



Read the full story at: <http://www.dmnews.com/messaging-cold-leads-on-a-tight-budget-why-your-message-always-comes-first-in-creative-and-more/article/131499/>

TOOLBOX

Massaging 'cold' leads on a tight budget, why your message always comes first in creative and more

How can I improve my marketing materials?

“Too often, money is wasted on fancy brochures, direct mail campaigns and flashy Web sites with little impact,” says **Jason Sherman, president of Sherman Communications and Marketing**. “Everything starts with your message — make it compelling, relevant and appealing.”

Sherman notes that you typically only have a few seconds to capture your audience's attention and engage it. “Strong visuals that support your central message are important, but the written message needs to be on target,” he says. “Survey and speak your audience. Find out what key issues matter most to them, then craft your messaging around the overlap between these top concerns and desires and your product's or service's greatest strengths. Test your marketing materials and campaign with samples of your target audience. See what reactions you get, and tweak accordingly.”