

The Red Letter



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I Give You My Words

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Go Ahead, Give It A Try

Schick has my number. Actually, the company has my address. More importantly, it now has my business.

I’ve always been a Gillette guy. For years, my day began with my trusty twin-blade. For me, it was “The Best A Man Can Get.” A couple of years ago, a Gillette TV commercial convinced me to try what was then a revolution in male shaving, the triple-blade. The Mach3 promised a close shave with less irritation for guys with sensitive skin.

Other companies introduced copycat triple blades, but I didn’t pay any attention to their ads. After all, I was living with less skin irritation and a smoother face. I was happy.

Then, about six months ago, a package arrived in the mail from Schick. Inside was a brand-new Schick Xtreme3 – triple blades, a flexible head to conform to facial contours, a more comfortable shave guarantee. Being a Gillette man I was dubious but, what the heck, I had the thing in my hand. I gave it a whirl.

Heaven. There is even less irritation, and the product’s name, Xtreme3, is just as cool. My Mach3 has been relegated to backup status. I don’t know Schick’s brand positioning line, and I don’t care. With a free \$5 razor and postage, the company is gaining the \$5-\$6 I spend *every month* on replacement blades. That’s a smart return on marketing investment.

Stealing market share requires innovation. Sometimes you have to give a little to get a lot more back. Maybe you can’t afford to give away a sample of your product or service, but you do have to find ways to give people a little taste – or feel – of what you have to offer.

Vote

If you accomplish nothing else throughout the entire month, get to the polls and cast your vote November 2. It is important, it is your right, and it is your responsibility.

It’s Fun to Help

Since launching my website, I’ve had the pleasure of speaking to several young people who visited it and are seeking employment or internships in advertising/marketing. Since FredComm is a one-man show, I provide them a list of area contacts.

One woman recently got back to me to say she’d had three interviews and received two job offers from people to whom I’d directed her. Good for her.

Good for everyone, really. We all benefit from new talent in town. Many of you do much more than I to help out these whippersnappers. Keep it up.

When all think alike, no one is thinking very much. – Walter Lippmann

The Good Word

Depends on What the Definition of “Its” Is

The poor, abused apostrophe.

If one punctuation mark holds the dubious honor of being most misused, it has to be the apostrophe. Nowhere is this more evident than in “its” vs. “it’s”.

The confusion most often occurs in forming a possessive or a contraction.

- “Its” is the possessive form, as in “its eyes were blue.”
- “It’s” is a contraction, as in “it is” or “it has.”

Try to substitute “it is” where you want to use “it’s”.

Example:

- The firm must protect *its* assets. (“...protect *it is* assets” makes no sense).
- *It’s* time to protect our assets. (“*It is* time to protect our assets” makes perfect sense).

I know, I know...*it’s* confusing, but you can do it.