

Getting it Write

How to write a good communicative piece of copy

Creating a communication to sell your products or services, whether on-line or off-line, has to have the same qualities as a face to face sale. You remember those far off days when you learned how to “funnel” the prospect into a situation where the handshake was an inevitability? No? Well let me refresh...

Research; prepare; present; sell the sizzle; deal with objections; close. Simple isn't it? No. I quite agree – it wasn't simple then, it isn't simple now (it never will be). But let's break it down.

You have to know what is special about the product (read product / service henceforth). Who knows what this is better than the company that creates it? Research – talk to the people who make it. Talk to the people who use it. Get testimonials from people who love it. Research.

Preparation. Take all the research and get all your thoughts down on paper. Everything. In any order. Any old how. The more you can get down, the more you have to work with.

Present - It's different in text. You can't size up the situation, or get pointers from the prospect (body language etc), so you have to find a way of capturing the ATTENTION of as many people who read your missive as possible. This means the headline. Work on it. It's important. If you don't grab their attention with the headline, you've wasted all the effort and expense thereafter. It's that important. Next – the sub heading – hold their ATTENTION. If you don't, guess what – you've wasted all your effort thereafter. Next – 1st paragraph – keep their ATTENTION. If you don't, yeah okay, you're getting the picture.

Sell the sizzle. Features and benefits. Show them what you've got, sure. But tell them how it's going to make their life better / easier / longer / sunnier. Lead them gently down the funnel – remember?

Dealing with objections is an impossibility – alright, of course I agree. You'll never hear the objections, how can you deal with them? It's a hard one. What you have to do is empathise. Read through what you've presented, and put yourself in the position of the prospect. What don't you find plausible – what's not ringing your bell after you've read all the way down the page? Get a friend to read it through – what would hold them back. In short, pre-empt objections.

This leads us to the close. If you have done a brilliant job, held their ATTENTION, and they've read all the way through, don't hold back on asking for the business – IT'S YOURS.

It's not easy, I know. But if you want to get it right, get someone in who can manipulate words to your advantage. Copywriting is an important part of any Direct Mail arsenal.