

THE POWER OF HOW SERIES

Know-How Guides For Travel Professionals

**HOW TO
CLOSE
THE SALE**

THE SELLING TRAVEL STORE

WHERE TRAVEL TRADE PROFESSIONALS SHOP FOR NEW IDEAS

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INTRODUCTION TO THE **POWER OF HOW** SERIES

For years I have watched and listened to travel trade trainers and keynote speakers, attended webinars and read hundreds of travel trade magazine articles - all designed in good faith to help travel agents increase their sales.

The challenge for me, was to find that nugget of knowledge. The golden take-away that I could use to grow my business. After the fact I realised I had been delivered a load of WHAT, and very little if any HOW. When I moved into training and development and subsequently keynote speaking, leading workshops and seminars, creating workbooks and writing articles I made myself a promise. That promise was to, wherever possible, given the format, time and available white space to deliver on the HOW-TO I was so hungry for. Delivering on the HOW-TO, my audience and readership would have a set of steps to follow and complete a business building action.

Along the way I have delivered my brand of street savvy HOW-TO to travel trade and tourism based audiences around the world. Currently I continue to deliver that same brand of HOW-TO through my website, social media, my digital magazine [Selling Travel](#) and my series of [eGuides](#) sold through [TTI](#).

The topics and subject matter of my current eGuides attempt to cover off as much information as needed. A quick read. The information broken down into step-by-step action items with an explanation titled: **HERE'S HOW TO DO THIS.**

Hope it works for you.



Thanks for purchasing this eGuide. Remember, the price includes a one-hour HOW-TO coaching session with me via Skype. Here's the HOW-TO to take advantage of this offer.

Step 1: Read the eGuide, make notes, decided what you need coaching on.

Step 2: Email me here: steve@sellingtravel.net and send your need-to-know comments.

Step 3: Email your preferred date and time for us to Skype.

Step 4: Download the latest version of Skype, test your webcam audio and video.

Step 5: Skype me here – [smprtraining1](#) – on the date / at the time scheduled.

Best regards

Steve Crowhurst, CTC

HOW TO CLOSE THE SALE

Whether you are a veteran seller of travel or you have just joined the industry via a home-based organization, there is always room in your knowledge bank to review how to close a sale. Especially in the current world we live in. That would be a terror filled, nervous customer base world. It's a world of uncertainty for many of your clients and would-be customers which means you cannot make light of what's happening around the world; neither do you want to dwell on the dark side of our fellow humans.

There is a certain balance required today that presents you as a down-to-earth, street-smart, savvy travel agent who does not live in a dream world. You live in the present day and understand world affairs, and what is actually happening at the destinations you are selling.

Step One: Product Knowledge

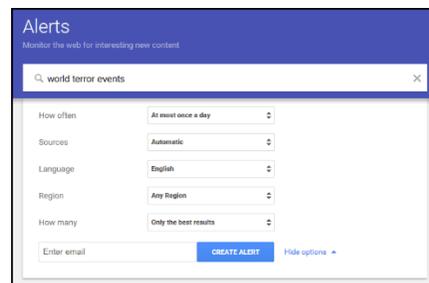
This topic is always Step One. In this case you need to increase your knowledge of world affairs, understand the world you are sending your clients into, making sure you can defend your reasons for booking them 'there' and be knowledgeable about travel insurance coverage, safety and security apps and services.

HERE'S HOW YOU DO THIS:

1. World News: It is your responsibility to stay on top of what's happening around the world, your world, in an overall, general sense. Plus, be focused on the destinations and countries that you sell to and specialize in. This means if you are selling coach tours of Europe and the itinerary transits several countries, then you have reviewed the current situation for each country along that route.

- Check your local online news outlet for current events on a daily basis.
- Click to www.cnn.com and select the correct location tab such as Europe.
- Click to www.bbc.com for a more local review of, in this case, Europe.
- Create a [Google Alert](#) to monitor World News, Terror Alerts and Weather Alerts.

After clicking to the **Google Alert page**, type in the topic you want to monitor. I have typed in World Terror Events. Click the down arrow and fill in this form to design how and when you wish to receive the alerts. Click on Create Alert. To delete an Alert you go back to the page highlight and delete.



The screenshot shows the Google Alerts interface. At the top, it says 'Alerts' and 'Monitor the web for interesting new content'. Below that is a search bar containing 'world terror events'. Underneath the search bar are several dropdown menus: 'How often' set to 'At least once a day', 'Sources' set to 'Automatic', 'Language' set to 'English', 'Region' set to 'Any Region', and 'How many' set to 'Only the best results'. At the bottom of the form, there is a field for 'Enter email', a blue 'CREATE ALERT' button, and a 'Hide options' link.

Step Three: Qualifying a Lead for Needs

Here we review the process from Suspect to Client. Here's the progression:

1. Suspect: someone, somewhere reads your ad, promo, etc.

2. Prospect: that same someone, follows up and makes contact

3. Lead: you respond and this person shows interest

- 1. Qualify:** you ask questions to ascertain their travel budget...
- 2. Needs & wants:** ask about what this person actually wants to do

4. Customer: you sell them, they buy, they travel, they return, they refer

5. Client: they repeat again and again - now you have a CLIENT

A "client" is always one step beyond "customer". A customer is someone who buys from you or any other retail store / travel agency. A client is someone who buys professional services from a dedicated source – in this case, YOU. To move the Lead to Customer, you need to ask the right questions.

HERE'S HOW YOU DO THIS:

If a Suspect (and every caller is suspect until they prove to be interested in travelling with you) makes contact based on an ad or promotion, two things are at play. They are interested in the actual promotion, or they like your "style" and figure you can help them with their own travel needs.

Usually when they make contact they will say one of the following:

A: "Hi, just read your ad / promotion and I'm interested to know more..."

B: "Hi, just read your ad / promotion and I'm wondering if you book to..."

You respond to A like this:

"Excellent, what would you like to know..." from here on you are trial closing to woo the caller to meet with you in person. If, however, your telephone and or email selling skills are top notch then you may not need to meet.

Step Five: Closing The Sale

Depending on which sales book, webinar or training you read / attend you could be faced with a few simple steps to closing the sale or several very intricate steps and methods. The key to all of them is to learn HOW. So, we're back to hearing the WHAT and then practicing the HOW. In this case, practice is key. It is the ONLY thing that will help you close more sales and understand where you need to up your game.

What follows is a list of Closing Techniques that might at first glance appear to be bordering on scams and fast talking, smooth, snake oil salesman. But, here's the thing, you actually use most of these techniques during a typical selling situation and most of the time without knowing it. The point I am making here, is this: if you learn about each close and the psychology behind each one then you'll have a better understanding of how to use it, knowingly, intuitively and professionally.

As you read through each close and the words you would / could use, be sure to make notes and turn the wording into something you can say. We all have our own phrasing and methods – so nothing written in stone here. Adapt and adjust to suit your own delivery and speaking style.

Body Language, Eye Contact, Handshakes, Tone of Voice, Words...

These elements are always part of the sales / closing process. How you stand, look, dress, speak, the words you use and the strength of your handshake – all of these can help you retain the interest of the person sitting with you.

As we move into the closing techniques we will have to assume that you:

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dress professionally | Have a sense of humour |
| Maintain personal hygiene | A "good" handshake |
| Can hold eye contact | Knowledge of other cultures |
| Smile | and their mannerisms |

Practice, Practice, Practice

It's the only way to learn how to close like a true travel selling professional. Work with your colleagues until the words roll off your tongue without hesitation. Keep it natural and without any hype.

Order of the Following Closing Techniques

To start with I have presented four of most used closing techniques. These are followed by a series of techniques in alphabetical order. Each can be used to enhance the sales process.

I have given your space under each closing technique to make your own notes on what and how to change the script.

5. ADJOURNMENT CLOSE - give them time to think.

Not everyone can buy this instance. To force a client at the wrong time, or to overdo the energy and enthusiasm for them to “book now” can and probably will drive them away to another travel agent. Recognizing the fact that your client needs time to think, chat with friends and family, do more research etc., is the key to this closing technique.

HERE'S HOW YOU DO THIS:

“I sense you need time to think this over, and that’s fine, take your time. To make sure you are not disappointed, I’ll reserve two seats for you and hold them until tomorrow at noon. Is that enough time for you?”

“Think it over? Yes of course you can. Here’s all the information you need and here’s my card too. Now one thing you need to know in terms of that date we were discussing – the seats are very limited, so I can only recommend that you come back to me by end of day or tomorrow morning. That said, I cannot guarantee they will still be available. If by chance you do lose those seats there are other dates available... and I’ll do my best to secure what you need when you call back...”

6. AFFORDABLE CLOSE - ensuring people can afford what you are selling.

Affordability is everyone’s concern. Each the rich and wealthy require their level of travel pricing to be affordable. To get to the bottom of what a client can afford or is expecting to spend, you must ask them how much they are budgeting for this trip. I know for a fact that many agents find it difficult to ask the budget question, it is however quite easy to do.

HERE'S HOW YOU DO THIS:

“...tell me, what have you budgeted for this trip overall, and by that I mean for the trip and your spending money, I want to make sure we come in on or under budget for you...”

If your pricing comes in a few hundred over budget, but that buys the client exactly what they wanted, then there will be no objection as long as you explain what they are getting. Remember too, that we all base cost on past experience and also personality. Some of us are misers and others are spenders. Some travellers will walk block after block with huge suitcases to save a \$30 cab fare. It is here when you explain the extra cost will save stress, time, offer a room with better view, more meals etc.

“I’ve managed to tally all the costs and at this moment the price on the arrangements you said you wanted comes in at \$275 over your budget – that however will give you a room that overlooks the old city and you’ll be close to all the museums and historical sites saving you taxi fares and time... so overall very affordable.”

Step Six: Follow Up

Yes you know it to be true. Follow up is the key to sales both current and future. If you hear any salesperson state, “Ah, they never called me back. Thought I had that one closed.” You will know they are not yet in the category of a professional seller of travel. No top notch sales person would be saying such a thing, admitting to their lack of follow up. You can never blame the client for your lack of sales. It doesn’t work that way.

What does work is to follow up at each stage of the sales process through to the close and then continue as the client departs and returns. Follow up is an ongoing event. Eventually it turns in to marketing to attract the next booking.

You can actually follow up after the first phone call, or meeting, after the qualifying session, the presentation, the booking, the departure and the return. There are numerous opportunities to reach out and ask, “How’s things going re the trip? Need any help?” For now, let’s focus on the post-sale follow up.

HERE’S HOW YOU DO THIS:

| Post Sale Follow Up Options | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| Phone Call | Text | Message | Email | Video | Face-To-Face |
| The phone call is the quickest and most direct method of follow up there is. Subject to the customer answering that is – and if they don’t then you’ll need a well prepared message that you can record without a stumble. | If you know how your customer uses their hand held devices, then you might be best to send a text, vs trying to reach them by voice direct. | Messaging can happen via so many apps these days that you’ll want to make it a point of asking which apps your clients use. In that way you know your follow up will be received. | Good old email. Still there, ready and waiting to carry your message. No more attachments as you know, so today we send links to whatever it is you want the recipient to read. | This is the way. As long as you are comfortable in front of your own phone / PC camera then use this format to say “Hi!” and deliver a 30 second message that says, Call me, I have something for you, bon voyage and more. | The old FTF meeting still works. Some clients would like to receive a call and be asked to come visit. Over coffee and a chat about life in general you can follow up re: How was the trip? Any referrals? Can you give me a validation?” |



About The Author

Steve Crowhurst, CTC

Travel trade keynote speaker, trainer,
author & publisher.



Steve entered the retail travel industry in 1965 and has worked from the front line to the executive floor, owned and operated his own travel agencies, travel trade training and consulting firms and has worked from a home office for over 29 years.

In 2010 he published his 412 page book 273 *"No Fluff - No Theory" Marketing Ideas for Travel Agents*; in June 2011 he published the first digital issue of Selling Travel magazine, this was followed by Travel Agency Manager and Travel Trade Supplier magazines in early 2013. In October 2013 Steve published the first issue of IC Travel Agent a digital magazine targeting the home-based travel agent, ICs and OSRs.



Steve is now turning all of his workshops and webinars into easy to read, street savvy eGuides. Check back often at www.sellingtravel.net for new titles.



Hi latest eGuide venture is to produce and publish The Power of HOW series. ENJOY!

For more information about Steve please click to:
<http://www.sellingtravel.net/about.html>

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