

# RENTONS' BUSINESS TIPS



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## ACS CELEBRATES 40 YEARS IN BUSINESS

Forty years ago, my father, Jack Renton, started this business by importing collection stickers from England.

In 1976, we introduced Christmas stickers into our range. About 10 years later, we also offered Christmas cards for sale. In 2001, the trading name, Australian Christmas Cards, was registered. Perhaps the biggest changes at Australian Credit Stationers have occurred in the last 12 months when we moved from Ermington to Seven Hills. This year, the trading name, Renton's Printing, was registered to take best advantage of the capital equipment we had purchased.

It has been a gradual change from providing you with collection stickers since the 1960s to Christmas stickers since the 1970s, to Christmas cards since the 1980s, to business cards, letterheads, brochures, flyers, booklets plus a lot more since 2003.

## THE POWER OF THE OFFER

One of the great improvements in marketing over recent years has been in the presentation of the offer. The offer is simply an incentive to entice you to buy. To be effective, it must be relevant; it must have a time limit and most important of all, it must attract your attention. To do this, the offer needs to be compelling, or better still - irresistible.

Competition has meant that there are now a number of similar products and services in the marketplace. The challenge for marketers is to make their product or service stand out, even though it basically does the same function as other similar products or services at approximately the same price.

Free extras as an incentive to order are usually less expensive for the marketer than a discount. The lost sales in terms of actual dollars in offering discounts can be significant. Often an attractive offer actually costs much less than the value of the discount. In fact, a lot of marketers actually sell their products or services at a premium and then offer a number of extras to make the price seem very reasonable.

Offers can be very simple. A 10% discount if you place an order within 30 days is probably as simple an offer as you can make. However, for the right prospect, this offer may well be very effective. Note that this offer and all offers must have an expiry date. It is important to emphasise urgency in your offer. If your advertising does not demand an immediate response, the chances are that it will be pushed aside permanently.

Thirty days is often ample time for your potential customers to respond to an offer. The time limit will depend on the product or service being advertised. Sometimes an

During the past 40 years, our philosophy hasn't changed. I believe we are all in business to serve others and make friends with our customers. It follows from here that your customers are more likely to order from you in the future, recommend your business to others and even pay you before they pay their other suppliers.



Ian Renton  
Australian Credit Stationers

One of the challenges of being in business is selling. The article, "The Power of the Offer", gives you some ideas for increasing your sales. And then for something completely different, I suggest you read the humorous quotations on the back.

offer can expire within 15 minutes. Some of the late night infomercials are very effective because their offer is so attractive. It seems too good to refuse. I recall one ad where you received a lot of extras but only if you rang the number within 15 minutes.

Instead of a time limit, an offer can be worded like this - be one of the first 100 to place an order and receive all of these extra benefits. Again, this creates a sense of urgency as you don't know how many people are going to take up the offer.

An offer can include almost anything. The most important message to convey is that the customer is receiving a special benefit that they normally would not receive. This benefit must have perceived value. Ideally, the potential customers should believe that this offer applies to only a small group and not everyone will be entitled to the benefits that they are being offered.

There are some powerful offers made on late night television. If you buy exercise equipment, you will probably receive a free video and a whole lot more. Radio can also be used to make compelling offers. This is a great way for a number of large retail stores or food outlets to promote their special offers. They usually conclude with the phrase, "while stocks last". Again, this creates a sense of urgency.

Generally, the most effective way of making attractive offers is by direct mail, because there are no constraints. The most compelling offers I have received are from companies promoting their seminars. Not only do I receive a massive discount for enrolling early but I also receive a long list of bonuses. To add to the effectiveness of this offer, it is accompanied by a strong money back guarantee.

Visit our website at [www.austcredit.com.au](http://www.austcredit.com.au) to read earlier articles from Rentons' Business Tips.