

CopySnips.com Free Report

Buy Now!

How to create
compelling urgency

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Buy now.

Order now.

Call now!

Three of the most common phrases in the language of sales letters and advertisements.

Copywriters insist that the use of the phrase “Buy now” will increase sales, and that's very probably true...

...but people don't buy *now* just because you *told* them to do it.

They do it because they *want* the product, they *want it now*, and they also feel an *overwhelming sense of urgency* to get it.

In this report, we're going to talk about what makes people want something *now*, rather than later – and what we can do to help them feel that sense of urgency.

First of all, we need to understand the answer to the following important question:

Why do people who want it now still not always buy it now?

The answer is simple:

Hesitation and inaction is usually easier than decision and action.

In other words, given the opportunity, most people will put off making a decision or taking action.

There are several reasons for this.

1. Familiarity versus uncertainty. Most decisions or actions involve a change of some kind, and it's usually easier to deal with the status quo (the current state) rather than the effects of a change. We prefer the *comfort of familiarity*, rather than the *uncertainty of change*.

2. Decisions and actions require energy. For example, we might wish to avoid the mental energy of making a decision, and weighing in our minds the pros and cons of our options.

3. The opinion of, and impact upon, other people. We have to weigh the impact of our decisions upon others. "How will others view me if I purchase this product? What impact will this purchase have on others?"

The Consequences Of Putting Things Off

Imagine you had a magical power... the ability to read the thoughts of your potential customers.

Wouldn't that be great? You'd be able to discover precisely why they don't buy, and even discern the moment at which you started to lose them.

Now let's imagine you're able to do that with your next potential customer - we'll call her Sally.

Sally comes to your website. She reads your sales copy with great interest and thinks, "This sounds like just what I need". She even gets excited about the idea of buying what you have to offer.

She checks the price, and thinks, "Yes, I can afford this!" She hovers her mouse over the order button.

It sounds like everything is in place for a sale, doesn't it?

Ah, but wait.

Something in her mind stops her from clicking the order button.

She hesitates.

As she pauses to consider the purchase she's about to make, her mind drifts to something she was thinking of buying earlier in the day.

She tries to recall why she needed to buy that other item... then it comes to her... it was for the vacation she'd booked the other day.

Then she remembers the promise she made to her friend, to check the location of the hotel they'll be staying at. So she switches browser tabs and visits the vacation website to get the details.

She calls up her friend to tell her the name of the hotel – and after talking for a while about the vacation, they make plans to go out for a drink later that evening.

She doesn't have time to buy your thing right now, so she writes down the web address of your site, making a mental note to come back to it tomorrow.

Over the next few days she thinks about your product – it's still something she'd *like* to buy – but other things get in the way, and she never quite finds the time to go back and order.

Other things make demands on her money, like bills, entertainment, shopping – and making sure she has everything she needs for the vacation.

Sally never buys.

Your product becomes a vague memory. The piece of paper with

your web address is soon covered with pieces of paper with more urgent things on them.

Unfortunately, you can't read Sally's mind – so you don't know Sally's story.

To you, she is simply a *statistic* in your web analytics program – one of the 98 out of 100 visitors to your site who didn't buy (if your product or service has a 2% conversion rate).

However, each of those 98 visitors who *don't* buy will have their own story, and many of them may be quite similar to Sally's story.

So what went wrong? What was missing?

The answer, in Sally's case, was a *sense of urgency*.

She didn't feel a strong enough sense that she *needed* to buy now - so she didn't... even though the copywriter told her to “Buy now!”

Copywriters understand that your sales copy needs to build desire, and even tell them to buy (so-called “calls to action”)... but neither of these are necessarily enough to compel them to buy *now*.

They must also feel an overwhelming sense of urgency.

And quite frankly, creating this sense of urgency is where most sales letters fail miserably.

Let me explain two things about desire and urgency that the writers of many sales letters fail to realize:

1. Urgency without pre-existing desire is ineffective.

I see many marketers and copywriters make this classic mistake:

They make the limited nature of their offer the prime focus of their copy, without *first* building a desire for it.

The simple truth is: If a potential customer isn't interested and doesn't want your widget, why should they care that your 50% discount on widgets lasts until this Friday?

Make sure the desire is there *first*, to make the urgency effective.

2. Desire without urgency is risky.

You can take potential customers to the peak of desire (as with Sally), but if you don't provide compelling reasons for them to act *now*, they may hesitate and put off their decision.

And this hesitation leads to a loss of desire you'd worked hard to build. Other things compete for the prospect's time, money and attention... other options present themselves, life gets in the way... and for whatever reason, they don't come back and buy.

So you not only need to build desire for your product, you also need to *create a sense of overwhelming urgency*.

The question you're probably asking at this point is, "How?" Read on and find out...

The 3 Urgency Accelerators

There are really only three ways to create a sense of overwhelming urgency:

1. Give them *reasons to buy now* rather than later.

2. Explain the *consequences of not buying now*.

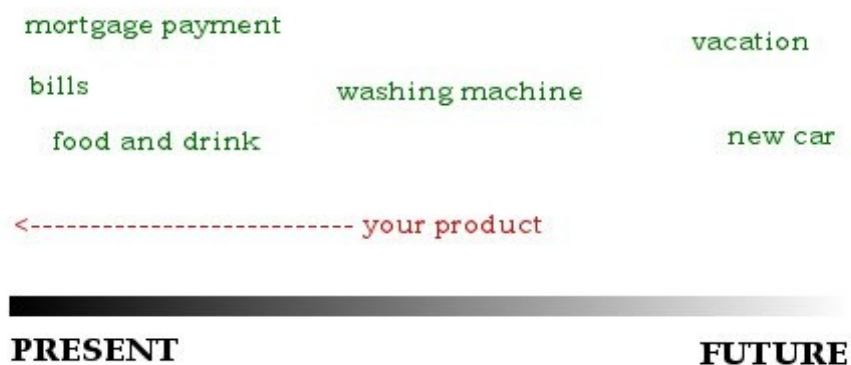
3. Create an *offer* which compels them to take action now, rather than later.

Before I explain how to do each of these, I'd like you to imagine a graph, in which the *present* is to the left of the graph, and the *future* is to the right. Plotted on the graph are all the things they need or want to buy or pay for.

For example, food and drink, the mortgage payment, and living expenses will probably be on the left side of the graph, on the “present” side. These are things they need to pay for either now, or very soon.

Closer to the right are things such as a vacation, a new car, a new washing machine and so on.

The further to the right an item, the more distant the purchase is perceived. It's less of a *urgent need* in the prospect's mind.



The role of your sales copy is to move your product to the left of the graph, in your prospect's mind, so they perceive it not only as a *need*, but something they need *now*.

Your copy can do this by providing them with *reasons* to buy now, and explain the *consequences* of not buying now.

Reasons To Buy Now

Of course, your copy should answer questions such as:

What will your product do for them? What will they get out of it? What problems will it solve? What pain will it relieve? What feelings will it give them?

In other words, it needs to explain the benefits.

However, it's important to understand that benefits are reasons to buy *at some time*, but they are not necessarily reasons to buy *now*.

Your copy must also supply the potential customer with reasons to buy now.

What are the advantages of buying now instead of later? What problems will be immediately solved? What kind of relief and pleasure will they experience from their action?

For example, let's say you're selling a \$50 ebook on how to start your own business and how that business can turn a profit as quickly as possible.

You can explain all of the features and benefits of the book, but these don't provide reasons for buying it now. However, here are some reasons it might be beneficial for your prospect to have all this information now, rather than later:

- Setting up a business takes time. So even if you're not going to set up until next year, it helps to know everything in advance, so you can plan ahead.

- You can get things on the right footing from the day you start.
- The quicker you start, the quicker you can be turning a profit (with the information from the ebook).
- You can be lining up potential customers even before you start – in fact, even now.
- You can use the resources in the ebook to research, evaluate the competition and find associates right now, even before you start.
- You can determine *right now* whether your idea is likely to be profitable or not, before you spend any money on the business.

These are just some ideas off the top of my head, and we'd want to phrase them much more persuasively when incorporating them into sales copy...

... but hopefully you can see that they are not simply *benefits*, but are also *reasons to buy now*, rather than later.

Consequences Of Not Buying Now

The following might sound simplistic, but it's generally true:

Most people's strategy in life (including their buying decisions) is to move towards *pleasure*, and away from *pain*.

So as well as supplying reasons to buy now, your copy should also explain the pain and consequences of *not* buying now.

What will they lose out on if they don't buy now? What problems might

just get worse? What pain will they experience, or continue to experience? What will be the ultimate outcome of continuing along the same path for the rest of their life?

Using our previous example of the \$50 ebook on setting up your own business and turning a profit as quickly as possible, let's come up with some *consequences* of not having this information right now:

- You need to *right now* implement the tests in Chapter X to find out whether your idea is a moneymaker or not. If you don't, it could cost you a lot of money.
- 90% of new small businesses fail within the first 5 years, and it's often because they don't do the things in Chapter Y before starting up, which you need to know *now*.
- Most new small businesses make a loss for the first year or two, so if you don't get this information now, you may sustain losses you didn't need to.
- The longer you wait to get started, the longer it will take to make a profit, or you may even abandon your idea – which is why you need to get this now.
- The biggest hurdle for most people is a fear of the unknown, which is why you need this ebook right now, so you'll be fully aware of everything you need to know. If you don't, it will be like walking in the dark.

Once again, these are off the top of my head and are really just outlines of the consequences – we'd want to phrase them much more persuasively in our sales copy.

For many people, the decision to buy is itself a “pain”. After all, it

means sacrificing a portion of their hard earned money. And let's face it, some order forms aren't exactly a pleasure to fill out either.

The job of the copywriter is to get the prospect to feel that the pain of *not buying* is going to be greater than the pain of buying. Ideally, we want them to take *pleasure* in the act of buying!

Unfamiliarity Breeds Hesitation

As we discussed earlier, most people prefer *familiarity*, which is why some people put up with pain. Familiarity is comfortable, and uncertainty is uncomfortable.

This explains a lot of human behavior, including buying decisions. If we're not familiar with another product, we are uncertain about it.

So we need to eliminate unfamiliarity, or make a potential customer feel familiar with what we have to offer. Here are some ideas on how to do this:

Get the product (or at least part of it) into their hands. If you're selling software, allow them to try it for a limited period of time, so they become familiar with it. If you're selling an information product, give them part of the product (maybe a chapter or two) for free.

Show them how it works. If you're selling software, you can use videos and screenshots to show them how it works so that when they choose to buy, it isn't completely new to them.

Use analogies. You need to explain every feature and benefit of your product in a way that your potential customers can understand. If you think there might be a problem with this, consider using an analogy, and think of something it's *like*, to which

it could be compared.

For example, instead of “article spinning software”, get your potential customer to think of it as *like having their own article “butler” who serves them with fresh content 24/7.*

Enable others to recommend it. Word of mouth is an important part of our buying decision. We often buy things on the basis of recommendations from people whom we trust. So make it easier for people to recommend you in the first place. Give them tools to do so, which will also make your product or service more familiar at the same time.

Offers That Create Urgency

As well as building desire to the point where they must have your product now, a second way to generate a sense of urgency is to create a *limited offer*.

Unfortunately, a lot of sales letters don't seem to contain offers that create any *real* sense of urgency.

Instead, they rely on wording that suggests they are thinking of putting the price up soon, so that's why the visitor should buy now.

I can't leave the product at this low price for much longer, I may put it up at any time - so buy now before it goes up.

The problem with this is it's *vague*, and therefore *weak*.

It may increase sales, depending on how often your audience is used to seeing these kinds of statements. (I see this all the time in the Internet marketing niche, so it's probably viewed with more skepticism than in a niche that doesn't see it as often.)

However, it's still weak. It doesn't create an *overwhelming* sense of urgency, does it?

This is what we're going for in this report... *overwhelming* urgency. Let's see how you can do this for real:

Limited Time Offers (And Why Most Internet Ones Suck)

A common sales technique is the *limited time offer*. Stores use this technique all the time, with their January sales, and their Weekend or Holiday specials... and they're pretty successful.

However, on the Internet, I see lots of *attempts* at limited time offers, but many of them seem to me to be fairly weak.

For example, you may have seen the “buy before midnight” technique, where the seller uses a snippet of Javascript to display today's date, and to imply the price will go up after midnight:

Buy before midnight of [today's date] and you can get it for the special price of just \$xx.

Now, there are a couple of reasons why this technique is a problem.

First of all, if the visitor returns after midnight, most of the time the price doesn't change. All that changes is the date, which is replaced with the next day's date. And since the price doesn't change, both the offer and the seller immediately loses all *credibility* and *trust*.

Furthermore, *any* sense of urgency the visitor may have felt immediately disappears when they realize the price hasn't gone up after all – the exact *opposite* of overwhelming urgency!

Second, there is often no justification as to why “midnight”

happens to be the deadline, or why there is even a deadline in the first place.

How To Create Effective Limited Time Offers

Back in 2003 I invented something called Dynamic Deadlines™, which enabled a seller to create limited time offers based on the time a unique visitor first arrived on their site.

Originally, Dynamic Deadlines™ was a feature of a program called *Sales Page Master* which I eventually withdrew from the market - but in 2007 I decided to reintroduce Dynamic Deadlines™ in a PHP program of the same name. (In 2009 I updated the program to include live counters).

The program “remembers” the time and date on which a new visitor arrives, and effectively creates a limited time offer for each individual visitor!

So let's say you want to create urgency by give your prospects a 20% discount if they order within 1 hour of visiting your site. This is exactly what you can do with this program.

The first time they arrive, your order link might say, "Buy within the next 1 hour to receive a 20% discount". (You can use a live counter, so they can even see the minutes and seconds remaining before the deadline expires.)

Now, here's where it gets *really* good. If the visitor misses their first deadline, you can have the program remove the offer and replace it with the full price... OR you can create another deadline, with a different offer - for example, a lower discount.

Once one deadline expires, you can automatically raise the price, withdraw the offer, remove a bonus and/or begin another deadline - the choice is yours.

You can have as many deadlines in sequence as you like - so you could offer an “early bird” bonus or discount for people who order with 1 hour, then a smaller discount or bonus for people who buy within the next 24 hours, and so on. And you can set each deadline to whatever length of time you want, from 1 minute to 30 days or more.

Now, what I like about this technique (and part of the reason I created the program) is that, not only can they see how much time they have left, but when they see the first deadline pass and the price increase (or a bonus disappear), your next deadline has *instant credibility*.

Unlike the “buy before midnight” technique where the price doesn't really change, by using Dynamic Deadlines™ the prospect can see the price increase *right before their eyes* once a deadline passes!

This means they are going to take your next deadline *very* seriously indeed. It's a truly limited time offer, for each unique visitor.

Incidentally, you don't simply have to use this technique on sales letters. You can also use it on landing pages or “squeeze” pages where you'd like your visitor to hand over their email address in exchange for a free report and email newsletter.

For example, you could offer a couple of free reports, and give a very short deadline (i.e. 10 minutes) to claim *both* reports in exchange for their email address. Then, once the 10 minutes has passed, withdraw ONE of the reports, leaving the one you really want them to read... and a new deadline, say 1 hour, to claim the remaining report.

Once again, when they see that one of the reports is no longer available as a bonus, your new deadline is going to be taken much

more seriously.

Reasons For Your Limited Time Offers

I firmly believe you should always provide a credible *reason* for time limiting your offers.

There are several approaches you can take to justify and explain the reason for your deadlines, but whatever approach you choose to take, you should *always* provide a reason.

Here are some angles you can take, which explain to your visitors why your offer has a deadline:

- **The straight talking angle.** This is great for sellers who are known for telling it like it is. Tell them the reason for the deadline is simply to compel them to act now!

Example: "As you know, most people hesitate and put off doing something when they can, even when taking action is in their best interest. So to help you take action now, I'm making this available only if you act within the next 10 minutes."

- **The cost effective angle.** If it's going to be more cost effective to have them buy now rather than later, explain that to your customer in simple terms they can understand.

Example: "It costs us money to re-advertise this product to you, so if you buy this right now we can offer you a 20% discount which will reflect how much we will save on advertising costs. So this discount is only valid for the next 1 hour."

- **The special offer angle.** Since Dynamic Deadlines™ are unique to each visitor, you can word it in such a way that implies you're running a special offer at the moment, and

your visitor should take advantage of it now. (This works best and sounds more plausible for deadlines longer than 12 hours. For example, setting it at, say, 23 hours and 40 minutes sounds like the deadline wasn't specifically tailored for them personally.)

Example: "However, we're running a special offer at the moment, which expires 23 hours and 40 minutes from now. If you order within that time, you can buy it at the discounted price of \$xy."

Of course, whichever angle you take, you should adapt the wording to your own offer; but I encourage you to provide a reason for your limited time offers – because, as humans, we *like* reasons for things. They make us feel like we're doing things for logical reasons.

Incidentally, if you're interested in using Dynamic Deadlines™ on your site, more details can be found near the end of this report. I haven't provided the link right now because, once you click to the site, your personal limited time offer begins!

Limited Quantity Offers

An alternative to limiting by *time* is to put a limit on the *number of units* sold.

This works best when you have a large audience who are going to be making a buying decision at roughly the same time.

If prospects feels there is little competition for the limited supply, then they're not going to feel particularly compelled to buy now simply because the supply is limited.

On the other hand, if they feel there is high demand for the limited supply, then assuming they really want it, they are going to feel

more compelled to act *now*.

In other words, for a limited quantity offer to be effective, prospects must have the *real* feeling that if they don't buy now, they WILL lose out.

With my Dynamic Deadlines™ program you can also sell limited quantities of something. You can show how many units have already been sold (and show many are remaining), and you can raise the price, withdraw a bonus, end the offer and/or sell another limited number of units, after you sell a certain quantity.

For example, to create an initial buying frenzy, you could sell the first 10 copies of your product at \$50, the next 10 at \$75, and so on. Assuming there is a bulk demand for your product, people will feel a sense of urgency if they think they are competing with others to secure a lower price.

Reasons For Your Limited Quantity Offers

Once again, many online sellers seem to have a hard time coming up with a *credible* reason for limiting the quantity of units for sale - especially if it's a digitally downloadable product.

So here are three different angles you can take to justify the limited supply:

- **The support angle.** This is particularly useful for products involving a *service* element. You only have so much time, and so can only support (or provide a particular level of service to) so many people. (If you don't have a service element, add one for that offer!)

“I will also offer free installation at this special price, but I only have so much time, so I can only make this available for the next 20 customers. There are 17 slots remaining, so act

now.”

- **The insider angle.** There are times when too many people knowing or using something can make it less effective, so you can use that as a reason for limiting the supply.

“If everyone used this system, it would lose its impact, so I only want a small number of people to have access to it – this is why I am limiting this to the next 100 customers only. There are 67 spots remaining, so secure your spot now.”

- **The exchange angle.** This is where you're looking for something from a limited number (X) of customers, so the first X customers will get a discount as an “ethical bribe” in exchange for what you want. I recommend making it something quick and easy, like a promise to answer a short (and I mean SHORT) survey about your product (or what made them buy), after they've purchased.

“Since we're upgrading this product, we're looking for speedy feedback, and we're even willing to bribe you for it! So for the next 20 customers only, we can offer a 50% discount IF you are willing to answer a quick and simple 3 question survey after you have purchased (which will take about 2 minutes). There are 12 of these discount slots left, so place your order now to claim your discount.”

The advantage of this is, not only does it provide a *reason* for the limited quantity of discount slots, it also provides you the *opportunity* of getting valuable feedback!

As well as showing how many overall units are available in the offer, it's a good idea to *also* show your visitors how many are remaining (which you can do with my Dynamic Deadlines™ program).

Assuming that people *are* taking advantage of your offer, then seeing the number of units available decrease over time provides social proof that other people are interested in it... and also contributes an additional sense of urgency – especially as the number of units remaining gets closer to zero.

This compels those who were “on the fence” or hesitant about your offer to *make up their mind*... or risk losing out.

Now THAT is what I mean by “the sense of *overwhelming* urgency”!

In Conclusion...

I really hope you've found this report of benefit to you, and it's given you an insight into not only *how* to get people to buy now, but also *why* it's important to do so.

If you don't create the sense of *urgency* while they're at the peak of desire, your potential customer might put off their decision to buy.

As time passes, they could lose much of the desire you may have helped to build. Other things will compete for their time, money and attention, and other marketers will sell them competing solutions which may create confusion and more indecision.

The ultimate outcome of these things is they don't buy. Ever. That's why we want them to feel an overwhelming sense of urgency.

We do that in three important ways:

(1) *Give them compelling reasons to buy now.*

Benefits give them reasons to buy *at some point* (and they do build their desire for your product), but you must also give them reasons to buy *now*. Why do they need these benefits now?

What are the advantages of buying now, instead of later? What problems will be immediately solved? What kind of relief and pleasure will they experience as a result of acting now?

(2) Explain the consequences of not buying now.

What will they lose out on if they don't buy now? What problems might just get worse? What pain will they experience, or continue to experience if they delay? What will be the ultimate outcome of continuing along the same path?

(3) Provide a compelling time or quantity limited offer.

Using my Dynamic Deadlines™ program you can provide them with the ultimate motivation for getting past the point of hesitation and indecision, by giving each new visitor their own personal deadline for taking action (or selling a limited number of units).

Dynamic Deadlines™ were not designed to be a *substitute* for building desire and urgency with your sales copy. They are designed to be the trigger for nudging them past the stage of hesitation and “putting it off”, which often leads to them not buying at all.

Finally, ask for their business.

Yes, you can say, “Buy now” and other phrases copywriters like to use (we call them “calls to action”)... this is asking for the business.

(If you're in direct communication with the potential customer, just ask: “Can I have your business?”)

You *must* do this. Just keep in mind that they're only going to do as you ask IF... they want it, they want it *now*, and they feel an overwhelming sense of urgency to buy it now.

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P.S: I'd like to invite you to read more great information over at <http://copysnips.com> where I regularly share writing and copywriting tips, and will be producing new reports for you to enjoy.

How To Use Dynamic Deadlines™ On Your Site

There's a reason I didn't provide a link earlier on in this report to my Dynamic Deadlines™ site.

That's because I'm using Dynamic Deadlines™ myself on the site, which means the first time you visit it, your personal deadline will begin.

So if you're interested in buying the program, I thought I'd give you a better opportunity to find out how it works beforehand!

Here's what you need to know:

- Dynamic Deadlines™ is a **PHP program** that you install on your own site. You need to be able to run **PHP 4.3** or higher. (Most web hosts have this enabled.)
- **Installation is fairly easy**, even if you've never installed a PHP program on your site before. You do *not* need to create a database or anything like that. Full instructions

are provided, and as long as you follow the instructions you could have it installed in as quick as 10-15 minutes.

- If you run into any problems, you get **90 days of technical support** from the time of your purchase.
- Each page on which you wish to display Dynamic Deadlines™ should be **PHP enabled**. The easiest way of doing this is simply to make sure the page **ends in .php**, i.e. *offer.php* – but if you don't want to rename your pages, you can change the .htaccess file of your site. Instructions on how to do this are included.

You can use the following link to see how it works, without affecting the main offer on my site. [Click here for a demonstration of how it works.](#)

[Click here](#) only if you're seriously considering, or are ready to invest in, the Dynamic Deadlines™ program. (Naturally, you'll be presented with your own personal limited time offer.)

Tip For Dynamic Deadlines™ Users

How long should you give your visitors? For your first deadline, make sure you give them enough time, based on at least the following factors:

Length of copy. The longer your copy, the more time a visitor will need to read it fully. Make sure you give them enough time to read it all if they choose to do so.

Questions. Make sure your copy answers any and all questions they might have before they place their order.

Although your main copy should answer all the main

questions, it may be a good idea to have a “Frequently Asked Questions” page as well, and a visual list of features and benefits, especially for technical products.

For many sales letters, an initial 1 hour deadline may be too short. You want to find the right balance between giving them enough time, and giving them too much time. You want them buying at the *peak* of their desire.

Price. It is going to be easier for a visitor to make an “impulse buy” at a low price, so you might want to use shorter deadlines (in terms of hours) for prices at the impulse buy level, and longer deadlines (measured in days) for high priced purchases.

MAKE MONEY WRITING SALES COPY

Have you ever thought about writing to sell, either for yourself or for others? Or are you already a copywriter, and would like to improve your skills?

You may be interested in my video copywriting series *Super Power Copy*, in which you get to see me writing 3 sales letters completely from scratch, so that you can quickly and easily write your own.

More details can be found at:

<http://www.superpowercopy.com>