
COPYWRITING TNT! May, 2008

Resources, ideas, and tips for writers and copywriters, business-to-business, high-tech, industrial, Internet, and direct marketing.

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QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"Direct marketing is based on selling through words, and good print advertising emphasizes that by giving the words priority and making them easy to read.

"Forget about clever. Disdain awards given for ads that are 'different.' Your purpose as a marketer is to create sales by communicating strong ideas."

-Michael Masterson

Source: Early to Rise

*** HOW B2B COPYWRITING DIFFERS FROM MARKETING TO CONSUMERS ***

If you're a marketing or copywriting professional, you might be aware that B2Business and B2Consumer copywriting are different creatures. But how are they different?

The biggest difference is that consumers don't want to spend money—business buyers DO. Businesses NEED the services of vendors and suppliers, from raw materials, to parts, sub-contracting services, supplies, everything the business needs to do its business. In that respect, B2B copywriting is easier than B2C. The buyer is far more willing.

However, the next difference is that consumers make their decisions individually. Your new pair of Nikes or your lunch at your favorite restaurant does not require a decision by committee. In contrast, businesses make most of their buying decisions by committee. Buyers in business are usually allowed to spend a limited amount without consulting management, so depending on what you're selling, there could be multiple decision-makers.

For the same reason as above, B2C is a one-step buying process. B2B is a multi-step buying process. You run an ad or send some direct mail, you develop some leads, send some brochures, follow-up on those leads, maybe even prepare demonstrations or visit the

potential client. And then, after all that, you may or may not make the sale. So in this respect, B2B requires a lot more effort.

--Source, AWAI's *Copywriting Insider*

*** A REVEALING SUBJECT ***

"When bikinis became the number one fashion in swimwear, we naturally advertised them - and our sketches showed the figures with navels. One very good customer called me to complain about both our sponsorship of the fashion and he detailed anatomical drawing. I called the matron and told her I should like to come out to discuss the subject with her.

"Over tea, I explained we were as concerned as she was about avoiding vulgarity, but this was a fashion so big, so universal, neither we nor any other store could afford to ignore its existence. I pointed out that what we were really talking about was the absence of ten inches of fabric between the bras and the shorts, which was less than the distance her own skirt had moved upward from 1907 to 1967.

"I suggested that she was every bit as moral as she was when she wore floor-length skirts. I told her if we refused to carry bikinis, her own granddaughters would insist she take them to another store to shop, and that if we lost the fashion respect of the current generation, we wouldn't have any customers when the older customers passed on. She finally agreed, but said: 'At least, you didn't have to show the navels.'

"I explained that we hadn't invented them, and it would be presumptuous for us to try to improve the human body. 'How would you answer your granddaughter if she showed you a sketch without a navel and asked you why?' 'Neiman-Marcus has meant so much to me and my family,' she said, 'that I hate to see you doing anything wrong. You have convinced me; you had no alternative.'

"A complaint like this took time to solve, but its challenge to our standards of taste, reflecting the deep concern of an old and valued customer, was worth the two hours invested in retaining her goodwill. It reaffirmed the Neiman-Marcus reputation for doing things right; reputations, like plaster walls, require constant maintenance."

-Stanley Marcus
Quest for the Best, Viking

*** HOW TO MAKE THE LEAP FROM AMATEUR TO PROFESSIONAL WRITER ***

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SAVE MONEY ON YOUR COMPANY BLOG

Should you pay thousands of dollars to have a ghostwriter blog under your CEO's name?

No, says author Deb Weil, who offers these 5 tips for creating an Effective CEO blog:

1. Don't hire a ghost-blogger.
2. Write conversationally.
3. Always link.
4. Accept a bit of criticism.
5. Be passionate.

Source: "The Corporate Blogging Book" by Deb Weil (Penguin, 2006).

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*** 7 WAYS TO GET FREE PR ***

"The cleverly expressed opposite of any generally accepted idea is worth a fortune to somebody," said F. Scott Fitzgerald.

But how can you use this principle in your PR to get media attention? Marketing expert Marcia Yudkin says you can do it by:

1. Taking issue with a survey result.
2. Disagreeing with a common belief or counteracting a stereotype.
3. Championing an underdog.
4. Revealing common misconceptions.
5. Making surprising predictions.
6. Exposing flaws in something assumed to be beneficial.
7. Describing the underside of something popular.

Example: Bob Baker and three colleagues in the music business Collaborated on a press release titled "What's Wrong with American Idol?"

Their press release criticized the popular U.S. talent show for Misleading aspiring musicians and the public about what it takes to succeed in music. Baker's reward for stirring up controversy: five

radio interviews that highlighted his status as an expert on careers in music.

Source: Marcia Yudkin, Marketing Minute, 5/3/06.

COULD YOU USE A MARKETING MASTER'S EXPERIENCE?

What if you could put the accumulated expertise of a marketing MASTER to work for you—TODAY?

Bob Bly has collected a treasure trove of marketing and copywriting gold in his program *Milt Pierce's "Lost" Marketing Success Secrets*.

Milt Pierce copywriting and direct marketing genius, with a career that spanned several decades. His work formed the foundation that helped Bob Bly launch his copywriting and marketing career, and his vast store of experience can be yours for less than the cost of your monthly cable bill.

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*** 10 POWERFUL FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS ***

1. "Am I catching you at a bad time?"
2. "Did you receive the information I sent you?"
3. "Did you have a chance to look over the material?"
4. "Do you use this type of product or service from time to time?"
5. "Do you have a budget for acquiring this product or service?"
6. "What is the approximate amount of the budget?"
7. "What's your time frame for acquiring this type of product - 3 months, 6 months, longer?"
8. "Are you authorized to approve this purchase, or will others be involved in the approval?"
9. "Is there anything I should have asked you that I haven't?"
10. "What do you want to happen next?"

"Don't believe the myths that long copy online won't be read and that short copy produces more sales. You need to say enough in your online copy to convince the prospect to act, just as your direct mail or other media copy needs to spur that act. If you don't have good direct-response copy - copy that sells - bad things happen."

-Craig Huey, President, Creative Direct Marketing Group
Source: SIPA Hotline, 11/6/06, p. 4.

*** TELL ME YOUR THOUGHTS ***

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