

## Writing for Effective Marketing

One of the central vehicles for communicating is the written word. Used properly it can do much more than convey a message – it can create an environment. Good marketing copy can reinforce need, explain purpose, and generate desire to such a way that a “nice to have” becomes a “must to have”.

What was that saying about the word being more powerful than the sword?

Putting together compelling, convincing marketing copy is a skill that can be honed. The process itself is comprised of 4 primary phases. They are:

### Phase 1: Draw Attention

You know the importance of a good headline. It takes a nano-second for people to decide if they are going to read your piece. It does not matter if it is a brochure or a press release, if you do not draw them in with your first sentence, you may never get them to read your second. The headline sets the stage, draws the reader in, and creates the expectation for what the reader will discover inside.

### Phase 2: Create an Interest

The next level of copy needs to create the interest of the reader and is executed through the establishment of a relationship. In this section you demonstrate an understanding of the challenges they face and the importance of finding an appropriate remedy. By doing this you establish your credibility by showing that you understand. You also create a relationship because you have shared with the reader a vulnerability. At the end of this phase you can hint that you may have the solution to the problem, This will draw the reader further into the piece.

### Phase 3: Explain Your Solution

During this phase you build upon the commonality of experience you shared with the reader in phase 2 and you explain how your solution solves the problem you already demonstrated you understand so well. You emphasize not only how the problem is resolved, but also the benefits of having the problem eliminated. This is the time to discuss functionality, added value benefits, and the enabling factors of your product. Your goal is show that your product goes beyond resolving their challenges and actually empowers them to conquer old demons and new heights.

### Phase 4: Close the Deal

Good copy contains a battle cry...a call to action. If you leave your reader without an understanding of what to do next, you will have been nothing more than an interesting, but ultimately unsatisfying read. You close the deal by driving the readers to react to your piece, either by embedding an incentive or reminding them of the consequences of their inaction. Either through stick or carrot, you need to get them to understand that they must react to your piece in order to gain the benefits you have detailed and the solution you have outlined (to the problem you demonstrated you understand).

There are a number of additional things you need to keep in mind while constructing your marketing copy. These include:

1. Provide All Necessary Information – Make sure you include all relevant specs, your contact information, and any other information that the reader might find necessary in order to make the decision to respond to your appeal.
2. Be Truthful – Too often marketing pieces are used to mislead or create confusion under the assumption that drawing traffic to your company will somehow create opportunity. This notion is based on the idea that half-truths can be used to get potential customers to inquire further and that as long as their level of interest has been raised sufficiently, they will tolerate certain inaccuracies. This is beyond absurd. It is false, and it is bad business. If you drive someone to interest based on false, exaggerated, or vague promises, they will abandon their interest for fear that your tactics demonstrate either an ethical shallowness or a weak product (thus the need for deception).
3. Be Creative – The battle for attention is becoming more and more fierce and the only way you can gain some attention is through creativity. You need to be relevant and you need to be engaging. You need to attract attention and hold that attention. Your best bet is through some creative element, be it graphic, thematic, or a combination of both.
4. Be Careful of Errors – Errors in your marketing materials erodes your credibility as people are likely to see your carelessness as an indication of an apathy that could extend to the service you provide or the reliability of your product. You must have everything you create proofread and reviewed.

Writing is central to a good marketing effort. Content, structure and presentation should all combine to create a piece that engages, informs, and, ultimately, convinces.