

Grow through Testimonial and Endorsements

By Mark P.D. Wheatley

Committed To Your Business Success

A TESTIMONIAL is a statement attesting to the quality of work/product/service which you provide, written by someone who has direct experience of dealing with you.

An ENDORSEMENT is also written or spoken by someone who has experience of dealing with you or a respected person within your industry or field confirming their approval of you, your products and services. Both are used to build up your credibility in the mind of a prospect.

Both testimonials and endorsements make a significant difference to your ability to convert leads into sales.

TIP, a recommendation included in a testimonial which is denominated.....is what you are looking for.

'Bill provides a great blue widget service, he saved me £X's through implementing his widget into my business and I would recommend his services to anyone who wants to use great big blue widgets in their business/home etc.....'

Family History

My Father grew a successful construction business which he started just after the Second World War. He grew it over a period of fifty years, eventually selling it before he retired.

Construction is a complex selling process and a difficult business to grow. In my Fathers office, most of his business history is still kept. He was the company's best salesperson.

There is a large quantity of photographs of construction projects and a very thick book full of letters from satisfied clients 'headed recommendations.' What you might also refer to as testimonials or thank you letters.

I recall whenever a new prospective client or clients representative visited the company, they would be taken on the 'grand tour' of our workshops offices etc, always ending up in the boardroom.

My Father would not hard sell anyone. He might talk about anything else apart from business, but at some point he would show the architect relevant photographs of the type of work that the company had undertaken, along with information concerning the value of the contracts, the time taken to complete etc

He would also with great pride show them his book of satisfied clients.

Extract from one of the many letters

'It's with pleasure that I write to congratulate your organisation in the way it has carried out the modernisation to our house.

The workman were caring and efficient in the way they worked, leaving us as comfortable as possible each day, in fact the foreman called at the end of each day to ensure everything was satisfactory.

The workmanship is excellent and my husband and I are both delighted and proud of our new home. Would you please pass on our sincere thanks to all concerned?

A copy of this letter has been sent to the Director of Technical Services and to the Director of Housing services.'

Clearly you cannot get letters like these by asking for them. A letter like this only comes if your people DO GREAT WORK and the person take the time and trouble to write a letter. To put this into context the couple were living in rented accommodation which belonged to the Local Authority.

My Fathers Company was rebuilding the property whilst the tenants were still living in it. **Can you imagine the mess in these properties?** The houses were virtually rebuilt around the tenants.

The book of testimonials was very powerful in demonstrating that the company not only produced a great end product, which could be seen in the various photographs, it also showed that other important issues to a client were addressed and that the company was a quality outfit.

The letters from these satisfied clients were the most persuasive tool in my Fathers marketing tool kit. **TESTIMONIALS BUILD TRUST AND BELIEVABILITY.**

For many years he operated without a corporate brochure, these letters and photographs were far more powerful than some glossy design.

Good Endorsements/Testimonials and Bad Endorsements/Testimonials

If a Testimonial is original letter or a copy, it's far better to show that (with the permission of the writer), rather than some two line written statement, with nothing to substantiate that it was written by a real person.

Yes, there are people out there that make them up!

TIP if you are selling yourself put them in a book and take them with you when you visit customers/clients.

If you are using testimonials in your marketing, when you get permission to use a testimonial ask if you can quote their name and company.

Also ask people who are interested in your services to respect the time of people who have endorsed you or written a testimonial about you, letting prospects know that they should only approach them through yourself.

An endorsement from a respected person in their field is very powerful because your product or service is associated with their success.

Also their opinions are valued and listened to if they command the respect of others in the market. Clearly a professional person who endorses another is putting at risk their own reputation by doing so.

If you're endorsing other people's products or services make sure you only recommend companies or people who you trust to do a good job, better still a great job.

When selling business to business, securing a recommendation from a lawyer or an accountant has to be regarded as a fantastic endorsement.

Accountants and lawyers guard against being associated with anyone who is dubious, or produces bad products or services. You should develop the same attitude.

Where to use testimonials and endorsements

EVERYWHERE: On your Website, in your advertisements, in your sales letters, during your sales presentation, in your brochures etc.

More recently video testimonials are becoming a trend, to bring websites alive.

How to Get Testimonials and Endorsements if your product or service is new?

If what you are doing is new and you have no track record here are a few ideas for you:

Target prospects offer a free trial, demonstration or seminar.

You can get people to fill in a form after the event or trial encouraging the target audience to give you feedback (Use a free gift, information to encourage them).

I hope you've enjoyed this article, if you want to know more about the subject or have any questions relating to growing your business, you can call me on **01623 720022** during normal business hours or click this [link](#) to let me know when it's a good time to talk.

How successful do you want to be?

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Mark Wheatley

Mark Wheatley is a business growth and marketing expert who specialises in growing small to medium sized businesses through low risk marketing strategies and improving sales skills.