

The Muse Takes Another Crack at Qw...uh... Pest Communications

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I had another cold call from the phone company who's name fittingly rhymes with *Pest*. I know I know, I should give it a rest already. But these folks are so darn persistent it is hard not to take a poke at them. Here's how it went:

- Jane [*with a noticable Hindi accent*]: This is Jane from Pest Communications. I would like a few minutes of your time. This is not a sales call. I just need to ask you about your current voice and data services.
- Muse [While hating myself for thinking "Jane... really? Not Jalaja?"]: I don't think we are a Pest customer. Are we?
- Jane [undeterred]: It will only take a few minutes sir, I just need to ask you a few questions about your current voice and data service.
- Muse: ...and this is not a sales call.
- Jane: No sir, we just need some information about your current contract.
- Muse: ... and you know we are not a Pest customer right?
- Jane [A bit like a bad rap song now... or maybe I should say a bit like a rap song]: Yes sir, we just need some information about your current voice and data services.
- Muse: ... and Jane (may I call you Jane), why does Pest feel like they need this information?
- Jane [sounding desperate now]: We just need to ask a few questions about your current contract. It will only take a few minutes.
- Muse: But I don't think my current contract is any of Pest's business. What is Pests interest in the information?
- Jane [wailing like Hermione after drinking the Cat's Polyjuice potion]: It will only take a few minutes sir. We just need to ask you a few questions.
- Muse: No thank you, I don't wish to tell you anything about our current service or contracts. Could you take us off of your list?
- Jane [calm now]: Thank you for your time.

Now perhaps I was unkind to Jane. I know she was just trying to do her job and she probably doesn't actually work for Qwe... er... Pest either. She's just the contract employee of some big call center somewhere that probably pays her half of an actual living wage. So let me say publicly to Jane that I'm sorry. Don't take my surly truculence too hard. The Muse is a tough nut to crack. In fact it has been years since anyone cold-called the Muse and managed to engage him in an actual conversation - let alone sell him anything.

Lest you think I'm alone, I have noticed that our society is becoming more and more jaded when it comes to marketing. I suppose it is inevitable. As consumers (particularly the under 40 crowd) get more savvy they become inoculated to most run of the mill sales techniques. Speaking for myself I never click on text link ads (nor do any of my readers apparently) or banner ads. I don't read marketing emails. I don't peruse the ads in the paper, or watch TV commercials (except for Geico commercials which I find amusing). And of course, I immediately cut off anyone I don't already know who calls me with a sales pitch.

The way I see it (and perhaps it's just me), the Internet has opened up the whole

universe of knowledge, services and products to me as a searcher. I can usually find whatever I need. There is practically nothing I want or need that requires a sales person. I even bought my most recent pair of shoes on line. Indeed, I'd rather be stuffed with celery and onions, and periodically basted with butter in a 400 degree oven until golden brown than have to spend more than thirty seconds talking to someone who is trying to sell me something for which I'm not already looking. Now I'm off to work on my CF Webtools sales campaign for the 4th quarter (expect a phone call).