

# The Real Reason They Buy

*A cheat sheet for business owners who write their own words.*

Ash Webb - ashwebb.com

Your customers may think they buy to solve a problem. But the decision usually starts with a trigger. A problem is something people think about. A trigger is something people feel. Feelings make people buy. Thinking makes people hesitate.

For this method, we use three main types of trigger. One of them is usually running in your customers before they ever see your words. When your words name that feeling, something shifts. They stop. They read. They buy.

## PART 1 - The Three Types of Trigger

These are the feelings running inside your customer. Not your product's features. Not their business problems. What they feel when they wake up at 3am.

### APPROVAL

They want to feel seen, valued, and chosen.

*"Nobody notices me. I'm doing everything right and still being overlooked."*

What they feel	What they want
Invisible. Like their effort doesn't register.	To feel like the obvious choice.
Frustrated that others less qualified get more attention.	To be seen as credible and worth paying for.
Quietly desperate to be validated and taken seriously.	Recognition that their work actually matters.
Hurt when ignored... it feels personal, not just professional.	Someone to say: yes, you deserve this.

### CONTROL

They want things to go the way they're supposed to go.

*"I keep trying. I keep changing things. Nothing sticks and I don't know why."*

What they feel	What they want
Frustrated. Like the rules keep changing on them.	A repeatable process that actually works.
Competent at their actual job... lost when it comes to getting customers.	To understand WHY something works... not just copy a template.
Exhausted from experimenting with no clear direction.	Confidence that if they do X, Y will follow.
Quietly convinced there's a method they're just not seeing yet.	Control over the outcome, not just the effort.

## SECURITY

They want to know this decision is safe.

*"What if I spend money on this and it doesn't work? What if I can never get this right?"*

What they feel	What they want
Anxious. Every dollar feels like a risk.	To know the money won't be wasted.
Burned before... bought something that didn't deliver.	Proof that this works before they commit.
Responsible for their income in a way that makes every decision feel heavy.	Reassurance that they're not making a mistake.
Like one wrong move could set them back significantly.	Stability. Certainty. The feeling that it's going to be okay.

## PART 2 - How to Identify Which Trigger Your Customers Are Running On

Listen to how your customers talk about their problem... in reviews, DMs, discovery calls, comment sections. Their words tell you which trigger is dominant.

Listen for...	Points to Approval	Points to Control	Points to Security
The words they use	invisible, ignored, overlooked, nobody notices, not getting traction	tried everything, nothing sticks, can't crack it, inconsistent, don't know why	wasting money, can't afford to get it wrong, not sure it's worth it, scared to commit
Their biggest frustration	Putting in the work and being overlooked anyway.	Effort going in, no reliable result coming out.	Spending money without being able to trust the outcome.
What they're afraid of	Still being invisible six months from now.	Never finding the thing that actually works.	Making the wrong call and losing money they can't recover.
Their objection before buying	Will this actually make people notice me?	Will this work for my specific situation?	Is this going to be worth the money?

How to read your result. The column with the most matches is your dominant trigger. If two columns tie, choose the one with the stronger emotional charge... the one that, if you named it out loud to your customer, would make them feel most understood. When in doubt: Security beats Control beats Approval in urgency.

## PART 3 - How to Apply It to Your Words

Once you know the dominant trigger, use this to rewrite the three highest-leverage parts of any ad, email, or post. One trigger per piece. Don't blend them.

Element	Approval trigger	Control trigger	Security trigger
What to lead with	The feeling of being unseen. Name it before you promise anything.	The frustration of trying without a reliable method.	The fear of wasted money or a wrong decision.
Headline angle	Outcome = being noticed, chosen, taken seriously.	Outcome = certainty, a method that works, knowing why.	Outcome = safety, confidence the spend is justified.
Opening line	You're putting the work in. And it feels like you're talking to an empty room.	You keep trying different things. And the results stay the same.	Every dollar that doesn't convert feels like a gamble. And underneath that: what if I can never make this work?
Subject line	why nobody's stopping / the word that makes them notice	the one thing that makes it click / why nothing is sticking	before you spend another dollar / the safe way to write words that convert
CTA framing	So the right people finally stop and pay attention.	A repeatable method. Not another guess.	Know it's worth it before you spend another cent.

The one rule. Pick one trigger per piece of copy. Trying to hit all three at once waters them all down. Speak to the one. Leave the others alone.

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# Want to Skip the Thinking?

Copy this prompt. Paste it into ChatGPT or Claude.

Fill in the three fields about your customers. You'll have their dominant trigger in under 60 seconds.

**Before you paste the prompt... fill in these three things about your customers.** The people you sell to. Not you.

1. **WHO are they?** Be specific. Not "women"... "women over 45 who come to me for weight loss coaching."
2. **WHAT are they trying to achieve?** The outcome they want from you. Lose 20kg. Get more clients. Feel confident again. Something specific.
3. **WHAT situation are they currently in?** The frustration or problem they're living with when they find you. What's not working. What they've already tried.

Replace the three bracketed lines in the prompt with your answers. The more honest and specific you are about your customer, the better the output.

## Quick Shopify example:

WHO they are: women buying handmade skincare from small online stores.

WHAT they want to achieve: find a natural product that feels safe, premium, and worth the money.

WHAT situation they are in: they have bought products before that irritated their skin or did nothing.

I want you to identify the dominant emotional trigger driving purchasing decisions for a specific type of customer. Use the three inputs below to do the analysis. The three types of trigger are: APPROVAL -> They want to feel seen, respected, validated, admired, or chosen. CONTROL -> They want certainty, predictability, clarity, or to stop the chaos. SECURITY -> They want to feel safe -- emotionally, financially, or practically. My customer: WHO they are: [e.g. women over 45 who come to me for weight loss coaching] WHAT they want to achieve: [e.g. to lose 20kg and keep it off without a fad diet] WHAT situation they're in: [e.g. tried everything, nothing has stuck, think it's them] Please tell me: 1. Which SINGLE trigger is most dominant for this customer -- and why, in 2-3 sentences. 2. Give me 3 opening lines for an ad, email, or social post that speak directly to that dominant trigger. Requirements: - Plain English only. No marketing jargon. No hype. - Write like a trusted friend who deeply understands what they're going through. - Do NOT use the words approval, control, or security in the output. - Do NOT give me all three triggers. - Commit to the dominant one only.

**This gives you the fast version.**

The prompt above finds your customer's dominant trigger and gives you opening lines to test.

That may be all you need.

But if you want the AI to do more of the heavy lifting, the full AI Prompt Doc goes further.

It analyzes all three triggers in your market and ranks them by emotional intensity. It reads your existing words... your current ad, email, or post... and tells you where you may be missing the trigger.

Then it rewrites your headline, opening line, subject line, and call to action in one pass. It also tells you what to watch for in replies and comments that confirms you have hit the right trigger.

**The mini prompt finds the trigger.**

**The full AI Prompt Doc puts it to work... on your actual words, right now.**

**Get the full AI Prompt Doc here: [ashwebb.com/f5703aac-68106da3](https://ashwebb.com/f5703aac-68106da3)**

The offer page uses a 12-hour timer. We do that for small amounts like this because fast action deserves a reward. After 12 hours the offer closes.

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