



## More popular than the Queen.

Do you realise that you've seen **Derek Derbyshire** more times than the Queen!

Who?

Well, Derek's been in the papers more times than any celeb you can think of because he is the face in the "**Shamed by your English?**" adverts that have appeared in the bottom right hand column of broadsheets and red tops since the 50's, creating over 400,000 sales for the self-improvement courses.

What makes this advert so unique is that its content has **hardly changed** in fifty years.

MD, Ian Travis, told the Guardian how over the years they'd tried all sorts of new ideas (better thought out, more up to date) but **not one had delivered** anything like the response the original advert still managed to achieve, even today. They got it right first time and have been unable to better it. It set the standard for all the self-improvement adverts that came after it because **it became familiar**.

Now, recently I was stuck in A&E after my daughter had sprained her ankle quite badly and while waiting I got to reading the newspaper, cover to cover, including **Soulmates**, the lonely hearts section of the paper.

**These adverts are truly riveting** being both straightforward yet expressive. They are a brilliant example of how to get across a serious message in about 30 words while **staying in context with every other advert around it**. Like the "Shame" advert they work because **they are familiar**.

Few of the Soulmates adverts constitute great literary romance but **they do a job**, ranging from the conservative "mid fifties Anglo-Australian 49; attractive energetic lady 53; or Wanted in Wilts" to the eye catching "deliciously different; Ben seeks Her; Longleat lion early 70s" while not ignoring the "allegedly standoffish monk; body of a god shame it's Buddha; and Funky Granddad tries again"

Have a go at writing down **your best attributes in 30 words** or so. Could you sell your business's top offerings in 30 words? That's the sort of challenge that Google Adwords presents to anyone wanting to try pay per click. In any media context, your advert has to "play the game".

Soulmates headlines come in degrees of expressiveness, sitting on top on **a formula of words** that are in one sense similar and in another quite varied, yet delivering **exactly what the readers expect to see**.

Adverts for **Men seeking Women** are often in the style "slim, attract, loving, passionate male seeks F for LTR" or "tall, intelligent, single, great snogger, seeks attract, Nordic sun worshipper with GSOH".

While **Women seeking Men** include "vibrant F, likes music, theatre, travel, dining and cosy nights" or "slinky alley cat; tactile attract, slim blonde" to the irresistible "sassy interesting, intelligent, curvaceous, loves football!"



**All the adverts have their nuances** but the key words are very much of a style, expected, safe and alluring (okay perhaps not Buddha). They abound with short hand such as: GSOH (good sense of humour); LTM (love to meet); LTR (long term relationship); OHAC (own house and car) and my favourite HOT (has own teeth – actually, I made that one up).

Like any advert, there's only so much you can include that is likely to keep readers interested so whatever you put in has to **be on the button**. When writing for adverts like Soulmates, pay per click or even your website, make your words stand out yet at the same time be **trustworthy and apposite**.

**Even a single word** can have a dramatic effect on the responses you get. "Bookish nerd, overweight, boring, millionaire, seeks..."

While I may not be able to help increase your success with Soulmates, I might be able to help your business be a marketing triumph. Call me on **01925 262800** or email me at [gerryw@flyingveemgt.co.uk](mailto:gerryw@flyingveemgt.co.uk) to find out how you can.