

Scott's Scale of Direct Response Volume
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Scott's Scale of Direct Response Volume

I spend very little time watching television but when I find myself in front of the set, I find the direct response advertisements and infomercials more interesting than the shows. An infomercial is simply a long TV ad for a product or service. Have you noticed that the “tone” of each infomercial differs significantly depending on the product?

If it's a product like a cleaning solution or vacuum cleaner, the tone is a lot like an out-of-control teenage spring break party. If the product is an exercise machine, the tone is fun yet professional. If the product is a golf club, the tone is professional and authoritative: the sense of authority usually comes from testimonials buttressed by a recognized golf teacher. If the product is a medical cure for some ailment, the tone is professional but almost austere and serious. If the product is a financial service, the tone is banker-ish; it's like spending time with a seasoned financial services executive. If it's a household product, the tone is upbeat and friendly without being too crazy.

It's the same with the shorter direct-response TV advertisements. Every direct response TV ad has these foundations:

- Benefits of the features
- Answers the question: “What’s in it for me?”
- A clear hook
- Emotional involvement
- A clear offer
- Etc.

However, there’s a big difference between a direct response TV ad for a vacuum cleaner and a TV ad for supplemental health insurance.

In direct response copy, tone is very important. Again, every piece of direct response copy, whatever the medium, will have the “must haves” as detailed above. But the tone of sales copy for a website selling a waterproof jacket has to differ from the copy for car wax.

Why?

To maximize response, the writer must develop an emotional connection with the prospective client or customer. And the tone of the ‘pitch’ helps to establish this vital connection. The difference in ‘tonality’ or volume, as I like to say, is subtle but vital. Will a sales letter for financial services that’s pitched like a household product draw a response? Yes. Will a sales letter for a household product that’s pitched like a financial service work? Yes. But the goal of every direct response writer must be to MAXIMIZE response which is why the right tone is vital...get the ‘volume’ right and you are more likely to get the best possible response, provided all the ‘must-haves’ are in the sales piece.

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One is the quietest. Eleven is the loudest.

1-3

Vocabulary: Professional. Secure. Long-term.

Best for: Financial services. Insurance. Health Care.

4-6

Vocabulary: Excellent.

Best for: Veterinarians.

7-9

Vocabulary: Superb. Really great.

Best for: Sports. Appliances. Memberships.

10-11

Vocabulary: Life-changing. Amazing. The best you have ever seen.

Best for: Household products. Automotive.

When I write copy for you and your product, I will ask you about the “volume” you want for your website, letter, etc. Email me now at scott@scottmartinwriting.com