**Instant**

**Host Beneficiary**

**Relationships**

Introduction

# Congratulations!!

Welcome to Host Beneficiary Relationships, your do-it-yourself guide to using other businesses to boost your profits.

A host beneficiary is when you and another business go into a loose partnership, and help each other make extra profits.

For example, a hairdresser might offer a free hair styling to the database of a beauty salon. The hairdresser gets new clients, the beauty salon gets more customer loyalty - they appreciate the ‘gift’ from the beauty salon owner.

Once you’ve been through this guide, you should know exactly how to approach other businesses and how to come up with offers that will encourage their database to deal with you. More importantly, you’ll have a selection of host beneficiary ideas to get you started.

This is the next step in your marketing success story. From this point on, you’ll know how to work with other businesses to beef up your bottom line.

# I personally guarantee it.

How To Use This Guide

After reading the introduction and background, jump straight in and start going through ‘The 7 Steps To Creating Host Beneficiary Relationships’.

Each step covers an important aspect of host beneficiaries - these are things that you must give careful consideration to. Each step represents a cornerstone of a great strategy.

You might be surprised by how much this exercise reveals about your business. It may get you thinking about important issues that have never crossed your mind.

Make sure you make notes in the spaces provided. When you come to write your first few strategies, you’ll need to refer back to these notes.

**Section 3** contains ideas on writing killer headlines for your letters to businesses and their customers - teasing copy that gets people interested in reading what you have to say.

**Section 4** offers a more in-depth explanation of how to come up with good offers - you’ll even find 10 examples to get you started. When it comes to host beneficiary’s, it’s essential that your offer is strong enough to really motivate people.

**Section 5** contains examples of powerful strategies, some of which may directly apply to your business.

Last, **Section 6** brings it all together, with templates of successful host beneficiary strategies. That means you can combine your new knowledge into a format you can be confident will bring results. You just fill in the gaps.

You’ll also find a computer disk with this package - it contains these templates in Microsoft Word format. Simply load up the disk and get started right away. That’s how easy it is.

Now, it’s time to get moving - there’s never been a better time to start using host beneficiary’s to your advantage.

**Important: A Note About Testing & Measuring**

The greatest business people and marketers are not necessarily the smartest or most innovative. Most simply understand the concept of testing and measuring.

When you are testing and measuring, there is no failure (except the failure to record your results and analyze them). Every step brings you one step closer to the right formula, and the right approach.

If you approach your marketing expecting everything to work first time, you’ll be bitter and disappointed when you discover it doesn’t. You may give up before you should.

**Remember this:** marketing has certain rules, but it’s still largely trial and error. You give it your best guess, then find out for sure using your testing and measuring.

It’s essential that you meticulously record every result. It’s extra work, but you’ll be glad when you have a marketing strategy that you know will produce results. That confidence only comes from testing and measuring.

The Nature Of

Host Beneficiary Relationships

What is a successful “Host Ben” Strategy?

The answer to this question is simple - if you make more money from the host ben than it cost you, it’s been a success.

Basically any Host Ben campaign that pays for itself can be considered successful. Before getting started, there are a few things you need to think about in depth:

1. **Work out your costs.** This includes the cost of printing, envelopes, any implements that you put in the envelope, phone calls, schmoozing with the other business owners, and more.
2. **Know your margins.** You need to know the net profit you make from anyone who buys your product or service. By understanding how much you actually make from each sale, you’ll be able to work out the % response required to make your campaign profitable.
3. **Lifetime Value.** Don’t view each new customer that your campaign brings in as a one-time sale. You will normally lose money on the first sale to a new client. The average business will need to sell to a client 2.5 times before it begins to make a profit from them.

With all this in mind you need to focus on bringing the customer back on a regular basis. Therefore, any Direct Mail campaign which covers its cost initially will turn out to be profitable in the long term.

What makes a successful Host Beneficiary Strategy?

This is just a broad overview of what makes a host ben successful - you’ll find very specific details in the next section. For a start, let’s just get things straight, so we know what we’re aiming for. Here are the main elements of a successful campaign ...

**The Right Attitude ...** One thing you’ll discover from reading this guide is that you are doing the other business a favor as well. You need to understand that they’re getting as much benefit as you are.

**Targeted Lists ...** You don’t want to mail to anyone who would not be interested in your product or service. You need to choose your host businesses carefully.

**Offer ...** A strong offer will make all the difference - without one, you can forget about response. With a powerful offer, you may need to hire extra staff just to cope with the response.

**Support From The Host ...** If your host business gets right behind the idea, you’ll have a far better chance of success. If they go into it with an ‘all right then - I don’t like the idea but I’m willing to give it a try’, you’re fighting an uphill battle.

**Phone Follow Up ...** Unless you’re selling directly off the page, you need to have an effective follow-up phone script. This can mean the difference between a 9% or a 25% response rate.

The 7 Steps To Creating Host Beneficiary Strategies

# Why (Use Host Bens)?

Before writing anything, you need to work out whether a host beneficiary strategy is for you.

Obviously, you have a suspicion that it is (or you wouldn’t have invested in this package), but you need to compare it’s potential returns against other available ways to market yourself.

For example, if your market is broad and your offer is VERY appealing, why not use the newspaper instead - it’s easier and probably a cheaper way to go. What about radio?

Host beneficiary is ideal when you have a **specific group** of people you want to advertise to, and there are other non-competitive businesses already dealing with them.

Here’s a perfect example - corporate training organizations. They know who their target market is (businesses that need help with customer service and sales), and they have businesses that deal with them (stationery suppliers, computer shops, etc.). A host beneficiary could work - they could get the stationery supplier to send the business owner a gift (a free 1 hour needs analysis with a qualified trainer).

On the other hand, a host beneficiary strategy is probably inappropriate for a fast food outlet - the market is probably too broad (anyone looking for a quick, cheap meal at lunch time) and it’s hardly worth going through the trouble and expense of setting up a host ben. You may as well just put an ad in the paper - there’s no specific business that would make a good host.

Remember, host bens work best because the potential customer **thinks the offer** is **a gift** from the other business. They believe the business has gone out of it’s way to find this offer, and pass it on. Because of that, they feel some obligation to take it up.

You need to find businesses who are willing to get behind the idea 100%, or else forget it. That brings us to the other consideration - are there any businesses out there who are willing to open their minds enough to run with the idea?

Of course, it depends how you bring up the idea. If you say ‘listen, I want to use your database and sap it for all it’s worth’, you’ll have a bit of a battle closing the ‘sale’ from there. On the other hand, you could try an approach like ‘hi there, I’ve got a way we can help each other - I’ll get some new customers, and your current customers will think you are the greatest most generous person on the planet. Then, later down the track, we’ll swap’ - it’s certain you’ll get a better response from this method.

# Who (Is Your Target Market)?

Before you even start making a list of potential host businesses, you need to identify exactly who it is you’re trying to reach. Precisely who is your target market?

A failure to answer this question will lead to failure FOREVER. For example, imagine a company who sells in-ground swimming pools doing a mailing campaign to a block of high-rise rental apartments. To avoid costly mistakes, you need to know who your potential customers are before you start arranging host bens with anyone.

Knowing your target market will also enable you to write in a way that your prospect will relate to. Using terms and phrases that are commonly used by your prospects will greatly increase the effectiveness of your letters to the customers of the host business.

So let’s get specific - who are the people most likely to be interested in your product or service. Here are some guidelines ...

**Age:** How old are they? Don’t just say ‘all ages’ or ‘a variety’. We want to create a mental picture of your average customer. Think of an age that symbolizes most of your customers.

**Sex:** Are they male or female? ‘Half and half’ is too broad. Practically every business is split one way or the other. Give it some real thought - which gender does business with you more often.

**Income:**  How much do they make? Do they earn a great living, meaning that quality is the big issue, or are they scraping for every dollar, always looking for a deal. It’s essential that you find this out.

**Where do they live:** Are they local, or do they come from miles around to deal with you? This will dictate how you communicate with them.

# Which (Business Will Make A Good Host)?

Now that you’ve identified the ‘who’, you need to find the right business to help you reach them.

There are a number of criteria for selecting a host. If you can think of one that matches each of these points, you’re in business. If you can find a few which meet most of the criteria, it will probably still be worth running a strategy. Here’s your checklist ...

1. **Non-Competitive ...** That means they don’t sell what you sell, or anything that could be considered a replacement for what you sell. For example, an acupuncturist and a masseuse may be considered competitive - both deal in natural therapy and relaxation. If the customer starts coming to massage, they may stop seeing their acupuncturist.

There is such a thing as wallet share - customers have only so much to spend each month. If the masseuse becomes their choice for relaxation, the acupuncturist will miss out.

The same might go for a CD store and a video store - if people spend all their disposable income on CD’s, they may have none left over for videos. It sounds crazy, but it’s a genuine fact - people set aside a rough amount each month for a particular type of activity ... if your business replaces the other business, you’re being competitive.

Of course, if you manage to get a semi-competitive business to promote you, then more power to you. It’s their loss, not yours.

Usually, there’s a lot of gray area here - all businesses are competitive in one way or another. Everybody wants the same type of customer ... one with money to spend. Some business owners are too paranoid to bother with - they think that you’re going to steal their customers - there’s not much you can do about these people. Just go for the ones with a good attitude.

1. **Same Target Market** ... This is the most important consideration. The host business must have the same or a very similar target market to your business venture.

For example, a high class beauty salon and an exclusive hairdresser are very compatible, a Ford dealership and an auto-electrician specializing in Fords work well, as do a Stereo Equipment shop and a CD store.

From your answer to ‘Who are your target market’, you should have a clear idea of the people you want to target. You should know how old they are, how much they make, what they’re interested in and more.

Now think about it - who else deals with these people? You can approach it from the other way ... what other businesses do these people deal with? For example, members of a gym might also go to a health food store, or people who buy luxury cars might also like expensive paintings.

1. **They Have A Database ...** you can’t mail to anyone if the host business doesn’t have names and addresses of their customers.

Of course, it’s not entirely essential - you can ask the host business to simply hand envelopes to their customers, or make a verbal recommendation to their customers. This tends to work less well.

Ideally, find someone who has a database a computer, or on paper. If their records are on paper, you could sweeten the offer to them by suggesting that you will organize for their records to be transcribed onto computer - if you’re going to do it properly, you’ll need to do this anyway, so why not throw it in.

1. **Right Attitude ...**

There’s a heck of a lot of jaded business owners out there.

They think the whole world is against them, the ‘big boys’ are discounting their prices to force them out of business and the economy’s ‘weak’.

These people are unlikely to go for anything any more complicated than ‘fliers’ to the letterboxes, which they’ll tell you ‘don’t work anyway’.

If they are negative from the outset, you probably don’t want to get too involved with them- they’ll only kill your promotion.

It’s better to find someone who’s willing to give you the support that you need - someone who’s smart enough to know a good business idea when they hear one. There are people out there like that, and they’ll love to get involved.

1. **Their Customers Like Them & They Like Their Customers ...**

There are two things you don’t want. The first is to mail to a hostile database that don’t want anything to with the host business.

The second is to get a whole bunch of new customers who are essentially D grade customers - they haggle on price, they annoy the heck out of you and always complain about everything.

You need to check that the host business thinks highly of their customers - if they don’t, you don’t really want to adopt these customers as your own.

1. **Big Database ….**

If the host business only has 23 customers on it’s database list, it’s barely going to be worth the trouble of mailing to them (although it really depends on your business.

If they have a huge database, you may even want to offer exclusivity to the business in exchange for access to the whole list, including phone numbers. If they only have a small list, they can forget about exclusivity.

1. **A Willingness To Test ...**

It’s important that you stress to the business that you just want to do a small number first before mailing to everyone.

If the business owner says ‘no, let’s send them all out with our newsletter’, it’s a less than ideal situation. You really want them to let you test first, then do the entire database - it’s also important that your letter goes out alone, with no other materials.

You could say to the host business owner ‘I think we should do a hundred first, just to make sure that everything’s OK. I mean, of course it will be, but you know, it’s your database so let’s respect it, and just make sure that everybody’s happy with it’.

# What (Do You Want To Say To The Host Business’ Customers)?

It’s important that your strategy has a clear focus, and you know precisely what you’re setting out to achieve.

The first thing to think about is whether the letter to the customers will be from you or your host business.

Generally, the most successful host beneficiary letters come from the host business. For example, the letter could come from a beauty salon and say ‘Hi there, I know a great hairdresser called Harry. As a special gift from me, I’ve arranged for you to have your hair styled by Harry at no cost to you. Call XXX XXXX to take advantage of this offer’.

This type of letter tends to work well - the customer believes that the business owner has gone out of their way to organize a special deal for them and they tend to feel obligated to take advantage of it.

If you write the customers a letter that says ‘Hi, my name’s Harry. I cut hair, I’ve been doing it for 12 years’, it’s unlikely people will call. There is nothing special about the offer - you’re just like any other hairdresser making a claim about how good you are, and how much experience you have. It’s much better when someone else is tooting your horn for you.

Once you decide which way to go, you then have to write the letter. Even if you decide that the letter will come from the host business, it’s still up to you to write it. They just sign it and put their name to it.

Your letter needs to have a clear purpose, and take people from point A to point B. Point A is your headline, which should identify where they are now. The body of the letter leads them to Point B, which is where you tell them why they should act right now, and how to do it.

Most important is understanding the customers you’re writing to. If you understand the needs, wants and position of your customer, you can sell almost anything to them.

For instance - mailing a letter to 47 year old women with a headline that says ‘Concerned about menopause? Here’s why you don’t need to be ...’ could yield excellent results. Or what about a letter to 17 year olds that says ‘Forget the fake ID ... here’s how you can get access to San Francisco’s best nightclubs before your 18th birthday’. Or how about a letter to struggling musicians that says ‘Tired of people passing your talent by? Here’s how to take the bull by the horns and get famous ... within 14 months’.

These letters reach out and speak to the people reading. If you don’t understand the people you are writing to, you’ll inevitably get off on the wrong foot with them. Imagine sending a letter to new mothers that said ‘Is your baby bored? Here’s why you should take it to Dreamworld ...’. The readers would be downright confused - anyone who’s ever had a child wishes for a moment of peace, not more excitement.

Before writing anything, you need to decide exactly what message you want to communicate. Then you need to decide what you want the recipients of your letter to do about it.

The first example (the beauty salon who gives the customers a free haircut) is an excellent one - it has a clear purpose. The flow from Point A to Point B is clear. Here’s a more detailed explanation ...

**Point A:** The customer knows of the business, and has dealt with them a few times before. They’ve been happy with the service and trust the business owner.

**Body Copy:** You know me, I think you’re a special customer, I wanted to say thanks so here’s a gift - a free haircut, I highly recommend Harry, he’s great, here’s why, call him soon, I look forward to hearing from you.

**Point B:** The customer calls and makes an appointment for a free haircut.

It pays to remember that simply asking people to act now (or for that matter, telling them to act now) is rarely enough. You need to give them a good reason why they should do something. A letter that just has a recommendation from the host business is OK, but a killer offer that is limited in some way will work ten times better.

Remember that most purchases can be delayed forever. It’s one thing to create desire, but it’s another to actually get people to part with their cash. Every month, customers have to decide what to spend their money on. It could realistically be a decision between buying your lovely oriental statuette, or buying the kids school shoes.

Every buyer has priorities. Of course, there are ways to re-arrange these priorities.

If you offer a special deal on the statuette, the customer may think “well, the kids can wear those ratty sneakers a little longer - but I won’t get this deal on this statuette again”.

The question is, how do you offer a great deal without slicing your profit margin drastically. There’s a couple of ways. First, make sure you are selling products or services with a high margin. Often, that’s not possible - try getting a high margin on gasoline. If you have the option of gearing your business towards higher margin items, do so - it’s much easier to come up with great deals.

If you can’t do that, you need to find items or services that are highly valued by the customer, yet have a low cost. Extra service is an old standby, information booklets are another one. Even better are services you can get for free from other businesses.

You could even be super-tricky and arrange a host ben for your host ben. Here’s how this works - you offer the customers of the host business something extra if they come and buy from you. You get this something extra free from another business. You are now the host business. For example, the hairdresser could write to the customers of the beauty salon and offer a free bottle of Matthew James Shampoo with any haircut. Matthew James, wanting to convert customers to their brand, would offer the shampoo for free.

**You’ll find more details and examples on offers in section 4.**

# How (Do You Write Your Letter)?

It’s a common misconception that you have to be a great writer, or some wizard with words to write a letter that works.

That’s absolutely not true - most of the most successful letters are written by people who know the people they’re writing to, and know how to come up with a good offer. Their writing skills are irrelevant.

Simply going to a database of stressed out execs and saying ‘100% less stress in 10 minutes or it’s free ... guaranteed. Normally $15, we come to you, call 563-4525 for a FREE introductory session’ is enough. It doesn’t matter what language you use, or even if you make spelling mistakes.

It might sound funny, but most people won’t even know.

At the end of the day, people won’t buy from you just because you can write letters so good that a publishing company might offer to produce them as poetry. By the same token, people probably won’t avoid buying from you because you can’t spell “quixotic, superfluous or rhetorical”, as an example.

As long as your message is clear, quick and targeted well, your letter will work. It’s really like serving food - if you are serving a delicious meal, it’ll taste just as good delivered on paper plates as on your best silver. People may prefer it on the silver, but if you’re serving to people hungry for what you’ve cooked, they’ll eat anyway.

There is only one sin you don’t want to commit - getting off the point, or rambling too long. If every word and every sentence says something important to the sale, fine. If your letter is full of fluff, people will lose interest very quickly. The same applies if you stray from your initial intention and message.

These guidelines apply for any letters you write to the host business to arrange the relationship, or letters that you write to their customers.

**Here are some other guidelines for getting your letter just right ...**

1. **Your headline:** Tell people exactly what they will get out of reading the letter ... the headline lets prospects know whether they should bother reading on. It needs to promise immediate benefits. For example ‘Here’s how to make $4500 extra income this month (just by sleeping in 2 hours later)’ or ‘Save 56% on your auto insurance bill’.

The other approach is to invoke curiosity. This is harder to do effectively, but better if your product doesn’t contain a striking benefit. Here’s a good example ... ‘Here’s why 3 out of 4 Calgary children will lose their hair before they reach 17’ or ‘4 reasons to call George’s Gym before July 15 and say “I’m a willee-wrinkle-wowee’. Most importantly, your headline needs to stop the reader dead in their tracks.

Another trick is to speak directly to them in your headline. For example, why not make your headline something like ... ‘George, here’s how you can make an extra $19,000 this year and make Harriet happy’. If you have your customers first names, this is easy to do with computer software.

1. **Create a strong introduction ...** the first couple of sentences are incredibly important. They tell people whether they should read on in depth or start skimming.

9 out of 10 times they’ll skim (or trash the letter entirely).

Here’s a couple of powerful introductions that help get higher readership ... ‘Before you start skimming, just stop. Stop and think about where your life is heading’ or ‘You don’t know it yet, but the next 5 paragraphs contain the secret of earning a fortune, without breaking your back’.

You need to immediately let people know that they’re doing the right thing by reading. Here’s another ‘cut them off at the pass’ style introduction ‘I know you’re tempted to throw this letter away without reading it, but I have a warning for you’.

Of course, in most cases your first paragraph will just support your headline. For example, ‘you’re probably a little disbelieving. In fact, I’m certain that you think I’m pulling your leg, but let me show you why that headline is 100% true’.

Generally, with a host ben letter, the Intro should refer to the relationship between the host and the customer. For example, ‘I wanted to write and say thanks’, or even ‘it’s so rare that anyone says thank you’.

1. **Include a strong, specific call to action ...** if you don’t tell people what to do, they probably won’t do anything.

Give them precise instructions on what to do - who to call, which number to use, when to do it and what to ask for. Here’s a good example - ‘Call Gordon Harris now at 345-6756 and ask for your 45 page personal astrological analysis chart’.

Better still - tell them to act, then mention that you’ll be calling in the next couple of days to discuss the letter and offer further. Naturally, it depends if the host business is willing to give you phone numbers - this tends to be pretty rare.

1. **Include concise and convincing body copy ...** the body copy is the actual text between the introduction and the call to action.

You don’t need to be a great writer to do this part well - it’s more important that you get the point across clearly, in as few words as possible, and in logical order.

After you write your first draft, go through and edit viciously - that is, cut out any sentence or word that doesn’t need to be there. Next, read it aloud and make sure it flows. Last, have a couple of people check through, and ask them to tell you what they got out of it. Ask them to explain it back to you, just to make sure you’re getting the point across. Ask which parts were boring, and don’t be afraid of the criticism. You didn’t set out to be the world’s greatest writer anyway, so any comments should be helpful, rather than hurtful.

1. **Sub-Headlines ...** If your letter is a long one (anything over 2 pages), it’s important to break up your text with sub-headlines.

These are short mini-headlines that guide the reader through the letter and pique their interest. There’s nothing wrong with making each one as attractive as your main headline.

1. **Use a PS ...** One of the most important aspects of the copy is the “Post Script”. In fact, the PS is often the most read part of the letter. It pays to include a major point right at the end - for example, an extra special bonus if they take up the offer in the next 3 days.

People tend to read the PS because it’s unexpected - they are surprised that someone has forgotten to include something. Some professional copywriters use up 3 or 4 PS’s and write up to half a page for each. It sounds crazy, but it seems to work.

1. **Make the layout ‘fun’ ...** when writing your letter, forget everything you learned in school about writing a ‘business letter’ (for some people, that shouldn’t be too hard).

Indent paragraphs, splash bold throughout, use bullet points and give everything lots of space. If you look at your letter and think ‘my god, that’s a lot’, you need to take another look at your layout.

Perhaps it needs to be spread out. Or maybe you need to take a paragraph and put the main points next to bullets.

1. **Watch out for letters that are too long or too short ...** The number of pages is less important than the actual layout. If spacing it out spills the letter over onto 3 pages, rather than 1, that’s OK. Just as long as it looks ‘fun’ to read.

There’s a common perception that a 1 page letter will always be read. There’s some truth to that, but there’s also a lot of mistruth mixed in there too. If the letter is packed solid with text, just so it’ll fit on one page, people will be more turned off than if it were 4 pages that was spaced out evenly.

Likewise, if it’s uninteresting and not targeted, people won’t read it out of politeness. And if it doesn’t have enough meat and reasons to act, people won’t do anything. You need to say enough to get them inspired to do something, but not so much that they run out of time, or get bored.

For a host ben letter, it’s unlikely that you’ll need anything more than 2 pages - if you do, it’s either a special case, or you’re running on. The personal recommendation from the business owner should be enough of a selling point to get you over most objections.

1. **Avoid anything that’s hard to read ...** type your letter in a standard font: Times New Roman or Courier. While another funny font may look ‘nicer’, it’ll be hard to read.

Remember, people aren’t interested in playing games by trying to decipher your bizarre typeface - they just want to know if they should bother reading, and if they like what they read, then what they should do.

Don’t make things confusing - it’ll only obscure your message. Avoid being an artist - be a business person.

1. **Include a gimmick ...** the very best direct mail letters contain some sort of gimmick, something out of the ordinary that makes them memorable and interesting.

Here’s a few examples ...

* A letter headed ‘Here’s why life is sweeter when you’re with MGA Insurance’ …. And include a lollipop in the envelope...
* A piece of salami was sent with a letter - the tie-in was that one rotten piece can bring down a whole company. At the time, the ‘salami incident’ (where a piece of salami allegedly poisoned and killed a young girl, subsequently destroying the company) was still fresh in the minds of the readers. The letter was for an employment agency, which helped you weed out the ‘rotten apples’.
* 40 cents was taped to the top of a letter - the headline was ‘I’m so eager to show you the new range of BMW Motorcycles, I’ve already paid for you to call me’.
* A small bag of fertilizer was mailed with a letter to agricultural wholesalers - the headline was ‘Here’s 8 ounces of Colorado’s most advanced fertilizer. Here’s why you’ll soon need 30 tones of the stuff ...’.
* A gimmick is a brilliant way to get attention, and stop people in their tracks. It’s also great if you’re following your letter with a phone call. Imagine calling after mailing the letter with the piece of salami. Instead of the usual ‘oh, I don’t know - I may have read it ‘ reply, you’d get ‘oh, that letter’.
* Whether you can do this will heavily depend on the business owner and how crazy they’re willing to get.
* Try and follow up with a phone call ... most people won’t call right off your letter - that’s just the nature of the game.

However, if you mail them a letter, then call soon after, you’ll be surprised by the leap in response. People have the chance to ask you questions, then order directly.

# A Special Note About Approaching Host Businesses

The main thing to bear in mind is that you are doing the host business a favor - if they truly understand what you’re proposing, they should jump at the chance.

Here’s the simplest explanation - you’re going to give them something worth $x that they can give to their customers free. Perhaps it’s a free voucher, or an information booklet.

When the customers receive the gift, they’ll think highly of the business owner and be appreciative. They’ll probably become more loyal and give more referrals.

Imagine if a business sent you a free gift every month. One month it would be a haircut, the next a voucher for having your lawn mowed, then an opportunity to get massaged for free.

You’d feel pretty happy about this, wouldn’t you? You’d probably feel privileged to be a part of this business, and there’s a very high chance you’d do want to do business with them again.

If you, as a business owner can see the benefit in this, then remember that when you approach the host businesses. If you want to start sending your own customers gifts, you have to go out and find someone who will offer a free gift. It’s harder than you think.

You’re making it easy - you’re coming up with a free gift the host businesses can present to it’s customers. You’re the one putting yourself out.

There are concessions you may need to make to insure that the deal happens. Here are a list of things that you can offer the host business if there’s any doubt ...

1. **You pay for the postage ...** if they don’t ask you to pay for the postage, they’re pretty thick. It’s your idea, so you should pay for it. The best you’re likely to get is to share it half and half. The host may offer to drop it in with a mailing they’re already doing, but you’d be better off paying for a separate mailing.
2. **You pack the envelopes ...** there’s no reason why you should ask the business owner to do anything aside from provide the names. They may want to stick labels on so that you don’t get to keep the names.
3. **You certify you will only use the names once ...** if they give you their list, you should probably guarantee that once this promotion’s over, you won’t touch the names again.
4. **You will do the same thing for them later down the track ...** this offer can be made. If you’re not willing to do the same for them, why should they do it for you.

# When (To Mail Your Letters)

If your product is perennial (that is, not seasonal), you don’t have to be too concerned about when to do your strategy. It’s more a question of which day, rather than which time of year.

With business clients, it’s usually a good idea to mail them a letter on Tuesday or Wednesday. People are usually feeling too busy on Monday, and pretty uninterested in thinking about anything new on Friday.

If your business is seasonal, you need to approach it differently. For example, a swimming pool builder would find it fruitless mailing a ‘summer letter’ in winter. The business owner would need to adapt the appeal to suit the time of year.

# What else (do you need to think about)?

Use this section as a final checklist - once you’re happy with your strategy letter, run through and make sure you’re ready to get started. Here are a few things you may not have thought of ...

* 1. **Staff Training:** Do your staff fully understand the strategy you’ve implemented? It’s important that they understand the vital role they are to play in this strategy. If your new customers come in and find anything less than the highest level of service your campaign will fail.
  2. **Objects:** Have you included an item with each letter? Check and make sure that all letters contain the object that you’ve mentioned in the opening paragraph. Your letter will not make much sense without it.
  3. **Check Stock and Staff Levels:** It’s unlikely your campaign will bring in hundreds of people all at once (very few actually do), but you need to be prepared for a sizable response. There would be nothing worse than having a rush of new customers come in only to find you have no stock or are too busy to serve them.

Writing ‘Killer’ Headlines

The best headlines do 3 things - identify the right target market, provide benefits and generate enough interest to get them to start reading.

**Let’s look at each one in more depth ...**

* 1. **Identify The Right Target Market:** You need to make sure that your target market reads your letter. Your headline needs to immediately speak to them. There’s nothing wrong with starting your headline with ‘MOTHERS’ or even ‘ATTENTION Ladies 37-40 with no children’. Of course, there are other more subtle ways, such as ‘Here’s how to make your Ford go faster’ or ‘Help the kids succeed at school this year’.
  2. **Provide Benefits:** You need to give your readers reasons to investigate further. Think about it - what is really going to make them want to read. A headline such as ‘MEN: How you can have twice as much sex as you’re having now ... guaranteed’ speaks for itself. What can you say about your product or service - what is the main benefit? Once you’ve thought of that, try coming up with some more specific and interesting ways of phrasing it. For example ‘How you can make an extra $4500 this year and pay off those credit card debts’ is more interesting than ‘How you can make more money’.
  3. **Generate Interest:** There’s nothing more powerful than curiosity. Compare these two headlines - ‘AMWAY: a new future for you’ and ‘How you make can $1100 extra per week, by meeting 3 new people a month’. Both are for the same company, but one holds more interest value and is more likely to get you reading. Try getting the main benefit across without telling the whole story, and getting a bit of mystery in there. Of course, too much mystery can kill your whole ad. Who’d read an ad with a headline such as ‘Pure grunt’, ‘Big cheese’ or ‘Stilted’? No-one, as so many advertisers have discovered.

# Headline Starters

This is where you get to write potential headlines for your ad. You’ll get a sharper focus of what you want to really say to potential customers, as well as learning what makes a headline work ...

7 reasons ...

First, write two headlines beginning with “7 reasons” ... Here are some examples ...

7 reasons YOU should call George’s Widgets today ...

7 reasons to get your Widget from George’s ...

**Now it’s your turn ...**

7 reasons \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7 reasons \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Here’s why ...

Now, try two headlines beginning with “Here’s why” ... Here are some examples ...

Here’s why George’s is offering YOU a FREE box of Widgets ...

Here’s why YOU need to call George’s Widgets now ...

**Now it’s your turn ...**

Here’s why\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Here’s why\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Here’s how ...

Next, try two headlines beginning with “Here’s how” ... here are some good examples ...

Here’s how George’s Widgets helps you live forever ...

Here’s how to get the perfect Widget ... guaranteed

**Now it’s your turn ...**

Here’s how\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Here’s how\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Announcing ...

Next, try two headlines beginning with “Announcing” ... here are some examples ...

Announcing ... a Widget dealer that guarantees your delight ...

Announcing ... a guaranteed way to lose weight using Widgets ...

**Now it’s your turn ...**

Announcing\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Announcing\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

DON’T ...

Next, try two headlines beginning with “DON’T” ... here are some great examples ...

DON’T take another breath until you read this ...

DON’T call anyone about Widgets until YOU speak to George’s

**Now it’s your turn .. .**

DON’T\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

DON’T\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

New ...

Next, try two headlines beginning with “New” ... here are some examples ...

New ... widgets that actually repair themselves

New cheaper way to buy widgets

**Now it’s your turn .. .**

New\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

New\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Now ...

Last, try two headlines beginning with “Now” ... here are some examples ...

Now available ... home hairdressing kits that your teenage daughter will like

Now in pre-production ... a movie based on the life of Elvis Presley

**Now it’s your turn .. .**

Now\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Now\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Creating Powerful Offers

So you’ve written a great headline, an exciting first paragraph and sub-headlines that tell a story. But what are you going to do to get your target market to respond? Great copy alone will not work, you need to have a strong offer, an offer that even you would respond to.

So what is a great offer?

When thinking of what to offer your customers ask yourself - ‘If I read this ad, would the offer be good enough to make me respond?’ If the answer is no, then go back to the drawing board. Without a great offer, you cannot achieve great results.

Another thing to consider when coming up with your offer, is the lifetime value of the people who respond to your ad. Taking a smaller profit in the short term will generally work out better in the long run.

**Here’s some examples of powerful offers ...**

* + l Free haircut - For a hairdressing salon looking to increase its database.
  + 2 Steak Dinners and 2 Glasses of Wine for $10 - Restaurant recruiting members for its VIP Club.
  + 1 New Release Video and a Large Pizza for $3 - Video store promotion to recruit new members.

All of these offers have a ‘too good to be true’ ring about them and are sure to get a great response. Weak offers will cause your ad to fail. Understand that your offer is the part of your ad that gets your customers to act now, and to buy from you rather than your competition.

**Here’s some examples of weak offers ...**

* 10% Off - This is not a big enough discount to generate interest. Of course, it will depend on the size of the purchase.
* Call now for your free color brochure - So what? Everyone hands out brochures. Unless the product is something incredible, people won’t respond.
* Buy 9 and get the 10th for 1/2 price - No one would respond to this offer. It’s pathetic, unless you’re a car wholesaler who regularly sells about 8 cars to dealers at a time.

**Types of offers ...Here are some possible offers that would be worth considering ...**

**1. The “Added Value” with Soft Dollar Cost**. Soft Dollar Cost refers to products, services or added extras that you can combine with your standard product to make it more attractive and increase its perceived value, but don’t add much if anything to your costs.

For this strategy to be effective the added extra must have a high perceived value, in other words your customers must see the added benefit as being great value.

**2. The Package Offer.** By packaging products and services together you create a more marketable combination. There is a higher perceived value when products or services are packaged, your customers will want to buy more, simply because of the extra products they get when buying a product they already want.

One of the best examples of a great package is computer equipment. Buy the hardware and receive the software for free. This style of offer is very attractive to potential customers.

**3. Discounts vs. Bonus Offers.** More often than not discounting will cost you profits. A far better way of clearing stock and generating extra trade is to have a 2 for the price of 1 sale. Or, try a “buy one of these and get one of these FREE”. The other way of wording this offer is “every 10th purchase free, or when you spend $100, we’ll give you $20 of your next purchase”.

**4. Valued at Offer.** If you are including a free item in your ad, make sure you value them. For example – “CALL now for your FREE consultation, normally valued at $75”. This positions your time, product, or service much greater than a simple free give-away that people won’t value or appreciate.

**5. Time Limited Offers.** Place a time limit on your offer, it will dramatically increase the response rate because it gives people a reason to respond right now. Place urgency in your offer ... “For a short time only ... Call before such and such ... Only while stocks last”. These will all create a sense of urgency in your consumer’s mind.

**6. Guarantee Offers.** Using a guarantee offer is a great way to boost the response to your ad. People will be far more willing to part with their money if you take the risk out of the buying decision. The better the guarantee you make, the higher your response will be.

**7. FREE Offers.** Giving away something absolutely free (no catches whatsoever) is often a brilliant way to build a loyal customer base. Offer a “bribe” to get them in the door initially, then great service and products to encourage them to come back. This type of offer can reduce your “cost per lead” dramatically.

Another example …. do you have jewelry that you never plan on wearing? Here’s how to make every piece fashionable again ...

**Dear [name],**

I’ve recently come across an excellent idea.

I’m not sure about you, but I’ve got lots of jewelry that I no longer wear. Either it no doesn’t fit my finger, or it’s gone out of style. I mean, these rings still have immense sentimental value - they just aren’t fashionable any more.

That’s why re-making is such a great idea.

Here’s how it works - you take your existing jewelry, extract the raw materials (gold, silver, gems) and create something completely new. Instead of purchasing a brand new piece, you modernize what you already have.

The results can be truly startling, as the ‘before and after’ shots I’ve included illustrate.

Of course, you may be happy with the style - it could be the fit that’s a problem. With re-sizing, it’s easily taken care of. For less than you’d think, your ring can be re-shaped to fit your finger perfectly.

And best of all ...

I’ve arranged a free assessment for you. This is a 15 minute analysis with one of Vancouver’s finest jewelers - Brian Davis of Jolissa’s Jewelers. Mention you’re a customer of Lejose and Brian will clean and polish your ring free. Then, after careful examination, he will explain the possibilities.

You’ll be amazed - the most archaic looking piece can be turned into something sophisticated and dazzling.

This assessment comes with no obligation. It’s simply an opportunity to see how easily your old, unused jewelry can be transformed.

Call Brian now at 478 3112, or simply drop in.

(signed) Julie McNamara,

Lejose Beauty Salon

PS If you have your ring remade in the next 28 days, you’ll receive a special bonus - a $50 voucher to spend at Lejose.

COMPANY

ATT: NAME

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

Good morning (NAME) ...

Here’s a $195.00 gift you can give every one of your customers ... FREE

I’ve come up with a great idea.

A way that we, as business people who both deal with home owners, can help each other.

It won’t cost you anything, it’ll fit in with your current promotional efforts and it’s guaranteed to make your current customers feel special. More importantly, it’ll give them another good reason to come back and buy from you again (or recommend that their friends do).

**Here’s the idea ...**

I manage a company called The Mortgage Professionals - we help people slash their mortgage rates and payments. And when I say slash, I mean that literally - one client I recently dealt with saved 12 years and $37,000.

While that’s exceptional, it’s not rare ... this happens all the time. We are NOT a bank, or financial institution - just intermediaries.

More on that later. First, I want to explain how this applies to you ...

People usually pay $195 for us to go over their numbers and work out a plan. This is a 30 minute session, and the first step in our process with them.

I’ve recently had 500 x $195 vouchers printed - these cover the cost of this initial consultation. Of course, there’s no obligation to go ahead with anything, but it will give the person an idea of what’s possible.

**Here’s where you come in ...**

I’m happy for you to distribute these vouchers to your customers. They’re genuinely valued at $195.00 each - it’d make an excellent gift for your customers.

I’ve also written a letter which I’d like you to send out with the vouchers.

Even better than that, I’m willing to pay for the postage, printing and envelopes - all you need to do is stick on the address labels. I won’t see the list, and won’t have the opportunity to contact your customers unless they contact me.

It’s a fantastic way to do something special for your customers without really doing very much at all. All you need to do is say “yes” when I call and I’ll organize for everything to go ahead.

And remember - this promotion won’t cost you anything, and is a brilliant, meaningful way to treat your past customers.

I’ll call you in the next few days, just to answer any questions you have, and organize the fine details ...

Look forward to speaking with you then,

**Shane Holzheimer**

**The Mortgage Professionals**

PS If you’re looking for an explanation of how this works, you’ll find it in the small booklet I’ve included with this letter. I’ll answer any extra questions you have when I call.

PPS For each person who goes ahead with a mortgage plan, we’ll mail you a 5% ‘spotters fee’ - that’s around $130.

PPPS This idea comes with the full backing of Citibank.

Instant Host Beneficiary Relationships

\*Templates\*

Template #1

# Here’s how you can give each of your customers a surprise gift ...

# *... and it won’t cost you a cent*

Dear [Name],

You’re probably wondering what this is all about, so I’ll tell you right away - I’m about to give you an easy way to delight your customers.

**Best of all, I’m going to pay for it.**

**Let me explain...**

I want you to send every one of your customers a gift – the opportunity to take advantage an EXCLUSIVE, one time deal. Here’s the offer – [Place your offer here].

[Explain more about your offer here, including how much money each person will save]. That’s right – I want to give each of your customers **$[X] worth of [whatever it is you’re offering] for just $[Y]**.

You’re probably wondering how this will benefit you.

Simple - the gift will come from *your* business, not from me. Each of your clients will think that this is a special deal that YOU have arranged for them. Best of all, this entire promotion won’t cost you a cent. All you need to do is mail them the letter I’ve included for you (I’ll cover the cost of the printing and postage).

Actually, **I’ll even prepare all the letters** - you just need to stick address labels on and send them out.

Just imagine how impressed your clients will be when they receive this unexpected gift. Better still, just imagine how many of their friends they’re going to tell. This is a sure-fire way to keep your current clients happy and get some referrals along the way.

**I’ll give you a call** in the next couple of days to arrange the fine details.

Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you soon ...

[Your Name]

[Your Company Name]

PS Of course, I wouldn’t want you to recommend us without visiting us first. **Please accept my offer of a free** [give the person you’re trying to set the deal up with, an extra special free offer to encourage them to become part of the promotion].

Template #2

# [Place your headline here, mentioning the free offer or special price]

Hi [NAME],

First, I’d like to say thanks for dealing with [BUSINESS NAME]. Loyal customers like yourself really make doing business a pleasure.

As a token of my appreciation, I’ve arranged something special for you – [place the offer you’re making them in here].

Here’s the deal – [explain what the offer involves, what they get, how much they save, and what they have to do to take advantage of this deal].

We have arranged this special offer for our top customers as a surprise gift. [BUSINESS NAME] understands that good customers deserve awesome treatment and service. I think it’s important to say ‘thanks’ once in a while, and to do something unexpected.

And just so you know that you’ll be dealing with one of the best [whatever it is your company does], let me tell you 3 things about [Your Company Name] ...

1. **Benefit 1** … explain.
2. **Benefit 2** … explain.
3. **Benefit 3** … explain.

I seriously recommend you take advantage of this special offer. I know that you’ll appreciate the thought!! Simply phone [Your Name] and mention that you have this letter.

Once again, I’d like to say thank you for being a valued client of [Business Name], and I look forward to seeing you again soon,

[THEIR NAME and SURNAME]

[THEIR BUSINESS NAME]

PS There’s only one limitation on this voucher - you need to use it **before [date].** It’s worth acting soon – this is the only time this century you will be able to [get x for y or whatever it is you’re offering].

PPS I’ve included a [Your Company Name] business card, with their contact details. Phone for a personal appointment, and make sure you take this letter when you drop in.

Template #3

# A Special Offer from [Their Company Name]

# for being a valued client …

# Here’s your chance to [place your offer here] …

# We’ve arranged for you to [whatever you want the clients to receive] … with an extra special offer open only to valued

# [Their Company Name] Clients …

**Good morning,**

Well at least it is for all [Their Company Name] Clients who are receiving this letter. Let me explain why …

We’ve arranged for all of our valued Clients and their guests, to [place your offer in here].

You see, I realize [buying your type of product/service] can be a daunting process. You need to consider [problem1, problem2 and problem3]. It’s not always easy to find the answers to all these problems, so when I recently came across the secrets to [whatever these problems are], **I thought I should pass those secrets on to you …**

It all happened a few weeks ago when I met a [man/woman] by the name [your full name]. Now [your first name] runs a business called [your company name] which specializes in [whatever it is you do/sell]. [He/she] explained to me that [Your Company Name] is not your normal ‘run of the mill’, [whatever it is you do/sell]. [List your major point or points of difference here] …

**But the topic [he/she] touched on that interested me the most, was that of [problem 1].**

I was intrigued by what [your first name] had said, as I’ve heard of many cases myself where people had gotten less than a good deal, so I asked him to elaborate further. [He/she] explained to me that often people would base their decision on [common mistake for people looking to buy your product/service]. But according to [Your First Name]this is seldom the case.

[Your First Name]explained that unlike most purchases where [common misconception], with [your type of product/service] it can often be the opposite …

Apparently there are quite a few companies that play on this common misconception, making a killing out of [whatever it is your opposition do that you don’t].

I thought about what [he/she] had said for some time, and it all seemed to make perfect sense. I was particularly interested in what [Your First Name] had said about [solution to problem 1]. From the horror stories I’ve heard in the past, it seems to make good sense to [solution to problem 1].

[Your First Name] then went on to tell me that [he’d/she’d] helped many people learn the secrets of [problem 1]. Secrets that some people in the industry would rather you didn’t know.

I asked if [he/she] would teach these secrets to our clients, and [he/she] agreed …

[Your First Name] offered to [whatever it is you’re offering], exclusively for [Their Company Name] clients. [Your First Name] will explain how to [buy your type of product service, what to look for and what to be mindful of].

Now [your product/service] would normally be valued at $[X], but [Your First Name] has agreed to offer [Their Company Name] clients [your product/service] for only $[Y].

So everything has been arranged. You simply need [explain what they have to do].

As a valued client I thought that you’d appreciate this offer. A way for [Their Company Name] to say thank you for being a client. Anyway, I’ll let you go now and call [Your First Name], and I look forward to seeing you back here soon.

[Name]

[Their Company Name]

PS I pushed my luck a bit further with [Your First Name] and got [him/her] to agree to an extra special offer, available only to our valued clients. [He’s/she’s] agreed to [extra special offer for people who act within ‘X’ number of days].

Template #4

Date: 00/00/2014

[Business Name],

[Contact Name],

[Address]

# Here’s how you can give each of your clients a [place your offer here] that will be talked about all year …

# *… and it won’t cost you a single cent …*

Dear [Name],

I’ve included this piece of BLU-TACK to emphasis a point – **I’ve discovered a way that you can build a stronger bond with your clients …**

Let me explain …

In your type of business your clients are your most important asset. Of course this is the case in any business. Building a long term working relationship with your clients insures that you’ll maintain a profitable [type of business] for many years to come. Introducing their family and friends to your business doesn’t hurt either. So I’ve come up with a way that you can build further on your existing relationships. A way that won’t cost you a cent …

**I’m going to give you the chance to make a [FREE/Special] offer to each one of your clients. Best of all, I’m going to pay for the whole thing.**

Now [Name] at this point you’re probably asking yourself 2 questions – ‘What could this offer possibly be?’ and ‘Why would someone like me be offering to pay for it myself?’ Well read on and you’ll discover the answer to both …

**First, let’s look at my reason for making this offer …**

Let me start by first introducing myself. My name is [Your Name], and I run a business called [Your Company Name]. I specialize in [explain what it is your business does].

Which is why I’m writing this letter to you …

See, I’m in the same position as most business owners, in that I’m constantly looking for the most cost-effective ways to find new clients. Now I realize that many of your clients would be [ladies/men] who, like everyone, like to [purchase what you sell/do]. So I decided that because your clients are my ideal target market, that making a [special/free] offer (that I pay for completely), would be a very cost effective way for me to reach a bunch of new prospects.

**So I sat down and thought about it for a while and realized that there was one challenge with my idea … What’s in it for [THEIR NAME SURNAME]?**

Obviously there has to be some benefit to you, if you’re going to let me mail a letter out to your clients. So I thought about it some more and came to the conclusion that if I made an extra generous offer to all of YOUR clients, that **it would make you look good in their eyes**. A way of showing that your business values having them as a client. Of course by having your clients pass this offer on to their family and friends, you have the chance to introduce a lot more people to your business.

But I decided to take this idea one step further. It occurred to me that if the gift came from your business, via a letter that YOU sign, your clients would think that you had gone out of your way to arrange a special deal just for them. **BRILLIANT!!!**

But rather than ask you to sit down and spend hours typing up a letter, I decided to write one on your behalf. I’ve included a copy of the proposed letter for you to look over. Obviously if you’d like any changes I’d be more than happy to alter the letter at your request.

But still there was one obstacle that needed to be overcome. There is no way that you’re going to let me see your database of clients. And why would you? Now obviously I don’t need to see your database, I’ll get to meet people when they come in to [whatever it is you want them to do]. So what I propose is this … If I purchase some letterhead from you, print the letters on that letterhead and them stuff them into envelopes, I can then give them to you, and you can just stick the mailing labels on them. I can then just pay you for the postage, and I’ll never need to see your database at all!!! Simple isn’t it?

**But anyway, enough about my reasons, let’s take a look at the offer …**

The [product/service you’re offering] would normally be valued at $[X]. But for your clients and their family and friends, it’s [only $(Y) or FREE of charge].

But that’s not all. I’m also prepared to offer [extra special offer/deal]!!!

So your clients and their friends not only get [offer 1], they also get [special offer/deal]. Just think of how delighted they’ll be with your business for arranging such a great deal. Best of all, they’ll bring along their family and friends who’ll view your business as one that looks after its clients.

**Just imagine the rapport you’ll build by making this special offer to each one of your clients.** Most of the people they deal with would never think to make them a special offer, which will make this one seem so much more special.

Anyway, we should probably look at where we go from here. What I propose is this … I’ll give you a couple of days to look over the other letter that I’ve included, and discuss it with any partners or associates you need to run it past. I’ll then give you a call to arrange a suitable time to sit down with you and discuss the fine details. I’m sure after we meet you’ll agree that this is a very exciting and worthwhile promotion.

So [Name], thanks for taking the time to look over this letter. I look forward to meeting with you soon …

[Your Name]

[Your Company Name]

PS Of course I’d be more than happy to make you the same offer. We’ll arrange this when I call you in a few days time.

Template #5

[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

[Time]

Hello,

I’d like to give each of your clients a unique gift that they will remember forever – a [whatever it is you’re offering] (valued at $[X]).

As you’d be well aware, [explain the problem that you’re offering a solution to. You need to hit on something that they’ll be able to understand and agree with. For example if you were selling secondhand cars you might say ‘there’s nothing worse than rogues who are simply out to rip people off’].

The unfortunate fact is, [explain how there are many people who simply have to put up with the problem you’ve mentioned].

With your help, I’d like to try and make a difference. I ask that you attach this letter with the next batch of newsletters that you send to your clients. Of course, I would be happy to pay the associated postage costs.

Without doubt, your clients will be thankful for this offer. This is an opportunity that many of your clients could benefit from. Of course they will appreciate the fact that you’ve taken the time to arrange this deal for them.

More importantly, you’ll be opening the door to help. Sometimes, that can be all it takes to change a life.

I’ll phone you directly in the next 3 days to discuss the idea further …

[Your Name]

**[Your Company Name]**

PS We are also prepared to offer [make the person receiving the letter an extra special offer to encourage them to get involved].

Template #6

# A gift from [Their Company Name]

Hello,

Have you ever wondered about [what you want them to think about]?

[Explain here the thing that you want them to consider. You need to have them thinking about the comment you’ve made in the first sentence, to get them reacting the way you want them to. This section needs to show empathy with a problem that the prospect has. Having said that, it needs to subtly get people to think about something that frustrates or annoys them].

[This paragraph needs to further build on the empathy, but show that there is a solution. Saying things like ‘imagine if you could find a solution to this problem’, or ‘it doesn’t have to be like this’. This section really needs to build the vision of what life would be like if you could overcome the problem that you just mentioned].

[This section should look like the person who has signed the letter, is endorsing your product. Don’t lay it on too thick, or nobody will sign it. But you can say things like ‘from what I’ve been told’ or ‘from what I’ve seen’].

The first step is [what you want them to do].

[Explain further what steps they need to take to get what it is you’re offering. If they need to call to arrange an appointment, or come and see you, then tell them to do that here. You need to also explain any conditions that are associated with this offer].

I highly recommend you take action today. Set aside any reservations you have, and embrace the chance to [do what it is you want them to do]. I wish you all the best …

[Name of Business Owner]

[Their Company Name]

PS [Include an additional offer here for anyone who acts fast. For example you might have a special offer open to the first 27 people who respond to this deal].

Template #7

# [Question headline to get people to open to the idea you’re about to present]?

# Here’s how to [correct the problem that you alluded to in the headline] …

Dear [name],

I’ve recently come across an excellent idea.

I’m not sure about you, but [relate your comment back to the question you asked in the headline]. [Continue with the same theme and expand on what you’ve already said. The idea here is to get people agreeing with the statement you’ve made. You need to have the readers nodding their heads as they read along].

That’s why **re-making** is such a great idea.

Here’s how it works – [here you need to outline your ideas on how things are to work. You need to explain what people are required to do to take advantage of your offer].

[Make a statement here that will get the prospect excited. For example ‘imagine what life will be like when’ or ‘just think of what people will say’.]

[In this section you need to cover any potential objections the reader may have. Starting your sentence with things like ‘Of course …’ or ‘And we’ve already considered …’ will help you get this idea across]].

And best of all …[This needs to explain an extra special offer that the business has apparently arranged just for their clients].

You’ll be amazed – [Once again you need to create the vision and get the reader excited].

This [whatever it is] comes with **no obligation**. It’s simply an opportunity to [whatever you’re offering as an opportunity].

Phone [Your name] now on [your phone number], or simply drop in.

[Their Name]

[Their Company Name]

PS [Make a special offer here to those who act quickly, or to the first (X) number of clients].

Template #8

# Give your customers a $[X] gift without spending a cent ...

Dear [Name],

I have included a champagne flute to emphasize that this is an idea worth celebrating.

Hi, my name is [Your Name].

I own a business called [Your Company Name]. We specialize in [explain what it is you do in a clear and concise way].

You’re probably wondering what this has to do with you. Let me explain ...

**I would like to give you [Y] gift checks** for you to give to your clients. These checks will be to the value of $[X] which they can then spend with us on [whatever you want them to spend it on].

You can simply offer these to your customers as add on value. I will pay for the cost of the printing, so you won’t have to spend a cent.

Imagine how impressed your customers will be when they receive a $[X] check just for doing business with you.

**I will give you a call in 3 days** time to further discuss this proposal – and arrange to send you your checks.

[Your Name]

[Your Company Name]

Instant Host Beneficiary Relationships

\*Examples\*

Example #1

# A facial for you *and* a friend … just $19

Hi Lucy,

First, I’d like to say thanks for dealing with *Heather’s Fashion Boutiques*. Loyal customers like yourself really make doing business a pleasure.

As a token of my appreciation, I’ve arranged something special for you – a unique offer from A Place Of Beauty, a salon in central Pittsburgh.

Here’s the deal – visit A Place Of Beauty with a friend and you’ll receive 2 facials for the LESS than the price of 1. Two facials would normally cost $70. If you present this letter and mention that you are a customer of *Heather’s Fashion Boutiques*, you’ll pay just $19.

We have arranged this special deal for our top customers as a surprise gift. *Heather’s Fashion Boutiques* understands that good customers deserve awesome treatment and service. I think it’s important to say ‘thanks’ once in a while, and to do something unexpected.

And just so you know that you’ll be dealing with one of the best beauty salons in Pittsburgh, let me tell you 3 things about A Place Of Beauty ...

1. **They’re serious about results** … A Place Of Beauty is not your average beauty salon. Using the latest equipment and techniques, they actually remove any blemishes and give you back your natural radiance … and that’s guaranteed.
2. **They’re professional AND friendly** … the great thing about a visit to A Place Of Beauty is that you’ll enjoy yourself!! More importantly, the Place Of Beauty team are experienced and completely qualified.
3. **You’ll be totally pampered** … when you have a treatment with A Place Of Beauty, you’ll experience complete relaxation and bliss.

I seriously recommend you take advantage of this special offer. Your friend will also appreciate the thought!! Simply call Sharon and mention that you have this letter.

Once again, I’d like to say thank you for being a valued client of *Heather’s Fashion Boutiques,* and I look forward to seeing you again soon,

**Julie Johnson**

**Heather’s Fashion Boutiques**

PS There’s only one limitation on this voucher - you need to use it **before May 1st, 2014.** It’s worth acting soon – this is the only time this century you and a friend will be able to be pampered for just $19.

PPS I’ve included an A Place Of Beauty business card, with their contact details. **Call for a personal appointment**, and make sure you take this letter when you drop in.

**Example #2**

# Here’s how you can give each of your customers a surprise gift ...

# *... and it won’t cost you a cent*

Dear Julie,

You’re probably wondering what this is all about, so I’ll tell you right away - I’m about to give you an easy way to delight your customers.

**Best of all, I’m going to pay for it.**

**Let me explain...**

I want you to send every one of your customers a gift – the opportunity to take advantage an EXCLUSIVE, one time deal. Here’s the offer – 2 facials for *less* than the price of 1.

If your customers visit A Place Of Beauty with a friend, we will pamper both ladies for just $19. The normal price for two facials is $70. That’s right – I want to give each of your customers **$70 worth of beauty services for just $19**.

You’re probably wondering how this will benefit you.

Simple - the gift will come from *your* business, not from me. Each of your clients will think that this is a special deal that YOU have arranged for them. Best of all, this entire promotion won’t cost you a cent. All you need to do is mail them the letter I’ve included for you (I’ll cover the cost of the printing and postage).

Actually, **I’ll even prepare all the letters** - you just need to stick address labels on and send them out.

Just imagine how impressed your clients will be when they receive this unexpected gift. Better still, just imagine how many of their friends they’re going to tell. This is a sure-fire way to keep your current clients happy and get some referrals along the way.

**I’ll give you a call** in the next couple of days to arrange the fine details.

Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you soon ...

**Sharon Richards**

**A Place Of Beauty**

PS Of course, I wouldn’t want you to recommend our beauty salon without visiting first. **Please accept my offer of a free Pampering Session** – this includes a full facial with one of our qualified therapists. Honestly, it’s one of the most relaxing ways you could spend 45 minutes.

**Example #3**

May 28th, 2014

Ambassador Tennis Club

Michael James,

P.O. Box 123,

Chicago, Illinois, 12345

# Here’s how you can put on a members evening that will be talked about all year …

# *… and it won’t cost you a single cent …*

Dear Michael,

I’ve included this piece of BLU-TACK to emphasis a point – **I’ve discovered a way that you can build a stronger bond with your members …**

Let me explain …

In your type of business your members are your most important asset. Of course this is the case in any club. Building a long term working relationship with your members ensures that you’ll maintain a profitable club for many years to come. Introducing their family and friends to your club doesn’t hurt either. So I’ve come up with a way that you can build further on your existing relationships. A way that won’t cost you a cent …

**I’m going to give you the chance to make a FREE offer to each one of your members. Best of all, I’m going to pay for the whole thing.**

Now Michael at this point you’re probably asking yourself 2 questions – ‘What could this offer possibly be?’ and ‘Why would someone like me be offering to pay for it myself?’ Well read on and you’ll discover the answer to both …

**First, let’s look at my reason for making this offer …**

Let me start by first introducing myself. My name is Dan Jones, and I run a business called Jewels For You. I specialize in the finest quality jewelry, at very affordable prices. I also run seminars to educate people on what to look for when buying jewelry.

Which is why I’m writing this letter to you …

See, I’m in the same position as most business owners, in that I’m constantly looking for the most cost effective ways to find new members. Now I realize that many of your members would be ladies who, like everyone, like to look good and like a bargain. So I decided that because your members are my ideal target market, that running a seminar (that I pay for completely), would be a very cost effective way for me to reach a bunch of new prospects.

**So I sat down and thought about it for a while and realized that there was one challenge with my idea … What’s in it for Michael James?**

Obviously there has to be some benefit to you, if you’re going to let me mail out an invitation to your members. So I thought about it some more and came to the conclusion that if I made an extra generous offer to all of YOUR members, that **it would make you look good in their eyes**. A way of showing that your club values having them as a member. Of course by having your members invite their family and friends, you have the chance to introduce a lot more people to your club.

But I decided to take this idea one step further. It occurred to me that if the gift came from your club, via a letter that YOU sign, your members would think that you had gone out of your way to arrange a special deal just for them. **BRILLIANT!!!**

But rather than ask you to sit down and spend hours typing up a letter, I decided to write one on your behalf. I’ve included a copy of the proposed letter for you to look over. Obviously if you’d like any changes I’d be more than happy to alter the letter at your request.

But still there was one obstacle that needed to be overcome. There is no way that you’re going to let me see your database of members. And why would you? Now obviously I don't need to see your database, I’ll get to meet people at the seminar. So what I propose is this … If I purchase some letterhead from you, print the letters on that letterhead and them stuff them into envelopes, I can then give them to you, and you can just stick the mailing labels on them. I can then just pay you for the postage, and I’ll never need to see your database at all!!! Simple isn’t it?

**But anyway, enough about my reasons, let’s take a look at the offer …**

The jewelry seminars would normally be valued at $25 per person. In these seminars I explain how to spot good jewelry over cheap and poor quality products, how to co-ordinate your jewelry with your wardrobe, and how to choose the right jewelry for your lifestyle. These seminars are a lot of fun, and those that attend will come away with a load of valuable information.

But that’s not all. We also offer some amazing deals on the night of the seminar, where those in attendance have the chance to pick up some pieces at greatly discounted prices.

See, I buy pieces from all over the world at greatly discounted prices. And when I say greatly discounted, I mean GREATLY DISCOUNTED. In fact on many pieces, we offer savings of up to 34% on what you’d normally pay in a jewelry store.

**But enough about the seminar, what about the offer …**

Well Michael, I’m going to give you the chance to offer your members free admission, PLUS they’ll also have the chance to get some amazing deals. Just think of how delighted they’ll be with your club for arranging such an evening (or afternoon). Best of all, they’ll bring along their family and friends who’ll view your club as one that looks after its members, and of course they’ll no doubt spend quite a deal of money on drinks and things while they’re there.

**Just imagine the rapport you’ll build by making this special offer to each one of your members.** Most of the people they deal with would never think to make them a special offer, which will make this one seem so much more special.

Anyway, we should probably look at where we go from here. What I propose is this … I’ll give you a couple of days to look over the other letter that I’ve included, and discuss it with any partners or associates you need to run it past. I’ll then give you a call to arrange a suitable time to sit down with you and discuss the fine details. I’m sure after we meet you’ll agree that this is a very exciting and worthwhile promotion.

So Michael, thanks for taking the time to look over this letter. I look forward to meeting with you soon …

**Dan Jones**

**Jewels For You**

PS Of course I’d be more than happy to donate a few quality pieces to your club that you could use as a raffle prize, or maybe as awards. The choice of how you use them is entirely yours. This is just my special way of saying thanks.

Example #4

# A Special Offer from Ambassador Tennis Club for being a valued member …

# Here’s your chance to attend a jewelry seminar and showing absolutely FREE of charge …

# We’ve arranged for you to attend a FREE jewelry seminar and showing, normally valued at $25.00 … with an extra special offer open only to valued Ambassador Tennis Club Members …

Good morning,

Well at least it is for all Ambassador Bowling Club members who are receiving this letter. Let me explain why …

We’ve arranged for all of our valued members and their guests, to attend a FREE jewelry seminar and showing, which is to be held in the Mahogany Room on Tuesday March 17th. This is one showing that you won’t want to miss.

You see, I realize that buying jewelry can be a daunting process. You need to consider the type of pieces that suit your wardrobe, which articles suit your lifestyle, and most importantly you need to know how to spot good jewelry over the not so good. It’s not always easy to find the answers to all these questions, so when I recently came across the secrets to successfully buying jewelry, **I thought I should pass those secrets on to you …**

It all happened a few weeks ago when I met a man by the name of Dan Jones. Now Dan runs a business called Jewels For You which specializes in advice on fine jewelry, in particular chains and bracelets. He explained to me that Jewels For You is not your normal ‘run of the mill’, jewelry supplier. They source jewelry from all over the world, and can therefore offer the very best deals. Dan explained that many of his pieces cost 34% less that what you’d normally pay in a jewelry store …

**But the topic he touched on that interested me the most, was that of spotting a good deal, over jewelry that was way over priced.**

I was intrigued by what Dan had said, as I’ve heard of many cases myself where people had got less than a good deal, so I asked him to elaborate further. He explained to me that often people would base their decision on the price of the jewelry – the more it costs, the better it is. But according to Dan this is seldom the case.

Dan explained that unlike most purchases where the more expensive usually means better quality, with jewelry it can often mean the opposite …

Apparently there are quite a few companies that play on this common misconception, making a killing out of high priced, poor quality items. While many companies offer real value for money, the trick for the consumer is knowing how to spot the good from the not so good.

I thought about what he had said for some time, and it all seemed to make perfect sense. I was particularly interested in what Dan had said about being able to spot the better pieces from those that are over priced. From the horror stories I’ve heard in the past, it seems to make good sense to find out how to spot the difference.

Dan then went on to tell me that he’d taught many people the secrets of spotting a bargain. Secrets that some people in the industry would rather you didn’t know.

I asked if he would teach these secrets to our members, and he agreed …

Dan offered to run a jewelry seminar and showing, exclusively for Ambassador Tennis Club members and their guests. In these seminars Dan explains how to spot good jewelry over cheap and nasty products, how to co-ordinate your jewelry with your wardrobe, and how to choose the right jewelry for your lifestyle.

Apparently these seminars are a lot of fun, and those that attend will come away with a load of valuable information. Now these jewelry seminars would normally be valued at $25 per person attending, but Dan has agreed to run one for us FREE of charge. That’s right, as a Ambassador Tennis Club member you won’t have to pay a cent, and neither will your friends.

Dan will also have a huge range of goods on display that are available for purchase. Now as I mentioned before, you can save up to 34% on a lot of these items, so it’s well worth your while taking a look at what’s on offer.

So everything has been arranged for Tuesday, March 17th. You simply need to call us at 345-6789 and reserve your place. There will be snacks available, and **there’s absolutely no obligation to buy**. If you don’t find any pieces that take your fancy, you’ll at least come away with new found wisdom when it comes to buying jewelry.

As a valued member I thought that you’d appreciate this offer …. a way for Ambassador Tennis Club to say thank you for being a member. Anyway, I’ll let you go now and reserve your place, and I look forward to seeing you back here soon.

Michael James

Ambassador Tennis Club

PS I pushed my luck a bit further with Dan and got him to agree to an extra special offer, available only to our valued members. He’s agreed to put up a lucky door prize valued at over $100. To enter, you simply need to fill in a ticket that will be available at the door. Good luck.

Example #5

Jim Stevens

11 Parade Circle

San Jose, California 12345

Hello Jim,

I’d like to give each of your club members a unique gift that they will remember forever – a comprehensive hearing check and 30 minute consultation (valued at $48).

As you’d be well aware, hearing naturally deteriorates as we age. For the person experiencing hearing loss, life becomes less satisfying – they can no longer participate in conversations with confidence, Movies and television shows become harder to follow, and social situations and interactions become more of a struggle than a thrill.

The unfortunate fact is, around two out of three people with hearing problems never do anything about it. They feel embarrassed, and aren’t really sure what to do about the problem.

With your help, I’d like to try and make a difference. I ask that you attach this letter with the next batch of newsletters that you send to your members. Of course, I would be happy to pay the associated postage costs.

Without doubt, your club members will be thankful for this offer. This is an opportunity that many of your current members could benefit from. Of course they will appreciate the fact that you’ve taken the time to arrange this deal for them.

More importantly, you’ll be opening the door to help. Sometimes, that can be all it takes to change a life.

I’ll phone you in the next 3 days to discuss the idea further …

Steven Remmings

**The Clear Sound Hearing Clinic**

PS We are also prepared to offer each of your members huge savings off of their hearing aid purchase, if the tests indicate that they are required.

Example #6

# A gift from St. Patrick’s Bingo Club

Hello …. Have you ever wondered about your hearing?

Hearing loss is a subtle condition that gradually makes an impression on people’s lives. On average it takes around 7 years for people to seek help after that first notice any problem with their hearing. Unfortunately part of the reason for this is because people feel embarrassed, when really they have no need to.

The fact is, it’s quite natural for hearing to deteriorate as we age.

That needn’t affect your lifestyle as you mature, especially with the incredible hearing devices that are available today. Although hearing aids use to be cumbersome and obvious, many of the latest models are available in completely discreet sizes. They also work better than those of the past – hearing aid technology has revolutionized the way in which hearing impaired people now live their lives.

From what I’ve been told, these devices give the wearer a new lease on life. Sounds will become sharper and clearer, and you hear the nuances of life once more – you’ll enjoy the melody of music, TV shows will make more sense, and you’ll hear the punch line of that funny joke told during a lunch with friends.

The first step is a hearing check.

To make it simple, I’ve organized for our club members to receive this free of charge. Normally, you’d pay $48 for this consultation. If you call The Clear Sound Hearing Clinic and mention this letter, they’ll waive that fee.

I highly recommend you take action today. Set aside any reservations you have, and embrace the chance to reclaim your hearing. I wish you all the best …

**John Wilson**

**St. Patrick’s Bingo Club**

PS As an additional offer to our members, if after the test it’s decided you need a hearing aid to solve your hearing difficulties, **you’ll receive $50 off a new Resound hearing aid**.

PPS As an extra special offer, if you chose a Digital Resound Hearing Aid, **you’ll receive $150 off**. These amazing new hearing aids have remarkably high, crystal clear clarity with fully automatic adjustment for easy of use. Best of all they can be programmed to suit most cases of hearing loss. These revolutionary new digital models will change the way you hear forever. So don’t put it off. Call The Clear Sound Hearing Clinic today and rediscover those treasured sounds you’ve been missing.

Example #7

# Do you have any expensive jewelry you no longer wear?

# Here’s how to make every piece fashionable again …

Dear Robert,

I’ve recently came across an excellent idea.

I’m not sure about you, but I’ve got lots of jewelry that I no longer wear. Either it no doesn’t fit my finger, or it’s gone out of style. I mean, these rings still have immense sentimental value – they just aren’t fashionable any more.

That’s why **re-making** is such a great idea.

Here’s how it works – you take your existing jewelry, extract the raw materials (gold, silver, gems) and **create something completely new**. Instead of purchasing a brand new piece, your modernize what you already have.

The results can be truly startling, as the **‘before and after’** shots I’ve included illustrate.

Of course, you may be happy with the style – it could be the fit that’s a problem. With re-sizing, it’s easily taken care of. For less than you’d think, your ring can be **re-shaped to fit your finger perfectly**.

And best of all …

I’ve arranged a **free assessment** for you. This is a 15 minute analysis with one of Cleveland’s finest jewelers – Brian Davis of Jolissa’s Jewelers. Mention you’re a customer of Lejose and Brian will clean and polish your ring free. Then, after careful examination, he will explain the possibilities.

You’ll be amazed – the most archaic looking piece can be turned into something **sophisticated and dazzling**.

This assessment comes with **no obligation**. It’s simply an opportunity to see how easily your old, unused jewelry can be transformed.

Phone Brian now at 478-3112, or simply drop in.

**Julie McNamara**

**Lejose**

PS If you have your ring remade in the next 28 days, you’ll receive a special bonus - a **$50 voucher to spend at Lejose**.

Example #8

# Give your customers a $50 gift without spending a cent ...

Dear Steven,

I have included a champagne flute to emphasize that this is an idea worth celebrating.

Hi, my name is Brad Mitchell.

I run Fantasy Disco’s, a mobile disco service that’s second to none. With a music selection from the 60’s through to the latest hits, we can cover any function from 21st birthdays to weddings.

You’re probably wondering what this has to do with you. Let me explain ...

**I would like to give you 200 gift checks** for you to give to your clients. These checks will be to the value of $50 which they can then spend with us on their next party.

You can simply offer these to your customers as add on value. I will pay for the cost of the printing, so you won’t have to spend a cent.

Imagine how impressed your customers will be when they receive a $50 check just for doing business with you.

**I will give you a call in 3 days** time to further discuss this proposal – and arrange to send you your checks.

Brad Mitchell

Proprietor Fantasy Disco’s

Break Even Analysis

It’s essential that you work out your costs up front. Otherwise, you’ll have no idea what you need to achieve in order for the campaign to be worthwhile. You may find out after doing the analysis that the campaign has so little chance of success, you need to go back to the drawing board altogether.

This analysis is for the whole campaign. After you’ve worked out your total fixed costs *(for the campaign)*, you then work out your profit *(your average dollar sale minus your variable costs),* which gives you enough info to work out how many responses you need in order to break even.

Divide this number by the total number of letters you are planning to send out. This will give you a percentage response rate. As a very rough guide (every case is different), anything over 15% is stretching it. If you need that high a response, you might night to have another think about it.

The very best direct mail shots to cold, new lists get around 15%. The best direct mail campaign to existing clients can be around 60%. These are rare results - if you need higher than that to break even, re-assess whether direct mail is the best way to go.

Break Even Analysis

**Hard Costs**  Advertising $ ................

Envelopes $ ................

Paper $ ................

Printing $ ................

Postage $ ................

Other $ ................

**1. Total Fixed Costs $ ................**

**2. Average $$$ Sale $ ................**

**Variable Costs** Telephone  **$ .............**

Wages $ ................

Electricity $ ................

Rent $ ................

Brochures $ ................

Other Postage $ ................

Other $ ................

**3. Total Variables $ ................**

**Delivery Costs**

Cost Of Goods Sold $ ................

Taxes $ ................

Transportation $ ................

Packaging $ ................

Other $ ................

**4. Total Delivery $ ................**

**5. Net Profit [2/(3+4)] $ ................**

**6. Response Needed To Break Even (1/5) $ ................**