



**Put it in Writing** will help you get your newsletter done on time, every time. We offer crisp writing, eye-catching design and punctual delivery.

**510/724-9507**

**jeff@put-it-in-writing.com**



**Put it in Writing**  
**Newsletter Specialists**

- Interviewing
- Writing
- Editing
- Design
- Graphics
- Typesetting
- Photography
- Printing

1517 Buckeye Court  
 Pinole, CA 94564  
 510/724-9507; 741-8698 (fax)  
 jeff@put-it-in-writing.com  
 www.put-it-in-writing.com

**Jeff Rubin**

## JEFF RUBIN SPEAKS!

Jeff Rubin speaks on writing, marketing and business development. His programs include:

### STRATEGIC INTEGRITY

Learn how integrity, reliability and humanity are great marketing strategies.

### PUT IT IN WRITING

Learn the writing and design techniques that get readers to respond to your printed marketing materials.

### IF YOU MARKET IT, THEY WILL COME

Convince people they cannot afford **NOT** to do business with you.

**www.JeffRubinSpeaks.com**

**877/588-1212**

PRESORTED  
 STANDARD  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 RICHMOND, CA  
 PERMIT NO. 336



# The Write Stuff

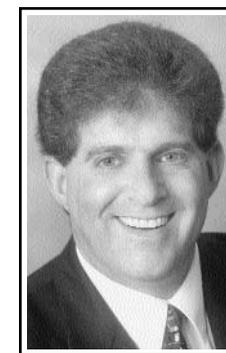
**A quarterly compendium of writing tips and other useful information**

## So, YOUR BUSINESS IS UNIQUE. So WHAT?

The response to the summer issue of *The Write Stuff* was interesting.

Usually, I hear from readers only when they spot a typo. *You made a mis-taaake!* Hey, it's human nature.

But not with the summer issue. Readers e-mailed and called, stopped me in the street to tell me they liked the articles about how to write and design a website that has true value for its viewers. OK, no one stopped me in the street, but there were several calls and e-mails.



JEFF RUBIN

One of them was from my friend and colleague Shawn Greene, a sales trainer and consultant.

When she offered to write an article about how to create a compelling benefit statement so you can convince your prospects that you're the right vendor for them, I jumped on it.

Her article, *So What? It's the Benefits That Sell*, appears inside. It's must

reading for those serious about positioning themselves effectively in the marketplace.

— Jeff Rubin

## CUSTOMER SERVICE IS YOUR BEST ADVANTAGE

By Jeff Rubin

In September, my wife and I attended the 45th annual Monterey Jazz Festival. Since embracing jazz

about 10 years, I have become a big-time aficionado. My wife and I attend jazz concerts and festivals all over the country, and I've got a collection of

nearly 600 jazz CDs and videos.

But I'd never been to the granddaddy of them all, the Monterey Jazz Festival.

> *Inside*



## CUSTOMER SERVICE IS YOUR BEST ADVANTAGE

### ➤ From front page

Where else could one find Dave Brubeck, Joshua Redman, Don Byron, Roy Hargrove, Etta James, the Heath brothers (Percy, Jimmy, and Tootie), Charlie Haden, Kenny Barron, Nancy Wilson, Ramsey Lewis, Christian McBride, Paula West, Lavay Smith & Her Red Hot Skillet Lickers, plus scores of other performers (headliners, band members and singers) — all at the same place?

Nevertheless, the festival was a colossal disappointment.

### TOO MANY PEOPLE

Oh, the music was great — what little of it you could actually get in to hear. Thousands of people flooded the Monterey County Fairgrounds; there were long lines of irate jazz fans at all the venues, and my wife and I were unable to get into several shows.

There were so many people it was impossible to walk from one part of the fairgrounds to another without dodging a body on your left or bumping into one on your right. Festival organizers, in their lust for rev-

enue, sold too many tickets.

On the way out the first evening, I noticed a man in a red jacket saying goodbye to patrons as they left the fairgrounds. He told me he was on the festival's board of directors and asked how I was enjoying myself.

I told him that at the last show we attended, in the Arena (for which we paid additional for reserved seats), people were smoking in several areas. This despite rules pro-

hibiting smoking, and several festival security people supposedly policing the area.

### MAN FROM MARS

He replied by telling me I should be speaking to the ushers and security people; when I said that I had, he gave me someone else to talk to. I told him that if I spent all of my time talking to these people, I'd miss the music.

I asked him if he could do anything about this; after all, he was on the board. He looked at me as if I were from another planet.

There were other logistical annoyances during the weekend, including long food lines and practically no on-site or nearby parking. By Sunday we were so fed up we sold our tickets for the afternoon and evening shows and went home.

This was a textbook example of how bad customer service can sabotage a good product. You'd think after 45 years they'd have it together. We won't be going back.

There are applications here for small business people. You may have the most wonderful product or service, but if you are weak in delivery, your customers and/or prospects will go elsewhere.

Think about this the next time you have an opportunity to give great customer service.

## Put it in Writing Partners

**W**e recommend these businesses, which give discounts to our readers:

**ALPHAGRAPHICS**, Walnut Creek, 925/937-4700 (Greg or Kristin).

**CRAFTSMAN TRADE PRESS**, (printer), Concord, 925/521-0156 (Ric).

**PINOLE COPY CENTER**, Pinole, 510/223-8901 (Judy).

**SCAN ART GRAPHICS**, (pre-press), Richmond (Hilltop), 510/223-3248 (Fred or Ron). ■

Visit us on the Internet at [www.put-it-in-writing.com](http://www.put-it-in-writing.com)

Now that you know your unique features...

## SO WHAT? IT'S THE BENEFITS THAT SELL

By Shawn Greene

**S**o you sat down and made a list of services and personal characteristics that make your business unique, as suggested in the Summer 2002 issue of *The Write Stuff*.

These items amount to business features. Now you're ready to state how these items benefit your customers so you can position value.

Features and benefits. Simple, right? Wrong. It's easy to mix them up. Here's how to create compelling benefit statements.

A feature is a characteristic. A benefit is what that characteristic does for clients. To hone into the benefit, ask, *So what?*

➤ This face moisturizer has sunscreen in it. *So what?* So you don't have to put on another lotion to prevent skin damage.

➤ Newsletters often get passed around. *So what?* So your marketing dollars go further.

➤ A lender offers both fixed and variable rate loans. *So what?* So you can choose a loan that suits your personal preferences.

Benefits fall into a handful



SHAWN GREENE

of categories: Save or make money; peace of mind; convenience; enhanced ego or image; and plain ole enjoyment.

Benefits should be plainly stated. The plainer the statement, the more sure you can be that you have actually drilled down to the real benefit.

You want to get to the heart of it, because the cleaner the statement, the stronger the impact. Asking *So what?* helps you get to the bottom line.

➤ My company has lots of experience with your industry. *So what?* So we understand your unique challenges. *So what?* So our services are designed to meet those chal-

lenges, and are proven solutions. *So what?* So you can rest assured we'll address issues quickly and effectively.

All together, the above boils down to, "Our experience with your industry means we address your unique challenges quickly and effectively."

One type of benefit should not necessarily be clearly stated — enhanced ego or image. Instead, use words that imply exclusivity, power, and wealth. And "fun" benefits don't need to be identified as such to be powerful.

Benefits are always in the eye of the beholder. Don't try to be everything to every prospect. Use the *So what?* method to create strong benefit statements. These will attract your best clients to you.

— Shawn Greene leads Savage and Greene, a sales consulting and training firm. Visit the company's

website at [www.savageandgreene.com](http://www.savageandgreene.com) for excellent, free advice.

For information about Shawn's training services and speaking topics, call (510) 237-8323, or email her at [shawn@savageandgreene.com](mailto:shawn@savageandgreene.com).

