

Five Secrets of Writing Great Sales Copy

By Vincent Czaplyski

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Why are you reading this sentence?

I'll bet you a steak at Ruth Chris it's because of the implied promise of the title. That promise – that you'll soon be privy to five well guarded secrets of writing great sales copy – just grabbed the skeptic in you by the scruff of the neck. It stood her on her heels and made her think, if only for a split second, that maybe there's some gold here.

So the title – or headline if you prefer to think of it that way – did its job. It got you to read the next sentence by arousing your curiosity. It probably made you feel that you could profit from these secrets. In other words it appealed to your sense of greed. And it might even have touched a couple of your other emotional triggers, like vanity or laziness, (or more positively) pride.

I don't know you well enough to say exactly which emotional hot button it triggered in you, but you're still reading aren't you? So I'll up the ante. A bottle of good wine to go with the steak says some basic emotion was triggered.

All of which leads us to Secret #1: People buy things for emotional, not logical reasons.

And the emotions that count most are whichever ones your copy stirs up in your prospect. Your prospect doesn't care one tiny little bit about you or your product. She could care less if she never heard from you again. What she cares about is that little voice inside her head that keeps asking, "What's in it for me?"

Never forget this. Your copy must keep answering that question until your prospect is completely involved with your message. If your copy starts off telling about your product and not what it can do for your prospect, it is almost certainly doomed to failure.

Secret # 2: Good copy helps the prospect picture your promise in her mind's eye.

It isn't good enough to just make a promise. You need to further involve your prospect by helping her picture herself experiencing your promise. She has to be able to see it, taste it, and feel it. Otherwise the skeptic in her will step right back in and start giving her reasons to disbelieve your promise.

You need to tell her something like this:

"Imagine a hundred of your business peers jumping to their feet in wild applause as you accept your industry's top marketing award. Then the room grows still, the audience hanging on your every word as you begin to tell the story of how five powerful copywriting secrets changed your life..."

Think of the last car commercial you watched. Probably strong on breathtaking mountain roads, beaches at sunset and sexy models – emotional appeals all. Do they have anything to do with cars? No. Do they help sell a lot of cars – you bet they do.

Secret #3: Once she can picture your promise for herself, she's ready for logical proof.

You've got her where you want her. Your words have carried her away to some place in her imagination where your product makes her feel more powerful, sexier, smarter, more beautiful – whatever. She really wants to believe it – all of it. She's letting her mind run a little wild. She's got the top down on the car you want her to buy. She's downshifting into third gear coming around a hairpin turn. Her hair is blowing in the wind, the sun is on her face and a blue ocean sparkles in the background.

But around the next corner is Ms. Skeptic, just waiting to throw cold water on this carefully crafted picture.

It's your job to make sure she never even sees little Ms. Skeptic. You reassure her with testimonials. You tell her salt air won't harm the paint job. You let her know that this car has the best safety record of anything in its class, and she'll never have to worry about breaking down again. In other words, you give her logical reasons to justify her emotional decision.

Secret #4: Your copy should focus on a single primary benefit – your Unique Selling Proposition

Every product should have one special selling point that sets it apart from every other product in its class. It's your job to find out what that Unique Selling Proposition is and never let your prospect forget it. It's OK to mention other benefits, but you should drive home the USP more than any other point.

Recognize these classic USP's? They sold a lot of products...

"We're number two – we try harder." "Your pizza delivered in 30 minutes or less, or it's free."

Secret #5: Always include a specific offer and ask for action.

You're almost there. You've made her a promise that hooked her emotionally. You helped her see herself living that promise. You gave her plenty of proof that she was making the right decision, and you stressed your product's USP throughout your copy.

There's just one thing left to do. You look her in the eyes and state your offer clearly. Then tell her what she must do to get it. In other words, you close the sale.

To summarize:

- Make a PROMISE
- Let your prospect PICTURE the benefits
- Supply the PROOF that you are telling the truth
- Stress the UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION
- CLOSE the sale by making a specific OFFER.

Vincent Czaplyski has the two best jobs in the world – he is a captain for a major U.S. airline and heads his own Internet and Direct Marketing company. Visit him at <http://www.SolidNetGold.com> .

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