

Writing good advertising copy (Part 5)

By  Chris Brewer

4 Jul 2016

Consumers have their own language: I don't necessarily mean speech.

But when, for example, writing copy for a male deodorant, a copywriter might write in a macho style – which could possibly alienate a large number of men who don't **want** to be all testosterone-boosted but would rather just smell clean and elegant.



© Mehmet Timur Dilsiz – 123RF.com

We also know that teenagers don't like being talked down to, and especially not with inappropriate and patronising language.

There's nothing more insincere than a 40-year-old copywriter trying to write in the style that will appeal to a 9- to 15-year-old. It's almost certain to fail and you don't want to upset this group, because they have considerable influence on what their parents and friends buy.

The key ingredients of copywriting are, of course (and we've already covered this several times) sensitivity and empathy. The writer has to understand the target market's psyche – which is why 19-year-old copywriters write better copy for teenagers and why 50-year-old writers produce better ads for retirement policies.

Consumers are (and this applies to all of us) selfish. A chap called Victor Schwab defined what people want – and writers

should know this already.

People want to **GAIN** the following:

1. Good health
2. Time
3. Money
4. Popularity
5. Improved appearance
6. Old-age security
7. Praise from others
8. Comfort
9. Leisure
10. Pride in accomplishment
11. Advancement (business and social)
12. Increased enjoyment
13. Self-confidence
14. Personal prestige

People want to **BE** the following:

1. Good parents
2. Sociable and hospitable
3. Up-to-date
4. Creative
5. Proud of their possessions
6. Influential over others
7. Gregarious
8. Efficient
9. First to do something
10. Recognised as authoritative
11. Educated

Things people want to **DO** are:

1. Express their personalities
2. Resist domination by others
3. Satisfy their curiosity
4. Emulate the admirable
5. Appreciate beauty
6. Acquire and collect things
7. Win the affection of others
8. Improve themselves generally

People want to **SAVE** and **AVOID** the following:

1. Time
2. Money
3. Work
4. Discomfort
5. Worry
6. Doubts

7. Risks
8. Personal embarrassment
9. Stress

And remember, a man's name is, to him, the sweetest sound in any language – and with today's technology, we can capitalise on this.

So remember to use the correct language and ensure your style appeals to what your specific customer wants. I once saw a Spanish TV commercial and, whilst I didn't understand a single word spoken, I understood the message perfectly. Now **that's** good advertising.

Read my blog (brewersdroop.co.za) or see what other amazing things we do at brewers.co.za

Note that Bizcommunity staff and management do not necessarily share the views of its contributors - the opinions and statements expressed herein are solely those of the author.

ABOUT CHRIS BREWER

Having joined the ad industry in London, Chris Brewer spent most of his career in media analysis and planning - but has performed just about every advertising task from Creative to Research. He's an honorary lifetime member of the Advertising Media Association and regularly advises agencies and clients regarding their media plan costs and strategies. He is also often asked to talk at industry functions. Email: chris@brewers.co.za. Twitter: [@brewersapps](https://twitter.com/brewersapps). Read his blog: www.brewersdroop.co.za

- Welcome to the latest Monty Python fiasco - 21 May 2020
- Is digital advertising worth all the hype? - 4 Dec 2017
- TV we got right - 20 Nov 2017
- Innuendo and the power of the pen - 6 Nov 2017
- When was the sale lost? - 23 Oct 2017

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>