

**About the Author**

Carl Davidson is the president of Sales & Management Solutions, a consulting firm specializing in sales and management video training and live seminars. He is the author of several books including *Secrets of Accountability Management*. His articles are read by more than 60,000 sales professionals monthly. Send comments on this article to him at davidson@salesco.net. For a free demonstration video and list of products and topics, call 800-941-0068.



By Carl Davidson

# If You Sell <sup>Just</sup> Water Softeners, You Could Be Making a Lot More Money

**H**ave you ever done a great demonstration only to find that the customer just isn't interested? We all have that happen occasionally, but sometimes we cause their apathy by emphasizing the wrong things. What I mean is that people do not buy steel tanks, resin and valves, they buy emotions, dreams and love. Let me explain.

Look at McDonald's restaurants. They could sell you a burger and fries. But, their commercials don't talk about good food, they talk about, "You deserve a break today" and "We love to see you smile." They show grandfathers basking in the love a child gives them as the child opens the Happy

Meal. They know people buy the dream, not the burgers.

There is a popular dandruff shampoo commercial running on television that has a great lesson for us. Think about it. No one needs dandruff shampoo. I mean, dandruff won't kill you. So how do they sell it? Do they have a chemist on the screen explaining how the product works?

No, they show a lonely guy suffering from rejection. He starts using dandruff shampoo and in a few seconds, his life turns around.

Do we really believe dandruff shampoos will get us all the women we can stand or that Happy Meals will make our grandchildren love us more? Apparently these images make us want to buy

products. These giant advertisers do lots of research to prove what works before they invest in nationwide ad campaigns.

So what does this have to do with selling water equipment? Plenty. If you are still talking mostly about valves, resin and TDS, you could be doing better by selling the dream. Here are a few examples of phrases and images you might want to try in your demonstration that sell the dream and the emotions. They are based on some of the motivating factors advertising research has proven to motivate buyers nationwide.

**Beauty**

"Imagine how great you will feel as people notice the younger, smoother skin and

*Watch television closely  
and you will see that products are sold  
using various images and phrases*

shinier, more manageable hair that you will have from using soft, conditioned water.”

#### Convenience

“You’ll feel great knowing that soft water has done 35 percent of your housework each week. You’ll never have to scrub that bathtub again. Soft water is like having a maid who pays you to help with your cleaning.”

#### Envy

Yes, envy is a big seller. Notice how many commercials are based on envy or putting something past friends and loved ones. You might use images such as, “Imagine the look on your friends and family as they see your sparkling crystal and flatware. They will admire you for your home’s sparkle and wonder how you find the time to keep your home so impeccably clean. You’ll smile, knowing your water conditioner does the work and you take the credit.”

#### Economy

“The numbers you gave me show that our equipment will save you about \$70 per month in soap and cleaning supplies ... that’s about \$840 per year or a saving of more than \$12,600 over the life of the equipment. That’s about a 46 percent return on your investment per year. Imagine the feeling of pride and accomplishment you will feel every time you turn on your faucet knowing you have improved your families life style, and are making a 46 percent return on your investment each year. It doesn’t get any better than that.”

Sound a little flowery and overdone? Maybe, but watch your television closely and you will see that products are sold using these kinds of images and phrases. How would your demo and the phrases you use stack up against the commercials consumers are used to seeing?

A very wise advertising guru once said, “Sell the lawn, not the grass seed.” What he meant was to sell the great feelings having a green, perfect lawn would give the consumer instead of telling them the technical features of the seed.

These techniques not only make it easier to motivate customers to buy, they also eliminate price objections. Again, if you watch television commercials, you will find that the more expensive products promote image and emotions. For example, in our area, there is a great commercial for an expensive restaurant that shows a couple having a romantic dinner. You can see how much in love the dinner has made them and how exciting their night will be thanks

We want your opinion.  
What are some other phrases and images you find effective?  
Send your opinion to Carl via e-mail at davidson@salesco.net.



to great food, service and atmosphere. They don’t tell you the price or show you the food, just the emotions and image. This restaurant is always full and dinner for two costs about \$150. The price isn’t a factor because the emotional sale is so strong. If you are running into a lot of price objections,

it could be because you are selling “a burger with fries” instead of “the most romantic evening of your life.”

Give it a try. It may seem a bit unusual at first, but I think you will find, just as top advertisers worldwide have found, you’ll sell more if you sell the emotions, image and feelings than if you just sell equipment. **WQP**

For more information on this subject, write in 1010 on the reader service card.

## We want to hear from our readers.

Have your dealership or article featured right here. Tell us about your concerns, projects/case studies and article ideas.

#### Water Quality Products

Editorial

380 E. Northwest Hwy., #200

Des Plaines, IL 60016

fax 847-390-0408

wqpeditor@sgcmail.com