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Copywriting that Sells

By **Amrit Hallan**

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The first thing I learnt after writing my first copy was - it all boils down to how much your copy sells. No matter how good it is, no matter if it beats Hemingway and Dickens in the efficient employment of language, if it does not sell, it is worthless.

Whenever you sit down to work on a new copy or edit an old one, just keep one thing in mind: how you can deliver "the message" in minimum words. Remember that literature written for the sake of promoting a product or a service needs to be succinct and direct, and above all, understandable. The average reader of your literature is a person who is in a hurry. He/she is bombarded with similar messages already (and he/she might be cynical).

Keep the end result in mind and create the copy around that. Relinquish your inherent proclivities and biases, and just focus on the message. Present the copy in a way that it is highly informative, convincing, and compelling. Before sitting down to write, think of your target readership. Are they children? Are they housewives? Are they teenagers? Are they hardcore technocrats and scientists? Formulate your language and presentation according to that.

A method I find useful is, make a list of all the words that can be associated with the current copywriting project. It is fun, and it helps you create supersets, sets and subsets of your project.

I have seen many copies where the creative writers lose focus, get carried away with their "creativity", and end up creating a message that can win accolades as a piece of art, but makes no sale for the client. The way you present your message should not dominate the actual message. Your writing style should not impede the actual message and end up creating a distraction.

Copywriting that Sells

I myself am a writer. It is often extremely hard to resist the temptation of sprinkling the powder of my style on the copy, but I have to resist it for the sake of the message (and my income). I have learnt to become detached. I keep telling myself: it's just a copy for my client for which I'm getting paid, and it is not a piece of literature that I'm creating to further the cause of my art.

This is the age of information. I don't know if it is true or not, it used to take an entire life-time in the eighteenth century to process the amount of information we process in a single day. With so much information (most of it is junk, by the way) around, it becomes difficult both for the reader and the writer to pinpoint the right tone and pitch. With so much fraud around, it becomes difficult to establish credibility.

That's what differentiates you from the others. Project your message in a way that it immediately grabs attention.

In the morning I was watching "Meet Joe Black" on HBO, (today is Sunday) and there was one scene in the movie when Anthony Hopkins and Brad Pitt were walking down a busy street. There were scores of people around them; still, they both were prominently visible even from a distance. I noticed that only

they were wearing dark clothes. Everybody in the crowd wore light shaded clothes. I found the scene very fascinating. This is how a focus should be created. Your message should be different from the rest of the crowd.

It should hit the right nerve instantly, from the first sentence itself. Your first sentence should make the reader think, "Ok, this is something worth taking note of."

Without sounding melodramatic, make your message as moving as you can afford to. Don't be too personal if you are not a known personality and the majority of your target audience is a stranger to you. Still, messages that address to individual readers are more appealing.

Try to start with a "You" or "Your" or "Yours?" Messages starting with a highlighted question also incite a response. Keep your sentences short, with lesser commas and semi-colons. If you have abundant space, use bullets to highlight major points - they are easy to read and are generally to the point. There are no strict rules for the sort of words you should use. Particular words should appeal to the particular target-segment. Mainly, keep things simple and to the point. Use dabs of humor wherever possible. Once I wrote a short story around the service of my client - they are a detective agency.

Copywriting is all about sincerity. You'll sound monotonous and clichéd if you are not sure of the motive of your copy. To sound credible, you should believe in the authentic intentions of your client. Never write for a product/service that is intended to cause harm to your readers.

In the end, practice and study. After all, copywriting is a profession, so it has its no's and yeses. Be observant. Study everything around you, and read the copies of other writers carefully. Always keep notes of things you can use. And...write a lot.

Amrit Hallan is a freelance copywriter, copy editor and a writer. He also optimizes web page content for

higher Search Engine ranking. Read his weekly essays and articles by subscribing to amritscolumn-subscribe@topica.com For Copywriting and Copy Editing Services, visit: <http://www.amrithallan.com>

Bencivenga, Halbert And Lok: The 3 Greatest Copywriters In The World!

By Marketing Basics

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No other element of marketing will make your business succeed or fail faster than your copywriting. Good copywriting can earn you a fortune. Bad copywriting will sink your business faster than the Titanic!

However, rather than write an article on how to write great copy, we decided to let three of the greatest copywriters of all time show you how it's done.

Listed below are the links to the websites of Gary Bencivenga, Gary Halbert and Dan Lok. If you want to learn how to write great copy, we can assure you, nobody does it better than these three professionals. They are truly in a class by themselves!

We suggest you carefully study their work, word for word, read their newsletters and glean as much information as you can from their materials. You simply won't get a better or more valuable copywriting education anywhere. Here are the links. Enjoy!

Gary Bencivenga: <http://bencivengabullets.com/>

Gary Halbert: <http://www.thegaryhalbertletter.com>

Dan Lok: <http://www.quickturnmarketing.com/>

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