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How to Write Words Worth a Thousand Pictures

By Glenn White

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Our Image-Driven Society

We live in a new image-driven society. It can be hard on writers unless they learn to connect with today's readers. Writing that connects is easy when you keep a few basic writing principles in mind. Let's face it, as a writer, you are competing with the greatest influence in our image-driven society, the film and television industry. So, let's take three well-known words in film making as cues for effective writing. Ready? Lights! Camera! Action!

Lights!

Catch the reader's attention. You catch your reader's attention when you know who they are and what holds their interest. Yes, write what you know but also write for who you know. For example, avoid using abstract words and concepts when writing for children. Kids won't understand and you won't grab their attention.

The effective writer writes about what interests the reader using words the reader relates to and understands. When you write fiction or even creative non-fiction; develop catchy titles, contemporary themes, strong heroes, good plots, intense conflict, and create interesting characters. When you do, lights go on for your reader.

Camera!

Describe, describe, describe! Use specific, concrete, and concise words. Write to describe but avoid using too many adjectives. Mark Twain said: "When you catch an adjective, kill it." Strong words from Mr. Twain but when you cut out adjectives and use descriptive nouns, your writing comes to life. Instead of writing "big, beautiful house," try writing "mansion," "villa," "castle," "palace," or "chateau." Use a thesaurus and find image-driven nouns to replace superfluous adjectives. Sorry, I couldn't find a

noun to replace "superfluous adjectives." But you get the idea.

The contemporary writing advice, "show don't tell," echoes in the ears of most writers. And for good reasons. The writer must "show" readers rather than "tell" to grab their image-driven attention. For example, use vivid detail instead of vague generalizations when describing emotions. Write, "sweat dripped from his forehead," not "he was nervous." Let the images come alive in your story.

Action!

Use action verbs, avoid "to be" verbs. Put your reader in the middle of the action in your story. Describe the action with the senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, and feel by using action verbs. Use moving images and carry your reader along, don't let your story become a study in still-life. Don't sprinkle your story on your readers; dunk `em in over their heads! Go ahead, get `em soaking wet with the action in your story. They will love you for it.

Lights! Camera! Action! will connect your story with your readers. Go ahead, give `em pictures they'll never forget!

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Some words are worth a thousand pictures

By Maricon Williams

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As the maxim goes – a picture is worth a thousand words. We are all aware of that. But can some words be worth a thousand pictures?

Is a picture really worth a thousand words? written by Jamie Kiley, is a manifestation that words can be worth a thousand pictures. "As a graphic designer, she reveals, my natural inclination is to create graphically-rich, light text websites. Since I'm focused on what a site looks like visually, I like using impressive images, bold splashes of color all over the page, and not very much copy. The end result is an attractive, visually-appealing site, with very few words."

Based on her observation, she noticed that visitors want specifics and they want them quickly. So it is advisable that you tell them exactly what you can do for them. You should tell why they have to choose you over other competitors. For this purpose, words are far more effective than images. In some if not most cases, pictures cannot convey the message nearly as specifically or quickly as well-chosen words can. Thus, it is necessary for the web to be informative and use the right words. Visitors want explanations, answers, reasons and motivation - and that's exactly what you suppose to give them!

How to Write Words Worth a Thousand Pictures

"I firmly believe that pictures and images enhance a website, but they should be used to provide a tasteful, professional frame for your copy, not replace it", Kiley added. "It is true that web users are notorious for having short attention spans and not wanting to read large amounts of copy. However, the problem is that most of the copy on websites today is vague and not enticing. It's focused on the company rather than the customer. So it should be no surprise that visitors avoid reading it."

Don't focus strictly on graphics, focus on what the customers need. And what they need is information. If you supply them what they want, they sure gonna purchase from you.

Now, do you subscribe to the idea that a picture is worth a thousand words—and therefore images, not a lot of text, should be the major drive of your home page? Or do words have more influence to capture a visitor's attention and motivate them to purchase?

Jamie Kiley, the author of the aforementioned article creates inviting websites. If you want tips on website building or you want your website done, you can contact her at jamiiekiley@kianta.com.

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