

A Professional Copywriter Can Help You Avoid These Seven

Common Marketing Pitfalls

By Heather Robson

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Heather Robson
heather@dfcreative.com

DragonFly Creative Media <http://www.dfcreative.com>

Small business owners often make the mistake of believing that they can get by writing their own copy for their marketing materials. Even big corporations sometimes fall into this trap believing they can be just as effective handling copy development in house.

While it's true that you can produce passable copy this way, you often are missing out on better results—results that a copywriting professional can bring to your marketing efforts. And settling for lesser results means your business isn't doing as well as it could, and its marketing materials are not providing the return on investment that they should.

The main concern that business owners and marketing directors alike have about hiring a professional copywriter is cost. They fear that the cost will be prohibitive. But in most cases the copywriter's fees are minimal compared to the overall cost of the marketing campaign. And good copy can improve the success of the campaign by up to 34%.

The reason a professional copywriter can make such a difference to a marketing campaign is not only that they know how to write persuasively...they also know what common mistakes to avoid. If you're trying to get by using copy written by somebody whose main focus is not copywriting, your marketing materials could be suffering from one of these common traps.

1. Me-Centered Copy

It's so easy when you're selling a product or service to focus on that product or service. It seems like a no-brainer. But the truth is doing so can kill your response rate. Professional copywriters know to avoid this me-centered mentality and focus on the prospect instead. This shift alone is enough to make a sharp improvement in any marketing campaign.

2. No Call to Action

So many marketing pieces do a great job of getting the prospects attention. They draw them in, convince them of the product or service's merit...and just when the prospect is ready to buy, they drop the ball, and forget to tell the prospect what to do next. A call to action is a simple, but often overlooked, way to build response rate...and it's something that every copywriter worth his (or her) salt will include.

3. Selling Features

This common marketing trap is similar to the Me-Centered copy trap. Instead of figuring out what the prospect wants to know about your product (why they need it, how it will help them), it's so easy to just tell them what you know about the product. A professional copywriter will avoid this trap and focus on a product's benefits, not features.

4. No Testimonials

If your copy doesn't include powerful testimonials, your marketing efforts are missing out on one of their most powerful tools. A professional copywriter will always ask about testimonials. If you don't have them, they'll offer some tips for collecting them.

5. Where's Your Target?

One of the most common copywriting errors is overlooking the target market. In an effort not to exclude anyone, the copy doesn't appeal to the people it's really meant for. If your copy doesn't immediately grab (and hold) the attention of those your product or service is meant for, a professional copywriter can help your response rate.

6. What's Your USP?

Your Unique Selling Proposition. What sets you apart from the competition. And ultimately why someone buys from you. A professional copywriter will want to know what it is or will help you determine it. And they will use it to make your marketing copy stronger.

7. Don't generalize.

A professional copywriter will spend time researching the market and issues of interest related to your product. They'll always be specific with the information they convey, adding intrigue and credibility to your every marketing piece.

These are just some of the most common pitfalls that a professional copywriter can help you avoid. By enlisting the services of a professional, you can improve your marketing efforts through a better response rate and an increased return on investment.

Heather Robson is a founding partner of DragonFly Creative Media (<http://www.dfcreative.com>), a company that helps businesses who are overwhelmed or short-handed move forward with their marketing strategies. She can be reached at <mailto:heather@dfcreative.com>.

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