

Great Copy Brings Sales

By Bob Osgoodby

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If you have great copy for your ads, you are most likely doing a respectable amount of business on the web. All great copy has certain things in common. First, and foremost it has no spelling or grammatical errors. Nothing turns a prospect off faster than these types of mistakes. In addition to running all your work through a good spelling and grammar checker, having someone else carefully read what you have written is also a good idea.

Use short ads of two or three sentences with meaningful headings. Most people won't read lengthy online ads. In longer ads, such as on a web site, the use of bulleted lists, which gives an overview of key points is effective, and will make the copy more readable.

If you are advertising on a web site, there are other conventions you should follow. If it is an ad, it should also be short, and follow the rules above. If however, someone who has read your ad is coming to your web site for more information, it should not leave the person reading it with questions that are not answered there.

Never, and that is a very long time, use images that take too long to load. If you do, the odds are you have just lost a customer. The text should be easy on the eyes and forget the cute background and text combinations. Dark blue on a black background is simply too difficult to read.

A white background with black text is still the best choice, however dark text on a light background is also acceptable. Using an image for a background is a mistake, and will take away from the effectiveness of your presentation.

All caps, either in an ezine ad or on a web page, should be avoided. They are very difficult to read and most people won't. Also, forget the fancy fonts. Arial and Times Roman are both very legible onscreen and if printed give a high quality copy. A fixed-width font such as Courier is the preferred font for email ads.

While many publications use indents to start each paragraph, a blank line separating them is friendlier to the reader. Their use quickly lets the reader jump from one to another. It is also a good idea to have headlines, which lead in to the next paragraph. Many people scan these headlines, and if they don't get their attention, they skip to the next. Obviously then, the paragraph headlines are extremely important.

You might have great copy, but if the headlines are "blah" they may just click away. The use of blank lines and headlines between the paragraphs simply makes it easier to read.

You should also be aware that there are many different line lengths used in email and in publications. Many times if your line length is too long, it will not wrap properly and you will have long and short lines, giving a jerky look, instead of ones which are uniform. Your best bet to avoid this is to use a line length of 60 or 65 characters, as even older email readers can read these lengths properly.

Most people read from left to right. It would therefore seem logical that all the text in your ad is aligned to the left side of the page. However - we are not talking about a lengthy document here. If your lines are short, and consist of only 4 or 5 lines, it might make more sense to center them on the page. This is a good idea if you are placing your ad in an ezine or newsletter. The text in the publication is left justified, and your use of a centered text ad will make it stand out.

While you might write great copy, you still might not make significant sales. The primary reason is that people seldom buy from a one-time ad. They will have to see your ad at least five to seven times before you can expect them to take any kind of action at all.

If you advertise in multiple places, use the same ad in all places. People will soon start to identify with your ad, and just might take the next step.

Have you checked your copy lately? If not, you should. Great copy will bring sales.

Bob publishes the free weekly "Your Business" Newsletter Visit his Web Site at <http://adv-marketing.com> to subscribe. As a bonus, get 40,000 FREE E-Books from Larry Dotson, when you visit <http://www.ldpublishing.com>

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