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Introduction

Chapter 1 – Complement Vs Competition

No man is an island, and no business that sells to men can afford to be one either.

Humans are social animals, and men in particular are attracted to the idea of social prestige. A business that has a “social life” of its own looks like a winner, and guys love winners.

Basically, you want your business to be one of the cool kids at the lunch table, not one of the kids sitting by themselves.

Get involved with other businesses in your field. Follow them on social networks; introduce yourself to their owners online or at industry shows. Be outgoing and positive about everyone’s efforts.

It can be hard for some business owners (especially men) to get out of the zero-sum mentality, where profits for another business automatically mean a lost opportunity for yours.

Break that mindset, at all costs. The vast majority of markets have room for growth. There are always newcustomers out there. You don’t have to try to kill other businesses and take theirs.

In most cases having more successful businesses in your sector is actually beneficial — it builds cultural interest, making the product you and your “competition” offer more desirable all around.

Take a very basic example: motorists are much more likely to pull off for a meal at an exit that lists multiple fast food outlets on its road sign, rather than exits with only one. It’s the social urge again — guys like to belong to groups.

So be friendly within your industry. If you have a brick-and-mortar retail presence, be friendly within your community as well, either through existing Chamber of Commerce or other merchants’ associations or through less formal networking. Don’t be shy about visiting a neighboring business during a slow time of day and introducing yourself.

If you don’t know the names and basic personalities of the people that run your immediate neighbors and competitors, that’s a problem you need to fix. Otherwise you’re at risk of becoming the lonely kid eating on his own — and that’s not good for you or your business.



Chapter 2 – Create a “Guy Space”

You can laugh at the idea of the “man cave” if you want, but it turns out that guys are willing to spend a lot of money on a space of their own.

Specialized designers make big bucks custom-fitting male sanctuaries. Some of them can get truly bizarre: there were guys in the northern United States pulling \$500,000, three-room, ten-hole ice fishing shacks on their trailers this winter.

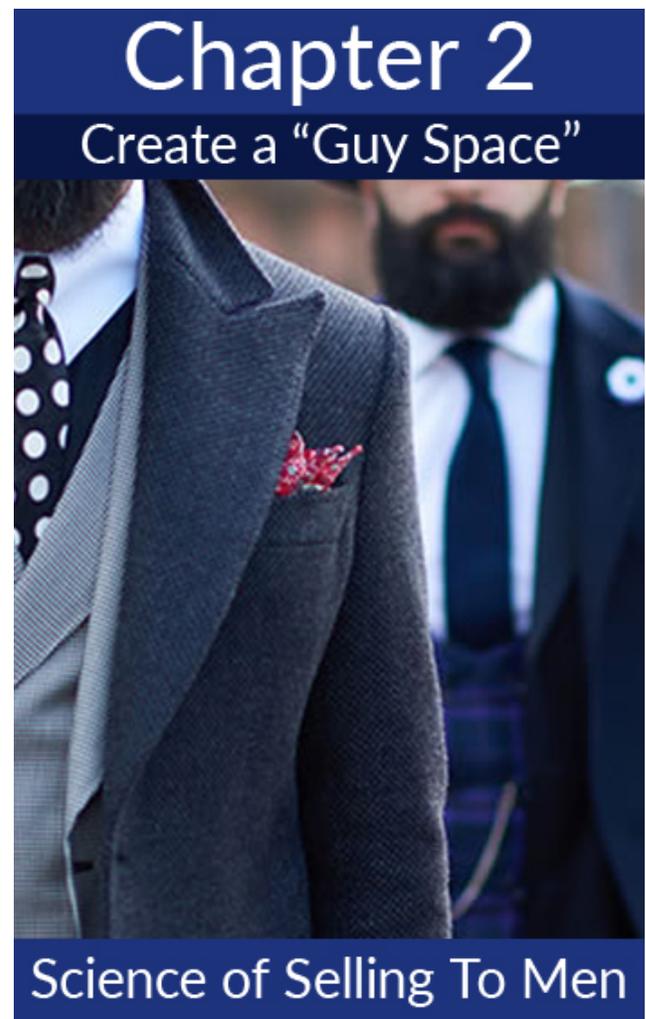
Not only that, there were *several competing companies* designing those top-dollar fishing shack trailers. Male spaces are a growth industry.

If you’re not in the man cave biz, tap that energy by turning your own business into a “guy space” instead.

Encourage relaxation and a casual attitude in your retail space, if you have one. Scatter some chairs around; have a TV on. If it won’t run afoul of local health laws, set out some snack bowls.

Higher-end businesses that don’t want to “cheapen” their brand can still have a masculine appeal. Wood paneling, dark colors, and a male sales staff all help create a male-gendered atmosphere.

Online businesses can also create a “space” through the use of comment tools, bulletin boards, and social media interaction. Encourage guys to respond to new products or informational posts, and respond to them when they do. You want male users to think of your site as a place where they can come get some straight talk from other men.



Chapter 3 – Offer An Education

Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you've got a customer for your bait and tackle business!

That's the basic theory behind "customer education" marketing.

In a typical give-away or promotion deal, a company offers products at a reduced price, or for free with the purchase of another product, or something along those lines.

In a customer education promotion you're just giving out information – and sometimes selling it. The internet has made this incredibly easy — throw a "How To" or a "Top Ten" list on your website, and you're already promoting yourself.

There's a real hunger out there for good, factual information that isn't purely infomercial-style product promotion.

Resist the temptation to tell customers about, say, "Ten Ways Our Tool Makes Your Life Better!"

Instead, tell customers about "Ten Ways to Make Your House More Comfortable for You and Your Family"

— and include several projects that would be made significantly easier by the tool you're trying to sell.

By giving the information (and making it real and usable, instead of just a self-promotion), you assure customers that you're authentic and that you share their interests.

Let them make the logical leap to buying your product on their own.

Websites, blogs, and social media platforms are all easy ways to put information out there for your customers.

If you have a physical retail space, you can also host workshops or demonstrations.

Many kitchen supply stores, for example, hire "guest chefs" to run cooking classes, which inevitably end up showing several of the store's high-ticket items in use (and in the hands of a professional who makes them look very effective).



Chapter 4 – Deliver a Focused Approach

Men admire overachievers and obsessives.

That makes an obsessive sales approach effective when selling to men. Male consumers don't want to think that they're buying products from something massive, faceless, or generic. **They want to purchase goods and services from specialists.**

Themed branding will help you to an extent, but there's no substitute for an actual focus. Weigh expansions into new products or offerings carefully if you're selling to men — you don't want to be seen as “losing focus” by introducing too many unrelated offerings at once.

Whenever possible, highlight the most extreme aspects of your business. American shoe manufacturer Allen Edmonds, for example, highlights the “212 individual steps” that go into handcrafting one of their shoes right on the front of their webpage.

That's way more information than a man needs to make an educated shoe purchase, and very, very few visitors to the site actually take a detailed look at the 212 steps. But by having it there, the company tells even a casual visitor “look, this is what we do, and we do it in an incredibly meticulous way.”

Pick out two or three things your brand specializes in. Think about how you've refined your approach to those products or services. Make a list of what particularly impressive steps you take on behalf of your customers.

Then make sure your customers know you're taking those steps, too.



Chapter 5 – Deliver a Unique Experience

Male consumers get bored quickly, both online and in brick-and-mortar retail environments.

The brutal reality of shopping — for pretty much anything — is that most providers start to look the same after a while.

That makes a unique shopping experience a big seller. Apple's success here is legendary, and not just with their highly recognizable stores.

It's easy to forget these days, but the iTunes store was utterly unique when it launched.

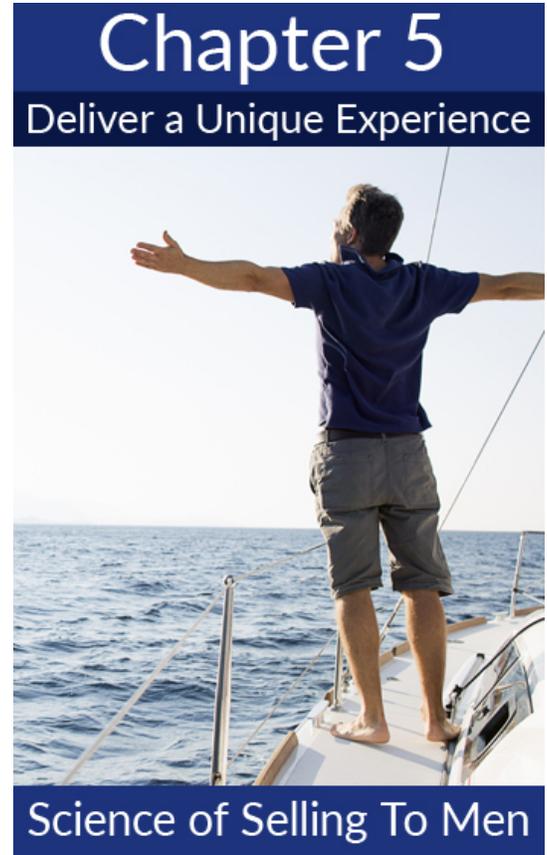
The idea of logging in and shopping a la carte for music, making your purchases without taking a digital “album” to a digital “checkout” in your digital “shopping cart,” was revolutionary.

Nowadays lots of businesses work that way, of course, including Amazon's highly successful one-click purchase process.

But many people have grown habitual in their Apple purchasing in the meantime — and in relying on Apple hardware to connect to the digital store for them, which is where the company's real profits come from.

Maybe you're not the next Steve Jobs. Maybe you're not even looking to be. But you should still work to deliver a unique experience to men when they visit your store or webpage.

If it looks like all the other ones in your sector, they're not going to remember the source, regardless of how great the product might be!



Chapter 6 – Leverage Sports

If there's one constant in the life of the modern man, it's sports.

Sports have always been huge, and according to the most recent research sports remain huge. Currently, 94% of American men identify as “sports fans” when asked.

Most men, of course, have a particular sport or two that they care about personally, but that makes surprisingly little difference to most marketers.

Unless you're selling a product that's directly tied to a specific sport (golf clubs, for example), an appeal to one sport is functionally an appeal to all.

It sounds counter-intuitive, but it's true: advertisements that show men drinking beer and watching football appeal to men even if you run the ad during a baseball game.

The idea of “watching sports” and everything associated with it (friendship, leisure time, food, etc.) is more important than the specific sport.



The Non-Specific Sports Tie-In

You can take an obvious conclusion from this: it's important for your product to be seen as something enjoyed by men who also enjoy sports, but you don't need to get too specific about how or why. Just an association with the concept of “sports” is all you need for a pleasantly masculine feel.

There's a reason, for example, that most men's casual clothing catalogs include a guy on a boat or playing catch with his kid or something like that in their photographs.

The advertisers want men to look at the catalog, think about athletics and leisure time, and get the rush of positive feelings they associate with those things.

It's worth your while to do the same. Images of men enjoying sporting activities or watching sports are an easy and obvious way to trigger that emotional cue.

You can also use written copy that suggests sporting activities. One veterinarian clinic in Chicago got more “likes” on Facebook for a post about pet-safe Super Bowl party snacks than they did for any of the rest of their activity that month.

Do veterinary services have anything to do with the Super Bowl? Absolutely not. But they knew that it was worth associating their business with the experience of watching sports.

Avoiding the Specific Tie-In

The flip side of this is that you don’t want to get bogged down in really specific athletic tie-ins unless you’re an athletics-focused business.

Men who aren’t fans of a specific sport aren’t going to be impressed by a detailed ad pitch revolving around that sport. It can actually be off-putting, especially if you’re using the name or image of specific celebrities. Men who don’t immediately recognize them will feel “left out,” which gives them a negative impression of your brand.

Unless you’ve got the brand positioning and the money to track down endorsements from multiple stars in multiple sports, year round every year, forget about the specifics. Make things about the experience of “sports,” not about a sport.

Chapter 7 – Luxury and Personal Service

Forget any sexist jokes you may have heard about women liking to be pampered.

As far as the sales data is concerned, men are the ones who want a luxury shopping experience with lots of personal attention from the sales staff!

There's also a powerful inverse here: male customers *hate* anything that feels like a packaged sales routine.

That applies online as well as in person; “door greeters” who chirp the same welcome message and automatic pop-ups on webpages that have to be dismissed each visit are equally off-putting to men.

You don't want the client to think you're treating him like everyone else. Service should feel personalized; even a little flattering. Ego matters, here.

Make Service a Priority

To give your brand lasting power with a male audience, make service a priority and stick to your guns.

Customize everything you can: sales, sizing, returns, exchanges, mix-and-match deals, you name it. You don't have to present every possible option on your sales floor or your website, but be prepared (and train your staff to be prepared) for flexibility in any customer service interactions.

A lot of brands will build better customer service into their prices — and consumers, by and large, have proven willing to pay a premium at a store or brand that they trust to treat them well.

Men in particular are willing to pay more somewhere they like rather than save money at a bargain store with no amenities and bad (or worse, outsourced) customer service.

Use Variety to Create a Feeling of Customization

Visual change helps give customers the impression that you're innovating on their behalf.

Switching up sales displays or the front page of your website lets you display seasonably relevant



items — and it also tells your customers that you're thinking about their needs. That creates a feeling of being catered to that men, in particular, find flattering.

Remember, it's fine to offer all your customers the same deal. The key is to make each of them feel like the deal was custom-made for *him*.

Make Personalized Service Visible

One of the key things to understand about selling to male customers is that they like their special treatment to be *visible*.

A 2012 study (Melnik and Osselaer) compared reactions to different kinds of reward programs and found that men responded best to brand or store memberships that offered both a “high status” and a visible display of status.

In one example from the study, a gym membership came with an optional “platinum membership.” Among other perks, platinum members were given the choice of a free towel or T-shirt, which they could have printed with their name, the phrase “platinum member,” both, or neither.

Men overwhelmingly opted for the T-shirt with the name and the membership displayed — the most high-visibility declaration of status of all the options.

The take-away here is that your special offers and services should be visible. When a man becomes a premium member, a frequent flier, a preferred cardholder, and so on, he wants other people to recognize that status.

Chapter 8 – Men are More Brand Loyal

Studies have shown that male consumer markets are more likely to remain brand loyal than female or gender-neutral markets.

That's an important advantage at a time when consumers overall are becoming less and less brand loyal. Online reviews, blogs, and forums give consumers a lot more detailed information on product quality than they had during the 20th century. That's diminished the value of a brand as a "known quality."

Capturing a male market's attention is therefore a key way to keep brand loyalty and repeat business strong. Even with digital "comparison shopping" readily available, male customers are still more likely to stick with a brand they know and trust, rather than actively seeking out alternatives.

There are a few ways to capture a loyal, mostly male audience for your product:

- Male-focused advertising and packaging
- Male-targeted online presence
- Customer interaction to encourage repeat sales

1. Male-focused Advertising and Packaging

This should be mostly self-explanatory: you want your visual and written materials to present your product as a "man's" product.

That doesn't have to become a parody of Madison Avenue sexism at its worst — you don't need bikini babes and guys in crew cuts chugging beers in your ads to sell a product to men.

What you want to do instead is create an image of your product that includes the product being used by men. Think in terms of language as well as visuals — when you talk to the customer, is it understood that the "you" of your copy is male?

Don't be afraid to buck the trend of scrupulously gender-neutral language. If you're making a



specific effort to sell to men, let them know it.

2. Male-targeted Online Presence

If you have an online presence (and you should), what are you doing to make it appeal to men?

You should have an immediate answer to that question. If you don't, that's something to work on.

Think about the online "spaces" you occupy. Your website is the one you have the most control over — you can design it with a masculine feel, include images featuring men, and again make sure your language predominantly refers to a male subject.

In social media spaces, control your interactions to build a male-focused network. Share links on Facebook or retweet things on Twitter that aren't your own material, but that are likely to be of interest to your male customers. The goal is to have them thinking of your online channels as "manly" spaces, not just as places that sell your product.

3. Customer Interaction to Encourage Repeat Sales

Get thee a mailing list!

Also reply thee to Tweets, comments, Facebook messages, and other customer interactions. If someone's making the effort to reach out to your company, reach back and meet them. Then reach a little further and offer them a special deal unprompted a few days later.

Every customer you have contact information for is a customer you should be in contact with. Just like the focus on a male-branded presence, this is about building repeat, brand-loyal customers.

When they think about your product or your sector, they should be thinking about your brand. Help achieve that by keeping your name on their screens on a regular basis.

Chapter 9 – Modern Sex Appeal

Sex sells.

Let's say that again: sex sells.

We like to pretend we've moved beyond that as a culture, but one more time: *sex still sells*. This is a reality of sales, and you should get comfortable with it.

With that said — what doesn't sell is *sleaze*. Responsible, mature men (the sort who are likely to have the most purchasing power) might secretly enjoy girls falling out of their bikinis or bending over in tiny shorts as much as the lad mag crowd, but they feel the need to be discreet about it for the sake of appearances at the very least. Get too obnoxious about the sex appeal and they'll feel they have to walk away.

That presents marketers targeting men with a fine line to walk. You want your product associated with sex! Men like sex, and they like things that make them feel sexy. But they also want to believe that it's a private enjoyment. They don't want to be seen as consumers of sexualized products.

Different demographics will tolerate a different amount of sex appeal, but a few understated strategies work well for almost anyone that wants to sell to men:

- “romantic” visual design
- couple/family imagery
- sexualized male imagery

1. Romantic Visual Design

Darker colors and warmer lights have “romantic” associations. Whether you're talking about web design or retail layout, toning down the contrast and making everything a little darker can give your space a subtle sexy feel.



Something as simple as using a light gray background on a webpage instead of a pure white one makes a big difference. It lessens eye strain, which lets the viewer's pupils widen a bit — a visual sensation we associate with relaxation, empathy, and togetherness.

Colored gels over harsh store lighting can have a similar effect. A dark, warm tone of flooring or shelving also makes the environment feel sexier in a way that isn't overstated or blatant.

2. Couple and Family Imagery

"First comes love and then comes the marriage," as the children's rhyme goes — and then the baby in the baby carriage.

It doesn't much matter if an individual man is actually interested in any of those things. The signals are tied close enough on both a cultural and an evolutionary level that if you show him a picture of a family, part of him is aware that sex is involved somehow.

That makes family imagery a good substitute for openly sexual imagery, especially when marketing to men in their late 20s and up. A young, attractive woman in tight clothing on her own is a racy image, but if you slap a smiling guy next to her in a wedding ring it's "safe" — and still sexy.

3. Sexualized Male Imagery

Market something using a picture of a woman in a bikini and you'll be accused of using sex to sell your product (unless your product is bikinis, or suntan lotion, or something else with an obvious connection).

Throw a rugged-looking guy with his shirt half unbuttoned on there instead, though, and no one's going to say you're pushing sleaze, even though there's still an obvious sexualization going on.

Male viewers won't be *attracted* to the sexualized man (or at least the majority won't be), but they will be able to identify him as making a sexual display, and they'll be able to empathize and imagine themselves making similar displays.

It's actually *more* effective at making men want to buy your product than an image of a sexualized woman, though it doesn't have the same immediate attention-grabbing factor. Give a man a picture of an attractive woman and he's happy — give him the promise of attracting women on his own and he's opening up his wallet to *buy* happiness.

Chapter 10 – Private and “Cool” Shopping Experiences

It bears repeating: men don't like situations or environments that feel forced and artificial.

The stereotypical male discomfort with shopping malls is a good demonstration of the phenomenon. Bright lights, piped music, over-friendly salespeople, and gimmicky displays all tell a man “you're a big phony if you shop here.”

There's an element of peer pressure there. No one wants to be seen as the guy who fell for something. So men mistrust slick or pushy-seeming promotions, and they mistrust them even more in public, when there are other men around to see them.

Male consumers want to feel cool. They want to feel hip, savvy, and a little aloof. Where women respond well to an emotional bond and a feeling of friendship, men prefer things to be a little more laid-back, and get suspicious if your approach is too aggressive or too touchy-feely.

That's led to the rise of several important innovations in selling to men:

- closed-door spaces
- gendered store design
- male-targeted online shopping

1. Closed-Door Spaces

It used to be the primary services offered exclusively for men were associated with immoral behavior: gambling, drinking, and sex. For obvious reasons, the “gentleman's club” business model where everything took place behind closed doors and several layers of security were popular with those ventures!

Recently, more socially acceptable businesses have been adopting the same model. Men's spas, for example, and even more traditional barbershops, are now being designed with curtained or otherwise sectioned-off vestibules, and with separate “stalls” for individual customers.

Sectioning men off from one another as they shop or receive services serves a dual function: it



removes the anxiety of public interaction, and it fosters an air of exclusivity that appeals to male consumers.

2. Gendered Store Design

The bland, gender-neutral big box store is looking increasingly outdated in the modern retail landscape.

Mass appeal is out; niche specialization is in. And that means a gendered approach for a lot of products: building and organizing the whole store from the ground up to appeal to men.

That can mean everything from obvious design appeals (bare concrete and steel as opposed to soft wallpaper and plaster) to the size of displays (bigger is always better with men — there's a reason outdoors stores tend to have a monster truck mounted on boulders or a three-story waterfall or something like that front and center).

Even subtler changes can help “gender” a retail location male: putting the men's restroom closer to the sales floor than the women's, for example, or setting the “focus” height of shelves and displays closer to the average male height than the average female height.

3. Male-Targeted Online Shopping

In the early days of internet shopping it may have taken men's brands longer to get on board than women's, but there's no excuse for lagging in 2014.

The demographics of internet shopping are notoriously hard to pin down, but the broad consensus is that both sexes spend roughly the same amount of money online. Depending on age bracket, either men or women might be a bit higher on average, but over the course of a lifetime it all works out into the same ballpark.

Where the difference lies is in shopping methods and habits: men are more likely than women to use search engines and “surfing around” to find products, while women tend to access online stores through mailing list and social media promotions.

That makes Search Engine Optimization and search engine ad placement a bigger game for male-focused retailers than female. If you're targeting men and you haven't done a thorough SEO overhaul, it's past time to get on that.

The shopping experience is also important to consider: men, on average, make purchases after fewer clicks and less minutes than women. The more streamlined your shopping experience, the more it's likely to appeal to men, so resist the temptation to put any extra bells and whistles in there.

Chapter 11 - Status for Newer Brands

Status symbols affect male purchasing much more powerfully than female purchasing.

Even luxury female goods from status brands are often purchased by men, as gifts for women.

Women on their own are more likely to seek out a similar-looking but more affordable alternative that doesn't come with a famous name attached.

That makes associations as a luxury or status brand more valuable when selling to men.

Brands that have a long history as status symbols obviously have an advantage in the prestige game. Rolex doesn't have to tell its customers explicitly that owning a Rolex is a status symbol — the name is already synonymous with the prestige. We use "Rolex" as shorthand for wealth.

Even though there are more expensive watches (and better ones), Rolex has the social cachet as a luxury item, and that makes the brand more desirable to many men.

If you're not Rolex or Lamborghini or another company with that level of status association, don't deal yourself out of the prestige game just yet.

Newer brands can still position themselves as status symbols.

But because the brand itself isn't a measure of status yet, the pitch has to focus on the product itself: what makes it more "luxury" than the competition?

Highlight the product's most exotic or extravagant qualities.

There are a lot of things that have luxurious associations beyond brand name: country of origin ("Egyptian cotton"), certifications and review statuses ("Zagat rated"), and even the training or culture of the craftsmen involved in production ("Savile Row tailoring," "Amish rocking chair," etc.).

Anything short and simple that a man can casually name-drop when showing his new purchase off to a friend works for you here.

Ask yourself "what would make someone brag about my product" — and highlight that.



Men are even willing to pay for the experience of exclusivity itself.

Membership or subscription services that require payment can perform better than free services of comparable quality, simply because the act of paying for them makes men think they're getting a better product!

And even if they're not, it still gives them something to brag about to their friends: "Oh, yeah, my gym is great, but it's a real investment..."

Chapter 12 – Tell a Visual Story

Story is important for a brand. You want your customer to feel like he's part of a narrative (starring him).

For men, at least part of that story should be visual. Male models using your product — or at least male stock art, if you can't afford models or don't have a visible product — should be a part of every store or website that tries to sell to men.

This is about empathy and self-imagining. The easier it is for a customer to identify with “a person who uses this product,” the more willing they are to *become* a person who uses the product.

Clothing store mannequins are a great example of a way that retailers tell a visual story.

In theory, the purpose of the mannequin is to display clothing. But once you put more than one piece of clothing on the mannequin, you're not just displaying. You're suggesting a combination, and that combination tells a story. A mannequin in a pair of designer jeans and a ripped T-shirt presents a very different narrative than a mannequin in the same designer jeans paired with a collared shirt and a blazer.

Once you start adding multiple mannequins to the same display, or incorporating furniture or scenery, you're suggesting a whole tableau of modern life. There's a reason stores are willing to “waste” so much floor space on their mannequin displays: by doing so, they're inviting customers to step into a world populated by people who *wear the store's clothing*.

Retailers targeting men specifically get added bang for their buck: men respond more strongly to visual teaching/learning than women. A visual cue that says “men use this product” is a powerful way to say “you should use this product.”



Chapter 13 - Authenticity and Familiarity

Nobody likes to feel dumb, and everybody feels dumb when they have to make a choice that they don't feel educated about.

In male consumers, that tends to manifest as a deep resistance to new products, especially ones that have an air of a novelty gimmick about them. No one wants to be the guy that got suckered by a passing fad.

A marketer's ideal position is an appeal to tradition. If you can legitimately claim to have been serving men for two or three generations, don't be shy about hammering that point. Phrases like "unchanged since..." and "for generations" reassure consumers that you're not a fly-by-night operation.

Generating Authenticity without Tradition

That all works well for companies that have been making the same product for hundreds of years, but what do you do if you're a newcomer?

First, offer the best product you can.

All the marketing in the world isn't going to do you any good if the product you're offering looks like you cut corners to save on costs. Invest in good design up front, on everything from your website to your packaging to any physical goods you're selling.

Second, use the language of honesty. Keep your copy short and to the point. Avoid buzzwords — consumers have grown mistrustful of phrases like "genuine" and "natural," which are so diluted they can mean anything.

"Real" and "100%" are phrases that inspire more confidence.

Finally, emphasize any tie-ins you have with your target consumers. If you're selling in the United States and your goods are made in the USA, that fact should be prominent on every item you sell. If you sell organic fruits, and your production facilities have other "green" features like carbon-neutral power, mention it. Anything that says "we're part of your community" to male consumers makes them much more likely to buy.



The Power of Familiarity

A recognizable brand is a huge asset in launching new products or expanding lines.

Send a man out to buy something he's never bought before — hand cream, let's say — and he's much more likely to buy it from a brand that sells something *else* he uses (his deodorant, maybe) than from a brand he's never tried before.

This is why you want your messaging to be simple and recognizable. Everything in your brand should have the same basic “feel” to it, so that a male customer can pick it out instantly in a shelf, a slideshow; whatever.

In short: if you've got brand recognition and tradition behind your product, use them. If you don't, start building them. A consistent style and an air of timelessness will always pay off big dividends down the road, especially compared to something that's too *avantgarde* or flashy-looking.

Men want the comfort of familiarity, not the uncertainty of something new.

Chapter 14 - Functionality is a Top Selling Point

If you're targeting men specifically, your marketing needs to talk about function.

Don't kid around with this point. Functionality is at the heart and soul of selling to a specifically male demographic.

Within a few seconds of his exposure to a product, a male consumer should be able to tell three things:

- *what it does*
- *why it does it well*
- *why he needs something that does that*

If your male consumer *can't* quickly discern those things, it's going to be a tough sell.

1. What it Does

Product design, packaging, and marketing all need to show a basic function. The question "what's this for?" is the kiss of death.

Tell as specific a story as you can when you sell a product. What does a nose hair trimmer do? If you answered "it trims nose hairs," you're only halfway there — the right answer was "it trims nose hairs, *which makes you look sexier and gets you more girls.*" Or whatever other benefits you want your customers to associate with trimmed nose hairs.

Always ask yourself what problem your product solves for the user. It's not about providing a function; it's about solving a problem.

2. Why it Does it Well

Here is where you tout all the miraculous technological innovation behind your product. Again, this needs to tell a specific story: not just what makes the product functional, but why improving that function is important.



Stick with the nose hair trimmer example. Does it have platinum-edged blades? Great! Tell the consumer why those are better than regular blades. And the answer isn't "they stay sharp longer," but rather "they stay sharp longer *which prevents painful tugging during trimming.*"

Innovative products are great. Everyone loves a better mousetrap. Just be sure to remind your target customer that he really needs the best mousetrap he can find.

3. Why He Need Something That Does That

Guys like to think they're being practical, even when they're buying something that isn't.

Don't be shy about offering justifications, even rationalizations. This is especially key for big-ticket items, single-purpose gadgets, and luxury items.

Time saved. Money saved. Spouses pleased. Girls impressed. Kids protected. Focus on positive narratives like that: "here are the awesome things you will have in your life when you have this product."

The more direct the connection between the practical function of the product and all the good things it's going to bring, the better. Once you've sold that connection, you've sold the product.

Chapter 15 - How to Emphasize Single-Purpose Engineering

The multiple functions of a Swiss Army knife or a Leatherman multitool are pretty awesome, but how many men do you know personally that carry one?

The answer is probably a handful at best — certainly a bare fraction of the men in your acquaintance.

Most men are impressed not by multi-functional products but by hyper-functional ones; products that promise to go above and beyond for their chosen task.

Design and marketing should offer excessive success in one specific arena to appeal to male purchasers.

This is where the success of many an infomercial product has been born.

Ron Popeil was famous for his “It slices! It dices!” pitch, but at the end of the day that was *all* the Veg-o-Matic did: it chopped food. It didn’t even chop food many different ways.

A basic chef’s knife offers more versatility — but the Veg-o-Matic sold on the promise of being custom-designed for one common kitchen task.

Male customers want to feel like a product was designed with their needs in mind.

That’s easy to focus on with a single-purpose device like a kitchen gadget, but what about something that actually serves many purposes, like a car or a house?

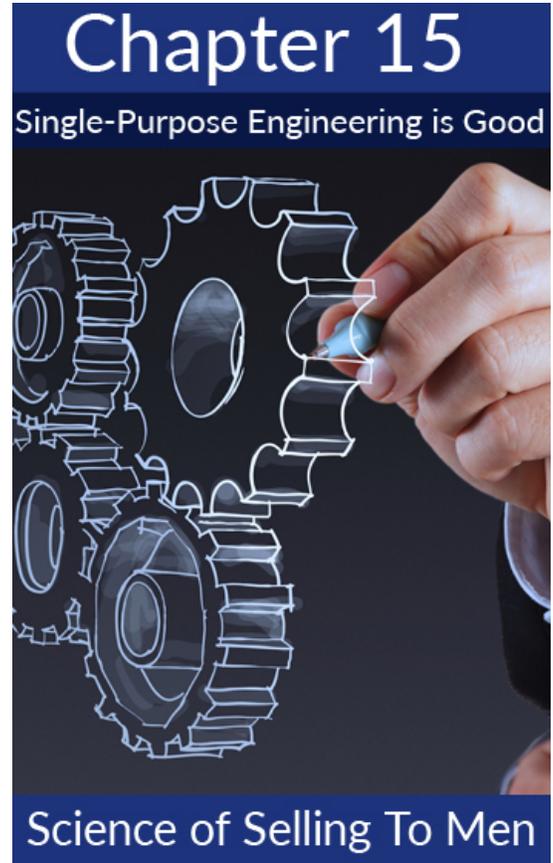
Here is where *branding* becomes important. Mercedes-Benz, for example, makes cars with many different strengths, but their advertisements always focus on one unique feature: the aerodynamics of a convertible roof that make it quieter and less windy than other convertible roofs, for example.

Is the purpose of a Mercedes-Benz convertible to be sheltered from the wind?

Of course not. But the suggestion that a part of the car was engineered with one problem in mind, to the exclusion of everything else, implies a similarly obsessive focus in the rest of the car.

And men, in particular, like that.

The idea of bundling or packaging also pays big dividends here. A 60-piece tool set, for example, is



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not actually a single-purpose tool. It contains many tools with many different attachments that can serve any number of functions. But sold as a whole, it can be presented as “the only tool kit you’ll ever need” and other superlative descriptions.

Make something “the one product” for a specific purpose — any purpose — and you’re most of the way to making a sale.