



# The Raphel Report

**Observations on marketing,  
advertising, sales and  
promotions  
by Murray Raphel,  
Chairman, Raphel Marketing**

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## **“That Reminds Me Of A Story....”**

Every once in a while I find a story in a magazine, newspaper or book that provokes my interest and gives some helpful insight.

I make a copy and put it in a file marked: “Share....”

But then I realized what better way to “share” than to gather them together in a column for you?

Here are a few of these stories...

### **Are You Wearing the Right Glasses?**

There is an English story, “A Pair of Spectacles,” about a kind and gentle man who suddenly finds himself acting mean and miserable – the antithesis to his gentle nature. Here’s why: When he left his home one morning, he put on, in error, a pair of glasses left by a recent visitor. That began his transformation from “Mr. Right Guy” to “Mr. Wrong Guy.”

Conclusion: You must look at life through the “right glasses” to feel good about yourself. And when you feel good about yourself, you have the proper attitude to do the “right thing” for your customers.

Which leads me into – Okyakusan:

When you visit a store in Japan there is a person on both sides of the entrance. They bow when you enter and say, “Okyakusan.” Roughly translated this means, “You are a visitor to our home.”

They believe all work is sacred. “It makes sense,” says Yoshihisa Senoh, former chief of employee training at Tokyo’s 10-year-old Takashimaya department store. “When you have guests come to your home, you clean the entrance and prepare the rooms. We invite guests every day to our store. We have to make them comfortable when they shop.”

From the time you enter, a salesperson softly greets you with, “Irrashimase” (“welcome”). You leave with each purchase painstakingly and attractively gift wrapped with the store’s logo and signature colors. You believe you have chosen the right place to shop.

Much better attitude than the story told by British comedian John Cleese in one of his business training films. He tells of the small business owner who complained, "If there weren't all these customers, we could run this place properly."

Selecting the right glasses is not a problem for a Tokyo bank, Daiichi Kongyo. For their safe deposit customers they have a lacquered tray of six pairs of eyeglasses in different prescriptions in case the customer forgot to bring his or her own glasses to the bank.

### **Don't Yell At Me!**

Why do TV commercials have an increase in volume?

I run to the set to turn down the sound because the announcer is screaming at me to: **A.** eliminate my bald spot or **B.** purchase carpet for my living room at rock bottom prices or **C.** quickly call my doctor for a prescription for the newest health product (until I hear all the disclaimers) or **D.** buy a product only available on TV (did you notice most are priced at \$19.99?).

Do sales increase in proportion to the volume of sound?

There's an island called Ulawa in the Eastern Solomon Islands. The natives believe you can frighten trees to death by simply yelling at them. If a tree is too big to chop down, they believe you can kill it by creeping up on it very early in the morning and, suddenly, direct a loud piercing scream to the offending tree. The tree doesn't fall right away, so they have to keep yelling at the tree.

Today on Ulawa trees still stand. Now some trees do fall and die from old age or hurricane winds. But the natives are convinced the trees fall because of the yelling and screaming.

Perhaps some people buy the hair replacement or carpet or prescription or "only available on TV" product because of the yelling.

Not me. I have another solution. Turn off the TV.

### **Two Wrongs Make a Right**

My uncle Sidney owned the only general store in Brandon, Vermont. Whatever you wanted to buy - from garden seeds to a new automobile - he'd sell it to you. He didn't stock the cars, refrigerators, air conditioners or stoves. He had catalogues and brochures of whatever you needed. He would buy the product you wanted from the manufacturer and charge you ten percent above his cost. The customers loved this arrangement.

He also sold small items in his store. One day a farmer came down from the distant hills. It was spring mud season in Vermont. The farmer asked, "Sid, do

you have any boots for sale?”

“Sure,” said Sid. “They’re by the front door. Take what you want.” The farmer paid, went to the front of the store, picked up his size and left.

Later, Sid saw that the farmer chose a pair of boots, but by mistake had taken two left feet!

The farmer never came back to correct his mistake. One year later the farmer returned during mud season. He said to Sid, “You know those boots you sold me last year?”

Waiting for the complaint, Sid said, “Yes.”

“Well,” said the farmer, “They were the best boots I ever had. Do you have any more?”

Sid pointed to the boot section in the front of the store and said, “You’re in luck. I’ve got just one pair left. Help yourself.”

*To be continued from time to time...*