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**Words To Avoid Using In Copywriting And Advertising**

**By Ray L. Edwards**

I could still recall the days of writing telegrams. That was before the fax machine, internet and email.

Writing a telegram meant economy of words and so obvious verbs and needless adjectives had to be omitted.

Today, with the advent of email and other cheap sources of communication you don't have to be that paranoid about your message—except you are writing an advertisement. When writing a classified ad for example, every word must count in the small space allowed and so word choice becomes very important.

But word choice is not only about being brief.

Even when crafting a long sales letter you should try and avoid using the personal pronouns: "we, me, I, our,us". The sales message should be about your prospects and not about your company. The "we syndrome" is a common error but it can easily be avoided. A sales message should state upfront the benefit to the customer not parade how many awards the company has received in the past ten years. Whenever possible then the copy should be written in the third person.

There are some other words that are very common in advertising but are just too vague to have any force. Great copy is always specific. "How to make \$3,567.23 from your home in 30 days!" has more force than "How to make money from home." Here are some commonly used words that lack force because their meaning is too ethereal:

**It** – State what "it" is rather than leave "it" for the reader to figure out. This word can often be replaced by what 'it' represents or stands in place of.

**Quality** – This has a similar meaning to "personality". We often hear people say that someone has personality. But everyone has a personality whether good or bad. The same holds for quality. Every product or service has some quality which the customer will be the ultimate judge of.

## Words To Avoid Using In Copywriting And Advertising

Superlatives such as "tastiest, best, fastest, strongest, superior, minimize, optimize". The problem with these words is that they instill doubt in the readers because these claims appear unsubstantiated. These words lack power because they are not measurable. Take the word "superior" for example. What criterion or measurement was used to judge this product as superior and by how much?

Solutions – This word cannot stand on its own. If you are selling a product or service it is also obvious that you are selling the solution to a problem, so state what the solution is rather than just using the word.

Technology – This word is commonly used to suggest innovation and newness. But customers have little concern about the technology that is behind the products they buy. They are only concerned about the benefit they derive from these products and services. How many drivers are really concerned about the technology that's under the hoods of the vehicle they drive? They are really only concerned that the vehicle is reliable and gives them some social status.

Difference – Rather than stating that you are different from your competitors state the difference instead. Just saying "different" means little and is just filling space. The statement "We make all the difference" doesn't leave the prospect more educated than before reading your sales message.

Consider the following advertiser's blurb:

"We make all the difference because of our superior quality and solutions we offer."

It's like junk food – a lot of flavor but zero nutritional value. This statement means little because it's not specific at all. It creates more questions than answers and leaves the reader totally confused. And this is the last thing you want to do to a customer.

Go to any website and you'll see statements such as "can save you time and money", (well how much?) "creates website in less time" (less than 2, 4, 100 hours?), "maximize your gas mileage" (by how much 1%, 5%, 40%?). All these statements will triple their effectiveness by using numbers (note that I gave a quantity, `triple').

The more specific your message is the more believable you will appear. Using a bunch of superlatives only makes you seem self-serving. Customers are immune to this type of hype and filters out these claims like a squirrel discards peanut shells.

When making any comparison in your sales letter state the baseline, use numbers and give a time period whenever possible. In this way you don't have to use superlatives because the numbers will speak for themselves. If you follow this simple rule your sales conversion rate will increase by 4.7% within 29 days of putting this into effect.

Even though that last statement was hypothetical you can sense its power because specific numbers were used instead of just saying `your sales will increase'.

I think it's time to review your sales message and sweep away the chaff words leaving the pure wheat

behind.

You'll be 9.9% happier that you did!

Ray L. Edwards is a master copywriter, published author and Internet Marketing Consultant. His copywriting clients have claimed up to 1,600% increase in their conversion rates just from using his services. He is an expert in writing sales copy for the web. Find more hot selling tips at

<http://www.webcopy-writing.com>

## **Five (5) Major Pitfalls Of Ad Copywriting And What You Can Do To Avoid Them**

**By Carla Lendor**

For all of us involved in advertising the challenge of producing that one piece of copywriting magic that sends our sales soaring is never far from our minds. Face it, copywriting is not all about aesthetically pleasing language, it is about sales. The most aesthetically pleasing copywriting is not necessarily the most persuasive that will produce the greatest sales. More often than not, simple language is what produces the most sales. This, in no way implies that you should abandon your artistic abilities when writing your ad copy.

Great copywriting demands discipline, imagination, creativity and hard work. You will not become a great copywriter overnight. Even for the best of us, it takes time to master the skill of ad copywriting. With hard work, dedication and purpose you will be able to acquire the techniques that will have you producing great ad copy.

In this article you will learn about the pitfalls you must avoid if you wish to improve your ad copy:

### **Wrong or Misleading Information**

There is nothing worse than an ad copy that misrepresents its products or services. The only person it hurts is you. Yes, you make a few quick bucks but misleading information will eventually destroy your credibility.

**Solution:** Thoroughly check the facts of your copy before submitting it.

### **No call to action**

Many times we are guilty of producing great ad copy but omit the call to action. You must tell your readers exactly what you expect of them, whether to sign up to your mailing list or buy your product. The call to action is what turns visitors into customers.

**Solution:** State precisely what action you want from your readers

### **Sexist language**

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Sexist or gender specific language can be offensive to people and will only serve to alienate your readers.

Solution: Use gender-neutral phrases. Use of plurals is also recommended.

### Alienation of Readers

Your audience should always be the primary focus of copywriting and thus your writing style should reflect that of your audience. Unnecessary words and phrases will confuse your audience and take the punch out of your ad copy.

Solution: Avoid the use of technical jargon. Simplicity is the key to effective communication. Make sure

your copy is concise. Don't speak over the heads of your readers or try to impress them with words and phrases they do not understand.

### Emotionless Language

Emotion is the central nervous system of copywriting. People buy on emotion not words. Bland copy does not appeal to the emotion of your readers. To write emotionally charged copy that creates an attachment between your readers and products you must first understand your customers needs, moods, personality and desires.

Solution: You must try to understand what motivates them into buying your product. Get to know your customers and understand what motivates them into buying your product. Appeal to the emotions of your readers. Emphasise with your customers.

If you keep those tips in mind when preparing your ad copy, you will see significant improvements in your copywriting.

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