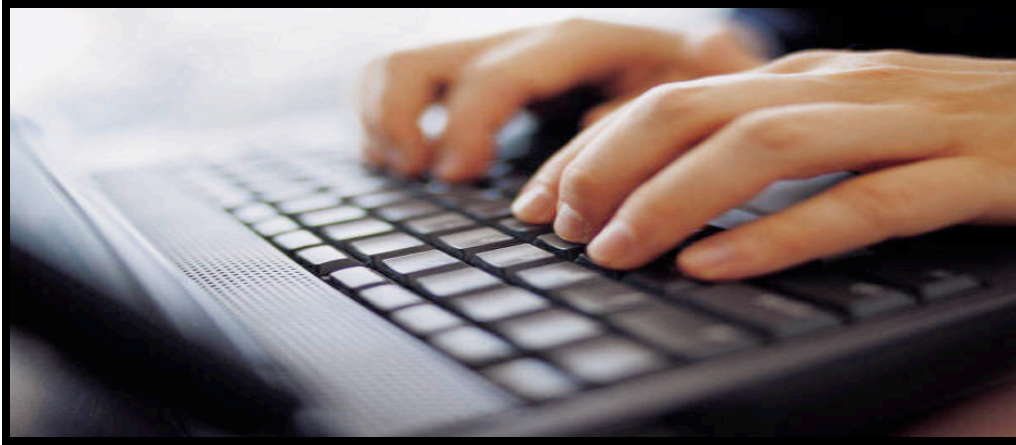


10 Tips To Ensure When Writing Advertising Copy It Gets Results



By: Dale W. Hutchings

One of the biggest challenges for business people, who attempt to do their own marketing in Tampa Bay, Florida, or for that matter any place else, is creating effective advertising copywriting. Often those who try soon learn it isn't easy and quickly turn to a professional copywriter, like myself, to handle this task. However, if you are brave and eager to tackle this challenge, here are ten tips on how to write advertising copy that will help produce what you are looking for: results.

1. Research Your Competition. As a marketing consultant, I always tell business people before you write a word, the first thing you need to do is research the competition. Look at their print and/or online ads. Listen to their radio spots or view with scrutiny their TV ads. Try to get a hold of their direct mail pieces, brochures and any other promotional materials. Then think about your business from a branding standpoint. Ask yourself: "What can I write about my product or service that is different from what the competition is saying?" "How exactly is my company's product or service different (unique) compared to other businesses?" Answering these questions will help you immensely in crafting a message and help you equally in building a branding image for your business.

2. Benefits! Benefits! Benefits! Make a list of the benefits of your product or service. Then narrow the list to three main ones, putting them in order of priority. Now think about how you can weave the most important benefit into the headline or opening copy line of the ad. That main benefit is the first thing you want readers to see.

3. Plan On At Least One Image...Maybe More. Beyond clever headlines what draws readers to an ad will be whatever image(s) you have. If you glance through a magazine, what is the first thing that catches your attention? Nine times out of ten it will be the photo or art on the page. Therefore, strive for strong images with the copy tying into the art as much as possible.

4. Determine Your Target Audience. In general, what is the age range of your customers? What gender? What occupations are they likely to be in? Where are you likely to find them? Once you determine these facts, write down why this group would want to purchase your product or service. Then work to integrate those reasons into your advertising copy, if at all possible.



5. Give Them The Facts. Providing positive proven facts is a common strategy every professional advertising copywriter uses at one time or another. Therefore, use these validated facts whenever you can in writing ad copy. Whether it's scientific tests, consumer studies or favorable reviews, if the facts indicate you have an impressive product or service with proven results for what it is intended for, let the world know. These facts will also do you wonders in terms of building a PR image.

6. Be Sure To Include Any Benefits After The Purchase. Always tell your audience about the support they will receive after purchasing your product or service. Perhaps it's free technical support. Maybe it's a special guarantee (e.g., if a customer is dissatisfied with your product, it may be returned anytime within 90 days for a full refund). Whatever it is, highlighting this benefit could make all the difference in someone's decision to buy or not buy your product or service.

7. Create An Added Incentive For Someone To Buy. Many businesses in a particular field often provide the same kind of product or service as anyone else in their industry. Therefore, it is important for you not only to try to carve a message that conveys how you are different from the competition (e.g., provide faster service, have more experience than competitors, etc.), but also to create an added incentive for them to do business with you. Examples would include:

- Offer a significant discount
- Entice them to participate in a contest
- Donate a percentage of each purchase to a charitable cause
- Provide free delivery with purchase

8. Develop Advertising Copy That Motivates A Response. Whenever and however you wish to advertise, you want to create ads that motivate consumers to respond. You want those responses because this will allow you to correctly measure how effective your ads truly are. Some of the suggestions noted in #7 above will help you achieve this goal. However, there are many others ways of accomplishing this. For example:

- Have them reply to a toll-free number to purchase your product or service.
- Have them reply to a quick survey in order to take advantage of a special offer.
- Have them visit your website to sign up for free newsletter or print special coupon offers.

9. Don't Forget The Power Of Testimonials. There is perhaps no better way to sell a product or service than using the power of testimonials in your advertising. What others say about you and your product or service is far more convincing than anything you can write, no matter how eloquent your words may be.

10. When It Comes To Wording: Less Is Better. My final suggestion is that whatever you write communicate your message in as few words as possible. Your goal when writing advertising copy should always be: keep it short, concise and to the point. Of all the suggestions presented this is by far the one you want to remember most. As Cicero once stated: *Brevity is a great charm of eloquence.*

