



Mastering Technical Sales

September 2008

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MTS News - Second Edition Now Available

Mastering Technical Sales: The Sales Engineers Handbook (2nd edition) will be available on Amazon.com starting September 2nd. We have added/changed over 40% of the content, including many new case studies and tips. New chapters include "The Hybrid Sales Position", "Using the CRM system", "Snap Demos", "Effective Webcasts" and a management chapter about "Running The Business With Metrics".

September Talking Point - Say It With Numbers!



There are decimal points, power points, starting points, counterpoints, tipping points and points of view, but how do you make a Very Important Point (VIP) within a presentation and then ensure that it "sticks"?

One out of the box approach to differentiating yourself and your company or service is to make your opening or closing point using numbers. It is instantly more memorable and serves to get your unique business value across without resorting to text or complex bulleted Power Point decks. Persuasion rates among audiences increase by over 40% when they see a visual as well as hear the words – but there again, 59% of all statistics are made up anyway.

Read the entire article on our website

The Single Most Misspelled Word



At least twice a week I see it in newspapers, presentations or just regular e-mail. Your spellchecker will miss it, and obviously it skips by most proofreading too. Yes, I mean "your" and "you". Just yesterday I saw "if **your** have a large database" and "I value **you** opinion". These simple mistakes occur because of mistyping, and not because of poor grammar, yet what do they say about you and your company?

How do you catch these mistakes? Try doing what professional proofreaders do (and Aron and I did this for our book!). Read backwards. Start with the last word in the sentence or paragraph and then read backwards to the first word. This out of pattern reading fools your brain, so it cannot anticipate what the next word will be. In particular look for the/they, there/their, be/by, late/later and best/bets.

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"Your book is an indispensable part of our new hire training program. It is required reading for every Sales Engineer joining the company at any level.

Rob - Vice President of Sales Engineering; North America

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The Power of Visual Perception

Simply making a pretty slide isn't doing your job. You need to paint a clear and powerful picture that makes people sit up, take notice and say "ah-ha!" Just like our laptops, the brain uses different storage mechanisms to hold information while it's being processed. There are three types of memory – iconic (an

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087349790275647902894728624092406037070570279072
803208029007302501270237008374082078720272007083
247802602703793775709707377970667462097094702780
927979709723097230979592750927279798734972608027
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instantaneous buffer), short-term (working memory like RAM – short lived and limited) and finally long-term (linked and indexed for future retrieval). Our short-term

RAM memory can comfortably hold five items, at which point it becomes

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087349790275647902894728624092406037070570279072
803208029007302501270237008374082078720272007083
247802602703793775709707377970667462097094702780
927979709723097230979592750927279798734972608027
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decision time for discard or file. You obviously want your audience to "file", so that means you need to focus on differences in position, color and orientation. For

example, which figure makes it easier to pick out the "5's"? Also remember our ability to perceive differences in areas (like comparative pie charts) isn't as evolved as our perception of differences in position – possibly because it was more important for our ancestors to determine the location of the saber-toothed tiger, rather than its exact size.

(adapted from Colin Ware: "Information Visualization")

The Final Word



Tips For Blackberry Users.

While looking at a list of emails, press "C" to compose a new email. Highlight a specific message, and press "R" to Reply, "L" will reply all (always dangerous) and "F" will forward it. Hitting "J" will jump to the oldest message in the email chain. To change the signal strength indicator to a number from bars, go to the home screen, and hold ALT, typing "NMLL". Anything from -50 to -90 is good reception, while -100 is poor.

Seats for the Frequent Flier. Air travel is a fact of life for many presales engineers. The recent cost cutting and reduction in flight schedules doesn't make that life too pleasant at times. One way to make yourself more comfortable on the plane is to use www.seatguru.com to ensure you get a comfortable seat with maximum legroom and minimum disturbances. Visit the website, chose the airline and model of plane, and you see a detailed map of best, average and worst seats on each configuration. Just try it!



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Click here to receive your own copy of the Mastering Technical Sales Newsletter and the Monthly SE Talking Points.

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