



Drayton Bird

Read It And Weep - Then Copy

A while ago I did a seminar for 11 Virgin Wines people.

They said they learned a lot (8 "fabulous" ratings, 3 "very good") but I learned a lot, too.

I always do from one man who was there, and who is just brilliant.

Not surprising, because he founded the business - and before that ran Virgin Finance.

Afterwards, he sent me this e-mail. Read it and weep, as I did.

Why is so little of my stuff as good as his?

But when I read something this good, I wonder what I can learn - and copy.

From: Rowan Gormley
[mailto:Rowan.Gormley@virginwines.com] Sent: 12 July 2007 10:03 To: Drayton Bird Subject: Help me keep my job. Please

Dear Drayton,

I would like to offer you a case of sensational, very hard to find wines, at half-price, a ludicrously low £3.17 a bottle. Why?

Well, some unkind people think that I spend all my time drinking great wines, in gorgeous places, with delightful people. And I resent that. Probably because it is so true.

*The only bad thing, is that **the best winemakers are the worst salesman - and the best salesman are lousy winemakers.***

And so to do my job (which is to find you wines that are better than you can buy at your local supermarket, for less money, by the way) I have to ignore the slick salesman with their massive marketing budgets.

To do my job properly, I have to discover the little guys. The winemakers who are too passionate about making brilliant wine to worry about how they are going to sell it. The kind of people who will get up at 2am to pick grapes by the full moon, to get the extra ounce of freshness. But won't get out of bed to see me when I come knocking on the door.

To get their attention (and therefore their wine) we decided to invite a group of our "in the know" customers to club together. After all a few thousand people knocking on the door are going to get a lot more attention than little old me.

That initial band of 2000 customers has now grown to 30,000 members.

Here is what they have to say about being a member of our Club.

"I had no idea there were so many delicious wines that I had never tried"

"I am blown away. Just a fantastic service"

So what is in it for you?

Well to start with, we would like to offer you a welcome case at half the

*normal price. A **saving** of £40. Why? The more members we have, the better we can buy, the better we buy the more members we can have. And then every quarter, after tasting our way through literally thousands of wines, and we will pick out the **absolute best** for our members. We will write to you to tell you about the wines we have selected. You can then change the case in any way you want (more of this, less of that, or even no case at all). OR sit back and relax, and we will ship them to you.*

*And the best bit...after you have tried the wines, members get a minimum of **15%** off the price that the general public pay. So you get the lowest possible prices, on the wines you have chosen, out of the wines we have chosen, out of the 1000's that we have tasted.*

Is there a catch? Let me think....er. ...no. This is not one of those ghastly book clubs. If you don't want the wines, all you have to do is say so. We will refund your money instantly, without fuss, if you are not happy with the wine, the service or anything else. We will even come and collect the wines off your doorstep if you want us to.

So what makes this so good?

1. Great subject line. Surprising, makes you want to know more. And everyone likes to help.
2. Starts with an irresistible offer.
3. Bags of charm - makes you laugh.
4. Relevant surprise: the contrast between those who sell and those who make is so clever and appropriate.
5. That theme is carried through.

6. Convincing when you read about the growth of the number of customers plus the testimonials.
7. Then a wonderful wrap up that explains what a great deal it is.
8. And a great guarantee.

Marvellous stuff!

If you study his approach, you'll do well, I promise.

P.S. A confession:

"I'm not as good as I once was, but I'm as good once as I ever was" is a joke I once had on my business cards. The truth is that my seminars always get very good ratings - but the Virgin rating was unusually high. I'll have to work hard to beat it.

But if you want an intimate seminar like that, which was in our rather cramped offices, let me know, give me time to prepare something special for you, and I'll try and improve.

P.P.S. Don't forget - if you have a friend or colleague who you think would like to hear from me, please forward me their address. They'll get a polite invitation - which they can decline - and I never share my email lists.

© Copyright, Drayton Bird

About the Author

In 2003, the Chartered Institute of Marketing named Drayton Bird one of 50 living individuals who have shaped today's marketing. He has spoken in 53 countries for many organisations, and much of what he discusses derive from his work with many of the world's greatest brands. These include American Express, Audi, Bentley, British Airways, Cisco, Deutsche Post, Ford, IBM, McKinsey, Mercedes, Microsoft, Nestle, Philips, Procter & Gamble, Toyota, Unilever, Visa and Volkswagen. In various capacities – mostly as a writer – Drayton has helped sell everything from Airbus planes to Peppa Pig. His book, *Commonsense Direct and Digital Marketing*, out in 17 languages, has

been the UK's best seller on the subject every year since 1982.

Co-ordinates

Drayton Bird Associates

Web: <http://draytonbird.com>

Tel: +44 (0) 845 3700 121

Email: drayton@draytonbird.com or db@draytonbird.com



Important Notice

© Copyright 2015, Bizezia Limited, All Rights Reserved

This article appeared in Better Business Focus, published by Bizezia Limited ("the publisher"). It is protected by copyright law and reproduction in whole or in part without the publisher's written permission is strictly prohibited. The publisher may be contacted at info@bizezia.com (+44 (0)1444 884220).

The article is published without responsibility by the publisher or any contributing author for any loss howsoever occurring as a consequence of any action which you take, or action which you choose not to take, as a result of this article or any view expressed herein.

Whilst it is believed that the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of publication, it is not a substitute for obtaining specific professional advice and no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to its accuracy or completeness. Any hyperlinks in the article were correct at the time this article was published but may have changed since then. Likewise, later technology may supersede any which are specified in the article.

The information is relevant primarily within the United Kingdom but may have application in other locations.

These disclaimers and exclusions are governed by and construed in accordance with English Law.

Publication issued on 1 March 2015