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Good Cop(y), Bad Cop(y)

By Barry Harrison

Good Cop(y), Bad Cop(y) by Barry Harrison

It's true— people don't want to read much. All the more reason to choose your words carefully. I'm convinced that great copy is essential for a compelling customer experience. Here are two samples I came across recently, that carried me from the sublime to the ridiculous.

The first is a description of a "Chenille Throw" from a Restoration Hardware catalog that's so evocative I practically salivate with desire. The second is an excerpt from a multi-page ad promoting Phoenix as a tourist destination. It's so pretentious and silly it makes me laugh out loud every time I read it.

Go ahead, read for yourself. Then think about what kind of impression the copy on your site makes.

The 5-lb Chenille Throw

"Chocolate truffles. Triple-cream brie. Ice cream cake. All areas where more is, well more... where five extra pounds is a very good thing, indeed. So it is with our chenille throws. Each is five pounds of butter-soft, pudding-rich, rayon-cotton chenille, a guilt-free indulgence, big enough to share."

Now that's good copy! Combined with a lush, close-up photograph of the throw draped oh so casually on a tan suede sofa, I don't know how anyone could resist!

Compare and contrast: [I'm not making this up].

"Destination Phoenix
Amazing what you can do here."

"Open your eyes the day you arrive and believe everything you see. Our world is in constant flow and a stiff current of excitement and discovery pull you along."

"Greater Phoenix is everything from shopping in world-class boutiques to dining that's equally up to task. It's lodging that may ease your body, but never relents on the imagination. And without a doubt, there's so many entertainment options, your agenda will swell with the energy of a true cosmopolitan city- tempered by years

of individuality and originality."

So while a stiff current of excitement pulls you along, your agenda will swell with energy. Yeah baby!

Destination Phoenix? I don't think so.

I'd rather curl up on my sofa with a good catalog and wrap myself in a 5-lb chocolate triple cream butter pudding guilt-free hunk of chenille. Yum.

Tips to improve the copy on your site.

1. Read your copy out loud before you commit to putting it on your site. Yes, every word.
2. If your writing skills aren't "up to task," hire a professional, or at least get somebody who can edit your text.
3. If it sounds like "BS" to you, it will sound like "BS" to your readers.
4. Less is more, especially on the web.

Barry Harrison is the author of "REDiTIPS" eMarketing Newsletter and a partner in Resolve Digital, Web Strategies for the Real World. Engaging Web designEffective Internet MarketingEssential Content Management Tools Visit his site at <http://www.resolvedigital.com> or <mailto:barry@resolvedigital.com>

How to Talk to the Police if Your Suspected of a Crime

Good Cop(y), Bad Cop(y)

By Susan Chana Lask, Esq.

If you're suspected of a crime, the police can come to your house or work or find you on the street to talk to you. Usually it will be a detective in plain clothes in an unmarked car who will want to talk to you. You might find a card from the detective under your door, or a message on your phone from him asking you to call.

You always have the right to remain silent, as anything you say to a police detective will be used against you in court. You also have the right to be represented by an attorney when talking with the police.

Just because a detective comes around looking for you doesn't mean you have to speak to him or see him at the police precinct. If the detective is at your door, you don't have to open it for him unless he has a warrant. If a detective is knocking at your door, you don't have to answer. You can wait until he leaves if you want and then of course call your attorney.

Usually, a detective will hound you to come into the precinct headquarters to "talk". But once you set foot into the precinct, the detective will have you at his mercy, where he can use different routines – such as "good cop/bad cop" – or violate your rights just enough to be "legal" to get you to talk. Maybe he'll take your backpack from you or other property you came in with like your cell phone, then direct you to wait for him, leaving you alone in a room for what could feel like a lifetime. He may even ask you to write your version of the story down and then use that against you later.

The police are experts trained in gaining your trust and confidence. They know what to say and what tone to use with you. They will lie and misinform you to get information they want. They can tell you they have witnesses when they do not or say they will lower the charges when they will not. The police most likely will not read you your rights because they want to create an informal, relaxed appearance so you will spill the beans voluntarily.

Good Cop, Bad Cop

If you're not talking then detectives may use the "good cop/bad cop" routine. The first cop sits alone with you in a small room and talks about the "crime". If he's not getting the information he wants to hear to nail you, then you may find yourself standing at the fingerprint machine with another more sensitive cop. Once you're at the fingerprint machine you can be sure you're being charged despite the fact that no one explained anything to you, read you your rights or told you what you're being charged with. Part of the game is to keep you disoriented and guessing your situation. If you hear the new cop say "just tell the detective what he wants to hear and you'll get out of here faster on a lesser charge" then you are being "played" and you definitely need to keep quiet. Don't say something just because you think it will get you out faster, because you're already in there and you're going to go through the arrest process no matter what.

When the police tell you the consequences of a crime they intend to charge you with, or that they can

lower the charge, don't believe anything they say. They can and will lie to you to get you to talk so they

Good Cop(y), Bad Cop(y)

can make an arrest. The police are not your attorney, they are not your friends— they are there to make an arrest.

The only way to protect yourself is to remain silent at all times. Enforce your right by consistently and politely stating "I am remaining silent until I have counsel." The police can not interrogate you once you invoke that right, although they will try to interrogate you. They also can't interrogate you unless they first read you your rights.

When you arrive at the police precinct , the police should have you sign a paper with your legal rights listed on it. They should have you read your rights while they read it to you, and then have you initial each right and sign the paper at the bottom with the time and date. This paper is a good thing for the police to prove they followed procedure and it will coordinate the time of your arrest closely with the time of reading your rights. It is not mandatory that they give you this paper with your rights, because they can by law verbally read you your rights and note in their notebook the time they read you your rights. Of course, they could never read you your rights and later say they did.

Hiring An Attorney

If a detective is hounding you with phone messages and coming by your house leaving cards with your roommate or family, immediately get an attorney. An attorney can determine if the police are going to arrest you. If you are going to be arrested then your attorney will advise you what to do (and what to say or not say), explain the arrest process, arrange for you to turn yourself in and get you through the process quicker. Also, the police will know they can't interrogate you if you're represented by counsel.

A good attorney will fax a letter of representation to the precinct and follow you through the arrest process by calling the proper offices and getting you to arraignment and out quicker. Your attorney should also fax a notice of appearance on your behalf to the Arraignment Clerk's Office the minute he or she discovers you've been "docketed" by the District Attorney's office (meaning they've drafted and filed a Criminal Complaint against you and assigned a docket number to your case so it can be heard by the court).

If you do not voluntarily turn yourself in then the police will remember you made it harder for them to arrest you and they may purposely delay your arrest process and make you sit for three days in jail before you see a judge. They'll delay filling out your paperwork and sending it to the proper offices. They may even lose your paperwork.

The last thing you want to do is spend a minute longer being arrested and in jail so here's a valuable tip: don't turn yourself in or get arrested at night or on a weekend because there are less people working those shifts and the courts close certain hours, so the process can take three days or sometimes longer.

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Good Cop(y), Bad Cop(y)

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How to Talk to the Police if Your Suspected of a Crime
So What's Your Argument?
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The Road Not Taken
Choosing Between Apartments? Consider Maintenance & Security

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Understanding Acne: Causes, Cures and Myths
English Slang Dictionary



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