



Put That in Writing: The Value of Testimonials

By Dana Kader Robb

Testimonials are a great addition to your marketing materials. They create an opportunity for your clients to tell their own stories, in their own words. And research has shown that potential customers read and believe testimonials at a higher rate than other information. Marketing consultant Steve Yankee calls them “the cure for worried buyers.” My experience has been that most clients are more than willing to write testimonials about their good experiences. All you need to do is ask, and maybe give them a few hints on what you need or how to write a terrific testimonial.

A good testimonial will...

- ✍ **Focus on the benefits that you've provided.** A good testimonial gives detail about the success the client had with your product or service (ie. my sales went up 25% after attending your seminar).
- ✍ **Be completely attributed.** The more information you give about the writer, the better. A full name and company name make the comments more legitimate. If confidentiality is important, note that “these clients gave permission for us to share their stories with you.”
- ✍ **Address potential objections.** If you are constantly facing the same concerns from potential customers, make sure your testimonials deal with those concerns.

- ✍ **Be specific.** Again, the more detail the better. You don't just want, “Your carpet cleaner is very good”. You want, “After I used your cleaner, my carpet felt and looked like new. I never thought those spots would come out.”
- ✍ **Have a length of two to three sentences.** Very short testimonials like “Amazing!...” or “Loved every minute of it!” seem edited and insincere.

To get good testimonials, you can...

- ✍ **Lead the writer to what you want to say.** When asking for the testimonial, ask a question like, “Did you notice a difference after you left my office?” Then, when your client responds, ask them to write about that.
- ✍ **Offer to type while your client talks.** If a client wants you to write the testimonial for them, ask a few questions about their experience. Take notes while they talk, using their language as much as possible. Type it into paragraph format and send it to the client for approval.
- ✍ **Get permission to reprint unsolicited testimonials.** If you get a thank you letter, immediately respond by asking for permission to use it in your marketing materials. By the time you need them, you may have a file filled with testimonials... and written releases to use them.