Lesson #26

The C.I.A. Report
Part 2 of 2

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Introduction

Picking up where we left off last week…

List Marketing C.I.A.™ Part Three: A = Adcontent

So, what is an "Adcontent" page? Let me explain. What do you think of when you hear the letters "C.I.A."? You think of "spies", right? You think of "covert". "Undercover". "Espionage".

Well, an adcontent page is a kind of covert sales tool. It's a blend of...

- Advertisement
- Editorial
- Content

It's "*information that effectively presells*".

Specifically, here is a working definition we'll build upon throughout the remainder of our session here…

> **Definition: "Adcontent Page"**
>
> An "adcontent page" is a feature-length article sharing useful information, story-telling and utilizing incentive advertising that leads the reader to a decision to make a purchase.

Now, I know that's a mouthful. Don't worry, I'm gonna break it down for you in bite-sized steps.

This isn't an ezine article that we're talking about it. An ezine article can only do so much in the form of selling. This is something deeper – a page that takes a major step towards CONVINCING someone to buy … without blatantly sending up warning signals that you're trying to convince them to buy.

Now, there are six steps in the process of creating such a page that I want to share with you. By the time we're done with these six steps, you'll not only fully understand the concept of an "adcontent page", but you'll also be thoroughly versed in creating your own.

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So, with that in mind, let's begin...

1) CHOOSE a title, not a headline.

Think about this: the one thing that will get your subscribers on the defensive quicker than anything is the mere hint that you're trying to sell them something.

For many people, they're already thinking of reasons why NOT to buy before you even tell them what it is that you're selling. They've seen it all, heard it all. They've already got their minds made up. And your job just got a lot harder, because you've got to do more than convince them to buy. You've got to convince them to give you the time to convince them to buy.

So, you don't want people automatically looking for the exit door.

> That's why it's so important that your "adcontent" page look more like content than it does an advertisement. You've gotta disarm readers. Ease them into a more comfortable setting. Warm them up to you, what you've got to say and, ultimately, what you'd like them to do.

So, begin by choosing a title, not a headline. Make it appear to be an article, not a salesletter.

Use an "articles" folder.

What would happen if I sent you directly to a salespage to my site? You'd automatically think, "He's selling something there." Why? Because you've been told from day one (and observed first-hand) that you need a domain name that matches the title of your offer. ListandTraffic.com just "sounds" like there's something for sale, doesn't it? Even if you arrive at the site and see an article posted there, you're already in "defense" mode and I'm gonna have to work harder to convince you to buy.

But, if I send you to a Question & Answer page that was an extension of my URL – that was sitting in an 'articles' directory? How would you feel landing on that? Safe. You see the "articles" folder and you assume this is an article – which it is. Big, big difference in your mindset and an advantage to me in getting to the desired result. So, setup a folder at your site entitled "articles" and house your "adcontent" pages in there instead of at the main entry page of your domain.

Use a non-sales "title".

At the top of every webpage is a "title". It often has the name of a product, a catchy phrase, the domain name or other bits of information.

Typically for a marketing or business-related site you'll see this used to begin pre-promoting the offer. Don't do this with your adcontent page. Instead, choose something that sends the message that this is a C-O-N-T-E-N-T page!

I chose for my example, ":: Answers To Your List Marketing Questions"…
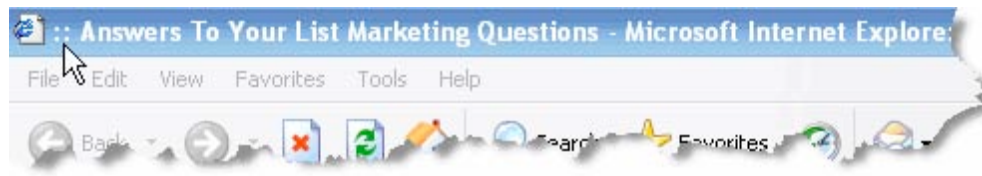
Nothing to be afraid of here. It just "sounds" safe to the reluctant, skeptical, "ya ain't gonna get any more of my money" subscriber who's on the lookout for would-be muggers disguising themselves as marketers.

Use a content "pre-head".
If you look at the upper left hand corner of my example page – which, by the way, is a real "adcontent page" that I send subscribers to – if you look at the upper left hand corner of that page, you'll see the words "List Marketing Q&A" highlighted in yellow like this: <mark>List Marketing Q&A</mark>

Below that, you'll see the words…

> W. Mark Thompson answers YOUR list-building questions
> <u>Note</u>: To submit a question for future issues, see below.

Do you see how disarming this is? It's no longer a threat. This appears to be – **and ultimately WILL be** – useful information as opposed to yet another demand for money. It leaves the reader with every reason to believe this is content as opposed to an advertisement. The less visitors feel threatened, the warmer they get towards you. And that will translate into more orders at the end of the page.

Use a "print" command.
You've seen it a gazillion times at the top of salesletters … "Print This Page" with a little printer icon beside it. When the visitor clicks on the print link, it opens up a print window and they can easily print a hard copy of the

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contents of that page.

There's a reason why smart marketers uses this "print command"… it increases conversion. If someone prints your page, they are more likely to read it. If they read it, they are more likely to buy.   So, this is a tool that you definitely want built into your "adcontent page" with one slight twist. Instead of using, "Print This Page", use the words, "Print This Article"…

     🖨 Print this Article

Again – let me emphasize that this isn't about "tricking" someone. You're gonna be posting an article on this page. You're gonna be sharing useful content. You're gonna be providing information that is of interest and value to the reader. You just want them in the right frame of mind to receive and respond to that information.

Note: If you don't have the "print" javascript, just shoot me an email and I'll be glad to give you a complimentary copy of it.

Use a "q&a" format.
I really like to use a *"question and answer"* format with this strategy because it suggests interaction with others and it really lends itself well to the concept of involvement and participation. The more the reader feels comfortable, the more they begin to like and trust you.

It doesn't take a genius to figure out that those two things – "like" and "trust" – convert into sales.

Use the word "by".
If you were to look at my example "adcontent" page, you'll find these words towards the top…

<div align="center">

Six Steps To Six Figures With List Marketing
by Paul B. Evans

</div>

What does this suggest to you? It suggests that it's an ARTICLE rather than a sales page. The format is completely different than that of a salesletter or advertisement. When you use the word "by" – and include your name, of course – you continue in the process of making this a risk-free read for the visitor.

Remember, one of the goals here is so you can sell without constantly bombarding

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your subscribers with hyped-up offers. You can literally send out one of these "adcontent" pages every week without creating problems.

So, choose a title, not a headline. Make it look like an article, not a salesletter.

2) CRAFT a story that reveals an advantage.

Ask the average person why someone else is better than them at anything and you'll routinely hear the same reason coming back…

"The other person has an advantage."

- Dave thinks the reason Bob always beats him on the golf course is because Bob has a nicer set of golf clubs.
- Susan thinks the reason why Dana always gets the big new accounts is because the supervisor likes Dana more.
- Jonathan thinks the reason Jacob gets better grades than he does is because Jacob is just naturally smarter.

Listen, it's a universal mindset that is shared by millions of people: there must be a reason why others are better or more successful or happier. Rather than point the finger at ourselves and any faults we might have, it's easier to point to others and say, "*It's not fair – they have something that I don't have.*"

Others have a secret weapon. An opportunity. A break. An advantage.

So, when you agree with them in your "adcontent page" that others DO have an advantage - and show that your content will level the playing field so the reader can also share in that advantage – you've got their full attention from the very beginning.

> And, when you can have someone else submit this story about an advantage, that's even better. That was the case in my example. I used a typical question from a client of mine in which he revealed a perfect "advantage" scenario.

Here's an engaging story that illustrates the point … two guys doing the same thing and one of them gets better results. Why? He had something the other one didn't have.

> It's so easy to get the reader involved at this point, because they are represented by those two guys. The reader falls into one of those two categories. Chances are, it's the one that hasn't quite gotten the best results yet, or they probably wouldn't even be reading the page.

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So, I use the opening part of my content to give an overview answer to the question, explain to the reader that an advantage DOES exist and let them know I'm about to equip them with the very advantage others have in the remainder of the article.

From this point on, they'll be hanging on my every word.

Begin by using some kind of story about an advantage being available to help the reader get better results. Reveal some kind of secret weapon that they can use to do as well as others have done. Maybe even better.

Then...

3) CREATE "useful, but incomplete" content.
This is a concept that I've been sharing for about seven years now – which is an eternity in Internet time – to describe content that gets the reader to take a desired action.

The real secret to using content to get people to buy is to create "useful, but incomplete" content. That simply means this –

> A) The content by itself is useful to the reader. It has value. It is beneficial on its own. It teaches, trains, it educates. In other words, the reader gains something they can use simply by reading it. That's the "useful" part of the equation.

> B) But, there's something missing. The information can be MAXIMIZED by responding to an offer inside the content. It's good … but it could be made better by obtaining something additional.

Let me give you some examples…

> ```
> Example 1:  "7 Easy Ways to Landscape Your Lawn For Free" would
> be useful information to someone.  Included with that article
> might be an offer for a $29.00 ebook entitled "101 Easy Ways to
> Landscape Your Lawn For Free."
> ```

See how it works? The content itself is useful … but, it's also incomplete. There are only 7 free landscaping tips shared, when there are 101 available. Do you think the reader is likely to purchase the $29.00 collection if the 7 ways from the article was useful to them? Probably so. Definitely so when they learn about your

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incentive that we'll be revealing momentarily.

> ```
> Example 2:  What about an article that shares "7 Sure-Fire Ways
> to Earn Monthly Profits With Autoresponders"  That's useful
> information to have.  But, what's missing?  The autoresponder
> itself, right?  So, the article promotes an autoresponder
> service as its offer inside.
> ```

I've taught, coached, used, co-opted and applied this strategy in dozens of different ways over the years and let me tell you quickly what I have found to be THE best "type" of article for using the "useful, but incomplete" content tactic.

What works best is to provide a "tutorial overview".

In other words, a classic "how-to" article that shares the basic steps involved in a process, while – quite obviously – not explaining each of those steps in full detail.

That's exactly what I did for the example "adcontent" page that we've been referring to in this session. I shared my complete "six-step system" for creating a six-figure income with list marketing. And then I pointed out that there is an audio training session available for each of those six steps which explains the step in full detail.

I even mentioned specific things that are revealed in those audio recordings as it related to each of the six-steps.

Do you think any interest is building among those reading the page? Of course. Most readers would be glad to BUY the audio set. When they find out how they can get it for free as my incentive, it's a done deal.

So, give them "useful, but incomplete" content. Provide enough information that there is some genuine value to the reader based on what they consume at the page. And then make it subtly clear that additional, better, advantage-creating information is available for FREE.

This is where you begin talking about your incentive. At the close of your "useful, but incomplete" content, unveil your incentive. It's time to start the "ad" part of your "adcontent page"...

4) CONVINCE by providing proof of results. I've said it before and I'm sure I'll be saying it again in the near future. Probably right now.

"Results" are the best reason for anyone to order. That's a profound statement that needs to be repeated – and you really need to think about what I'm saying here. *"Results" are the best reason for anyone to order.*

In other words, by providing proof that your "incentive" works, you'll be making it much easier for the reader to say "yes" than it is for them to say "no".

> ***Listen, the only reason any of us want to
> do anything is because we want results.***

Think about it –

- We exercise because we want to get in shape, be healthier or attract someone from the opposite sex.
- We go to work each day because we want to get paid so we can buy things … mainly for our children.
- We eat our favorite food because we want to enjoy the taste. And we want another reason to get back to our exercising.
- We even sleep because we want to be rested and refreshed.

The only reason any of us wants to do anything is because we want results. Ultimately, we want results that we feel will better our lives and make us happy, but it's those results we're after.

So, your job is to convince us you've got what it takes to help us get those desired results. And the way you do that is to prove you've already generated those results.

What's more convincing to someone wanting to lose weight than "before" and "after" photographs of yourself showing you've lost 50 pounds?

So, what I like to do is use screenshots or photographs. If you look at my example page, I've got screenshots of two important things on it:

> 1. Subscribers. The first thing I show is that I know how to get new subscribers – a lot of new subscribers – to join my opt-in list. I did this by showing a screenshot of my inbox with new subscriber notifications.

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2. Sales. Secondly, I showed that I know how to turn those subscribers into sales by showing my order notifications that came in as a direct result of attracting those new subscribers.

That's proof that my incentive works, and works well. And it's more than enough to convince fence-sitters that they need to take action.

So, you gotta prove it. Illustrate your results. After that…

5) CALL to action with your incentive.

It's crunch time. Now's the point in this process where you let the reader know the requirements for getting your free incentive. What is it that they need to do in order to grab what they now have a desire to possess?

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Note:  I'm not going to read my entire call to action here due
to time constraints – and the risk of completely boring you to
tears ;-) – but I do want to remind you that you should study
what I have in place in my own example page that we've been
referring to throughout our training session for a clear "call
to action".
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The point is, it's time to escalate things. Thus far you've been investing in the reader by providing them with quality, useful information. Now comes the point where they invest in you.

Explain your position: if they'll order XYZ product or service through your affiliate link, you'll give them a free copy of your incentive.

And don't forget to explain the merits of the offer you're promoting. Briefly highlight the best benefits to the reader of buying the offer. Why do they need it? What is there to gain from getting it? What kind of RESULTS have you seen from it?

Your incentive is the "icing on the cake". Explain that you're promoting an offer that they probably are going to buy anyway … why not get your "secret weapon" for free as part of the deal?

Now, with any good "call to action", there needs to be some kind of compelling reason to take action NOW. You don't want them to walk away empty-handed. They may never come back. Instead, you want to get them to make a "yes" decision now.

There are three ways to create what I call a "yes environment" in your call to action that I want to briefly mention before we move on…

> **1. Stress the unavailability of your incentive.** It's "off the market". It's not for sale. No one else has it. It can't be found elsewhere. You may not ever make it available again.
>
> **2. Put a limit or deadline on your incentive**. Make it available for only 24 hours. Or, limit it to the first 50 who order. Update your site as people order by showing how many copies are still available to increase interest.
>
> **3. Add a "first 10" component to your incentive**. To really get people to take action, give something additional to those who respond immediately. Offer a personal consultation or a month free membership or some additional component of your incentive to the first 10 people who order.

When you put these things into practice, there's only one more step before you start cashing your checks for all those orders that'll come in!

6) COMPLETE the process with a referral / order link.

Give them the link they'll need to use to order the offer you're promoting. Provide them with instructions on what to do after they've ordered so they can collect the incentive you're offering.

> For instance…
>
> Click Here to visit the site.
>
> After you've placed your order, just send me your transaction number to you@yourURL.com and I'll forward you the download instructions for the free copy of "27 Ways To Find New Affiliates".

And just like that you've got a compelling offer in place to increase your orders without constantly bombarding (and alienating) your subscribers.

> Listen, it's IMPOSSIBLE to continually send out offers to your subscribers without your list becoming ineffective. Impossible. I don't care if you're Jimmy D. Brown or John Reese or Marlon Sanders or who you are. If you continually feed nothing but offers to your list, sales WILL decline. People will stop reading your emails or they'll unsubscribe. Either way, you're

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not getting paid.
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However, if you use the **List Marketing C.I.A™** strategy, you'll be able to strengthen your relationship with your subscribers while subtly making offer after offer. Instead of alienating your list members, you'll educate them. Instead of programming them to look the other way, you'll train them to buy.

If you just apply what I've explained to you here, you'll soon become very influential with your subscribers – specifically, in their buying decisions. Whether you promote affiliate programs or your own products, this is one very effective way to get list members to buy from YOU instead of your competition.

 If they're gonna spend their money, they might as well spend it with you!

Folks, THAT'S how you skyrocket your affiliate commissions WITHOUT strong-arming your subscribers.

This Week's Assignment

1) **Create Your "Adcontent" Page.** Follow today's steps and develop your own "adcontent" page to use in promoting your FTM site. Send out a mailing to your existing list members to notify them of the free content you've made available. Drive pay-per-click and other traffic to the page. Create additional "adcontent" pages (all related to your FTM site's topic) and drive traffic to them. Make it a priority to create 2-3 of these pages every month.

That's a wrap for this time. See you sometime next time.