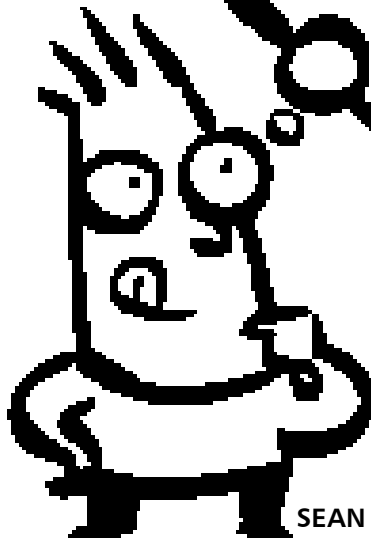
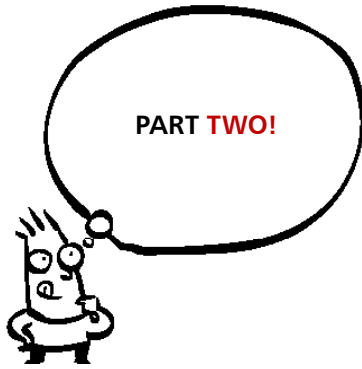


HOW TO WRITE
NEAR-PERFECT HEADLINES
IN MINUTES! PART TWO



SEAN D'SOUZA



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For more information, please write to:
PsychoTactics Ltd., PO Box 36461,
Northcote, Auckland, New Zealand
Phone: 64 9 449 0009
Email: sean@psychotactics.com

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You don't know me...

Headlines can be mysterious.
But only because there are so many aspects to headlines.

Aspects you may never have considered before.
Like signatures as headlines.
Or testimonials as headlines.
Or headlines that aren't even found on top of the text.

What you don't know can indeed hurt you.
And ignorance isn't the bliss you think it is.

So let's learn the different aspects to headlines.
We've had enough mystery for a while.

Warm regards from Auckland,
Sean

The doorway principle

Assume I visited your home. How would I enter? Through the window, or the backdoor. Surely you've reserved the chimney for good ol' Santa. So where do I enter?

Why through the door, right? And when you write copy, what's your door? Why the headline. So think about it. How many obstacles would you put in the way, if you wanted me to enter? What a silly question, eh? You'd make darned sure you freed up the entry to the doorway, so I could get in quickly. Not true.

Most websites seem to do just the opposite. They put in barriers. They put in dozens of distractions. And if by chance their customers do get to the door, they're now confused. Are they standing at the door, or was there a door before?

Your doorway is your headline

So if you want the world to see your headline, what should you do? Why, you'd do what any sensible homeowner would do.

- 1) You'd make your doorway prominent.
- 2) You'd make your doorway different, somehow.
- 3) You'd make your doorway free of obstructions.

1) Making the doorway prominent:

So how does this translate to websites, for instance? If you look at headlines, you'll find that most websites have headlines that are weak and wimpy. Look at the headline in this article. You'll find that it's kinda Arnold Schwarzhateverhisnameis.

And you'll find that your eye went to the headline in a fraction of a second. That I didn't need to put flashing lights and dancing girls around the headline for you to take notice. I just had to make it bold. And prominent. So that you can instantly see the 'door' and know that hey, this is a headline.

2) You'd have to make your doorway different

When I say different, you're probably confused. Yes, you can see the boldness of the headline, but won't that be enough? No, no, no, no, no. That ain't enough. A headline needs to be different. As in, different font. Or different colour. Or different size. Not just bold, but different. A boring doorway doesn't get noticed. And an overdone doorway is laughed at.

But a doorway that's elegant and stands out, is one that's starting to get (and keep) your customer's attention. So yes, notice how the font



ONE key psychological factor can make the difference in your business. Actually, make that THREE!

Harness the Psychological Power of '3' to Improve Communication

Two might be company in life, but in communication you can go all the way to three and still have a rollicking party. If you step over to four however, it's quite likely that you've stepped into the hara-kiri zone. Back up that truck a bit and learn how the power of '3' has the ability to make your communication soar.

Let's Start With a Little Test

Here's a psychological test. Lay out 10 business cards in a row and choose three that catch your attention instantly. Now don't cheat. Do this before you continue reading this article and you'll be quite amazed at the results.

So What Did You Find?

Isn't it strange that there seems to be no real reason why you chose what you did? There doesn't even seem to be a very clear pattern emerging.

Some of the cards have lots of information, and some have very little. Some are colourful and others are not. Yet something has drawn you to play the devil's advocate and reject some of them outright. Could that something be a deep-rooted psychological trigger embedded in your subconscious? And how can this trigger make such a dramatic difference to your communication and marketing?

See the headline? It's in 18 point. It's Red. And it stands out. Make your headlines non-wimpy by making them prominent. Headlines that are similar-looking to your text in colour, font and size don't stand out. Standing out: That's what a headline needs to do best!

is 'serif' vs. the copy that's 'sans-serif' (Georgia vs. Verdana). Notice how the colour is red vs. the text being black. Notice that the point size is 18 while the text point size is 12. It's the little things that make it a headline. It's the itty-bitsy fundamentals that make it prominent and say, "Hey, you, the welcome mat's here!"

3) You'd have to remove the darn obstructions

Don't give me ten lines to read. I don't want to read that stuff. I want to read your headline. I want to know if I qualify. Don't put your testimonials in front of your headline (unless the testimonial 'is' the headline). Don't put twenty billion links and stupid photos.

Sit down. And count the hoops that customers have to jump through to get to your headline. (read: <http://www.psychotactics.com/artpower-of-three>) and remove those hoops. Chop anything that's getting in the way of your doorway, ruthlessly. Yes, chop, chop, chop.

Your headline is your main attractor. It's what most of your customers read. It's what gets them to read the next fifty words, that then slides them down into the next fifty words, and so on. Make your doorway bold, and different, and without obstructions.

Us mortals have to find your doorway. Santa on the other hand, can manage quite well, thank you :)

Exercise: Look at the headline on your website.

- 1) Is it bigger in font size than the rest of the text? If the rest of the text is 12pt, it should be about 18pt)
- 2) Does it stand out, because you've chosen a contrasting colour? (Hint: don't choose pale blue or yellow)
- 3) Does it have nasty obstructions? (Your top banner and logo could be a real-pain-in-the-butt-distraction)

You'd think these three steps are obvious. They're not. And I've seen site, after site, after site where the headline is either invisible or is displaced by a loud, noisy banner. If that's the case, you've got 15 minutes of work to do (Yup, simplify the banner and make the headline bold, *contrasty* and bigger). 15 minutes of work, that simply cannot wait.

Ok, so you've seen the mess on your website, and fixed it. That's good. Now hang on. This concept of headlines isn't just for your home page. The other pages matter too. And yes, the same concept applies if you're using headlines for your brochure or leaflet. But yeah, as long as you have the concept, and have done something to fix it, we can move on. And move on, we will to the unusual concept of 'Testimonials as headlines.' Sure beats breaking your head trying to find a headline, eh? Now all you need to do is get a client to write one for you. How easy is that? Find out for yourself.

Testimonials as headlines

So big deal. You have testimonials from your customers. And another business just like yours have testimonials from their customers.

What makes the other company's testimonials work better than yours? It's called the forgotten art of the headline.

Headlines? In testimonials?

Yes indeedy! When a client gives a testimonial, they are saying something, something, something, kaboom, something, something.

Noticed the kaboom in the middle of that testimonial?

If you ask the right questions (either over email or the phone), at some point in the testimonial the client will say something that's absolutely kaboom. A phrase, a sentence so powerful that you sit up and take notice.

Then of course, you hope all your prospects will do the same

Same what? Same as you, of course. Your hoping your prospects will read the testimonial, get to the kaboom, and take notice. Well, you know it and I know it. We will read through our own material with a microscope. At best, our prospects will just glance through the testimonials.

So darn it, put the kaboom where your prospect can see it!

Yes, take the headline out of Paragraph 3, Line 4 (or wherever the kaboom statement sits) and put it right at the top of your testimonial. And while you're at it, can you increase the size, colour and boldness of the headline font, por favor?

But, but...I don't have place to put a headline

Yes, I know. You can't put a headline on every single testimonial. If you're running your testimonial in your main text or off a side bar, there's usually not enough space.

So allocate a space or page for testimonials

Create a special page where your prospect can go and read the testimonials. Put your headlines on that page. If you can, put the photos of your customers. And where the customers come from. And make sure there is a balance of sorts in the gender.

You'll find the following factors in a testimonial:

- 1) Headline: Taken from the body copy itself.
- 2) Notice how the headline is bold, a different colour and a different font.
- 3) What do you do when you have a one line testimonial? The answer is on the page. Yes, scroll, scroll.
- 4) Notice the gender. One man, one woman, one man, one woman. Hmmm....Now why do you think that's important?
- 5) See the photos? Why do they matter?
- 6) See where the clients live? Why does that matter?



Mark Silver
Portland, Oregon
Heartofbusiness.com

I had to kick and scream at myself for a day or two, before I decided to go for the Masterclass Strategy workshop!

The first thought I had was: "Ugh! I had just cleared my schedule of travel... I want to stay at home." I'd had a schedule the last five years of travelling once a quarter for a week or more, and I thought that was all over. When Sean announced the workshop, I said to myself: 'I don't want to travel - this was going to be my first quarter off!'

But, the only reason that thought came up was because I knew I had to be there- it wasn't really an option to not go- and I just had to kick and scream to myself for a day or two. ;-)

But once I was at the workshop, I found so many things

Validation for the path I was on, plus concrete new steps and clarity on the larger picture, and seeing parts of my business strategy that were missing that I had no idea I needed. Amazing. Incredible! Better than 'Cats'.

We've digressed, haven't we?

We set out to learn about headlines in testimonials. And we learned so much more. One more techie thing and we're out of here.

I used to use graphics for my headlines. Not anymore. I now use CSS. If you don't know how to use CSS, ask your friendly neighbourhood web designer, or look up CSS tutorials. CSS loads quickly and makes your headline looking smashing! Now, now, you know what to do next. Go and put some headlines on your testimonials. This article is called The Forgotten Art of Headlines, not because testimonial headline writing is a forgotten art, but if you don't get down to putting in headlines for your testimonials, it will soon be... forgotten. :)



Adam Kayce
Berkeley Springs, WV,
Spiritual Guide
adamkayce.com

"I figured the Website Masterclass would be a rehashing of older material."

Before the Website Masterclass, I had my doubts about what I could learn. I have been on 5000BC for more than a year, read the Brain Audit - I'm even in the Protege program. So I was a little skeptical about hearing anything new; I figured it'd be a rehashing of older material.

I also didn't know how I would swing the time away - I've been so busy implementing the Protege teachings, and I was concerned that this might take me off-target.

I saw the intensity in Sean's eyes

Even before the Masterclass started, I knew I was in for something I'd never experienced before... because I met Sean in the lobby, and I saw an intensity in his eyes, a focus, a dedication - and you don't see that in people too often--and to that degree. It made all the pieces fall into place; though, because I could now understand how Sean & Renuka have achieved all they have in such a short time.

Then, when Sean started the Masterclass, I quickly realized that this was no rehash - this was brand-new stuff. Well, 5000 years old, but brand new to me!

Exercise: Get up. Raise your hands. Do 10 squats. (Ok, just kidding!) The real exercise you've got to do is open your copy of the Brain Audit to page 65. There are five questions on that page. Call up a client, and ask them those questions. Be sure to record in audio (as in record via Skype or via the phone). And then get the information transcribed. And about fifteen minutes later, you've got a massssssive testimonial. And co-incidentally, you've got your headline too. And this testimonial (properly constructed with the questions taken from Page 65) will not only help you get great testimonials, great headlines, but also wonderful customers as well.

This takes us to an oft-asked question. Now that we've tweaked the size of our headlines. Now that we've gotten great headline testimonials, should we also use our headlines to beckon Google? Yes, you should. But how should the beckoning be done? Let's find out, shall we?

Keywords and headlines

Can you really drive more traffic to your site if you have more keywords in your headlines? Or can you do without keywords completely? Imagine you need to write a headline for an article. Would you first consider keywords before writing the headline? I don't think so.

A headline is hard enough work, without you driving yourself nuts over the whole business of keywords.

The core of headline writing should be attraction

First concentrate on writing headlines that seek to make the reader want to read more. Imagine your headline showing up on Google.

Would it be enticing enough for the customer to click through? Or would it be keyword rich and so boring, that the customer would simply go to the next link?

Customers click links based on curiosity and relevance

A headline that's curious and relevant gets far more clicks than something that's keyword rich and boring. So here's what you should do to get your cake and eat it too.

First write the headline.

Then add keywords where you can.

When you follow this method, you'll focus mainly on the curiosity factor, thus creating a more powerful headline that is also picked up by the search engines.

And you can have the best of both worlds.

Exercise: Yes, keywords are important. But they're second in line. It doesn't take that much time to work out how to fiddle with a headline and the first fifty words. Once the article is written, you can always add keywords to the headline, and to the rest of the article. And then Google will come a beckoning. But don't waste too much time trying to please Google first, because it's your customers that come first. Keywords are second-priority. Still a priority, but second!

Now you've been told time and again that headlines are the first thing on the page. Well, not quite true. They could also be the last thing on a page? Yup, this is a headline you see. It's driving you to the next page!

Bottom-up headlines?

Headlines don't always sit at the top. Sometimes headlines sit right at the bottom. And if you post in forums, or have email signatures, you've actually got a headline sitting right there. And here's why you would consider that bottom-headline to be tops. The headline is primarily an attraction device. It's meant to draw you from one point to the next. And when a customer has finished reading your email or forum post, a signature does the job of creating curiosity. And in doing so, it more or less qualifies to be a headline. :)

You're watching TV. It's Extreme Makeover time.
They take this wallflower-looking person.

And they cut. And they snip. Boy, do they tuck! And about 2 weeks later, the Extreme Makeover artists transmogrify their subject into a work of captivating beauty.

You watch and say, no...can't be...can't be the same wallflower. Ah, but it is. So what say we have the same kinda fun? What say we do the Extreme Makeover on that darned email signature of yours. Yeah, yeah, the one that kinda hides under a bushel every time you send out an email.

And what say we do the makeover without all the cutting, snipping, tucking and la-dee-dah!

Ready for the Extreme Email Signature Makeover?

You bet you are! And best of all, there's little or no creativity involved. In fact, you'll need to look no further than at an article you've written, to get all the inspiration you need.

So what should you do?

Just paste your entire article in the email signature?

No, no, no. Pay attention dah-ling! We're creating magic. And for magic, you need to know the tricks.

Stick with me, and you can learn how to have dozens of instant email signatures, based on your articles, in three easy steps.

So what are the steps?

Step One: Find an article you've written.

Step Two: Create an excerpt.

Step Three: Insert drama.

Step One: Find An Article You've Written

Just step back in time to your article archives, and pull out an article you thought was pretty cool. Or which customers thought was really thought-provoking. But hey, don't take all day. Just find an article that works; don't aim for perfection.

Step Two: Create a Summary of the Article

I went and pulled out an article that spoke about PowerPoint. And sat down, and kinda summed up what the article was all about. The core of the concept was how some PowerPoint presentations work so much better than others. And how other PowerPoint presentations just bore you to tears.

So boof... I now had my summary in a few lines.

But what's next? Why it's time to insert some drama, of course.

Step Three: Inserting Zee Drama

To insert drama, all you have to do is hit on the customer's biggest concern. In this case, the customer's real headache is giving a presentation that's boring. So I have to make sure I get the 'problem' smack in the middle and create intense drama.

And about fifteen seconds later, I have my signature:

Can PowerPoint Presentations Rival TV Ads? Ever wonder why some PowerPoint presentations are head

and shoulders above others? Why do some have amazing powers of persuasion while others simply bore you to death? Here's the secret to PowerPoint pizzazz. Go to: www.psychotactics.com/artpowerpoint.htm

Notice the flow?

You create the drama by running sequential problems and solutions. And then you drop a dollop or two of curiosity. But remember, the curiosity effect is kinda like a bikini. What it reveals is interesting, but what it hides is vital. In fact, you'll learn about curiosity, by learning what's not curious. Of course, nothing like a few examples to show you how it all works, right?

Examples

This is Mark Silver's older signature file. Notice how the newer one below has punch and vivacity, as compared with the old one.

Older Example:

Making a difference and making a profit in business.

If you are in business, make sure you get our free newsletter:

Business Heart. It's full of creative thinking, inspiring stories, and practical, grounded steps on how to make your business profitable, serve the world, and keep your heart.

When you subscribe, you also receive a free 3-chapter workbook excerpt from the book, "Unveiling the Heart of Your Business, How money, marketing and sales can deepen your heart, heal the world, and still add to your bottom line." Please come get them both: at heartofbusiness.com

And the Newer Examples:

Example 1: In running your business there are things you love to do, and things you don't...

Wondering how to hand off your most hated business tasks?

Read this article:

heartofbusiness.com/articles/2006/Apr19.htm

And another new example:

Example 2: Ugh! Sitting down to pay the bills, balance your accounts...

Is there an antidote to the money grumbles?

The Kitchen Table Financial Summit

heartofbusiness.com/articles/2005/July28.htm

So what changed in Mark's signature files?

- 1) Instead of a long-winded signature, his signatures are short, and evocative.
- 2) There's a clear problem; a clear apparent solution; and lots of curiosity.
- 3) The signature file now has one thought, instead of half a dozen :)
- 4) And best of all, it teeters on the edge, forcing the curiosity factor in your brain, and making you want to go clickety-click right away.

The best part of all is you never have to put up with drab, wallflower signature files. All you really have to do is let your article create the direction, and you'll have a signature file 90% done--the moment you finish your article. Then add the curiosity, and you're ready to run.

And voila, you have your Extreme Email Signature Makeover. Yeah, just like that! And without the la-dee-dah!

(Sean's Note: Thanks Mark Silver from heartofbusiness.com, for permission to use the before/after version of your signature files).

Exercise: You've read the information, but hey, you're going to get tempted to write a whole chunk of information in your signature. So when was the last time you wrote three paragraphs when creating a headline? Never, right? Well, then don't go about creating these massive signature files. Because signature files are headlines. And headlines need to attract. Nothing more, nothing less.

Which then takes us across to part segundo of this article. Where do you use these bottom-up headlines? There are tons of applications. Some are more urgent than others. Find out for yourself. :)

Bottom-up headlines-Part 2

So you know that email signatures are powerful attractors, right? But what do you put in your signature? And where should your signature appear? Find out why your signature isn't quite working as hard as it should.

First, let's handle the minefield of signatures

The purpose of the signature is attraction. Not conversion. (Yup, we covered it in the last chapter). So if you're trying to convert, you're jumping too many steps already. But let's assume you've got your attraction factor spot on, in your signature. How do you know what to put in your signature?

What are you promoting?

Is it a workshop? Is it a book? Is it a consulting program? Whatever you are promoting at this very moment, you'd want to fill up to the brim, right? So if I'm doing a workshop, then my email signature has a signature that leads to the workshop page. If I'm promoting a book, then my signature has the link to the book. But hang on a second...that's not the end of the advice.

Pay close attention to what the email is saying

If the email is going out from you to a client, then it needs to communicate whatever you're promoting. But if the email is sent to you from the client, the rules above go whack out of the window. Because your signature now depends on what the client is saying, and not on your promotion any longer.

So if a client writes to me about workshops

What's the signature going to promote? C'mon you can guess.



The screenshot shows a forum post by a user named 'admin' (Administrator). The post title is 'Re: Tell me about your pain' with a sub-header 'Reply #19 on: Today at 06:39 AM'. The post content discusses price stores and eco-friendliness. At the bottom, there is a signature: 'What if a client buys your product and service...and never uses it? What are the chances they'll come back for more? Learn why consumption matters at: <http://www.psychotactics.com/xattversumption.htm>'. The user's profile information on the left includes 'Online', 'Posts: 5555', and a location 'In Kivi Country, Off Antarctica'.

What if a client buys your product and service...and never uses it? What are the chances they'll come back for more? Learn why consumption matters at: <http://www.psychotactics.com/xattversumption.htm>

You can use a signature that creates curiosity. And that signature can promote a new product, or a new event. Or just something you think is important. Remember, you're not writing a book. All you're doing is attracting. create curiosity. And draw the customer to the 'next step.' What you see here is a permanent signature that appears on every post. But you can have a signature that specifically appears as part of the post (see next graphic) Unrelated note: I reached the magic figure of 5555 posts with that particular post :)

You see, you can't just slap a signature in and expect it to work all the time. The usage of signatures depends on the promotion you're rolling out (and remember, it needs to be an attractor, not converter). But if the client is talking about workshops, and you send out a darned signature of your book promotion, then the signature doesn't become a call to action.

It becomes advertising. And advertising that's so far away from the original question, that it's a waste of space really.

But what if you don't have loads of products and services

Well, you got me there, didn't ya? It's really hard to tell what you're going to slap into your signature if you don't have lots of products/services. But what you can do, is see if you can somehow personalise the signature to match the question of the client. If it doesn't, ah well, you're better off simply putting in a signature that's pre-prepared. Even though the signature may not correspond to the question being asked, it beats having nothing.

And finally...

Put your signature wherever you possibly can. In your emails, in forum posts and at the bottom of all your articles. I know I'm going over the top, but remember to attract--don't seek to convert.

Once you follow these simple rules, you'll start seeing more traffic, and a heck lot more conversion than ever before!

Re: Triggers or Tag Lines

If you go to a fush and chups shop (that's fish/chips in NZ) 🤪 (and feeesh and cheeeps in Aussie)..ok, so I'm distracted. Let me start again.

If you go to a fish/chip shop.

What would cause you to ask: How do you do that? OR what would cause uniqueness?

Very little, right? Because they're fish and chips and what else is there to know?

But what if I told you they changed the oil every fifty times (when most shops don't change it for at least 250 times) Now does that make a difference to how you think?

How long do make one toner last? Fifty times? Or a hundred times. The specifics will tell me how 'eco-friendly' you are. e.g.

Tag lines can drive you crazy. How do you un-crazy your life and get powerful taglines?

<http://www.psychotactics.com/brain-audit-applications.htm>

Notice how this ‘headline’ is not a permanent signature. It changes based on the post. So in this post, the question was related to taglines. And note: The answer needs to be given. And given in the maximum detail possible. So yes, answer the question, but then you can put in a ‘headline’ that attracts the person towards the next step. This ‘headline/signature’ is not a permanent one that appears on all posts. It’s designed specifically for this particular question. You can’t over do this kind of promotion though. From time to time it will work, but if you overdo it—especially in a forum—you risk being treated as a pariah of sorts. You can however, answer every email with some kind of promotion. (see below). You’ll see that the signature can be added to every email—as a bottoms-up headline!

To:

Cc:

Bcc:

Subject:

Priority: ☐ Receipt ☐ On Read ☐ On Delivery

Here you go...

Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,

Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah,
Blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.]

s-

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Can fewer customers lead to higher revenues?
Is that really possible? Judge for yourself at:
<http://www.psychotactics.com/xatversumption.htm>

Attach: (max. 8 M)

Exercise: Do you have a book you've just written? Do you have a workshop coming up? Well, use the headlines in your signature file and get customers interested. Another headline that really helps is when you answer a question, say on a forum, and you post a related product/service at the end. You could always do it, as long as you don't overdo it. And finally, every email is an opportunity to get a message across. So go on and write a few headlines (if you are a 5000bc.com member, get the cavers to give you feedback—yes, the feedback is important) and then keep them in stock—so you can use them in your email and other places such as forums etc.

And this takes us to the summary. So let's summarise what we've just learned.

Summary

And that brings us to the end of Part Two of the Core of Headline Writing.

So let's summarise: What did we cover?

1) We started out with making sure our headlines stood out. In 189 point (oops, 18 point). And then we made sure that the headlines contrasted with the text. And most importantly, that the top banner didn't wiggle and dance and distract the reader from reading the headline.

2) Testimonials. Now who'd think that testimonials would make good headlines, eh? Well, they make excellent headlines. And all you need is your copy of Brain Audit, a recording device and a happy client. And then with a little editing skills, you're ready to go.

3) Keywords. If you get hung up on them, you'll write great keyword based headlines, but your customer won't read much else. So first write for your customer. Then put in the keywords later. It works, believe me!

4) We learnt how to take a part of your article and make it a signature. And how that signature in turn becomes a headline.

5) And then we went on to find out how events can become headlines. In forums, in emails, and yes, as part of the signature as well.

So this bringeth us to the end of the second part of 'How to write Near-Perfect Headlines.' But nothing will replace you learning how customers think. So yeah, read the P.S. because it's important!

P.S. You may also want to consider (and I strongly recommend this), going to <http://www.psychotactics.com> and subscribing to the newsletter. You will understand in a more comprehensive manner why most people don't get marketing right. And why marketing is such a bloomin' pain. When you understand how Attversumption works, it makes a world of a difference to what you do—and more importantly, how you do it!

Why do some great headlines attract customers, but fail to convert to sales?

Isn't it time to find out why? Find out more details at this page and [judge for yourself](#).

<http://www.psychotactics.com/products/wordtracker-special-bonus>