Copywriting

Tell your story

EverythingDigital

Copywriting Fundamentals

There are several types of copywriting, all focusing on a different result but all copywriting hopes to have a reader respond with some kind of action.

- Website
- Landing pages
- Sales pages
- Sales letters
- Product pages
- Brochures
- Flyers
- Content writing

Within all of these different items, we have two different types of copies. Sales copy and Content copy.

Sales copy is focused on the features/benefits of a product or service and has a strong call to action.

Content copy on the other hand focuses on educating your reader and typically has no sales copy. Content copy happens on your home page, about, service, and blog page.

"The more your copy sounds like a real conversation, the more engaging it will be." -David Garfinkel

Emotional

In 2016 when I incorporated my branding & design business, my tagline was 'we build emotional connections. It is still true to this day, and now any/all marketing people are talking about 'emotion.' It has always been about emotion.

We do business with people we like, we do business with people we 'think we know, even if that is from their Twitter profile or their Facebook page.

Emotion and empathy are some of the most underrated business skills. They aren't measurable and can't necessarily be taught, but they are critical.

By empathizing with customers or clients, you understand their needs and why they need your product or service. It allows you to understand the emotions they're feeling and allows you to listen to them.

The purchasing process is emotional (if not 90–100%), and sales copy needs to include emotional statements, questions, and stories. Having empathy for others will translate into a copy that resonates with them; make that connection successfully, and you have a customer for life.

Put yourself in the customer's shoes and brainstorm about what they are thinking, feeling, and experiencing.

Storytelling

Humans love stories. Stories resonate with us on a deep level because they are emotional and they make the interaction personal. Our audience can relate, particularly if you are speaking to your demographics. This is just one of the reasons why sharing reviews and real testimonials are so helpful. When people are writing reviews, they are using expressions, they are using emotion (often without even knowing it). Customers get to see another person just like them explain their struggles, which they’re facing too, and how a product solved them.

Ask a question about the customer's experience

You want the customer to say "Yes" as much as possible because it will make them more likely to say "Yes" to the sale later. This is why it can effectively ask relevant questions throughout content and sales copy. Since the reader can relate to the questions being asked, it keeps their attention on the page for longer.

Write as you speak

While it might be tempting to use technical jargon and a fancy vocabulary, it's best if you don't. Think about it. A small group of individuals will understand advanced terminology and words, leaving out a huge crowd of readers that don't. However, if you use a casual and simple vocab, suddenly reaches everyone.

Copy is also supposed to flow easily, which large and complex words prevent by slowing down the reading process.

Create a sense of urgency

Let's imagine two scenarios. First, there is an abundance of product inventory, sales, and special offers for customers to take advantage of. In the second, these same items are only available for a limited time. What does this create? Urgency.

Customers feel like must take action right now, or they'll miss out. Take advantage of this primitive behavior by creating offers, discounts, and promotions within a limited time.

Use power phrases like:

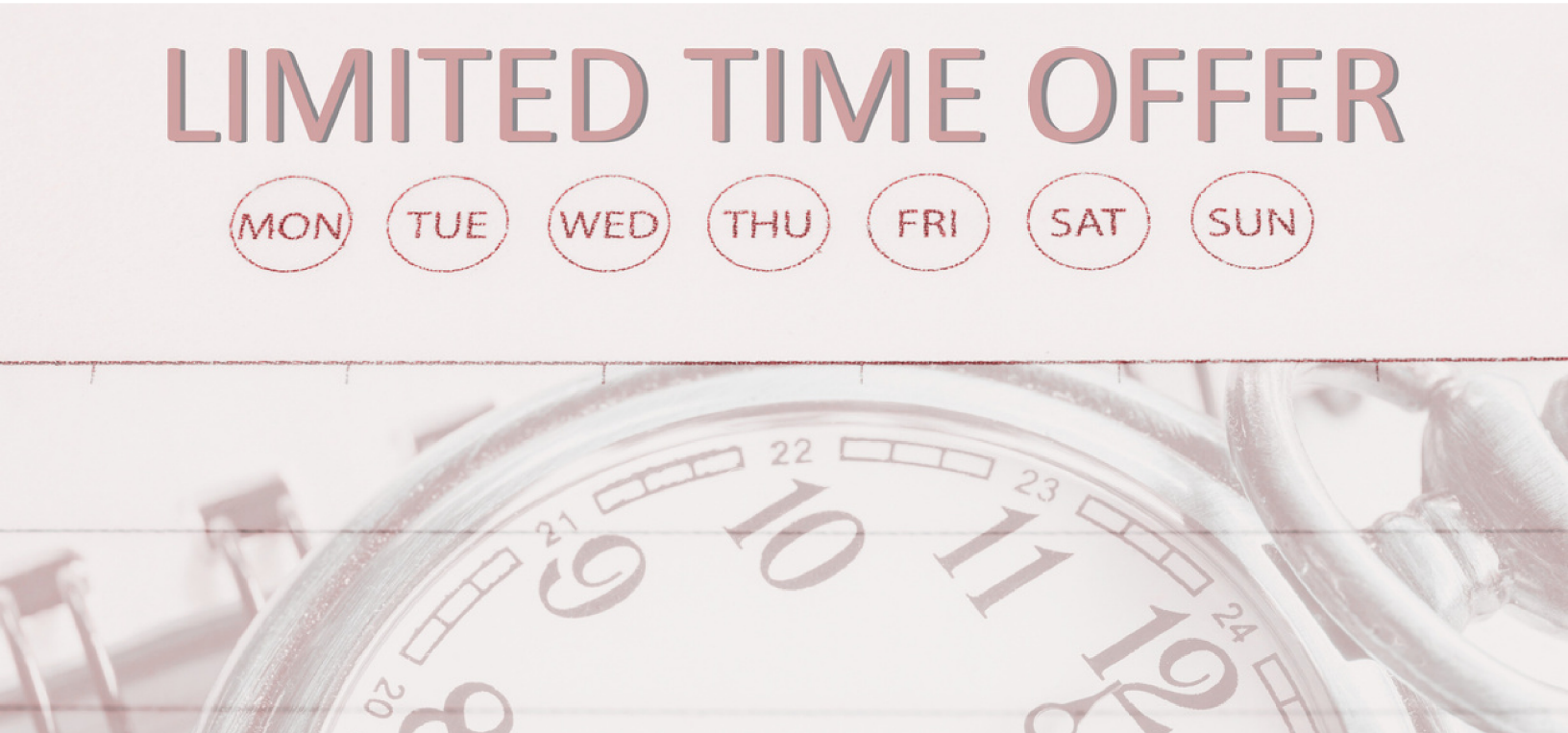
- Buy now before it's too late
- Limited inventory
- While supply lasts
- Selling quickly
- Reduced price
- On Clearance
- Last call
- Ends soon

7. Calls to action

A call to action is one of the simplest strategies on earth. It's what it sounds like: a call to take a particular action. And no, consumers aren't so lazy that you must point them in the right direction. You're simply helping them think less. The fewer questions, comments, and concerns they have, the faster they get to the sale. A call to action is a phrase that tells the customer exactly what to do next.

Here are some calls to action you can try for yourself:

- Buy now
- Shop now
- Add to cart
- Don't wait
- Order today
- Call now
- Call this number
- Enter your email
- Click here
- Get yours today
- Claim coupon
- Claim discount
- Save money
- View catalog



Pain + agitate + solve formula

This is one of the number one formula used in copywriting. It works in blog posts, sales letters, and longer brochure material as well as on your website.

Use a pain point that your product or service can solve, agitate it and show empathy about the issue, use emotion and present the solution. That solution can be your content, a digital product, a service, or anything you want.

Let’s imagine we’re selling tax services, boring right? But it's a pain point for many who don't know how to do their taxes. We would begin by mentioning the pain point of not knowing how to complete their taxes. That would suck, right? Well, we wouldn’t stop there. We’d agitate this by explaining that the customer is potentially losing money or worse, costing themselves money. The cherry on top would be positioning our financial services as the solution to their problem. See how simple that is?

This formula can be completed within a few sentences or spanned across thousands of words in a sales letter. It’s up to you to use it accordingly.

Scarcity

Scarcity creates fear of missing out on Limited inventory. Offers only lasting a certain time. The product is being discontinued. What do all of these have in common? Scarcity. Nobody wants to miss out on a good deal. Similar to urgency, creating scarcity with your copywriting forces customers to make a decision now. If they wait, they will miss out on a great deal and who wants to do that? You can create a sense of scarcity by emphasizing the window of time someone needs to take action to complete an offer.

Nike intentionally produces several lilimited edition sneakers and ‘hypebeast’ brand collaborations a year and they are fetching a fortune

Take advantage of power words

Every word has emotion and an image attached to it.

If I say the word “Zen,” what comes to mind?

How about the word “seductive?”

Most likely you thought of yoga for the first and a woman for the second.

These "power' words grab attention; they command an emotion, and these are single words and phrases that get a response. Use power words headlines as that’s where attention matters the most and sprinkle power words through your copy to keep people engaged.

Logical order of points

Make sure your copy is easy to follow and consistent. If you are writing copy for products or services, keep all copies in the same format, it makes it easier to read and allows for a better overall experience for the reader.

1. Introduction
2. Product features and benefits
3. Pricing
4. Testimonials
5. Call to action
6. Conclusion

Images are salespeople

The importance of images cannot be underestimated. They convey an emotion, a feeling, and are the foundation of your story. Be very careful when choosing images; they want to fit your brand (check out our Build your brand guide & workbook to learn how to build your brand and define your tone of message (and images!).

If you can afford to take professional photos, do it! If you can't, use quality stock photos from sources like www.pexels.com.

David Ogilvy

David Mackenzie Ogilvy CBE was a British advertising tycoon, founder of Ogilvy & Mather, and known as the "Father of Advertising." Trained at the Gallup research organization, he attributed the success of his campaigns to meticulous research into consumer habits.

Wikipedia

One of the most legendary advertisement's ever written is the one David Ogilvy produced for Hathaway's dress shirts. It featured the iconic man with an eye badge that caught everybody's attention off guard. It was both creative and sales-forward.

More importantly, the copy is perfect.

Notice how David speaks about how a Hathaway shirt won't clash with a tie, be too overwhelming, and looks crisp at all times.

He also mentions Hathaway's new blend of material that you can't get anywhere else which stays fresh for up to 24 hours.

NOTE THE CAREFUL PATTERN MATCHING ACROSS THE FRONT OF OUR HERO'S SHIRT. IN A VARIETY OF STRIPES. $8.95

Hathaway presents a mercifully restrained new stripe

—woven from Dacron® and cotton in the cause of good taste

HATHAWAY is adamant. Striped shirts should look crisp, stay neat, and exude an air of *quiet* individuality.

Hence the introduction of the shirt you see above. *These* stripes will never clash with your tie or leap off the shirt at you. They are far too discreet.

The secret of their subtlety is in the weaving. Every strand of color is cross-woven with a strand of white. Which explains the stripes' quiet understatement. *Mercifully* restrained.

But how to keep the stripes looking crisp and neat? Hathaway solves the problem by using a canny new blend of Dacron® polyester and cotton called *Hathawaveave*.

A shirt of this ingenious stuff stays fresh and unwilted for 24 hours. It also shrugs off dirt. Never puckers or wilts along the seams. Drip-dries overnight without a trace of wrinkling. And rarely needs the attention of an iron—a boon when traveling.

For a free *Dictionary of Shirts and Shirtings*, and store names, write C. F. Hathaway, Dept. 00, Waterville, Maine. Or in New York, call OXford 7-5566.

®DuPont registered trademark

"Never wear a white shirt before sundown!" says Hathaway.

David Ogilvy and Rolls Royce

"At 60 miles an hour, the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock." He uses emotionally connected words like "magic" and confident building phrases like "attention to detail" and that is all tightly woven into one small paragraph.

That paragraph summed up the luxury and comfort a Rolls Royce car delivers. It also stood out from the other vehicles being sold in 1959 which were notoriously noisy.

The perfection of a simple headline and why a few simple words can engage your customer to keep reading.

The Rolls-Royce Silver Cloud—$11,995

"At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock"

What makes Rolls-Royce the best car in the world? "There is really no magic about it—it is merely patient attention to detail," says an eminent Rolls-Royce engineer.

1. "At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise comes from the electric clock," reports the Technical Editor of THE MOTOR. Three mufflers tune out sound frequencies—acoustically.

2. Every Rolls-Royce engine is run for seven hours at full throttle before installation, and each car is test-driven for hundreds of miles over varying road surfaces.

3. The Rolls-Royce is designed as an *owner-driven* car. It is eighteen inches shorter than the largest domestic cars.

4. The car has power steering, power brakes and automatic gear-shift. It is very easy to drive and to park. No chauffeur required.

5. The finished car spends a week in the final test-shop, being fine-tuned. Here it is subjected to 98 separate ordeals. For example, the engineers use a stethoscope to listen for axle-whine.

6. The Rolls-Royce is guaranteed for *three years*. With a new network of dealers and parts-depots from Coast to Coast, service is no problem.

7. The Rolls-Royce radiator has never changed, except that when Sir Henry Royce died in 1933 the monogram RR was changed from red to black.

8. The coachwork is given five coats of primer paint, and hand rubbed between each coat, before *nine* coats of finishing paint go on.

9. By moving a switch on the steering column, you can adjust the shock-absorbers to suit road conditions.

10. A picnic table, veneered in French walnut, slides out from under the dash. Two more swing out behind the front seats.

11. You can get such optional extras as an Espresso coffee-making machine, a dictating machine, a bed, hot and cold water for washing, an electric razor or a telephone.

12. There are three separate systems of power brakes, two hydraulic and one mechanical. Damage to one system will not affect the others. The Rolls-Royce is a very *safe* car—and also a very *lively* car. It cruises serenely at eighty-five. Top speed is in excess of 100 m.p.h.

13. The Bentley is made by Rolls-Royce. Except for the radiators, they are identical motor cars, manufactured by the same engineers in the same works. People who feel diffident about driving a Rolls-Royce can buy a Bentley.

PRICE. The Rolls-Royce illustrated in this advertisement—f.o.b. principal ports of entry—costs **$13,995.**

If you would like the rewarding experience of driving a Rolls-Royce or Bentley, write or telephone to one of the dealers listed on the opposite page.

Rolls-Royce Inc., 10 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20, N. Y., CIrcle 5-1144.

March 1959

Albert Lasker's Sunkist campaign

There was a time when Sunkist produced more oranges than they could see. They had to start cutting down orange trees to reduce their production.

They hired a copywriter by the name of Albert Lasker, and he began working with Sunkist and came up with the idea of orange juice, which wasn't known back then (really.... Can you imagine a time when there wasn't orange juice!).

The two produced and patented an orange juice extractor that was sold for ten cents each. It was advertised under the "Drink an Orange" campaign, and Americans went wild for this new beverage.

This campaign helped Sunkist sell more oranges and no longer have to scale back operations.

Starting your copywriting process

1

Research competitors' products/services and their reviews.

You need to understand your competition and researching them can give you insight into your customers. What do they like? What don't they like? Start with competitors you respect and dig into their reviews online.

Now build out your preferred audience.

What does your audience look like?

Who are they? Create a buyer persona with the data you collect. It should include their demographics, pain points, questions, values, feelings, and any other important trait that can be connected to the copy you write.

Why do they need the product? Determine what problems they are facing which made them seek the product. Remember: understanding your customer will give them genuine empathy and emotion will follow when writing your copy.

What questions do they have? What questions would they ask about the product or service? This usually entails pricing, turnaround time, shipping, refunds, etc.

What objections would they have? Customers will typically have objections about the product, especially when it sounds too good to be true. Think about these before you write copy because you can be proactive with good copy.

Key ideas in bullet points

2

Taking everything into consideration that we covered in fundamentals, you will have a pile of information and ideas now that we need to make sense of them. Trust me summarizing your ideas in bullets will allow you to refine and prioritize the copy.

It will help you visualize the flow of your copy. Secondly, bullets organize different points and sections of the copy. You can map out the project's headers first and place bullets under them. When you begin writing that section, you will have plenty of inspiration planned ahead of time.

Your header, major point, and bullet points are organized beforehand. This prevents writer's block because you already know what to write about as soon as you move on to the next section!

I recommend writing the first draft as fast as possible. I know you might think that quality will suffer, but the opposite is true. When you write slowly and analyze everything you're typing, it uses the non-creative side of the brain. You might spend too much time worrying about grammar, flow, logic, etc.
This slows down the writing process.

On the flip side, when you write very quickly your brain uses the left hemisphere which is responsible for emotion and creativity.

You will be revising and editing later, so you don't need to be a perfectionist.

Clean it up!

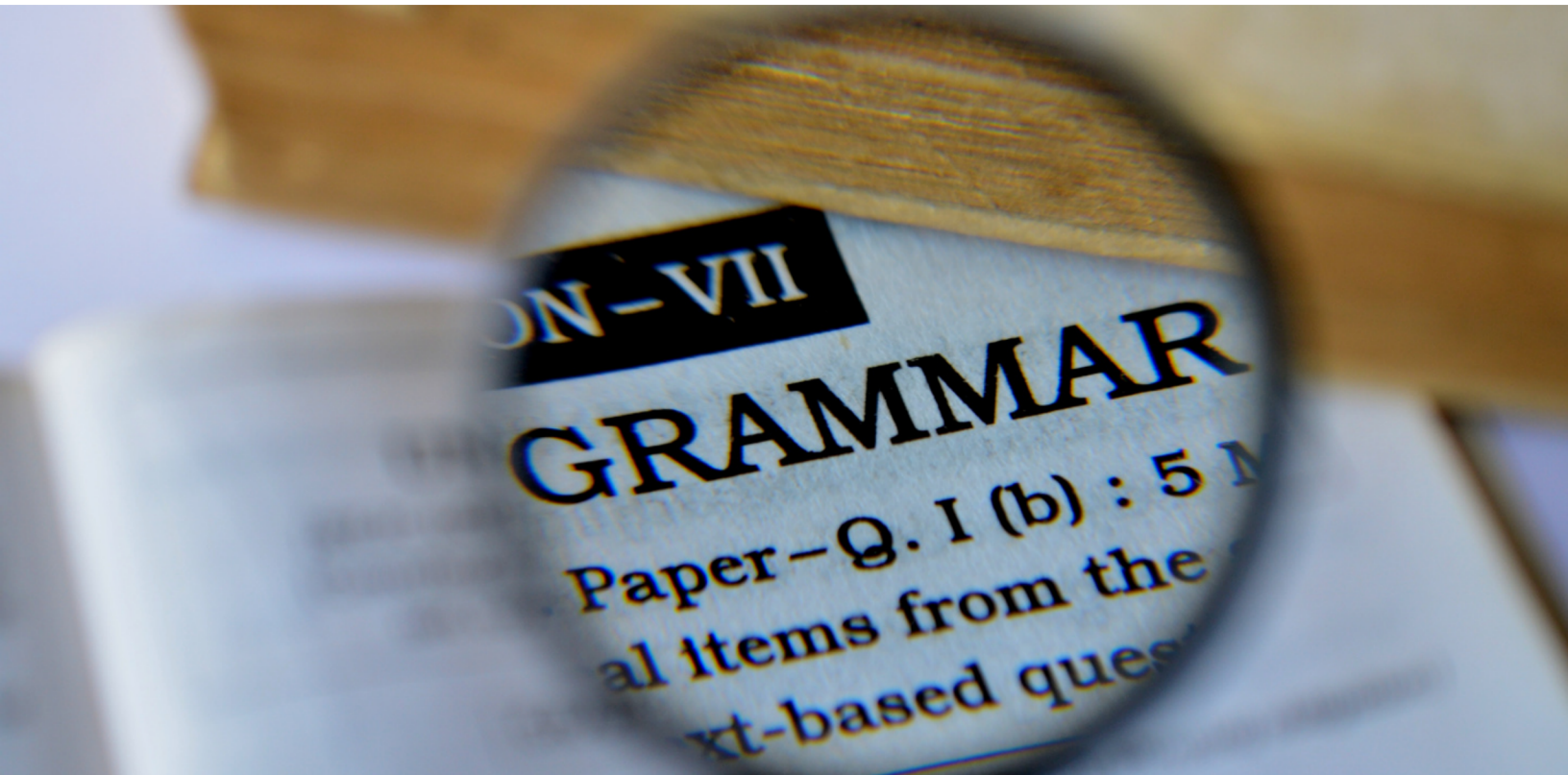
3

Writing the first draft as quickly as possible is very rewarding.

You get to see a semi-finished product which should motivate you to carry on!

Re-read the first draft and fix:

- Grammar and spelling mistakes.
- The logical sequence of points and sections if it makes sense to rearrange them.
- Any unnecessary words or sentences that fluff up the copy.
- Copy that doesn't ultimately help the goal of the project such as generating sales or leads.
- Proper sourcing of images and data.
- Formatting and structure (headers, lists, etc.)



EverythingDigital

WE CREATE EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS.

everythingdigital.ca