

How to Use “How To” Leaflets to Sell More Product

John Stanley

Editor’s Note: This is an article from John Stanley’s best-selling book *Just About Everything a Retail Manager Needs to Know*.

Customers are a diverse lot – from various age groups, social backgrounds, and a wide range of experience. Help guides or how-to leaflets are aimed at the novice user and “do-it-yourself” market. In providing this helpful literature, you educate the customer in the hope that they become advocates of your business and spend more money.

Keep leaflets simple

Always design how-to leaflets with your target market in mind. These people often do not have technical knowledge, so they need the leaflet. Keep it simple, attractive, and avoid technical jargon related to your industry. Although pictures are easier to understand than words, text will be necessary to get your message across. Rather than lengthy paragraphs of text, use short sentences, bullet points, or short numbered statements. For example, a garden center leaflet on the topic “Which containers should I buy for my patio?” might include the following:

When choosing your container:

- Consider the area of patio and the architecture of the site. If it is a natural look you want, select stone or terracotta pots. If it is a modern environment, select plastic or fiberglass containers.
- Select pots that are large enough for the plants you have chosen.
- And so on ...

Talk the language of your customer

Use words like “you” and “yours” when talking to the customer. Do not use language such as “I” and “we” when related to you as the retailer. This sounds like you are dictating to your customer rather than holding a conversation with them.

Ask the questions the customer would ask

- Your leaflets should highlight common questions customers would ask:
- **Where** do I start?
- **Which** _____ should I select?
- **Which** _____ do I buy to get success?
- **How** do I put it together?
- **How** do I look after _____?

Provide extra information in separate boxes

The basic text is what the customer needs to know to be successful. Highlight in separate boxes additional helpful bits of information the customer should know. and then highlight these items in separate boxes.

These should-also-knows could include:

- Time saving tips
- Fun tips
- Did you know...?

Include a shopping list in the flyer

Remember, your objective is to increase the average sale per customer. The leaflet gives you the opportunity to cross-merchandise, add-on, and provides a complete package to do the job successfully. Therefore, your leaflet could include such lists as:

- Tools you will need to do the job
- Shopping list to be successful
- Items you will need to maintain value

Pay attention to legibility

Ensure people can easily read your leaflet. Serif is most easily read typeface. Research carried out by the Newspaper Advertising Bureau of Australia Limited proved this finding:

	Comprehension Level		
	Good	Fair	Poor
Layout with Serif Body Type	67%	19%	14%
Layout with Sans Serif Body Type	12%	23%	65%

The words were the same; the only difference was the typeface.

Bring color to your leaflet

Color will help your customer identify your leaflet. I would advise using a different color for each different leaflet. Make the cover of the leaflet very simple and distinct. At the same time, make sure your brand is clearly obvious to the customer.

Position your leaflets in the store

Do not put leaflets on the counter where they will soon become untidy.

Leaflets need stands positioned near the counter. If placed in this position, your team can use the leaflet as an “added value” tool. An alternative is to place the leaflet next to specific products, such as a garden container leaflet next to containers.

Train your staff in their use

Make sure your team has read the leaflets. Your team must be providing the same story as the leaflet. If they provide a different story, you will end up confusing your customer and your team members will lose credibility.