

Amazing Value Boosters: Explode Profits and Never Compete on Price Again

Interview With Joe (Mr. Fire) Vitale, May 16 2002

Preston: Hello, this is Preston Campbell of Profit Zone Marketing at www.yourprofitzone.com. Welcome to this installment of Amazing Value Boosters audio series, where we explore techniques and strategies that add value to your core product or service so you never have to compete on price again. And, of course, that means more sales, more profits, and a much longer and stronger relationship with your prospects and clients.

And today, we are really privileged to have with us Mr. Joe Vitale. He is one of the very top results-oriented marketers in the business today and a top copywriter.

He's the author of numerous books, including *Spiritual Marketing*, *Hypnotic Writing*, *Cyber Writing*, and *There's A Customer Born Every Minute*. And he's also helped over 200 authors write, publish and promote their books. He has a variety of audio programs out, such as "The Power Of Outrageous Marketing," and his sales letters have achieved responses as high as 91%, and that's incredible. Joe, I'd sure like to learn how to do that.

He's helped numerous clients, large and small, create powerful marketing and successful programs. And he's also considered one of the most dynamic and inspirational speakers around, and his fiery speaking style has earned him the moniker, "Mr. Fire."

So Joe, welcome. It's truly a pleasure to have you here today.

Joe: Thank you.

Preston: Maybe we could start by you elaborating a little bit on your background and the role of value in the marketing process.

Joe: Okay. Well, I'm primarily, first and foremost, a copywriter, and then I'm an author of a lot of books on marketing sales, publicity, advertising, things like that. I work mostly with entrepreneurial clients around the world. And many of them are authors or information publishers. And I would say that learning how to boost the value of anything that we've been offering has been fundamental to any keys to success we've had. And some of the success of my own products – I think I have 13 traditionally-published books and about 13 e-books out there – one of the reasons the e-books seem to do so well is it's easier to add value to them than it is to add value to the books that are being sold in bookstores. Maybe that's something we can touch on in this conversation.

But clearly, adding value boosts sales. And there's a real secret to it, there's a real psychology to it, there's a method to it. And we're going to discuss some of that right now.

Preston: That's interesting. That's a good point with the e-books. And things certainly have changed with the internet.

How would you define the elements of value, Joe?

Joe: How would I define the elements of value? I guess there's a couple things that come to mind. The first is psychological. I think when somebody looks at your product or service and you have a price tag on it, they make an unconscious, immediate, instantaneous decision about the value of that product or service.

So one of the things I've learned to do, and most people in business really struggle with this, is to simply raise your rates. Raise the price for whatever it is you're selling. Raise the price for whatever it is you're offering. Because right then and there, you communicate a sense of value.

I often say that marketing is mostly perception. Perception is influenced by how you describe yourself. And one of the ways you describe yourself, your business, your product or service, is how you price it. So I've found that that's one of the keys right there, to influence the psychology of buying by creating a perception in people's minds about the value of what you're offering.

Preston: That's great. So you're saying that value is really in the mind of the buyer

Joe: Absolutely. You influence that mind, of course. And that's why I've created this whole brand name with my *Hypnotic Writing* and *Advanced Hypnotic Writing*, *Hypnotic Marketing* and *Advanced Hypnotic Selling Tools*. I've got all these hypnotic-oriented books because I believe that what I'm doing is influencing people almost subliminally, certain subconsciously.

So yes, the value is taking place in a person's mind and you can manipulate that.

Preston: You mentioned that you've really worked all over the world and consulted with a lot of different types of businesses. Do you find the same general issues of value apply throughout the world? Or do you have to use different strategies in different places?

Joe: No. On the level we're talking about, by increasing value, by influencing perception, that takes place around the world. The most powerful word in marketing, the most powerful word in copywriting is still the word "free." And whenever you offer free things with your product or service, you're increasing the value of it in that person's mind.

For example, I just had an e-book released a couple days ago called *Hypnotic Selling Tools*. And *Hypnotic Selling Tools* has something like 1,800 different ways of influencing the subconscious mind of people through your copywriting.

But we don't just stop there. What we've done is added five bonuses. There's things like 20 hypnotic, full-page sales letter templates as one bonus. Another one is *Psychic Marketing: Even Without Having ESP*.

Another one is *Psychic Predictions That You Can Use To Supercharge Your Sales*.

The whole point of this is that these bonuses are often the reason that somebody will end up buying your main product. There's something called "**the psychology of the second interest.**" That means that people will often buy your primary product because of their interest in your secondary product.

So in other words, when you're offering, like I just mentioned *Hypnotic Selling Tools*, that's the primary one. All these freebies might, in fact, be the real reason that people buy the one I'm offering. And this is, to answer your question, good around the globe. Because as I've said

many times, people are people everywhere. And it's been that way since the beginning of time. The human desires, the human interest, the human passions do not change. Technology changes, our culture changes, our tastes may change, but we all want food, sex, romance, a few of the other things that are built into our DNA.

So yes, the value-added boosting techniques work everywhere.

Preston: That's great, Joe. I don't know how many times I've heard my client say, "This doesn't apply to me." But as you just pointed out, this type of thing applies to everybody and that's important to understand.

Joe: That's right. People are people. The highest-level executive that you might be intimidated by goes home at the end of the day and watches *The Simpsons*. We're all coming from this basic level of human nature.

Preston: Let me ask you this, Joe. How important is it to have a good core value a good starting point, a good core internal reality, and I would say that versus the outside perception you present.

Joe: Let me make sure I understand. Are you talking about my own perception of my product or services?

Preston: Literally, for anybody's perceptions, for you or any of the clients you work with. I've had clients where you take a look at what they're offering and it's lacking in some areas. And you have other clients that have a very strong core capability, but they haven't found a way to build perceived value or they haven't found a good method to convey that value to their customers.

Joe: That's a great question. What I'm finding is I have about seven different ways to boost value for any product or service. And one of them, just one of them is on how you describe your product or service. So in other words, it's copywriting. It's the essence of persuasion in print, or with words if it's just over radio or TV. And I can give you a very simple example.

Just imagine that there's two lemonade stands. You're a little kid and you're selling lemonade, and your neighbor across the street or right next door is selling lemonade, and you're both selling it for 25 cents. You may both get equal business or one may get more than the other, depending if there's a shade tree over you or something like that. But what if you changed your sign and said, "Lemonade, 50 cents," but added a couple words? So you have the competing neighbor still saying, "25 cent lemonade, get it here." But your stand says, "50 cent lemonade, made with clean water."

Who do you think people are going to go to? They're going to go to the 50-cent one because you added a couple extra words. Both lemonades are, no doubt, made with clean water. But the one who said "with clean water" and charges 50 cents is signaling, through persuasive copy, through a couple of simple words, that you get more value. And they'll spend more money with you.

Preston: That's a great example.

With so many techniques available, why do you think, Joe, that so many businesses are out there are trying to sell their products and services on price?

Joe: Fear. Fear is the number one reason that holds them back. And the fear is that they won't have any sales if they don't lower their price. But that is a bottom-line, Marketing 101, fundamental mistake.

There's five reasons why you don't want to go with price buyers:

You don't want to lower your price because price buyers, **first** of all, aren't loyal. They're going to just shop for the lowest price at any time, all over the globe, and you're going to be fighting tooth and nail to get them. And they will not keep coming back to you. So there's no long-term sales. Because price-buyers aren't loyal is the first reason not to sell on price.

The **second** is that price-buyers are the biggest complainers. If you've got people who are complaining about products and services, it's usually the ones who paid the lowest price for them.

And the **third** is they're the ones that are going to stiff you on the bill. The price-buyers tend not to even pay their bills. They're price-shopping because they're broke most of the time or they're maxed out on their credit card.

The **fourth** reason is they end up bragging that they ripped you off, so they're out there passing around negative publicity that reverses the word-of-mouth publicity that you want. And it's a kind of gossip, where they're bragging and you're losing.

And the **fifth** is they think you're cheap. You don't get any respect.

So there's five solid reasons right there not to go with the lowest price. And the reason that most businesses go with the lowest price is that they're shaking in their boots. They're just afraid that if they raise their price a little bit or add a little value or add something extra, that they're not going to get the extra business. This is counter-intuitive marketing. Because the reality is by raising your price, you immediately signal that you've got something of more value.

Now, you better have something of more value if you're raising your price. But my point is from a copywriting, subconscious, hypnotic, persuasion standpoint, just raising your price will signal that it's something more.

But to answer your question, I'm going long-winded here, is fear is what stops them from doing it.

Preston: Joe, that's one of the most succinct descriptions of why someone shouldn't compete on price. And I hope our listeners took notes there, because that was a fine set of reasons that you shouldn't do something like that.

You and I have both probably seen a lot of businesses literally go out of business because they're trying to keep prices low and suffer narrow margins.

Joe: Oh, all the time. All the time. The statistics are shocking.

Preston: What do you do when you have a client that doesn't even have a core product to start with? Do you innovate?

Joe: Do I help them create a product?

Preston: Do you help them modify their product offering itself to make it a little bit more marketable?

Joe: Yeah. And I think what I would do is, I guess, using the term “adding value” is the way to do it. And again, I said there’s seven ways that I typically boost value for any product or service. I told you one of them. I’ll go through all of them in a second.

But to answer your question, yeah, I do think that I have helped a lot of people add value to their product. And I do it with myself all the time. I think I learned this when Aesop Marketing put my first e-book online years ago. It was *Hypnotic Writing*. You can still see it at HypnoticWriting.com.

But they didn’t just sell my book. It was called *Hypnotic Writing*. I sold it as a spiral-bound book in the back of the room at my talks, and I made some money doing it when I was traveling around and speaking a lot.

When they put it online, they immediately added value by requesting of me something else that I had often sold but was willing to give away to people who would buy *Hypnotic Writing*. And I had an old online marketing strategy that they still sell.

So they were teaching me that you had to add value to increase sales. And in all of the stuff that I’m putting out there and all of the clients that I’m working with, and I can tell you a couple stories here in a minute or two of some clients I’ve worked with, we always search for what are some extras that we can give, for what are some products or services we can add on to a product or service so we can create to make more value, to make it worth the customer’s while, and to justify the higher price.

Preston: Absolutely. Now, let me ask you this. Clearly, from what you’ve talked about, and you have something that a lot of the “Madison Avenue advertisers” don’t have, and that is customer focus, you must spend a lot of time with your clients trying to understand what the prospect is looking for. What process do you go through to understand what the prospect is looking for?

Joe: Great, great question. I have told people repeatedly that the real secret to marketing today is in this phase. And it’s almost a mantra that you need to have in your brain when you’re writing copy or thinking about your customers. And it’s simply this: get out of your ego and get into their ego. Get out of your ego and get into your customer’s ego. Get out of your ego and get into your prospect’s ego.

The more you can do that, the more you will have success in marketing today.

Preston: That’s great. Now, do you go through any kind of process? When you sit down with a client, what kind of process do you go through with them to help them with these issues?

Joe: That’s a good question. I think all of the top marketers, marketing people, marketing consultants and specialists all do the same thing. And the very first thing they do is research. They absorb all of the information they possibly can about the product or service.

I tell people that, “If you want me to sell your book or your software, your service, whatever it happens to be, send it to me so I can live it and breathe it and play with it, and become it. I want

to get used to it. I want to find out how they made it. I want to find out what the thoughts were behind it. I want to find out how the customers are perceiving it. If at all possible, I want to talk to a few customers. I'll either e-mail them, write them, often even call them on the phone and interview them. And I want to know about the unhappy customers as well as the happy customers, because I want a full, well-rounded view of what's going on in creating this product or service.

I remember a story about Gary Halbert, the top copywriter who's out in Florida these days. Kind of a controversial figure, but when it comes to writing copy this man is a genius.

I remember this story as somebody who had hired him to write copy for their new product, and they went over to Gary's house and they were astonished to see the entire living room of his house was wallpapered with all kinds of information and clippings and product descriptions related to that person's product. That's because Gary was just inhaling and taking on every aspect of that product to be able to understand all of it, to be able to sell it.

And then, of course, there's even the famous story about David Ogilvy. When he was hired with the Rolls Royce account to sell the cars, he went through all of the research on that car, he went through all of the paperwork, all of the manuals, and he stumbled across a line that said, "The loudest noise you heard in that car was the ticking of the clock." And he ended up writing a famous headline for an ad, and it came from his research.

So that's where most of us start.

Preston: That's fantastic. For our listeners, I hope you all listened to that. That's very, very important to really get into the head of your client, and those are some great examples.

Let's move into talking about some of the techniques you use, Joe, for building value. You mentioned a seven-step process.

Joe: That's right.

Preston: Kind of tick down through the things you use that really work well for you.

Joe: Okay. A couple of them, I've mentioned. But I'm going to go through all these seven, just so you have them. And the first is **I raise price**. And I learned this years ago from a controversial metaphysical teacher by the name of Stuart Wilde. And I'd interviewed Stuart Wilde, gone to one of his seminars, and he was talking about the metaphysics of money. He was saying, "You know, one of the best ways to increase the value and worth that you are sending out to the world, to get people to pay more attention to you, and to send you more money is to do one thing – raise your prices. And then when they show up, take their money." He was very blunt and controversial.

And I also remember Jay Abraham, when he was first advertising and promoting himself as a marketing consultant. He said he was the marketing consultant who charged \$3,000 an hour.

I've met a few people who went to him during those early years, and I don't know anybody who paid that money. So he issued that as a way to create value for himself, instantaneously. This goes back to perception is everything. Most of the value takes place in a person's mind.

So the first thing I do is advise people, “Raise your prices!” And I’ve done this. I’ve sold some e-books that people didn’t think were possible to sell for the high prices I came up with. I invented a way of teaching e-classes. And just for five e-mails, I was charging a lot of money for those e-mails. And there’s a story behind that that, if we have time, we’ll get to.

But the bottom line was by raising the price for that e-mail course, I was able to get people to pay attention to it and to think there was incredible value in it. And, of course, there was value in it. But raising the price, the first step of the seven, was a very fundamental thing I did to just signal there’s value here.

And the second one I do is the way I’ve mentioned about the lemonade stand, is in **how you describe your product or service**. You influence people’s minds with the words you use to talk to them or to write to them. So strong copy influences people.

Another example might be when pink tuna started to be sold and it was outselling regular tuna, the regular tuna people came out with a little logo that said, “Our tuna is guaranteed not to turn pink.” There’s nothing wrong with white tuna or pink tuna. And this was kind of a low blow to the pink tuna people. I don’t really know the legalities of that.

But the point of it was a few more words of copy, just like the lemonade made with clean water, you suddenly signal that you are adding value to your product or service.

So the second fundamental way of boosting value is in how you describe your product or service. You position it in a person’s mind so that they value it.

And the third is to **add bonuses**, and that’s the example I gave with hypnotic selling tools. When you go to that site and you buy the book, you get five other products. And it’s the whole idea of the psychology of the second interest. People will buy things, the main product, in order to get the extra product.

So add bonus items, add freebies, add something more to your service or add something more to your product and you can increase the value.

The fourth way that I go about doing it is by **having an incredible guarantee**. Guarantees are worth a whole hour or two hours or a whole day all by themselves. But when you create a risk-free guarantee, meaning you put all the risk on you and no risk on the buyer, you start to signal that, “Oh, this must be very valuable. There’s a lot of value in this.” Again, you’re influencing their subconscious, their psychology, their perception.

When I came out with a book years ago called *The Seven Law Secrets Of Success*, we put this guarantee on the back. I don’t have the book in front of me to tell you word-for-word what it said, but it was something like, “Use the seven secrets in this book. And if you’re out of work, you’ll have a job in 30 days. If you have a business of your own, you will increase it by 33% in six months. If not, send the book back with your receipt and you’ll get your money back.”

So it was some kind of hard-hitting guarantee that said, “Oh my god, this book is different from all the other books out here. This book has value, and the other ones may or may not.” So the guarantee communicated that.

The fifth way I go about boosting value is with **credentials or credibility**. In other words, if I have certain credentials, or my client does, that helps lend value or the perception of value to the product or service. I want to state that. And if I don't have that, I want to build credibility with something like testimonials.

I'm a big fan of collecting testimonials. I saw one statistic that said, "Testimonials can increase sales by 250%." That's a whopping statement, a 250% increase in sales just by having your raving fans write down that they're raving about you so you can use it in other promotions.

So my fifth way of boosting value is by having other people say how valuable it is through testimonials.

My sixth way of doing it, and this is for a service, is to **add more service**. So if you've got a product, you would add more bonus items. If you've got a service, add more service.

For example, I have a luxury sports car that I love. It's a BMW Z3. And I now live out in the country. I'm not real close to any of the cities and it's hard to find somebody to detail my car without me taking it in. But if I take it in, I'm missing half a day.

So I want a detail shop that's going to add the service of not only detailing my car and making it look brand new, but they'll come out to me, pick it up, take it to where they work, clean it up, do the detailing, and bring it back to me.

I just recently, two weeks ago, found somebody to do that for me. And even though they wanted, I think, about \$30 more, I gladly paid it because their service had an added value that boosted my wanting to work with them.

And the seventh and final way of my boosting value is with a **USP, a unique selling proposition**, which sometimes can be called a unique story proposition. But it's the famous line that was created by Rosser Reeves back in the 50s and people like Dan Kennedy and other marketing giants use it a lot. When you have a USP, you differentiate yourself from everybody else in the marketplace, once again signaling your value.

A very strong USP, like Federal Express saying, "When you absolutely, positively need it overnight," or Dominos "You get it in 30 minutes or it's free," when you have that kind of a USP you are ringing value in a memorable way in people's minds.

So those are the seven key things that I would do.

Preston: That's great, Joe. Let me just review those for our listeners. Your seven steps are to raise the price. You might want to comment on that. I've had a lot of clients and coaching students ask me about overall sales when you raise prices. Can you talk about return on investment and the real sales you get when you raise the price?

Joe: Well, first of all, when you raise the price you may or may not get the bulk orders. So in other words, you may see an immediate lack in a mass amount of orders.

It's hard to answer this question, because it's different for every product and every service.

I guess fundamentally, for me, when I raise my prices very high, I don't get as many sales. But the sales I get more than make up for the ones that I might have gotten when a bulk lower-priced

sale type took place. So I got more immediate money with less transactions. I've got clients or clientele who just bought at the higher price, who now look at me very favorably because they're looking at me or my client with an added value type of perception like, "Oh, he must really be worth it to charge that kind of money."

And then, of course, they're staying with me. They're more loyal. Like I said, one of the problems with the price buyers is that they're not loyal. I paid a higher price for my BMW Z3, my sports car. I am loyal to that company. I love that company. And maybe part of the reason, which I hadn't even thought about before, was that the higher-ticket item is influencing my mind to think, "These people are the deity when it comes to creating cars. They can do no wrong." And that helps increase the backend and long-term customer relationship because if they're thinking you are the best, if they're feeling good about paying the high price, if they're thinking you've got great value going, they're going to stay with you. And over the long haul, you'll make tremendous amounts of money, sometimes 30 times more money than you might have with one stupid little sale to some complaining company with a very price-discounted event.

Preston: That's a super observation. It sounds like if you posture your price the right way, you may have less sales but you're going to have more profits. And certainly, the lifetime value of the prospect increases.

Joe: Yes, absolutely.

Preston: Your second point was strong copy.

Joe: Yes.

Preston: Your third point was add bonuses. And let me ask you this. I've had a lot of people come up to me and they say, "If I add bonuses, this is going to add a lot of cost to me and reduce my margins." Do you have to do things that cost you money to add value?

Joe: No, not at all. That's a great question. I guess the best example I have is on the online world. I just recently helped Terry Laveen, who runs a coaching school at CoachingInstruction.com, I helped her with her book *Work Yourself Happy*, an Amazon.com bestseller.

When she came to me and said she wanted to sell her book and she wanted to sell lots of copies, and she had about 1,000 in her living room, she had self-published the book. I said, "Well, I know a way to sell it and make it a bestseller in one day and probably sell all of those books. But you have to do a couple things."

So she was game. She wanted to know what she had to do. I said, "I need you to create or find or convert a lot of the products you already have into e-products." I needed her, in other words, to take some special reports that she had already written and turn them into a downloadable format, or to take any interviews she had with herself on a radio show or a talk she gave somewhere, turn those into a downloadable format. I needed her to create e-products.

So she did that. When she was done, she had five or six e-products.

We then issued a letter to everybody on her mailing list, and I joined in and sent it to my mailing list too, saying that on this particular day – we picked one day – if you will go to Amazon and buy one copy of her book, we will give you all of these e-products.

So in other words, in short we were saying, “If you spend \$15 on this paper book, you can have \$150 worth of e-products. Those e-products did not cost anything more to add. It did take a little bit of time for her to do it because it was all computerized and she had to somehow or other translate them or convert them.

But all we did was issue a sales letter to everybody on her list and my list. As people would buy her book that particular day, they would get a receipt from Amazon, they’d send that receipt to her or her assistant, and then they would get the access code to download all these books.

So she sold all of her books. She sold like 800 or 900 books that day. Her book became a number three bestseller on Amazon – actually, I think it was a number two bestseller on Amazon – all within 12 to 24 hours. And all it cost was time to create some e-products to add to this.

So I think it takes some creativity, a little bit of originality and some daring, but you can come up with products or services to add on that don’t cost you hardly anything but create the perception of perceived value that people want.

Preston: So, virtually, all of us who have businesses have some value-added information that we could add to our products or services.

Joe: I believe so, yes.

Preston: Let’s see, your fourth step was guarantees.

Joe: Yes, incredible guarantees.

Preston: One of the things our listeners might be wondering is if you make a strong guarantee, are you going to have increases in returns or have returns that reduce your margins, or is this actually going to help your sales and help you do better in terms of net profit?

Joe: That’s often brought up by people when they get nervous about creating a guarantee. They think, “Oh, I’m just going to get ripped off.” The reality is you will not be ripped off. Less than 2% of the people ever enforce a guarantee, ever. They keep it, they forget about it, there’s all kinds of things that take place in their mind. But the longer the guarantee, for example if you sell a product or service and say, “Keep it for 365 days, if you’re not happy, send it back and we’ll give you your money back,” what happens is people forget they ever bought it, they put it aside, they lose their receipt, they forget how to send it to you. There’s all kinds of things that take place.

So I say if you have a product or service that you think is valuable, and you certainly should, this is the core to making value-boosting techniques work. You should begin with a product or service that is great. You should have the best software, the best car, the best book, or whatever it happens to be in this particular niche field that you’re offering it to. And then everything you add on it just helps sweeten the deal, more or less.

So a guarantee that is **risk-reversal, putting the risk on yourself and not on the customer**, increases sales but will not increase the return.

Preston: That's great. Your step five was credentials and credibility.

Joe: Yes.

Preston: One of the things a lot of people find is testimonials are very important in building credentials, but they don't know how to take testimonials. Could you talk a little bit about that?

Joe: They don't know how to get them, you mean collect them?

Preston: Yes.

Joe: When I advise people, I have programmed myself to do this. I wrote a brochure for a woman in California just a couple days ago, and she wrote back and said, "Oh my god, this is fantastic! I'm really happy."

So instantaneously, my mind clicks in and I immediately write back and say, "Thank you. I'm very glad that you're pleased. Would you jot down a few words about how you feel about my product and my service, or how you feel about my copywriting in this case?" 99% of the time, these people will immediately say yes, immediately write something down and send it back to you. If there is that 1% that don't do it, I usually follow-up and say something like, "I know you're busy. How about if I write down two or three lines that summarize what I think you said about my product or service, and you can change it or you can okay it so I can use it in my promotions?"

So basically, I ask for them (testimonials). And I've trained myself to ask for them. And I do my best to train other people, clients, your listeners, whoever, to have this little gear that goes off in their head as soon as they hear a compliment about their product or service. You should have that switch go on, a light go on and you say, "Would you write that down or allow me to write it down, and you approve it so I can use it in my promotions? It may help a lot of other people realize how good our product or service is." That's it. That's how simple it is.

Preston: And Joe, what do you look for in a strong testimonial?

Joe: Oh, good. There's two things I look for. I want it to be in their words. I don't care if it is incorrect grammar or punctuation or spelling. I might correct the spelling, but the rest of it I want to be real, I want it to sound real, I don't want it to sound like a copywriter wrote it unless a copywriter did write it. I want it to come from their heart, their dialect, their idiosyncrasies, their humanness. So I want it to be real. I want it to be sincere. That's the first thing.

The second thing, the more specific, the better. So if the woman who thanked me for the brochure just says, "Joe wrote a great brochure," that's not as good of a testimonial as if she wrote back and said, "Joe wrote such a fantastic brochure. He did it 24 hours ahead of time. When I showed it to people just to get them to read it and okay it, they hired me on the spot and I made \$43,000 in two days."

You see the difference? The one testimonial that just says, "Your service is great" isn't as good as the one that says, "I used your service and I made \$5,000" or "I used your fertilizer and my tomatoes were three times bigger this fall."

Preston: That's a great recommendation. I'm taking notes here. I've certainly been guilty of writing the copywriter's testimonial on more than one occasion.

Let's see, your sixth point was adding more service.

Joe: Correct.

Preston: Now, I presume here that you can add services to services, products to products, products to services and services to products?

Joe: Yeah. In general, if you've got a product, you'll probably add some other product. And in general, if you've got a service, you can probably add another service. That's in general. There's probably cross-over in both of those. It would all depend on what you've got, what you're selling, and who you're selling it to.

But when I was speaking of service, I'm talking about like the car detail place, that I don't want just somebody that will detail my car and I've got to drive over to get them. If they add the service of picking up my car and, in fact, leaving a car with me, a different one so I've got transportation, and when they're done they bring my car back and take theirs away, that's added service. That's added value. I think I paid 30% more, 30% to 40% more to have that service. And I'll use them again.

Preston: That's a great example.

Let's move on to the last point you made, and that was on your unique selling proposition (USP) or unique story proposition. How do you get a USP that's specific enough, and how do you develop something that truly is unique for yourself or a client?

Joe: That's a challenge. You've usually got to work with somebody else, because it's real hard to see your own value sometimes, at least in a unique way. It's one thing to say, "I've got a pizza parlor and I sell my own recipe of pizza. That's unique, but it's not quite the unique selling proposition you want. The unique selling proposition is one line. It's a unique line. It's a proposition that sells the people who hear it or read it on your product or service.

Whenever I work with somebody, I have to talk to them, listen to them, and listen intently to them with an ear towards the hidden uniqueness that they may not even be aware of. And maybe it is like the detail place, to kind of use that example again, where other car detail places might say, "We will polish your car, detailing it so it will look like brand new." This other one might say, "We will drive to your home, pick you up" or "We are the only service within a 50-mile area that will drive to your home, pick up your car, detail it and bring it back, and all for under the price of like \$100." That's more unique. And if there's nobody else in this area saying it, then they've locked on their own USP. They've got a unique selling proposition that can work, one of the tests for a USP.

So if you've come up with what you think is a unique selling proposition for yourself, a way to test it is to ask, "**Can anybody else say it? Can anybody else make the same claim?**" Because if somebody else can make the same claim, if there's another car detailer place within 50 miles and they do the same thing, then that's not unique enough to be the USP you want. You need to have something that you and only you can say you do. And that takes some work. There's no flippant, real easy, instantaneous answer to it.

Preston: That's a great recommendation. I know that one of the most common mistakes I see with clients is that they want to create very general ads. And certainly for most of us, we see the specificity in our heads but what we put it down on paper is simple.

The Yellow Pages is a great example of somewhere anybody can go to see a lot of advertisements that all look the same.

Joe: That is a wonderful point. I made a tape set in Australia with Winston Marsh a couple years ago, and we pulled out a Yellow Pages from Melbourne, Australia, and we just went through it. We would open it to a section like printers, and all the printers read alike. They all printed. And all the auto repair places repaired autos. There was nothing that stood out. There was nothing that differentiated them from anybody else. There was no uniqueness.

So you want to be unique. And if you can add something to your product or service that makes it unique, you've just boosted your own value immediately.

Preston: It reminds me of the real estate section we looked at recently that had seven or eight ads that all said, "Residential and commercial," except for the one "unique" ad that we jokingly noted said, "Commercial and residential." In reality, no one said anything unique. You couldn't choose, which meant the decision probably came down to price.

Joe: Yeah, sometimes it takes a little twist.

Preston: Let me ask you this, Joe. You've given us seven great value-boosters. For our listeners, where in the process do you create value around your products and services and create the offer? Which part of the process do you do that in?

Joe: Well, I think you should be thinking about that from day one, but probably you're not. Most people that are creating their own product or service, whether it's pizza or software or a book or clothing, I don't know what that might be for whoever is listening, they're only focused on that primary product or service. And I think that's fine. But when you're nearing the point when you're starting to think about, "How am I going to sell it and who am I going to sell it to, or how am I going to position it in the marketplace," at that very point, if not sooner, they should be thinking about, "What can I add to this basic offer that's going to make it more valuable to the people I want to shell out the money for it?"

Preston: I know that when I first learned copywriting, I always started with the headlines. And I eventually realized that it was pretty darned hard to write a headline if I didn't have a good offer first.

Joe: Right.

Preston: Where do you start that process?

Joe: That's a good one, too. I, again, go back to the first step, researching. I want to play with the product or service. I want to live it and breath it and get used to it. I want to read all the documentation on it. I want to read any earlier promotions. I want to know what the basic offer is. What am I selling to somebody?

And then at that point, also, see how can I juice it up. And that's by adding products or service, testimonials, guarantees, something of these seven things I've talked about. And I think after

knowing what we're selling and how we are value-adding to it, I think at that point I start working with a headline. And for me, the headline is excruciating but at the same time extremely stimulating. Because I know once I have a fantastic headline, most of the ads, sales letters, news release, whatever I'm working on, starts to fall into place. But I think the sales letter, just to make my own process more conscious as I'm talking right now, I think the headline comes after knowing what the offer is. And the offer comes after knowing what the product is and adding some value to it.

So it's somewhere in that process, in that stream.

Preston: That's great. You've obviously got a lot of experience putting offers together and creating products for yourself and for clients and promoting those. Could you talk a little bit about what your biggest success stories have been and those of your clients, in terms of taking a core product or service and really boosting the value up and making it do well?

Joe: There's a couple stories that come to mind, and I know we're running out of time here so I'll be brief and just tell one of them.

Jay Abraham, who most people probably know, he is a living marketing genius and I greatly respect him, he came to me one time and wanted me to sell one of his books. It was the famous Mr. X Book, which is a great book that everybody should have. And the Mr. X Book, real quickly, is a book written about Jay Abraham's techniques of marketing, but written by somebody else.

The story is that somebody took all of his classes, his books, his seminars, his tapes, and then wrote their own book, basically stealing all of the ideas from Jay Abraham, and published all the book and called it the Mr. X Book.

Well, Jay Abraham, being a very smart marketer, found this out. And instead of suing, he made a deal and bought all of the books and is now selling them himself, because he thinks the book is great. It's the best summary of his own ideas.

So Jay Abraham came to me and wanted me to sell the Mr. X Book to my list. And I wrote up a small, short sales letter basically saying the book was available. And if you bought it, we added a little value by saying that you can get a special report with it. We got some sales, but nothing to brag about.

So Jay asked me, "How can we boost the sales?" And I said, "Well, my list is used to getting a lot more freebies." And this is true for everybody, it's not just my list. Free is a powerful word, and there is the psychology of the second interest I mentioned.

So I told Jay, "What else can you give me that I can give to people? The Mr. X Book is great, but they want more. They want added value.

So he said, "Well, let me think about it." And he came back and he still gave the special report. But now he had two other tape sets. I think both of them were tape sets that he had with Nightingale-Conant. So he got both of them. I think one was called Your Secret Wealth, and they're both worth about \$70 each.

So now we issued the sales letter, but adding that Jay Abraham just sweetened the deal. “Buy the *Mr. X Book* and get the special report, but now also get these two other tape sets.” And sales just about tripled at that point.

So we added some simple value with stuff he probably had sitting around in his garage. But that was enough to boost sales.

Preston: That’s a wonderful example, Joe. That’s fantastic.

Let’s see, we do have time for another one.

Joe: Well, the only other one that immediately comes to mind is the one I alluded to earlier, about the e-classes I created. There’s a lot of people online that have autoresponder marketing classes, where you can send in your e-mail and just get an e-mail class back. In fact, I have a couple free ones. If you send an e-mail to Class@AWeber.com, you’ll get, I think, a seven-day e-class back. It’s an autoresponder. And the reason it’s free is because it’s promoting me and at the end of every one of the e-mails there’s a little sig file that’s a sales piece for some product or service. I don’t even remember what it was.

So there’s a lot of those out there, and there’s a lot of people who are teaching teleconferences and telemarketing classes, and they charge \$50 to \$100, or sometimes \$1,000 depending on what they’re doing.

Well, a couple years ago, and it was about the time I wanted my BMW Z3 that I told you about, I came up with the idea for teaching an e-class that was very expensive. In other words, very expensive to people who were going to take it. And what I proposed to do was offer five e-mail lessons on a particular subject. And the first class I taught was on spiritual marketing, which is one of my more recent books and one I’m very proud of. Amazon’s been selling a lot of them.

So I announced this spiritual marketing e-class and I told everybody, “You will get five e-mail lessons. They will be from my book,” which at that time was not published, so this was pretty rare and exclusive. I was going to charge \$1,500 per person to get these five e-mails.

Now, when you just hear that and you don’t know anything about me or the e-classes or anything like that, it sounds impossible. It sounds preposterous. It sounds almost insulting. How could I get \$1,500 per person for people to take or receive five e-mails?

Okay, this is where I had to add value. The very first thing I said was, “First, the lessons are from a book that is not available anywhere on earth. It is not published.” And at that time, I didn’t know I was going to publish it, ever. So there was some value in thinking, “I’m going to have **something that nobody else has.**”

“Second,” I said, “I’m going to give you homework at the end of every one of those lessons. I want you to do the homework and return it to me.” So I was **creating interaction.**

And then the third and most powerful thing I said was, “I will personally review it and give you consulting by e-mail. I was not going to consult with them in person. I was not going to consult with them by phone. But I was going to **consult with them by e-mail**, meaning when they did their homework and sent it to me, I would review it, I would critique it, I would give them advice

for improving it. So if they wrote a sales letter, I would do my best to tell them how to improve it and send that back by e-mail.

So the added value in this particular case was they were getting me – at least a part of me.

So I advertised the class to my e-mail list, which at that time was only 800 names, and did anybody sign up? I made about \$23,000 in two days because 16 or 17 people immediately signed up to take that e-class, getting five e-mails, but the value-added was me and the consulting, and they were glad to pay \$1,500 each for it.

Preston: That is a fantastic perspective, and it certainly points out the value of helping people who just don't know what to do, especially for somebody who's actually done it before and you have that insight.

We're getting to the point we're going to close out the program here. Joe, is there anything else you want our listeners to know in terms of boosting value?

Joe: I think fundamentally, people need to know their own value. In other words, it's a self-worth issue a lot of times. Especially if you're a consultant or you're a counselor or a specialist in some area where you're working one-on-one, and you are the business, I think that you have to recognize that you are valuable, and then extend that to your business is valuable and extend that to your product or service is valuable before you can ever start raising your prices or describing your business in a strong copy way or doing any of the seven things we talked about.

So I think fundamentally, it all takes place inside. And this is really the spiritual marketing approach. Spiritual marketing is about taking care of the inside of you first, before you try doing things on the outside. All the information in the world, even listening to this tape, isn't going to make a difference in your bottom-line results unless you believe inside yourself that you are worth it, your business is worth it, your product or service is fantastic, and your customers are worth having it.

So have the self-worth first, and then start going through the seven steps we talked about for increasing, boosting value.

I can also give a website that might help some people, a book I read about ten years ago called *How To Sell At Prices Higher Than Your Competitors* is still available. There's a website – I just checked it yesterday – called PricingExpert.com, www.PricingExpert.com. PricingExpert.com can help people in rationalizing how they want to raise their prices and add value, and maybe even getting over some of the self-worth issues that could be there. They may not be there for everybody.

So those are a couple parting thoughts.

Preston: That's wonderful. I want you to know I'm reading your *Spiritual Marketing* book right now, and I'm going to check that site out very soon.

Joe, how can our listeners get a hold of you? You certainly have a lot of great information. I think a lot of people will want to contact you.

Joe: Okay. My main website is www.MrFire.com. They can reach me on e-mail by at Joe@mrfire.com. I'd be glad to hear from anybody and do my best to respond to all of them.

Preston: Joe, thank you so much for the insights. I've certainly learned a lot. I've got several pages of notes I'm going to be reviewing. And thank you to our listeners. This is Preston Campbell with Profit Zone Marketing. You can reach me at www.YourProfitZone.com, at 805-660-1133. And make it a great day.