Writing Marketing Copy that Attracts

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Make Your Message Shine

We have no doubt that if you were sitting down for a one-to-one conversation with a prospect, you'd be able to explain yourself clearly, develop a great relationship and probably even come away with a sale. But for some reason, many of us can't translate that ability to communicate into the written word.

Copywriting, without a doubt, is the biggest stumbling block for most businesses as they try to set up their marketing automation. But it doesn't have to be. We've come up with a few solutions that will help your copy shine … and start producing results.

Focus on Relationships, Not Sales

The sales will come. But people like to buy from people, so it's important to develop a relationship before you ask for the sale. Even sales letters should include a good portion of "humanness." The more you can concentrate on building the relationship, the better chance you'll have of creating copy that converts. Otherwise, your copy will be so over the top that it will turn into a late-night TV commercial … or be so boring that it becomes like the forgotten reference section of the library.

## Personality Trumps the Professor

Did you really *love* the way your college professors connected with you? Chances are, you had brilliant professors who used big words and expected you to follow along at their pace. Well, that might work in a university setting (where you have to listen in order to graduate), but it doesn't work in business.

People like simplicity. They like cleverness. But they don't have the time or patience to decipher your attempts at being a professor. The solution? Simply talk to your prospects like you would in person. Save those big words for something else … like your letter to the home owners' association.

One-to-One Conversation

Today's media allows you to have a very personal relationship with your prospects. Your message is right in front of them, via a computer screen, direct mail piece or even their phone. Because of this close interaction, it's important to have a one-to-one discussion.

Think of your communication style as less like a speech to the U.N. and more like a dinner party at a friend's house. Make your reader think that this email/Web page/letter was created especially for him/her. This relationship building will help you down the road when it's time to convert.
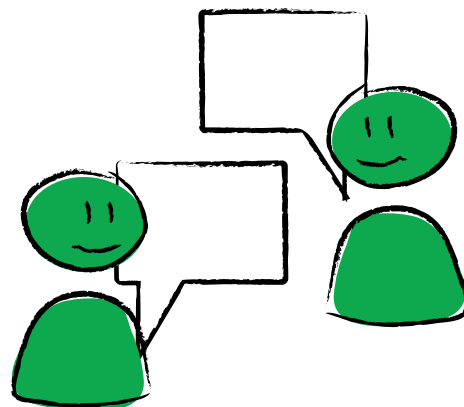
Size Doesn't Matter

There isn't really a formula that outlines how long or short a particular piece of copy should be. But, regardless of the size, you have to get the message across quickly. Again, readers don't have the patience to scroll down through 15 pages of fluff to get to what they really want. Word count doesn't mean a thing … *quality* word count means everything.

Don't Talk about Products

Your products and services are interesting, but they aren't the most important things you can discuss in your copy. Sure, you'll want to have a features page that lists all the great things that set your products apart from the crowd. But when you talk to people (with your voice or your keyboard), talk about what your products can do for people.

Focusing on the benefits of your products will automatically answer the age-old question, "What's in it for me?" Prospects will want to have that question answered before they'll open their wallets.

Urgency

No matter how brilliant your writing is, you'll need to encourage your readers to take action. One of the best ways to do this is by creating a sense of urgency. There are several ways to do this, including setting a deadline, creating scarcity of your product or creating a great sense of excitement. Whichever you choose, be honest. Don't create a false deadline just to drive sales. Prospects will catch wind of what you're doing, and then you'll be in a heap of trouble.

Words, Words, Words (A Copywriting Checklist)

No matter how you spin it, you have to use words in your copy. Everyone does it. This is what Napoleon Hill says about words:

> "Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another."
>
> - Napoleon Hill

Are you using the right words? **Using the right words will help you be successful in a couple of ways:**

- You'll stay welcome in your prospects' inboxes (because they actually read what you send them)

- You'll position yourself as the expert (because they know you have something important to say)

- And ultimately, you'll make a bunch of sales (because you'll stay in their minds until they are ready to buy)

Much of your success depends on the words you choose. But you don't need to have a degree in English to craft great emails, sales letters, landing pages, website content and other collateral that will ensure your success. You just need to follow a system.

As you write, follow this simple checklist to make sure your copy shines and that your message gets delivered. Before you know it, the principles in this checklist will become second nature, and your writing will improve. Let's get to it.

1. Overall Tone

☐ The writing is casual and avoids formal clichés

Less effective: *"This email is to inform you of a special offer we are extending to all …"*
Better: *"We're excited to tell you about a special offer …"*

☐ The writing feels more like a conversation I would have with a person in a restaurant than a speech I would give to a crowd of 1,000

Less effective: *"AAA Pest Control is the best solution for residential and commercial …"*
Better: *"We've been able to help hundreds of homeowners and businesses …"*

☐ My personality is reflected somewhere in the copy

Less effective: "Thank you for your consideration."
Better: "Can't wait to see you in the store!"

2. Content

☐ There is enough information in the opening sentences to tell the whole story

Less effective: "Back in 1942, the world was in crisis. There was a feel of uncertainty…"
Better: "The events of 1942 changed financial planning forever. A+ Financial is committed …"

☐ The bullets are complete thoughts that pertain to the intro sentence

Less effective: "There are three things every homeowner should know about insurance:
- Homeowners should get insurance
- It's the law
- What about taxes?"

Better: "Here are three things every homeowner should consider about insurance:

- **You may not want your bank to pay the bills**
  Many lenders will include your insurance payments in the escrow account …
- **You may not have as much coverage as you think**
  The standard insurance package you selected may not include flood …
- **You might be paying too much**
  There are many hidden fees that insurance companies attach to …"

☐ I have included subheads/titles for people who simply want to scan the document

Less effective: "We provide an all-in-one solution for business owners looking for social media, PR and communityv recognition. We also specialize in …"

Better: "All-in-One Communications Solution
We provide an all-in-one solution for business owners looking for social media, PR and community recognition. We also specialize in …"

☐ The copy includes a clear call to action

Less effective: "Our website has additional information."

Better: "For more information about service packages, please visit our website at …"

3. Mechanics and Readability

☐ I checked the copy for spelling/grammar errors

Less effective: "Your going to LOVE our new kitchen applances"
Better: "You're going to love our new kitchen appliances"

☐ I replaced the big words to improve readability

Less effective: *"Your windows will rapidly shine with immaculate clarity"*
Better: *"No more spots … no more smudges. Just a clear view of the world."*

☐ I read through the copy and deleted unnecessary sentences/thoughts

Less effective: "Your will is extremely important. It is essential to create a will that …"
Better: "It is essential to create a will that …"

☐ Someone else has read my copy to check for flow and readability

Less effective: Save. Send.
Better: Save. "Can you look over this email to see if it makes sense?" Revise. Send.

Conclusion

Don't make this harder than it needs to be. Simply talk to your audience like you would talk to a friend. You'll see your conversion rates improve, your bottom line increase and your stress levels go way down. Isn't copywriting fun?!