

# CompellingCopy.com's Copywriting Boot Camp

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An Intensive Guide to Copywriting

## Attention troops!

By opening this document, you've automatically enrolled in CompellingCopy.com's Copywriting Boot Camp. This boot camp is designed to give you a quick, intensive lesson in copywriting. In the coming pages, you'll learn how to:

- ?? Strategize before you write, so your copy is precisely targeted to the prospects most likely to become your customers
- ?? Brush up on the basics of copywriting structure
- ?? Write effectively using our basic copy outline
- ?? Produce copy that gets you the results you want

Sound tough? It is actually quite simple. Using this guide (combined with a lot of practice) can turn your bland, ineffective copy into copy that acts like a magnet to your customer. Your magnetized copy will be so good, your prospect won't be able to resist you (high irresistibility=high income)!

Don't worry if you haven't written copy before – you don't need any formal training. All you need is a passion for your product/service and CompellingCopy.com to guide the way. The simple formula you learn here applies to all types of copy that you'll need to write in order to market your product:

- ?? Direct mail
- ?? Web content
- ?? Emails
- ?? Ezine content
- ?? News releases
- ?? And all other marketing collateral

Are you seeing the possibilities yet? Are you thrilled by the prospect of being able to do this yourself rather than pay a high-priced professional to do it for you? Are you excited about growing your business?

OK then. Troops, get ready to learn one of the most important skills any small business owner, home-business operator, independent professional, and entrepreneur should possess – how to write compelling copy.

Let's start with the basic Boot Camp Rules:

### **Rule #1:**

Your copy begins with your prospect. In order to get your prospect to complete the desired action (subscribe to an ezine, buy a product, purchase a service, etc.), you must get inside his/her head. While logic may justify the prospect's buying decision, the decision itself is based on emotion. Let's explore the inner workings of your prospect.

Thinking like your customer isn't enough – you have to become your customer. Get inside his/her head to determine how he/she thinks. Understanding your prospect's motivation will help you answer questions and overcome objections in your copy. Think of it as a personal conversation – your copy should read like it's a two-way exchange between two people. In this case, you're going to anticipate what your prospect would be saying – the questions he/she will ask, the doubts he/she will have, etc.

Before you even begin writing, you should know the following things about your prospect:

- ?? Age
- ?? Income
- ?? Gender
- ?? Interests
- ?? Fears
- ?? Worries
- ?? Desires

(We'll discuss the last three in more detail in Rule #2)

This information will clue you in on what points you need to raise, what objections you'll have to combat, and what questions you'll have to answer. It will essentially be your copy map.

### **Rule #2:**

Your copy must appeal to your prospect's emotions. That's right. You may think that you need facts and figures. While those can be nice when used correctly, they shouldn't be at the core of your copy. Instead, your copy should push your prospect's "hot buttons."

Hot buttons could be the emotions that a prospect feels as a result of a problem that he/she has, or it could be a hidden desire that he/she harbors, or it could be in relation to something that your prospect needs. It is these hot button emotions that inspire the prospect to act.

The questions you need to ask yourself are:

1. What does my prospect want and need (There is quite a distinction between the two. For example, your prospect may need to earn more money but may want a brand new luxury car.)?
2. What feelings is my prospect feeling as a result of his/her wants and needs? What emotions are involved?

Here at boot camp, we get physical. That means that you shouldn't only be thinking about these questions in your head – you should be **writing them down** on a piece of paper! Get out that pad and pen and start writing down the

answers to the above questions. If you don't complete this type of brainstorming before you start writing your copy, your copy will suffer.

To help inspire you, I've listed some examples of common wants and needs. Use these to complete the questions above.

Wants:

- ?? Control
- ?? Recognition
- ?? Love and belonging (approval)
- ?? Security

Needs cover the physiological basics:

- ?? Pain
- ?? Hunger
- ?? Rest
- ?? Thirst
- ?? Cold/hot
- ?? Breathing

Also categorized under needs are:

- ?? Protection from crime/safety
- ?? Protection from natural disasters
- ?? Protection from theft
- ?? Protection from poverty

The emotions behind these hot buttons are:

- ?? Solitude
- ?? Rejection
- ?? Acceptance
- ?? Love
- ?? Insecurity
- ?? Vanity
- ?? Fear
- ?? Benevolence
- ?? Admired
- ?? Fulfillment
- ?? Potential
- ?? Greed
- ?? Anger
- ?? Envy
- ?? Gluttony
- ?? Lust
- ?? Pride
- ?? Laziness

*Helpful tip – tap into as many of these emotions as possible*

Once you identify your prospect's needs and wants it will be easier to craft copy that appeals directly to him/her. You can position yourself as the problem solver, the one that has the answer to his/her wants, needs, desires. From there it's as easy as talking to your prospect one-on-one and offering him/her exactly what he/she wants.

**Rule #3:**

The tone of your copy is extremely important. If your copy is empathetic, you'll draw the reader in. Think of when you have a great conversation with someone – you feel a connection, like the person understands you and your feelings. Transmitting empathy in your copy can make your prospect feel the same way – understood and accepted. When he/she is in a safe environment, he/she feels comfortable taking action – which is your main objective.

Here are some tips for your copy:

- ?? It should be injected with personality
- ?? It should be in a narrative style
- ?? It should share the intimate feelings of the writer
- ?? It should be presented in a positive fashion
- ?? It should be benefit-focused

Above all – write like you talk! Use short, succinct, honest, straightforward, and benefit-oriented words and sentences.

*Helpful tip: Find an image that corresponds to each important point – appeal to the prospects senses (sound, sight, touch, smell, and taste)*

**Rule #4:**

Benefits, benefits, benefits. Your copy must be benefit-oriented. We cannot stress this point enough. If you start to wax poetic about your company and all of the great products and services you offer, your prospect is going to leave your Web page, delete your email, recycle your direct mail piece, and ignore your sales message! Yes, your prospect wants to know more about your company and what it has to offer, but what he/she really wants to know is:

**What's in it for me?**

Your prospect has a problem, pain, need, or desire. Your copy should focus on solving the problem, curing the pain, meeting the need, or fulfilling the desire. The pros call this one-to-one marketing or customer-focused marketing.

Rules can get oppressive after a while, so we're going to stick with just these four. They provide a strong foundation for the rest of the boot camp. Notice that none of the rules were specific to writing? Bet you thought that you were going to be hit with grade school grammar rules, didn't you? Nope, not here. We're focusing on writing **smart copy**. What is smart copy, you ask? **Smart copy combines copywriting, marketing, and psychology to get maximum impact.**

Take some time to think about these rules and your prospects. Before we get into the mechanics of copywriting, you should have the above down cold. Write down everything you know, understand, and believe about your prospect. Brainstorm, brainstorm, brainstorm. Ideally, you should talk directly to your current customers to make sure that your beliefs about your customers are, in fact, accurate. Many times, a marketer markets a product based on what he thinks about his prospect. If his thoughts aren't accurate, his results will be lackluster.

*Helpful tip: Talk to your customers! Find out why they buy from you, what they like and dislike, what they want more of and less of, etc. If you don't feel comfortable calling, try sending a survey via email or snail mail. Offer them something for their time, such as a discount or premium item. Customer feedback is valuable and your customer should be rewarded for providing it!*

Now we get into the nitty gritty – the art of copywriting. To make things easy, we've compiled a basic template of a typical piece of sales copy:

1. Headline
2. Headline design
3. Letterhead/logo (Letterhead for direct mail; logo for Web site)
4. Opening paragraph – this should be brief
5. Offer
6. Advantages
7. Positive language
8. Emphasis on important passages – important words and phrases should be bolded or underlined (you might want to stay away from underlining on a Web page, as this denotes a link). You should also format important paragraphs differently.
9. Readability – lines of text should be 50-80 characters. Transitions should flow by using springboard words. Different type faces should be used in different sections (serif fonts are preferable)
10. Structure – sentences should be short, words should be short and simple
11. Personal aspect

12. Interest boosters – questions, news, summaries, riddles, promises – basically anything that gets the prospect's attention
13. Page breaks
14. Proof
15. Conclusion
16. Gifts
17. P.S.
18. Number of lines per paragraph – paragraphs shouldn't be more than 6 lines
19. Dynamism
20. Conclusion

You can do all of that, right? Fear not - it's not as intimidating as it looks. Stand firm troops!

Before you start writing, we need to shift the focus back onto you for a bit. Why should your prospect buy from you? You know what's coming here, don't you? That's right – your Unique Selling Proposition, or USP as the copywriting community likes to say. When crafting your USP, think about the following:

- ?? How is my product/service different from my competition?
- ?? How is my product/service unique?
- ?? How is my product/service fundamentally better than anything else around?

Take a while with these questions. Get out that paper and pen again and start brainstorming these questions. Your USP is critical to your success, and you'll be weaving it throughout your copy.

Have you loaded your arsenal with all of your information? Did you answer all of the questions posed thus far (did you actually write down the answers?)? If so, you are ready to get to the tough stuff.

This is the classic copywriter's layout. Everything you write will consist of just about every one of these elements. As you work through each section write down samples for your own product/service for practice. I'll take a lot of practice before you have just the right copy, but the practice will pay off.

Here we go:

### **Headline**

Some of the most important copy you'll write is your headline. It draws the prospect into your copy. Say something meaningful to your prospect – something that appeals to his/her core beliefs, feelings, desires.

Here are the tips for writing headlines:

- ?? Promise advantage or benefit, the satisfaction of one of the prospect's desires or needs
- ?? Make a promise to help avoid inconvenience, pain, lack of something or problem
- ?? Arouse curiosity
- ?? Announce some important news

## **Lead**

This is where you hook your prospect and keep his/her interest strong. You have to show him/her what he/she will gain if he/she continues to read your copy.

Here are a few lead techniques:

- ?? Paint a picture in your prospect's mind
- ?? Debunk a common myth
- ?? Spout off facts and figures

## **The Body**

Here's where the hard sell comes in. Your plan here should be to:

- ?? Make a case for your product/service
- ?? Draw out the benefits – the more benefits you include, the better
- ?? Prove your product or service can do everything you said it would
- ?? Introduce fresh, new ideas

Ask yourself – how can I improve my prospect's life? Now think about the evidence you need to persuade your prospect. You can reference a specific study, facts and figures, or testimonial from a professional.

In order for your body copy to be effective, you must establish credibility with your prospect. If he/she doesn't believe or trust you, he/she won't buy. Here are some methods for establishing credibility:

- ?? Use articles
- ?? Use testimonials
- ?? Use independent data
- ?? Cite degrees, published works, or credentials of people you quote extensively

*Helpful tip – you must back up what you say with independent and reliable information*

Body copy typically follows these guidelines:

1. Qualify your readers
2. Make a promise
3. Reinforce the promise
4. Arouse the reader's curiosity
5. Make your promise credible

Seasoned copywriters use many different techniques in their copy. Here are a few examples:

- ?? Tell a story
- ?? Ask a question – why do you think this is so? If you could XXXXX would you be interested?
- ?? Break important news
- ?? Get rid of prospect's bad memories – describe an unpleasant situation and discuss the solution
- ?? Sum it all up – use bullets, separate your points
- ?? Use testimonials – these lend credibility and combat skepticism

The basic copy flow will look like this:

- ?? Advantages
- ?? Curiosity
- ?? Unity
- ?? Assurance
- ?? The offer
- ?? Conclusion
- ?? Hurry
- ?? Enthusiasm
- ?? After sales service

### **Close**

This is your last chance to solidify the buying decision in your prospect's mind. Here are some strategies for accomplishing this:

- ?? Before you reveal price, remind the prospect about the benefits and throw in an additional benefit(s)
- ?? Make an offer – in clear terms that states the actual price
- ?? After revealing the price, show the prospect that he/she has nothing to lose by buying because of your guarantee
- ?? Finish with a strong P.S. that introduces a surprise benefit, convey urgency, and offer special bonus

### **The Order Device**

In direct mail it's an order form, on a Web site, it's the order page – regardless, the copy here must turn the prospect into a buyer. Here are some tips for the copy:

- ?? Must reinforce buying decision
- ?? Must restimulate initial desires
- ?? Must eliminate any kind of buyer's remorse

How do you accomplish this? Be sure to restate the benefits, the money-back guarantee, and the special bonus.

*Helpful tips for your Web site: Feel customer's needs, make navigation clear, load fast, KISS (keep is seriously simple), write actively and clearly, ask for the order*

There you have it – the basics of copywriting in a nutshell. At ease, troops! You now possess all of the basic knowledge of any copywriter out there. That wasn't so bad, now was it?

If you'd like more in-depth information about copywriting and more tips on how to refine your sales and marketing copy, visit <http://www.compellingcopy.com>. We offer a vast array of articles from the top professionals in the business. We also offer coaching and e-courses so that you can learn step-by-step with the guidance of a professional.

Keep practicing what you've learned here and you'll start churning out compelling copy yourself!

Wishing you boundless success and abundance,  
Your friends at CompellingCopy.com