating the best possible focus for your advertising message.