

# How To Use Social Proof To Increase Your Business

Alice's Notes & Thoughts on Jeff Walker's Social Proof Teleseminar  
<http://productlaunchformula.com/prelaunch/call.html>

Not too long ago, noted product launch expert, Jeff Walker conducted a free teleseminar on a concept known as “Social Proof”. Social proof is something we are subjected to every single day and it’s what drives people to make all kinds of decisions. On the call, Jeff referred to it as “Monkey See, Monkey Do” and that’s a perfect description.

People don’t like to make decisions and it’s often easier to follow the crowd. If we see someone else doing something, we are more likely to do it too. If our friend recommends a movie, we are more likely to see it.

Jeff gave a great example during the call. He said he remembered being on a road trip with his family when he was young. They’d been traveling a long time and everyone was hungry. When they got to a town, they saw a restaurant and everyone said, “Let’s eat there.” But Jeff’s Dad refused. Despite the fact that everyone was famished, he said they couldn’t eat there because there were no cars in the parking lot. Jeff’s Dad had, in effect, decided, “If nobody else is doing it, than I’m not going to do it either!”

I don’t want to go into a long explanation of what social proof is. If you’ve listened to Jeff’s call you already have a good grasp on it. If you haven’t listened yet, now is the time:

<http://productlaunchformula.com/prelaunch/call.html>

I just wanted to take the time to create this report to help people see how social proof applies to their own businesses and how they can use it to increase their sales. A number of people said to me, “The information in Jeff’s call was great, but how do I apply it to my business?” --- Well, social proof applies to all aspects of life, including your very own business. I hope that this report will give you some concrete ideas on what to do next.

Before I provide you with the ideas, let’s remember a few key points that were mentioned throughout Jeff’s call:

- People don’t like to make decisions. They often follow the crowd and they usually don’t like to be the only one to do something.
- You have to be believable. Once you’re unbelievable, people will no longer trust you and you’re done.
- Give a “reason why” or some justification on why you’re doing something. Remember, Jason’s explanation of why he was only selling an initial 490 units of his product?

And now without further ado...

## How to Implement Social Proof into Your Marketing Plan

All of these ideas were mentioned at some point in the call, so if you listen again... you'll definitely catch them. I'd just like to flesh them out a bit for you and give you some practical applications for them. Here's the ideas I'm going to cover:

1. Testimonials & Case Studies
2. Celebrity Endorsements
3. Referrals & Affiliate Programs
4. Product Reviews
5. Blogs & Interaction
6. Critiques & Live Coaching
7. Screenshots – Online “Proof”

### 1. Testimonials & Case Studies:

Does your website have any success stories from people who have used your product? Umm... why the heck not? Detailed testimonials and case studies are a perfect way to add social proof to your website. It shows other people are using your product or service and they're getting the results they wanted.

**If you don't have testimonials or case studies on your site, I can guess a few reasons why:**

- **You never thought of it before.** In that case, get on it!
- **You don't trust testimonials on other websites and feel they're usually made up.** That's a legitimate concern because most testimonials don't inspire the confidence they should. If you see a testimonial that says:

“It's the best widget ever!. Darlene”

then yes, I doubt you'll be impressed. Testimonials need as much detail and believability as possible. Consider adding these to your testimonials:

- Photos of your customers (and if your product changes appearance – for example, a weight loss product – a BEFORE and AFTER picture are a must)
- The real and full names of your customers
- The city and state or province that your customer lives in.

Some people are worried about asking this from customers, but get as much detail as you can. If someone doesn't want their photo posted, but is okay with their full name... that's just fine. However, you'll find satisfied customers are usually happy to help you spread the word about your product.

So, now that you've added proof that your customer actually exists, you need to add reality to your testimonial. Having your customer say they liked it is not likely to be as effective as if you get in to specifics.

### **Let me give you a few examples:**

- If your customer purchased car insurance from you, a testimonial that says, "I saved \$334 by purchasing my insurance from you," that's more powerful than, "I saved a lot of money by purchasing my insurance from you."
  - If you have a copywriting business, you can have your customers share their conversion rate data. Instead of saying, "We made more sales because of your copywriting," they can say, "Our conversion rate went from 0.7% to a whopping 3.8%."
  - If you happen to sell kids designer paintings, like one of my subscribers does, instead of saying, "We loved it!", you can have your customer talk about how their child's confidence and interest in creative expression increased.
- **You are a new business and you don't have testimonials.** Don't worry, we've all been there. If the sales don't come pouring in immediately, give away your product and service in return for a review. Of course, you can't say, "I'll give you my product in return for a glowing testimonial," because that would be unethical. You are just going to give away some freebies in return for feedback. Some feedback will be great and you may have some no-to-positive feedback that you can learn from as well.

## **2. Celebrity Endorsements**

These can be very powerful, but be sure to combine these with #1. Although celebrities can have a lot of clout—people still like to hear about the results from every day people like themselves.

Okay, if you're freaking out and wondering how you'll ever get Oprah to endorse your product, forget about it. These don't have to be world-famous people... just well-known people with good reputations.

If you sell baby products, you can find book authors who might like to evaluate your products. Book authors are always looking for publicity and it's often a win-win situation for both of you.

If you sell a web conferencing service, contact some direct sales companies and let them try it out. Even a team leader with a good downline can be considered a "celebrity" with clout.

If you sell sports-related products, contact the sports editor from your local paper to see if they would like to evaluate the product.

The possibilities are endless. If you can hook up with *Destiny's Child* to have them endorse your apple and walnut salad... good for you! But you don't have to aim so high. Just find people with a good reputation and people look up to.

### **3. Referrals & Affiliate Programs**

We all now know how hard it is to get a new customer. If you've done any cold-calling for your business, you know what a nightmare it can be. But you don't have to make it so hard on yourself. If you have existing customers, they can refer customers to you, so don't be shy – ASK FOR REFERRALS!

You can simply ask for them or offer your customers an incentive for referring a friend. You can give them a little discount, a special gift or credit on a future purchase. Just be sure to put a system in place to ask your customers to refer others to you. You can do this in follow-up emails. Send a card by mail asking them to send their friends. Whatever it is, just make sure you ask.

Just like referrals, you can set up an affiliate program. Back to the example of the kid's designer paintings, if parents are surfing around the net on kid-related sites and they keep seeing these promotions for your paintings – they are going to start taking notice. If 10 websites are promoting your product.. hmmm... it might be worth looking into.

### **4. Product Reviews**

Allow customers to submit product reviews that your website visitors can read. Think of Amazon – They have an editorial review and then customers can post reviews and rate products. There are good, bad and mediocre reviews, but the point is – people are talking. You want people talking and generating excitement for your product.

If you're an affiliate for a product, product reviews are a great way to generate sales. But let me remember this – if you publish a completely glowing review, people may look upon it with suspicion. A balanced review that shows the negative (but perhaps not too negative!) and positive, it is more believable and people are more likely to trust your recommendation.

### **5. Blogs & Interaction**

Blogs are an amazing tool to get people talking. If you allow comments, you can generate a buzz for your product. Yanik talked about the "spy photo" during the call.. it had people talking about the product and saying how excited they were for it to be released.

But you can be more subtle than that in your day-to-day blog entries. You can use blog informative blog entries to show people how to consume your product. For the web

conferencing service I mentioned earlier, the owner of that business could blog about how to make money with web conferences, how to facilitate company training, etc etc. She is giving people ideas on how to use the product and allowing people to ask questions on how to implement it in to their own businesses.

But what if you're an affiliate? If you, for example, sell cloth diapers as an affiliate and you use them yourself– tell people about it. Tell them your best tips for keeping baby as dry as possible, cleaning the diapers, etc. Provide them with statistics on cloth diaper use, the environmental problem disposables are causing, etc. Don't be afraid to have an opinion. Just like Jim said on the call– It doesn't matter if people like you or hate you, as long as they're talking.

## **6. Critiques & Live Coaching**

Show people examples of your abilities. If you're a copywriter, create video critiques of sales copy like my friend, Michel Fortin does. People will get useful tips from these videos and it will show that you are an authority in copywriting.

If you're a life coach, allow people to listen in on a session so they understand exactly how your service works. Of course, you'll need to find a client who is willing to be recorded for use on your website – but you can certainly find a willing participant.

## **8. Screenshots & Scanned Copies – Online “Proof”**

This idea was introduced numerous times during Jeff's call. Everything from Jason's example of showing the screenshot from his fulfillment center inventory to Yanik's publishing a check from Dan Kennedy – these are types of social proof.

If you're selling a business opportunity or money-making product, earnings statements are good proof. Screenshots of emails and thank you notes that people send you. Basically, if you can back up any claim you make in your sales copy with a graphic image – do it.

## **So, Get To It!**

Well, there you have it.. 8 ideas to implement social proof in to your marketing. A gain, if you haven't listened in to Jeff's call yet, make sure you do so:

<http://productlaunchformula.com/prelaunch/call.html>

If you're ready for Jeff's Complete Course on Product Launches, check it out at:

<http://www.productlaunchformula.com/prelaunch>