



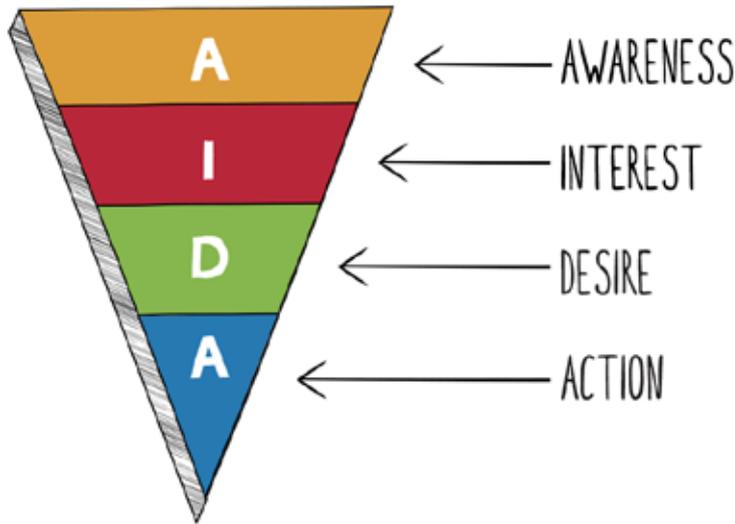
ABOUT the AUTHOR

JORDAN KELLY bid strategist, writer and coach - is the author of a large range of how-to books on high-value bidding and tendering. In her column this month, she shares a further excerpt from her popular title, 'The Bid Writer's Style & Grammar Guide'. Her books, along with a free subscription to her newsletter, 'The Bid Strategist', are available at www.bidstrategist.com



HOW TO USE TIME-TESTED WRITING PRINCIPLES TO IMPROVE THE IMPACT OF YOUR PROPOSALS

THE AIDA MODEL



Journalism offers many principles and practices that a bid-writer may valuably heed . . . most especially as concerns the crafting of a punchy and enticing opening paragraph or, in journalistic lexicon, a "lead-in" or "intro".

This peak paragraph should encapsulate the essence of your piece. While you should be as direct and interesting as possible throughout, the "intro" sets the scene for all the content that follows in that piece or section.

With the intro in place and doing its job, the next element of the journalistic formula a bid writer may wish to make good use of is the "inverted pyramid" principle.

The inverted pyramid dictates that you organise the key points of your content in descending order of importance – leading in with a summary of the most important point, followed by the next most important point, then the next. This generally

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relates to the first three paragraphs, after which the rest of the story unfolds as an expansion of the points made in these.

The journalistic rationale is that the average newspaper reader scan-reads most articles. Therefore, he or she needs to get the gist of the story in the headline and the first three

paragraphs.

While the reader-evaluator will, you would hope, read the full text of your response / proposal sections, it still behooves you to lead in with your most critical information and develop your piece in an order that maintains his or her keen interest.

The AIDA Formula

An equally viable format for rolling out your content is the "AIDA" formula used to guide direct marketing pieces. It's similar to – although not the same as – the journalistic "inverted pyramid" principle.

This acronym stands for Attention, Interest, Desire and Action.

In "bid" terms, this formula translates to:

- Get attention
- Build interest
- Unfold the big picture / your observations of the prospect organisation's project or procurement, its needs, and the quantifiable benefits it seeks
- Build your case / establish credibility / provide proof points
- End with a reminder of your key theme and the wisdom of choosing your offering as the answer to the prospect's problem or need. ■

IN CLOSING this month's column, I'd like to take the opportunity to ask for feedback and topic suggestions from West Australian Transport Magazine readers. Are my columns useful to you? What other topics should I address, or guidance should I provide? I welcome your requests. Email the Publisher at karen@angrychicken.com.au with your requests.