



Donald's "Quote of the Month"

"You can take a two year course on 'advertising' but here's what you really need to know. **Advertising is creative bragging!** That's it! The question is, what compelling value are you delivering to every customer, every day that's actually worth bragging about?"

1. Four things to know before you spend a penny on advertising:

(time to read this article is about 60 seconds) For a printable version of this article, [click here](#).

Every year companies around the world spend 100's of millions of dollars on advertising...and much of it is completely wasted. Here are my four things you need to know before *you* spend a penny on advertising.

#1: First, you need to know what advertising is. Basically, "advertising is creative bragging."...that's it! Many companies think that they have an advertising problem when, in fact, what they really have is a fundamental value problem. They aren't doing anything worth bragging about. They deliver no compelling value that will "grab" their target customers, clearly differentiate them from their competitors and grow their bottom line.

Remember, first you get really good...and then you "brag". Don't brag and then try to figure out how you're going to pull it off!

#2: When you're **delivering compelling functional, emotional and financial value** to well understood target customers, the process of creating effective advertising is actually pretty easy. But, if you don't know...

1. Who your target customers are,
2. What life is really like for them and what they really value,
3. How best to reach them...and,
4. What your compelling message will be,

...you're not ready to spend a penny on advertising.

#3: Don't lie! People aren't stupid. For almost a year there was, in the Toronto Airport, a big backlit ad for a chain of mediocre hotels that said, "*You won't find any nicer hotels in Canada.*" This is a lie...a big lie...and anyone who has ever stayed in one of their hotels knows it.

By the way, over-promising and under-delivering *is* lying.

#4: Your most **powerful and cost-effective advertising** is the enthusiastic recommendation of delighted customers!

People love "showing off" when they find a wonderful product, service, restaurant, lawyer, accountant, hair stylist, etc. It makes them a "big shot" with their friends. Plant the seed by asking delighted customers to recommend you. Tell them "*You'll be a hero...your friends will love you!*"

Advertising only works if what you say about yourself is congruent with what "others" are saying about you. So, if you're saying that you're the best while previous customers, the media or respected authorities are saying that you're not...you're wasting your money.

Advertising is so expensive that it only makes economic sense when you're good enough to achieve "leverage". "Leverage" occurs when the value and experience that you actually deliver is so wonderful that every new customer that your advertising attracts enthusiastically recommends you to at least four other people! If you're not good enough to achieve "leverage" you can't afford to advertise!

So, are you ready to spend big money on advertising...or, realistically, do you have some work to do first?

2. The Christmas Tree Man:

(time to read this article is about 60 seconds)

For a printable version of this article, [click here](#).

Note: We've always included this wonderful and true story about "The Christmas Tree Man" in our December Newsletters. It's definitely worth reading...or re-reading!

I've often spoken to clients about the danger of "judging" customers by how they're dressed or by their general appearance. Back in my days as a retailer of ladies fashions and gifts, I learned a powerful and moving lesson from "The Christmas Tree Man".

Our staff came to me one day to express concern about an unshaven, disheveled and generally unwashed gentleman who kept coming into our store. As he shuffled through our ladies clothing and gift departments he would glance out the window every few minutes and then, sometimes, he would rush out the door empty-handed. This process was repeated several times each day...sometimes resulting in a purchase and sometimes in yet another mysterious disappearance.

When he did buy he always paid cash from a huge roll of bills with an old elastic band wound twice around it. But mostly he would look out the window, then rush out the door...and this strange behavior was spooking our staff.

When they started making some very unflattering assumptions about this unusual character I assured them that there was probably a logical explanation and I promised to chat with him on his next visit.

Sure enough, a few hours later he reappeared. I approached him, explaining that our staff was quite intrigued by his mysterious comings and goings. "Oh", he said, *"I'm the Christmas tree man. That's my Christmas tree lot just down the road with the little house trailer. I grow the trees on my farm up north, you know, and then I come down here for three weeks each year to sell them."*

"I work all alone so I have no time off to buy gifts and I don't get back home until well after midnight on Christmas Eve. So, whenever I have a few minutes, I rush up here to shop. I really love your store. You have wonderful things and every day I choose a few gifts for the ladies on my list."

"But you keep looking out the window." I said. "Oh," he replied, "I'm just checking to see if anyone has pulled into my lot to buy a tree. And if they have, I've got to rush back before they leave, or I won't get the business. You can't replant those trees you know. Once they're cut, they're cut."

"By the way" he said, "I know that I don't look like your usual customer. In fact, I probably look a bit scary and I guess I don't smell too good either. I don't have much more than a bed and a stove in my little trailer. No place to wash up. There's not a lot of money in real Christmas trees anymore, you know. It's kind of sad. But your staff, they're so wonderful. They treat me with respect and I really appreciate that!"

The Christmas tree man spent almost \$3000 in our store over a three-week period. He came and he went, he came and he went, day after day, always looking out the window, sometimes rushing to serve a customer...and at the end, on Christmas Eve, before he left for home, he brought each of us a real Christmas tree!

3. Three proven steps for promoting your business...from a sex therapist:

(time to read this article is about 90 seconds) For a printable version of this article, [click here](#).

It has often been said that sex sells and that the enthusiastic recommendation of delighted customers is the most effective way to grow your business. But Dr. Guy Grenier, a psychologist who specializes in human sexuality in London Ontario, has found that no matter how delighted his clients might be with the improvement in their sexual relationships, they're reluctant to tell others about him. "When you have a sexual problem, that's not something you talk about around the water cooler.", says Dr. Grenier.

So, how has he promoted his business to become *the* high profile trusted authority in his market? Here are the three proactive steps that Dr. Grenier has taken to brand himself and grow his business...

Step 1: He **writes** a weekly column for *London This Week Magazine*. He also writes articles for a variety of other publications.

Writing interesting, content-rich articles for **newspapers** and consumer or industry **magazines** is one of the most effective ways to position yourself as a high-profile "expert". But, before you start writing articles, do a reality check...are you a true expert? Do you know 10, 20 or 100 times as much about whatever you do than your target customers? If not, what commitment will you make to become a true expert?

Then, determine what information your target customers need to know. What are they confused about? What innovative thinking, new technology or future trends must they be aware of to succeed in their business, or their lives?

Next, determine which publications will best reach your target customers? Contact those publications, introduce yourself and offer to send them a few sample articles. Offer to be a regular or periodic contributor. If you're an expert but not a great writer...no problem. You can hire a free-lance editor, an English teacher from your local high school or an English major or journalism student from a local college to help you. Just remember to have a distinct style or personality to your writing that's interesting to your readers and congruent with who you are.

Now here's the neat part...the media are like sheep. Once you're featured in any one publication or any of the electronic media, other media will be after you...and together, they can make you "famous"

Also, you can create your own media. You can create a high-content **Website** featuring your articles, facts and tips along with information about your products and services, including, if appropriate, an online store. Creating a great Website is not a job for amateurs. Get a Web Designer with a proven track record and remember here too to be clear about your style and personality. This is all part of branding yourself and you need to be clear what your "brand personality" will be.

In addition to your Website, you can create your own **Newsletter**. It can be free or available by paid subscription. It can be printed and mailed or sent electronically across the world in a flash. It can be weekly, monthly or quarterly depending on your type of business. What it *must* be is valuable and interesting!

Step 2: Dr. Grenier **teaches** a course on human sexuality at the University of Western Ontario, he **trains** high school teachers about sexual issues pertaining to teens and he **speaks** at symposiums for health care professionals.

How could you promote your business and position yourself as the caring expert by sharing your expert knowledge with interested groups and prospective clients? What schools or educational events could you speak at? Who needs training that you could provide? What clubs, conferences, industry events or consumer shows could you speak at?

For example, I've often suggested to Financial Planners that they should approach the folks who run Bridal Shows in their area and offer to run daily Seminars on "How to get your marriage off on the right financial footing!" Or you could call it, "Love blooms when your money grows...7 things you need to know to get your marriage and your money off to a good start!". Then get up in front of all those starry-eyed young couples

and give them the 'straight goods' on what they really need to know. Weeks before the event invite the media folks who are covering the Bridal Show to attend your seminar and perhaps they'll do a feature article on you or put you on the 11 o'clock news.

Step 3: Finally, Dr. Grenier regularly **appears on radio and TV** shows to discuss sexuality and intimate relations. This incredible free exposure has resulted from all of his writing, teaching, training and speaking. It's a total proactive initiative that requires first that he be a true expert and then that he commit the time to give back, to share his knowledge and to get "famous" in his market.

Do you know who the radio and TV on-air people and behind-the-scenes producers are in your market? More importantly, do they know who you are and how you can be helpful?

Would "famous" be good for *your* business? What will you commit to do, starting right now, to put these three simple steps to work for you and your bottom line?

4. Cooper's 'almost famous' Chowder that you really should try:

(time to read this section is about one minute) For a printable version of this recipe, [click here](#).

This is the perfect time of year to enjoy a large bowl of thick and creamy chowder. Below is my recipe for an absolutely fabulous **Scallop Chowder** that I make for family and friends every year at this time.

We were in Cape Cod and Nantucket a few years ago and in a week of "chowder chasing", we didn't find one that came even close. A **printable version of this amazing recipe** can be found on our website on the Free Articles page under "Neat Stuff". Try it and let us know what you think!

Warning! If you hate seafood, this chowder is so good it could change your mind!

If you're on a budget, replace half the scallops with a firm fish like cod or haddock, and if you're allergic to scallops, use fish only. If you want to "upgrade" your chowder to impress your friends, add some shrimp or lobster. Sometimes I've also added some fresh or dried Rosemary and Thyme just as I'm ready to bring the mixture to a boil near the end. If you like your chowder with a bit of a "bite", add a little Cayenne pepper.

Note: This is a "BIG" batch of soup! It makes about 20 servings, which means you can give some to special friends, or hog it all for yourself and be happy for days! Of course you can also cut the recipe in half.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 lbs large scallops
- 1/2 lb. bacon
- 1/4 cup butter
- 10 cups potatoes
- 3 cups onion
- 2 cups celery
- 1/4 cup white vinegar
- 1 quart milk
- 1 quart light cream
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 3 teaspoons salt

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COOPER'S SCALLOP CHOWDER:

Peel and cube potatoes into ¼ inch cubes. Dice onions and celery into ¼ inch pieces. Halfway through the peeling and dicing process, start cooking the bacon over low heat. Fry slowly until crisp, using the butter to obtain as much liquid fat as possible. When the bacon is crisp, separate the meat and the liquid fat and set both aside.

Put potatoes, onion and celery in a large pot with 6 cups of water, salt, vinegar and the fat from the bacon. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes at a boil.

Cut large scallops into about four pieces and dice the bacon pieces.

When the vegetables are cooked, put 6 cups in the blender and puree them. Add the puree back in with the vegetables. Add the diced scallops, bacon pieces, cream, milk (set aside 1/2 cup). Blend the 1/2 cup milk with the flour and stir into the chowder when hot. Mix the milk and flour mixture into the chowder very well so that there are no lumps.

If you're adding some fresh or dried Rosemary or Thyme, now's the time to do it. Heat just to a boil, then turn off the heat. Taste and add, salt and pepper to your liking. Cover for at least 15 minutes to let flavors blend.

To gussie it up like the restaurants do, stick a sprig of Rosemary or Thyme in the top of each serving.

Enjoy with my compliments!!... Donald Cooper

Bonus: Homemade cookies are another wonderful tradition at this time of year and you'll find two great cookie recipes on our website at www.donaldcooper.com ...Free Articles, Section J – "NEAT STUFF"

5. Bits & Pieces:

(time to read this section is about 45 seconds)

Note: We've selected special "Bits & Pieces" that will be great conversation starters at all those Holiday Parties that you'll be attending in the next few weeks where no one knows what to say to each other.

Item #1: When NASA began the launch of astronauts into space, they discovered that regular pens wouldn't work in zero gravity. So, they invested 10 years and \$12,000,000 to develop a special pen. And what did the Russians do? They used a pencil.

Item #2: Did you ever notice that the Roman Numerals for forty (40) are "XL" ?

Item #3: Walmex is Wal-Mart's majority-owned subsidiary in Mexico. It is that country's largest retailer and single biggest employer, with more than 109,000 employees in 73 cities. Walmex currently operates 733 stores, including discount stores, Sam's Club warehouse stores, department stores, grocery stores, restaurants and general merchandise supercenters.

Walmex generates more than \$13 billion in annual sales. That's more than the country's entire tourism sector. It's also equal to 2% of Mexico's GDP.

Item #4: We can learn a lot from crayons. Some are sharp, some are dull, some are pretty, some have weird names and all are different colors...but they all have to live in the same box.

Item #5: One percent of the world's population controls 96% of the world's wealth.

Item #6: Between 1950 and 2004 the world's population doubled...but fresh water consumption has increased six-fold.

6. “Joy to the world” needs to be a 12-month proposition!

(time to read this article is about 60 seconds) For a printable version of this article, [click here](#).

One of the most popular of all Christmas carols starts off with the words, “Joy to the world”. This is a concept that’s way too important to be on our lips and in our hearts for only three weeks each year. The world and everyone in it needs “joy” all year long.

How do we deliver joy in business? We add it to every transaction. When people buy what we sell, they also want some joy. They want groceries...and joy! They want accounting or legal services ...and joy! They want financial services...and joy! They want a new TV...and joy! Anyway, you get the idea.

Think of the people that you most enjoy doing business with and I bet you that they all add joy to every transaction. I immediately think of Renatta at our local Post Office. We go out of our way to give her all of our postage business. She is kind, knowledgeable, efficient and enthusiastic. She knows her stuff and she loves her job. Renatta honours every customer and makes a special fuss over her ‘regulars’. She is ‘joyful’...and it’s contagious!

#1: First off, joy begins with you. You are the source of joy and energy in your business, or your department. If the lights are out on the front porch of your life, it’s highly unlikely that you’ll brighten the way for anyone else.

Do the people who work for you get up every morning, get dressed, have breakfast, hug their loved ones and say, “I’m off to fun now!” as they go out the door?

Clive Bedoe, the very clever CEO of Canada’s West Jet Airlines tell his employees, “If you’re not having fun...you’re fired!” Clive knows that our customers are never having more fun than we are. By the way, ‘fun’ is something that we have *while* working...not something that we do *instead* of working. Some folks get that one mixed up.

#2: Next, hire joyful people. Bless you if you think that you can take sad, small hearted people and somehow transform them into joyful people but my guess is that it’s a whole lot easier to start with people who are joyful by nature.

Sandra Wilson, founder of children’s footwear manufacturer Robeez Footwear in British Columbia, Canada, says, “If you’re not prepared to do the chicken dance, you can’t join our company.” In other words she doesn’t want staff who can’t or won’t be joyful. By creating a culture of joy, Sandra has reduced staff turnover by 50% while growing the business by 1200% over three years.

#3: Finally, create rituals of joy. Encourage joyfulness. Create celebrations, contests, rewards, events and activities throughout the year that energize, uplift and encourage. Take a calendar and mark on it each day of the year that you could do something joyful ...and then do it!

What will you commit to do to make your business more joyful for your team and for your customers this year?

7. Our Quiz of the Month:

(time to read this section is about 30 seconds)

Thanks to all of you who answered our November Quiz Question, which was...

“What percent of all vehicles sold in North America don’t actually deliver the mileage promised by the EPA ratings, according to Consumer Reports Magazine?”

And the bonus question was to **guess the largest percentage shortfall between the stated EPA mileage and the actual mileage in Consumer Report tests.**

Answers:

A) 90% of all the cars tested by Consumer Reports Magazine did not deliver the mileage promised by their EPA rating.

B) The vehicle with the biggest shortfall was the Jeep Liberty Diesel 4WD which achieved only 50% of its promised mileage.

We had no winner in November because we ‘goofed’ by offering the choice of answers from our previous issue. Sorry about that readers! Take a look at this month’s Quiz below...

This month’s Quiz: Rudolph, the red nosed reindeer, now the subject of a popular Christmas song, was originally “invented” by what American department store as a promotional idea?

Send your guess to Sharen Skene, our wonderful Director of Marketing, at sharen@donaldcooper.com. Each correct answer received within ten days (due to the holidays) will go into the ‘pot’ and one winner will be selected. The winner will receive their choice of any of our excellent DVD Seminars worth \$60 to \$80.

8. Where in the world is Donald?

(time to read this section is about 30 seconds)

Many readers have asked that I let you know where I'll be in the next little while where there may be opportunities to "rent" some of my time on a cost-friendly basis. If an event is a PUBLIC SEMINAR, we will let you know, otherwise you can assume the events are industry specific.

Keep in mind that we have new bookings and locations added to our calendar on a weekly basis, so if you don't see something near your area, contact Sharen at sharen@donaldcooper.com.

a) Calgary in January 2006.

b) London, Ontario on February 4, 2006.

c) Las Vegas in late February.

d) Nashville, TN in March.

e) Las Vegas in mid March.

International travels: If you reside in any of the following places and we can help you to rethink, reinvent, refocus and re-energize your business to create both compelling customer value and long-term profitability, simply contact Sharen and let's look at possibilities.

f) New Zealand and **Australia** the first week of April.

g) United Kingdom mid June.

i) Italy the end of June.

9. Chuckles and Hugs!

(time to read this section is about 30 seconds)

Here's some more wonderful wisdom sent in by one of our readers! When asked what love is, a group of 4 to 8 year olds came up with these brilliant answers...

- a) "When my grandmother got arthritis and couldn't bend over and paint her toenails anymore, my grandfather does it for her all the time, even when his hands got arthritis too. That's love."
Rebecca - age 8
- b) "When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth." *Billy - age 4*
- c) "Love is when a girl puts on perfume and a boy puts on shaving cologne and they go out and smell each other." *Karl - age 5*
- d) "Love is when you go out to eat and give somebody most of your French fries without making them give you any of theirs." *Chrissy - age 6*
- e) "Love is when you tell a guy you like his shirt, then he wears it every day." *Noelle - age 7*
- f) "My mommy loves me more than anybody. You don't see anyone else kissing me to sleep at night."
Clare - age 6
- g) "Love is when your puppy licks your face even after you left him alone all day." *Mary Ann - age 4*
- h) "You really shouldn't say 'I love you' unless you mean it. But if you mean it, you should say it a lot because people forget." *Jessica - age 8*
- i) "Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and listen."
Bobby - age 7

10. That's all for this month!

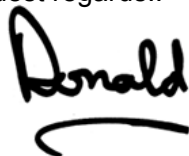
"Thanks" for all of your great feedback and suggestions! We especially love to hear of your successes using our insights.

Don't forget to visit our Free Articles section on our website for lots more valuable info on how to sell more, manage smarter and make more money in your business.

Also, let us know what you'd like to hear more about...or less about. And, do send us your stories and examples of great, horrible or just plain bizarre business practices that you find in your travels.

Finally, if you know of others, anywhere in the world, who will find value in this E-Newsletter, we'll appreciate your sending this along to them and inviting them to sign up at www.donaldcooper.com.

Kindest regards!!



Donald Cooper, MBA
Certified Speaking Professional