
Copywriting Pro Tip Quick Reference

Digital Asset for:

STARTING A BUSINESS

QuickStart Guide



THE *Simplified* BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO
LAUNCHING A SUCCESSFUL SMALL BUSINESS,
TURNING YOUR VISION INTO REALITY,
AND ACHIEVING YOUR ENTREPRENEURIAL DREAM

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DIGITAL MARKETING

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THE *Simplified* BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO
DEVELOPING A SCALABLE ONLINE STRATEGY,
FINDING YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND
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COPYWRITING PRO TIP QUICK REFERENCE



TIP #1 – COPYWRITING IS MORE SCIENCE THAN ART.

New copywriters are often discouraged when they produce copy that doesn't shoot conversions through the roof. That's okay, but remember this: although copywriting is often seen as more of an art than a science, the harsh truth is that a lot of copywriting (and marketing in general) has more in common with the scientific method than with art. Copywriting is a lot of testing, learning, implementing, and testing again. Don't be discouraged by initially disappointing results.



TIP #2 – SEE WHAT THE COMPETITION IS SAYING.

The best source of copy examples and inspiration can be found with your competition. Of course, you want to set yourself apart from your competitors, but think about it: your competitors are selling a product or service similar to yours to an audience similar to yours. That's a great place to look for inspiration.



TIP #3 – BENEFITS MAKE SALES, FEATURES MAKE FAILS.

Focus on benefits, not features. Benefits make a positive impact in the lives of your customers or solve a problem they have. People have a hard time relating to features, but they can relate very well to having their problems solved.



TIP #4 – WRITE IN THE ACTIVE VOICE.

The word "by" is a passive writing red flag. It is the word that transfers action away from the subject of your sentence. Scan your copy for the word "by." There are, of course, many good reasons to use the word "by," but check to make sure there aren't any bad ones hiding out in your copy and robbing your subjects of action.



TIP #5 – TELL A STORY.

When using storytelling elements in copywriting, don't pick just any story and don't use just any words. Stories that use metaphors, suspense, humor, or irony build stronger connections and produce copy that is compelling.



TIP #6 – THINK ABOUT THE TEMPERATURE OF YOUR AUDIENCE.

Consider the temperature of your traffic when selecting the words you use to communicate with them. If the traffic is cold, don't use technical terms regarding product specs. Your audience will immediately identify that your copy (and your offer) is not for them. When communicating with a hot audience, don't dumb things down. Be specific and address their level of familiarity with your solution.



TIP #7 – EVEN FREE OFFERS SHOULD PROVIDE YOU WITH VALUE.

Remember, free only means that there is no charge in dollars and cents. It does not mean that there are no strings attached. It is totally ethical to advertise that you are offering someone a free guide, then request their email address in exchange. In fact, this premise is at the core of modern content and inbound marketing techniques.



TIP #8 – PEOPLE BUY SOLUTIONS, NOT PRODUCTS.

People buy solutions to their problems. This is why copywriting focuses on benefits, not features. Features don't solve problems, and they don't impact the lives of your customers. That's what benefits do.



TIP #9 – MAKE IT PERSONAL.

It can be tempting to write copy that speaks to every single pain point your audience may have. The more pain points addressed, the more people you connect with, the more conversions, right? Wrong. Your reader will lose interest and identify with the ways that the copy speaks to the problems others face instead of the way it speaks to their own problems. Attempting to address too many pain points dilutes the persuasive power of your copy and prevents you from making the connections that convert.



TIP #10 – AVOID INVITING OBJECTION.

Don't give your readers a reason to object. Instead of asking "Why not call today?" use a more decisive alternative such as "Give us a call today." Better yet, make your call to action ultra-specific: "Give us a call and book your free consultation today!"



TIP #11 – KEEP YOUR PROMISES.

When examining your calls to action, don't forget to double-check and see if you are actually delivering the thing you said you would. If your reader clicks a button that says "Click here for your free report," then is charged a fee when they get to the final page, that is only going to turn them away from your brand.



TIP #12 – FOCUS ON THE CTA.

The more specific and clear your call to action is, the better it will convert. You want your reader's journey through your copy to be seamless and frictionless. Ambiguous calls to action put up roadblocks and don't help your audience move on to the next step.



TIP #13 – BE SELECTIVE.

Less is more when it comes to focusing on benefits. Select one or two benefits that are pertinent to your audience and relate to their pain points; revolve your copy around those points. It may seem appealing to try to write for as many people as possible, but the reality is that targeted, audience-specific copy will show higher conversions.



TIP #14 – DON'T BE AFRAID TO SWIPE.

The topic of swipe files is a divisive issue among marketers. A swipe file is a collection of all the successful pieces of copy that one brand or copywriter has used. On one side of the coin are the marketers who say, "Yes, definitely use whatever swipe files you can get hold of, there is no reason to reinvent the wheel." On the other side of the coin are those who say, "Don't use someone else's swipe file; they were writing about their product/service and you are better off exploring your own product/service than relying on someone else's." Both parties have points, but regardless of which path you take, be sure to create your own swipe file. Take notes, look at your competitors, and constantly be on the lookout for ways to improve your copy.

THE TOP 5 POWER WORDS TO USE IN YOUR COPY

We all know there is power in words. There are a number of industry resources for copywriters that rank the effectiveness of different words when it comes to strengthening your messaging and increasing its ability to convert. Let's look at the top 5 power words you can use to boost the effectiveness of your copy.

YOU

Let's face it, we're all a little narcissistic sometimes. A healthy dose of self-interest is what gets us through life, and copy that speaks to this primal urge will be better positioned to make stronger connections. As a bonus, focusing on "you" as the subject naturally helps you write in the active voice.

FREE

It's no surprise that everyone's favorite word makes it into the list of the top five power words. People love free, and while there is a limit, the more you can use the word "free" (and deliver what you promise) the more interested your readers will be in what you have to offer.

BECAUSE

It's a little surprising that this word makes the top five. The psychology behind the effectiveness of the word "because" is well outside the scope of this guide but think of it this way: "because" reinforces the original statement or request. It is a "how" and a "why" instead of just a "how."

INSTANTLY

This is the twenty-first century. We have high expectations for instant gratification. The more your copy (and your offer) can deliver on this desire, the higher your conversions will be.

NEW

There is a certain excitement that surrounds things that are new. Use this power word with caution, however—things that are new are not only novel, but they are untested and unproven. Don't use the newness of a product or service as a crutch to prop up your copy. Make sure that your benefits are clearly presented and that your messaging matches the pain points of your audience. This will have a much bigger impact than the novelty of your product or service.