

101 COPYWRITING DOS + DON'TS

COPY HACKERS

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51 Copywriting DOs

- Tell visitors to “click here”
- Point to words you want people to notice
- Use symbols in place of words: +, &, \$
- Use numerals in place of written numbers: 7, not “seven”
- Follow the “Goldilocks” rule
- Use meaningful headlines *everywhere*
- Talk with your prospects like you’re in the same room
- Explore layers of benefits
- Highlight your best product
- In lists, put your best points at the top and bottom
- Replace long words with short ones
- Communicate what’s unique + highly desirable about you, and give a reason to buy from your site
- Put a caption under photos that matter
- Let your happiest customers do the selling
- Make friends with... the ellipsis
- Explicitly write who your product is “ideal for”
- Let copy guide your design / page layout
- Focus on “what’s in it for me” (WII-FM)
- Scratch all instances of “we” + your company name
- Lead with “you”
- Repeat important messages
- Position “click triggers” around your buttons
- Research before you write
- Scrap your first ideas
- Mimic Robert Munsch and Dr. Seuss... Not Ernest Hemingway
- Match your headline to the call to action that led visitors there
- Make your calls to action specific
- Steal your customers’ words
- Either kill a pain or highlight a delighter

101 COPYWRITING DOS + DON'TS

- Know your messaging hierarchy
- List out all your benefits & bonuses for your own use
- Start with 10x more info than you need
- Summarize testimonials with mini-headlines
- Keep your offers simple
- Group & chunk text
- Keep 'paragraphs' short
- Show and tell
- Have meaningful hero banners
- Increase font size and darken type color
- Be smart with your logout screen or thank-you page
- Make tangible promises
- Optimize your headlines for SEO
- Display key messages *on the screen* in demos/videos
- Write descriptive alt text/tags
- Be enviably risky
- Use the word "quit" if you *don't* want people to quit
- Put a face on your [impersonal] company
- Be Unique-to-You and Desirable-to-Them
- Make it easy to buy
- Spell check
- Split test to be sure

50 Copywriting DON'TS

- ⊗ Write for 100% of your traffic
- ⊗ *Imply* anything
- ⊗ Welcome people to your site
- ⊗ Tell yourself, “No one reads online”
- ⊗ Depend on testimonials and logos to *sell* your product
- ⊗ Use “I love it!” testimonials
- ⊗ Put your best content in a video only
- ⊗ Limit yourself to X number of words
- ⊗ Use “lorem ipsum”
- ⊗ Pretend you’re well-known... yet
- ⊗ Use small, tight fonts or spacing
- ⊗ Dilute your audience’s lingo
- ⊗ Blindly copy someone else’s tone
- ⊗ Assume your visitors are just like you
- ⊗ Exclude people unintentionally
- ⊗ Use incentives like a crutch
- ⊗ Break bad news like a jerk
- ⊗ Waste your tagline
- ⊗ Make it hard for people to unsubscribe
- ⊗ Follow antiquated rules of features vs benefits
- ⊗ Try to sell everything at once
- ⊗ Be vague!
- ⊗ Forget why you created a page to begin with
- ⊗ Compromise clarity for cleverness
- ⊗ Be a grammar nazi
- ⊗ Bore your reader... ever
- ⊗ Let your USP scroll away
- ⊗ WRITE IN ALL CAPS OR WITH LOTS OF EXCLAMATION POINTS!!!
- ⊗ Use round bullets for numbered lists
- ⊗ Write long bullet lists

101 COPYWRITING DOS + DON'TS

- ⊗ Hide BBB + security proof
- ⊗ Be a slave to “consistency”
- ⊗ Use dead-end pages
- ⊗ Assume your competitors have got it right
- ⊗ Forget that customers can leave anytime
- ⊗ Fake a waiting list
- ⊗ Tell yourself, “Writing copy should be easier than this”
- ⊗ Interrupt user flows for your own purposes
- ⊗ Write like a smug prick
- ⊗ Assume your visitors are ready to buy on your Pricing page
- ⊗ Jump straight into “persuasion tricks”
- ⊗ Cram everything above the fold
- ⊗ Invest more in your visual design than in your copy
- ⊗ Stuff keywords where they don’t belong
- ⊗ Hold back
- ⊗ Write the width of the page
- ⊗ Let paid ads rule over your visitors
- ⊗ Complicate your ‘storefront’
- ⊗ Take any rule as fixed and unchanging
- ⊗ Forget why you hired a copywriter & designer