

# IRRESISTIBLE OFFER:

MASTER THE  
PSYCHOLOGY OF  
AN UNBEATABLE  
PROMOTION

A WHITE PAPER



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# 1

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## Executive Summary

Do you love a good deal?

Well, that's a no-brainer. The question is – who DOESN'T?

It helps when the price is right, but great marketing involves more than a good deal. It anticipates and sparks buyer behavior based on the biases of key customers. The theme of your message isn't nearly as critical as its recipients. By matching the right triggers with the right targets, you can nearly double the conversion rates of your prospects.

In this white paper, you'll receive practical pricing tips, craft a sharper audience orientation, and discover five marketing strategies to help your brand create desire.



# 2

## Master the Psychology of an Unbeatable Promotion

Do you want to boost demand, elevate your brand reputation, and outsell the competition?

Offers are the bait, but marketing is the strategy. Marketing psychology is the reason you pull the trigger rather than abandoning the cart. It's your "why" for splurging on items you could buy for half the price elsewhere. And as an entrepreneur, the mechanics of marketing psychology help you tailor messages to your key customers, so your products or services practically sell themselves.



## How Targets Define the Trigger

Entrepreneurs and business owners often assume people make logical, well-researched purchasing decisions.

But for the majority of people, that's not the case. People frequently act on impulse, emotion, or even impatience – often without understanding why. Small things like pricing, colors, or taglines can tip someone from complacency to commitment in a blink. That's why good advertisers know that tiny, often unnoticeable triggers can make all the difference in moving prospects toward action.

How do you match the primary target to the optimal trigger?

### Put the “Who” Before How

Research shows that highly targeted marketing campaigns that speak directly to customer wants, needs, and beliefs can increase conversion rates by up to 40 percent.

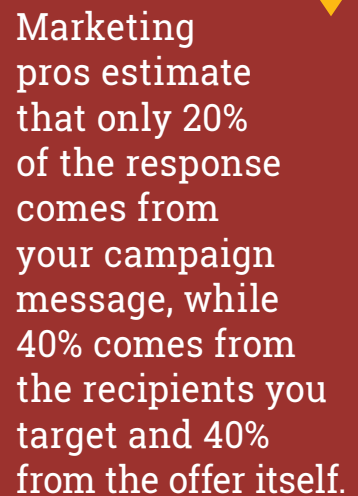
Did you know that the theme of your message isn't nearly as critical as the recipients? Marketing pros estimate that only 20% of the response comes from your campaign message, while 40% comes from the recipients you target and 40% from the offer itself.

If this is true, an essential part of a promotion is advanced research about your audience. What moves your clients to buy? A promise of prestige? Reliability or peace of mind? Perhaps it's an association with nostalgic memories of days gone by. Audience orientation starts with realizing that what matters to you (the marketer) does not necessarily matter to them (the audience).

Instead of starting with your product, start with their WHY.

Approaching your marketing in a structured, logical way will yield better planning and greater results. For example, if your marketing campaign lasted only one month and brought no new customers or sales, what would you be willing to spend? Stake a plan between two goalposts. The first is your perfect outcome (like the number of new leads or dollars of increased revenue); this is your best-case scenario. The second goalpost is the minimum you require to break even or continue your campaign.

Your marketing strategy must remain somewhere between these goalposts. This range can guide your spending decisions.



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## Matching the Promotion to the Person: 3 Examples

Putting yourself in your customers' shoes can affect every downstream decision you make, from color combinations and fonts to product placement and pricing.

This is the essence of an irresistible promotion. Understanding and anticipating consumer needs will enable you to get closer to your clients and provide an unhindered purchasing path.

Here are three examples:

**Lock in Loyalty.** Humans are creatures of habit, and they appreciate bypassing the mental fatigue of choice overload. That's why many airlines and hotels create high-value loyalty programs that are easy to navigate.

**Markdowns that Motivate.** Some people absolutely can't resist a sale. As JCPenney's early marketers discovered, its core customers were so psychologically tied to sales that they would rather pay more for a product (during a so-called "sale") than to consistently have low prices. On the flip side, today's Dollar General managers know that some people want the basement bargain option every time – and they'll purchase more because of it.

**Personalization Moves Products.** Do your customers value experience and self-expression? This may be as simple as printing customizable pet collars or pairing your primary products with matching accessories. One Italian eyewear brand started offering packages by allowing clients to choose their own combination of frame color, case, and corresponding sparkle sunglasses. Customization allows brands to grow consumer engagement and solidify brand loyalty, which is especially powerful in younger markets.



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## Five Strategies that Create Desire

Understanding and anticipating consumer behavior allows you to get closer to clients and provide them with a more enjoyable experience with your brand. Here are five strategies for doing this.

### #1 Priming

Priming uses a stimulus trigger to prompt a subconscious reaction and (hopefully!) a purchasing decision.

Primer triggers are everywhere, and they work wonderfully when paired with an enticing offer. Like these:

**You're sitting at a stoplight near Burger King** when the tantalizing scent of a flame-broiled burger envelops you from all sides. Just as your olfactory neurons start firing, your eyes and watering mouth join the party. Before you is a strategically placed full-color banner of the latest BBQ Bacon Sliders -- featuring three minis for \$4. Your mind says "maybe," but your stomach says YES. That new diet will have to wait.

**Did you know cultural events are happening each year** that put people in the mood to shop? The Super Bowl is one. Local sports stores capitalize on this by tying fun messages and slashed jersey prices into their marketing leadup for the big event. Some even pair the promotions with tailgating and appetizers. The Superbowl is the primer, but the jersey sale is the offer. What a memorable way to get in on the fun with fans who are happy to celebrate and ready to spend!

Priming triggers can include music, weather cues, colors (red for romance, blue for beachy, etc.), or phrases that match the season (like using a fresh start effect of back-to-school shopping: "New year? New GEAR!").

Sharpen your eye for detail and use triggers that prime people for the decision you want them to make.

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## #2 Scarcity

Scarcity is simple to employ because everyone has a fear of missing out.

Scarcity instills a sense of urgency by presenting fewer opportunities or a limited window of time. People react against this threat to their freedom by acting to preserve it (like saying YES to the dress!).

Here are several ways to leverage this principle:

- ▶ Specify a limited number of products, or – as airlines often do – by showing how many items you have left at a specific price
- ▶ Feature a time-limited coupon or a window of days an offer must be redeemed
- ▶ Use wording that amplifies the urgency, like “Steal of the Day” grab bags or half-day flash sales
- ▶ Create seasonally specific items and limit the amount you produce or sell

Think scarcity is a powerful marketing trigger? Try combining it with a seasonal holiday primer.

### The 2021 LOL Surprise Calendar

LOL dolls nailed this with its 2021 Surprise Travel Advent Calendar. This boxed “calendar” featured an exclusive mini doll and 25 box flaps with unique outfits and accessories for each day. Advertisers wooed parents with both a holiday primer (Advent) and the scarcity of a seasonally specific product (a “Limited Edition” option that featured a unique new doll named Jet Set Q.T.). LOL urged parents to extend the anticipation of Christmas by acting quickly: “give your children smiles on their faces with each day’s surprise in store for them.”

Who could go wrong combining the joy of the holidays, mix and match accessories, and an Outfit of the Day (sharable online via #OOTD)? By selling seasonally specific products in limited quantities, LOL marketed its products as an “Advent-ure” little girls wouldn’t want to miss!



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## #3 Social Proof

It has been said that when people are free to do what they please, they typically imitate others.

How can you build more social currency into your marketing? Whether you choose recognizable product colors or selfie photo booths at your events, make it easy for people to share your brand through social media or when they're just "doing life" in the public square.

When things are built to show, they're built to grow. Make your offers more tempting by adding evidence that other people have bought in first:

- ✓ Feature images of happy clients enjoying your product
- ✓ Use on-site signage or printed ads to menu favorites, best sellers, or employee recommendations
- ✓ Distribute stickers, T-shirts, branded clip-and-go hand sanitizers, or highly visible custom bags
- ✓ Post glowing testimonials from people sharing real results:

" \_\_\_\_\_ is a game changer – my search is over!"

– OR –

"I kissed \_\_\_\_\_ goodbye when \_\_\_\_\_"

To create show-stopping influencers, make your social proof triggers as shareable as possible and use taglines that answer the most important audience question: "What's in it for me?"

## #4 Secondary Offers

Many people take the word “no” at face value.

But sometimes the word NO is just an invitation to offer someone the next, best YES. Did you know abandoned shopping carts cost online retailers nearly 70 percent of sales? It doesn't have to be this way! Often, it's not that a person doesn't want to buy; it's that something distracts them from doing so.

Even if this distraction is hesitation about the price, you can meet indecisive individuals at a place they're more comfortable. Do this by offering a \$5 product and following it (later) with a \$3 coupon code. Or by posting premium packages followed by more streamlined, affordable subscription services down the page. A third option: create signs and banners with visible price knockdowns – like crossing out your previous price offering and comparing it with the new one.

Want to put a secondary offer in their hands? With a direct mailing package, consider one postcard featuring a seasonal service offering. Then follow it with a more tempting offer (like a one-month free lawn care trial or a \$10.00 gas card if someone gets an auto insurance quote through your agency).

This tactic, known as rejection then retreat, is a negotiating tool that elevates customers' perceived value of your product or service.



## #5 Price Psychology

When shoppers feel like they're getting a good deal, they are excited and more willing to purchase.

Want to move more products? Experiment with discount tactics like these:

**Dollar or Percentage Off:** This discount type is the most widely used, simply offering a reduction on the original price, such as \$50 savings or 40% off. Discounts can be placed on specific products or applied to an entire order.

**BOGO:** Short for "Buy One, Get One," this discount type prompts customers to purchase additional items. Examples of BOGO include "Buy One, Get One Free" or "Buy One, Get 50% Off the Next Item."

**Quantity Discounts:** Quantity discounts encourage shoppers to increase their order value to receive a discount. For example, "Purchase two items and get the third free," or "Receive 30% off your \$100 purchase."

**Rebates:** A rebate is an amount that's returned or refunded to customers after their initial purchase. Often used for large-ticket items, the most common is a mail-in rebate. For extra impact, list the post-rebate offer (e.g., "\$499 after rebate").

**Free Shipping:** Increasingly popular among online business owners, this removes the shipping cost associated with any order. Many merchants offer free shipping for a particular order amount, such as "Free shipping when you spend \$25 or more."



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To add more impact, here are three pricing tips:

- ✓ When offering volume discounts for a service (like \$9.99 monthly versus \$99 annually), do the math and include the ACTUAL SAVINGS in your ads. Like this:



- ✓ We've all seen discounts ranging from 5-75 % off. Although consumers redeem these offers, the mental math may deter people. Would you rather use a banner advertising an \$100 item as 25% off? Or a promotion like this: \$100 – now just \$75!
- ✓ Consider the long-term benefits of your sale. If you know customers are likely to use your business repeatedly (like a tax specialist or a grooming service), try a free or radically reduced initial offer to persuade prospects to choose you instead of your competition.

Incentives create urgency, build goodwill with clients, and dissuade people from looking for other offers.

## Conclusion

If you know how and why your key customers think, you can tailor your marketing in ways that prompt them to act.

This is a competitive advantage that brings big gains over time. And the good news is this: there is no surefire method to marketing things “just right.” Research your target customers, eyeball the competition, and hone your marketing to craft just the right offer.



## About Your Sponsor

Irresistible offers include principles that can be transferred from industry to industry, market to market, and business to business.

Whether you need a bold color combination, a taste-bud-tempting banner, or a compelling theme for your campaign, we'll employ a wide range of formats to bring your story to life. Nothing entices key customers like beautiful, tactile print!

### Contact Us

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Positive Printers, Inc.  
3555-A Centre Circle  
Fort Mill, SC 29715

803-802-3345  
[positiveprinters.com](http://positiveprinters.com)

