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Entice Your Reader With These 5 Headlines

By Alexandria Brown

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In the world of marketing communications, your first impression – your headline – can lead to either marketing success ... or failure.

It's important to realize that headlines work best when they appeal to your reader's interests (not yours). And not only can they *grab attention*, they can also make your message easy to read, convey your main selling points, and lead your customer to a sale.

Over the years copywriting pros have used several headline formulas that always work well. Here are my fab five:

1. The question. "Are You Worried About Your Financial Future?"

A question headline automatically gets your readers involved in your message, because they answer it in their minds. Many people will read further into your letter, ad, or Web site copy just to find out what answer or solution you provide. Again, make sure the question focuses on the reader's interest, not yours. A *bad* example would be: "Do You Know What New Product We've Created This Year?" (No one cares but you! ;))

2. The How-to. "How to Get Thinner Thighs in 30 Days."

How-to headlines work very well, because people love information that shows them how to do something. (Thousands of book titles begin with "How to...") Think of the benefits your product/service offers and then try creating some "how to" headlines.

3. The Testimonial. "Rob Smith's Consulting Is Pure Magic – Our Sales Have Increased by 30%!"

Why not let your clients do the selling for you? Their commendations can go a long way in convincing others to use your services. Tip: To appear credible, always include your clients' full names and the cities they live in.

4. The Command. "Boost Your Business Today!"

Turn your most important benefit into a commanding headline, such as "Make More Time for Your Family," "Look Younger Instantly!" and "Get 7 New Clients This Month." (By the way, throwing a number

into your headline is another good tactic. And readers seem to like odd numbers as opposed to even.)

5. The News. "Introducing Our New 'Rest–Assured' Tax Service!"

This usually works best if you truly have something big to announce, such as new products or big changes in your company. Don't try to make news out of something that's not.

Once your readers know you have something they're interested in, they'll take the time to read your entire article, brochure, letter, ad, e–zine, or Web page. So put some TLC into creating headlines that entice!

How To Write Headlines That Could Make You A Fortune

By Noel Peebles

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What do people see in advertising? Headlines! What do you see when you are glancing through a newspaper or magazine? Headlines! What is it that makes you stop for a moment and look at an advertisement, or even read some of it? The headline!

An advertisement headline is no different from a news headline. Both are designed to capture the reader's attention and to encourage them to read further.

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The same applies with a radio commercial. It also needs a headline to attract the listener's attention so they "prick up their ears" and listen further.

The headline therefore becomes the ad for the ad. It must be strong enough to "flag attention" and stop the reader, listener, or viewer "in their tracks." The job of the headline is to entice them to read on or pay further attention to the message that follows.

Let's face it; we all have a natural resistance to advertising. These days we are bombarded with thousands upon thousands of commercial messages. Unless the headline is of particular interest, or in some way says "I'm talking to you!", we will tend to ignore it.

If you're like most advertisers, you will open a newspaper or magazine and go immediately to your own advertisement. It stands out because you are looking for it.

In reality, the average reader is not scanning the publication in search of your advertisement. The publication may have four hundred other headlines in that particular issue. Every headline is competing with all the others in the issue. A particular advertisement is not just competing with other ads for the reader's attention. It is also competing, with the numerous articles and news stories in the publication.

They are all screaming to the reader –

"Pick me! Pick me!"

To further complicate matters, things that are happening around them may distract the reader. Noisy kids, the sounds from a television or radio, traffic noise, an over-heard conversation...these can all compete for the reader's attention.

Magazine publishers understand this principle all too well. You only have to look at the magazine racks in the newsagents to see what appears on the front covers of each publication.

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Bold headlines like:

"Royal Sex Scandal"

"Win \$150,000 Sports Car Inside"

" Six tell-tale signs that he's cheating on you".

Eye-catching headlines like these are targeted at specific audiences and are designed to sell magazines.

Home decorating or lifestyle magazines may use headlines like: "17 ways to save on bathroom renovations" or "New Fashion Trend For Kitchens".

Business magazines may use headlines like: "How To Negotiate And Win" or "Your Bank May Be Charging Too Much".

So study the headlines on magazine covers and you'll get a real insight into what works and what doesn't.

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Noel Peebles has bought, developed and sold several of his own businesses, and has been involved with the purchase and sale of many others. He has fifteen years of 'hands on' experience, directing his own highly successful' retail businesses, including franchise marketing and business development. He also has his own public self-storage complex. And, he's traveled extensively to over forty countries.

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