

COPYWRITING

THAT COUNTS



How to Craft a Message SO Powerful ...
You Persuade People – EVERY Time!



Chris Lang

COPYWRITING THAT COUNTS

Web
Marketing
WORX
Delivering You Massive Profits

It's all about **Creating & Editing ...**
TWO Sides of the Same Coin!

And yes, it is true ... each of these IS vital.

However, you can't perform BOTH roles at the same time.

Because your final Results will fall well short
of what you're expecting ... if you attempt it.

So, let's begin with your Prep-Work ...

Whenever you embark upon a writing assignment, concentrate initially upon letting all your ideas flow freely ... just **as fast as you possibly can.**

You need to turn off your internal editor; and just get it all out of your head. (For me, initially getting it down on paper works best ... for anything that needs some creative input!)

Only when you've finished doing that, should you begin your 9-Step Editing phase. And once again, just focus solely on one Step at a time.

When all is said and done, it comes down to a simple Framework.

It's certainly not rocket science; but it works. And if you can make it part of your everyday writing ... you will be persuading your audience **EVERY** time!

#1: Your Opening

This is probably the most crucial part of your selling message, after ...

- ⦿ **The Headline** for your Advertisement, Brochure or Web page. (#cc0000)
- ⦿ **The Johnson Box** for your “Report” or Web page. (see previous page)

If you’re able to get people “totally involved” during your first 50 words ... they simply can’t wait to read the next 500 words.

And the Direct Marketing studies show: If you do your job properly there ... the next ‘fall-off point’ will not be until around 5,000 words.

But if you’re like most people, it could take you as much as a page to get fully warmed up.

Therefore, after the initial draft, you’ll generally need to remove at least the first few of paragraphs – because you will typically find your crucial “lead-in” paragraph is actually ... a fair way down the page.

Therefore, you might try using simple, tight opening paragraphs like ...

For Ads, Brochures, Web pages and Reports

- ✓ How would you like to ... ?
- ✓ Yes, it’s true ...
- ✓ Let’s face it ...
- ✓ Have you ever wanted to ... ?
- ✓ Would you mind doing me a favour?
- ✓ Will you try this experiment?
- ✓ Here’s your chance to ...

For Ads, Brochures and Web pages

- ✓ If you’re concerned about _____, then this _____ is what you need.
- ✓ It’s time to ...
- ✓ How much is _____ worth to you?
- ✓ This is it! This is the _____ that will ...

Sometimes, you may even consider using a relevant case study, story or analogy to draw them in.

#2: Flow and Sequence

You need to check to ensure your **Paragraph Order** will move your audience towards the decision you're wanting them to make.

And that order might change, from audience to audience!

If they need to be convinced about you or whatever you are “selling” ... then move the segments relating to “Authority” and “Testimonials” nearer to the start.

If you’re using a story ... is it well positioned to help your reader get involved?

Just keep asking yourself the question: “Does this paragraph (or section) make sense where it currently is right now?”

#3: The Look and Feel

Simple things like “white space” can be as important as the actual words on the page. Because, your reader needs time to take a breath.

This is where you can also add items like ...

Bolding

'Fake' handwriting

Highlighting

Other Embellishments

- Bullet points



1. Numbering

(use them sparingly)

Check Boxes

Different colours

Make sure you use Headings and Subheadings to introduce, and visually breakup, the various sections.

And you could also use *italics* and underlining – but only in moderation. Because, these text enhancements should never take centre stage.

Whitespace, bullets and numbering are the key elements. But take care with bolding and highlighting.

As any good chef will tell you ... “Just a pinch of spice is all you need”.

#4: Scanning and Skimming?

Scanning is what your readers do – when they first glance at what you've written.

They take in the Look and Feel ... which is why that's so important, as it puts them in the right frame of mind.

Now you have them poised ready to read on ... you need to make it easy for your readers to quickly skim your message – to confirm their decision to stay with you.

Therefore, if they can skim ...

... the Headline (or Johnson Box), Sub-heads, boldings, highlighted words, bullets, etc AND reach the conclusion you wanted ...

... THEN, you've truly done your job!

Everything else is merely there to help them justify the decision they're about to make.

#5: Make Your Transitions Easy

As you move from one point (or segment) to another, your transition needs to come across as totally seamless. To achieve this, perfect English grammar and prose can sometimes get in the way.

Never stand on ceremony (or traditional rules) to get your message across. But equally, don't stoop to introducing slang or colloquialisms.

Starting a sentence with "And" or "But" is perfectly okay. Because, you need to write as though that person was there, just across the table from you.

By way of example, here are a few Transition phrases you might like to use ...

- ✓ As you'll appreciate ...
- ✓ As you'll probably recall ...
- ✓ However, more on that in a moment.
- ✓ Later, I'll explain how ...
- ✓ For the moment, ...
- ✓ A few examples of what you'll find ...
- ✓ Also, ...
- ✓ Back to the purpose of this letter/report.
- ✓ However, before we move on to that ...
- ✓ Anyway, don't just take my word for it, here are ...
- ✓ However, I'm jumping ahead. First, let me explain how ...

These transitions move you to the next point in your sequence; and allow you to change direction, without the reader even noticing it.

#6: Check-out How it Sounds

And that means ... literally.

Sit down, close the door and read your report (advertisement or web copy) out aloud to yourself. Or better still, have a friend or colleague read it to you out aloud.

You'll be totally surprised what you learn from what you hear – both good and bad.

All the rough spots will become plainly obvious. In particular, where there is a gap in your logic – as you move the reader towards your “Call to Action”.

#7: Here's Your 22-Point Checklist

Simply run through this Checklist, once you think you're done.

1. Do you have an “Attention-grabbing Headline”?
Use one that encapsulates your Irresistible Offer!
2. Did you engage the readers with your very first sentence?
And does it compel them to read your next sentence?
3. Have you involved your readers by posing questions,
which can't be answered with a simple Yes or No?
4. Do you manage to create Authority?
5. How open is the reader to your “pitch”?
(Can you go straight there; or do you need to build trust first?)
6. Should you be using a story or analogy, to draw your audience
into what you're offering?
7. What about the reason why?
(Problem ... Pain ... Solution)
8. Have you introduced scarcity?
(Limited-time offer; or only a certain number available)
9. Have you included some Testimonials? (People love social proof)
10. Why should they act and now?
11. Do the Subheads logically summarise your message?
12. Have you included specifics?
13. What features and benefits should you include?
14. Have you justified the “purchase” in your reader's mind?
15. Why might your target market not respond?
(Bring up possible objections and answer them)

16. Is your language appropriate for your audience?
17. Have you ignited their curiosity?
18. Do you have them mentally nodding with agreement?
(And phrases like: Isn't that right? Sound familiar?)
19. What about a summary, for a long proposal/report? (In a nutshell ...)
20. Have you made it easy for them to respond?
(Is there a clear "Call to Action"?)
21. Did you personalise it with a "PS: ..."?
22. Have you tidied up the Look & Feel?
 - Does that sound like a chat across the table?
 - Go back and remove the word ... "that" wherever possible.
 - Rephrase things, to add "you" and "your" more often.
 - Mix up your sentence AND paragraph length.
(Using just two or three words is quite okay)
 - Ensure you have Transitions, to keep things moving smoothly.
 - Stand back and view the immediate visual impact, overall.
(Margins, typeface, headings, subheadings, boldings, italics, etc)

#8: Putting it to Bed

Always allow yourself enough time to "sleep" on whatever it is you're writing. Because, with a fresh set of eyes, you'll always discover things you missed earlier.

This step is an imperative – not simply a luxury!

#9: And then, Perform Your Final Audit

By now, you've read your piece so often, you're finding yourself anticipating what's coming next. As such, you are no longer be an impartial (nor objective) critic.

Therefore, you need to ask someone uninvolved (who understands proper grammar, and can also spell) to quietly read it through for you.

What you're looking for is for them to identify all the simple transpositions like ...
"there" for ... "they're" or ... "their".

You may not consider this a major issue. But all other things being equal ... something small like this could be the difference between the reader choosing what you're offering, over someone else.

Simply because ... it reflects upon your level of professionalism, and attention to detail.