

## **Copywriting Basics:**

**11 Tips, Tricks & Rules of Thumb to make  
your copy more engaging, easier to read,  
& more likely to get your reader to take action!**

### **The Challenge:**

- **Your readers scan. Period.**
- People read very differently online than they do printed material, like a newspaper, novel or brochure.
- Online, people are moving *quickly*.
- They think you have what they need... So they're looking for it... When they find it, they stop and read. If they don't find it, they go away.
- And, even if they do stick around, they're still going to start skimming and scanning at some point.
- It doesn't mean you're a bad writer if your reader starts skimming. The best copywriters in the world know their reader is going to skim, and that it's their job to keep bringing the reader back. (And that's WHY they're the best copywriters in the world.)

### **The Solution:**

- Format your copy so it...
  - A. makes it EASY for your readers to find what they're looking for
- And
  - B. re-catches their attention when they start skimming

## **11 Copywriting Tricks, Techniques & Rules of Thumb:**

### **1. Break up your paragraphs.**

In fact, in copywriting “paragraphs” aren’t really a thing. They’re called “chunks.” As in, chunks of text.

Each chunk or paragraph should be no more than 3-4 lines long.

And don’t be afraid to use single-sentence paragraphs (like this one and the one above.)

## **2. AVOID ALL CAPS... NO, REALLY. (okay, except for in special cases.)**

WE’VE ALL HEARD THAT ALL CAPS LOOKS LIKE YOU’RE SCREAMING...

BUT HERE’S ANOTHER REASON TO AVOID THEM...

ALL CAPS ARE HARD TO READ BECAUSE EACH LETTER IS EXACTLY THE SAME HEIGHT. IT BLURS TOGETHER. As opposed to letters that have tails (like “g” and “y”) or letters that are taller (like “t” and “f”). Having the different heights makes it easier to read.

## **3. Parentheses are your friend (but you’re probably using them incorrectly in your copy)**

In school, you learned to use parentheses around the bits that aren’t as important as the rest.

In copywriting, parentheses actually CATCH the reader’s eye – so they’re a great place to put the part you want to emphasize. Or to add a silly side comment that adds personality (‘cause we all want personality in our copy, right?).

## **4. Make important phrases look like titles by capitalizing the first letters (e.g. I woke up this morning with a Need For Coffee.)**

Now, You Don't Want To Overuse This Because It Gets Hard To Read, Just Like When You Use All Caps.

But when you want something to stand out or definitely get read, make it seem like it's important by adding capital letters.

**5. Commas? Nah. Use dashes instead – like this.**

And make those dashes long. Not the dinky ones - like this.

(On a Mac, hit “option” + “-” to make it longer.)

If you're not sure how, go ahead and use 2 shorter dashes -- like this. It breaks up the text, making it easier to read.

**6. Use 1, 2 or 3 instead of one, two or three.**

Numerals are easier to read + get our attention.

**7. Use ellipses... even if it's grammatically incorrect...**

It gives the eye a break – especially if you've got a long sentence

It makes the copy read more like you're talking – because we all use pauses while we talk

It catches your reader's eye & makes her keep reading

**8. Use large font.**

Even if you're afraid of making your page or article look too long. If it's too small, it's harder to read – so I'm less likely to read all of it.

**9. Use periods. Seriously. Break up those long sentences. Because you really don't. need. them.**

Long sentences are hard to read on a computer screen.

So break 'em up.

(Even if it would make your high school English teacher faint. Copy is about being conversational, not grammatically perfect.)

## **12. Don't center everything. (Seriously.)**

You can center copy that...

- is a title, header, or subheader
- is a super important line of copy, and you want it to stand out more than the subheaders that are all left-aligned

### **BUT...**

Don't overdo it with centering. It's hard to read because readers' eyes are used to going back to the left hand side of the page each time they finish a line.

If they're looking at an entire paragraph that's centered, and each line is a different length, it's hard for the eye to keep track of where it is.

Your eyeball wants to jump back to an "anchor point" on the left side of the page,

but it's hard to do that when your centered lines of text don't extend all the way to the left side of the page.

## **11. Use bullet lists to break up long pages of text, or to make examples, features, and benefits stand out.**

Break a long sentence with 3-4 parts into smaller, easier-to-read chunks.

**For example:**

*When decorating your room, it's important to use various textures, create a focal point, consider displaying your collectibles, vary the scale, and pay attention to lighting.*

Versus:

When decorating your room, it's important to...

- use various textures
- create a focal point
- consider displaying your collectibles
- vary the scale
- pay attention to lighting

### **"Fascination" Bullet Points**

Fascination bullet points are considered an "advanced" type of bullet point.

The fascination bullet teases you without giving everything away. It fascinates you until you HAVE to know the rest – even if that means buying the product.

### **How to write a fascination bullet point:**

Mention a compelling benefit... without revealing how to GET the benefit.

Ramp it up by mentioning an undesirable result they'll get if they DON'T learn the rest.

Handle an objection they might have by tacking on an "even if" phrase.

### **Examples:**

- On page 33, you discover a six-second motion with your mouth that instantly relaxes the over tense muscles of your chest, heart, and solar plexus – and drains hypertension out of your body like water running from a sieve

- The #1 "big mistake" people make on their blogs that absolutely *kills* their sales. Page 239
- **The secrets to approaching VIPs at live events** – what to say and do, so they don't just dismiss you along with the rest of the crowd trying to get their attention.
- The psychology of busy, influential people – **what you need to know BEFORE you reach out to them**
- **The secrets to crafting attention-getting subject lines** – because you can write the best story in the world... but it doesn't matter if no one OPENS your email in the first place.
- How to get decision makers **to pay attention + take you seriously** – even if you have no experience working in corporate yourself!
- **The most IMPORTANT thing to do after you name your price.** (If you don't do this, it could easily cost you thousands of dollars.)