

# How To Write Killer Headlines

Can a good headline help you sell?

You can bet it can! Ninety percent of the success or failure of any promotion you produce is affected by your headline writing. It doesn't matter if you're writing an ad or a sales letter...

## YOUR HEADLINE CAN MAKE OR BREAK YOUR SUCCESS

Some books that sell few copies become best sellers with exactly the same content but a brand-new title.

So you need to ignite your sales by writing headlines with amazing power, and I will show you how to do it.

What advertising gurus say ?

“Advice to copywriters: When you are assigned to write an ad, write a lot of headlines first. Spend hours writing headlines or days if necessary. If you happen to think of a headline while walking down the street or while riding the bus, take out pencil and paper and write it down.”

*John Caples*

“On the average, five times as many people read the headlines as read the body copy. It follows that, unless your headline writing sells your product, you have wasted 90 percent of your money.”

*David Ogilvy*

It doesn't matter if you are a professional copywriter or a newbie, anyone can be stronger in headline writing.

## SO, WHAT DOES A GREAT HEADLINE DO?

- \* Grabs attention
- \* Communicates benefits
- \* Appeals to the reader's self-interest

- \* Answers the questions, “What’s in it for me?”, “Who cares”, “So what”
- \* Sets the offer’s tone
- \* Attracts the right audience.

Of course you need a good body copy, but with any body copy, or with the same body copy, writing a good headline can help.

## HOW TO WRITE HEADLINES TO HELP YOU SELL

- \* Write a believable promise
- \* Don’t use more than 17 words
- \* Use quotation marks and italic text, because it is more memorable
- \* Use reverse type sparingly, because it is hard to read
- \* If you use a photograph, place the headline below it
- \* Use the same type size in the entire headline

## HOW TO WRITE YOUR CONTENT TO HELP YOU SELL

- \* Take product apart and review it element by element.
- \* Look at the product with a marketer's eye (don’t use the producer’s cap, if you are the one who have written or created it).
- \* Use strong action verbs (like slash, chop, stagger, etc). For example “Multiply your income by three!” The word multiply is a strong action word.
- \* Identify all the benefits and feature of the product from the buyer’s point of view.
- \* Benefits are the real hot buttons. Benefits are those elements of the product that answers the question “What’s in it for me?”
- \* A feature is a fact about the product that builds credibility: “It’s 11 x 17 inches, 244 pages and has 13 illustrations.”
- \* You need both features and benefits in your copy. But benefits are more important to emphasize. A powerful headline must scream the product’s benefits. Benefits will help you close the sale.

Why?

Because people act 90 percent on their emotions, and benefits help bring out emotions. Once a person is motivated, the buyer will justify his or her decisions by using logic. For each headline write 10 before choosing the best one!

## HOW TO EXTRACT YOUR PRODUCT'S BENEFITS

Make a list of as many benefits and features you can identify.

Choose the strongest, most universal benefit from the point of view of your customers.

Identify features and benefits that make you and your product unique – these are your “USPs” – Unique Selling Propositions

Feeling stuck or unsure of what your USP might be? Just answer the following question: If you had unlimited, godlike powers and could grant your prospective customer the biggest benefit you can possibly imagine he or she would ideally want from your product, what would that be? Write down your answer. This is most likely your strongest USP.

## TEST, TEST and TEST

Even after you write what you believe is the ideal headline, it is imperative that you test it. You need to keep running new headline tests for two reasons:

- \* To see if you can make a better one, and most of all. . .
- \* Every headline has a lifetime and you need to change it.

When do you need to change a good headline? Not too soon! If it is working never change (you'll be tired of it before your customers). Change it if you beat the results with a new headline.

## POWER WORDS

OK, now it's time to write the headline. The safest headline begins with “How To” because it immediately appeals to the reader's self-interest. It piques curiosity. If the benefit is powerful, the reader will move on to the body copy. The “how to” phrase cannot be overdone (there are over 7,000 books with titles that start with “How To”), and here are some other powerful words and phrases you can use:

- \* Announcing
- \* Advice to
- \* Yes
- \* Secrets of
- \* The truth of
- \* Love
- \* New
- \* Protect
- \* How much
- \* Now
- \* Life
- \* How would
- \* Amazing
- \* Here
- \* This
- \* Facts you
- \* Discover
- \* Only
- \* Breakthrough
- \* Do you
- \* Sale
- \* At last
- \* Bargains
- \* Hate

And finally, the two most powerful words when writing headlines:

- \* Free
- \* You

Power words are already implanted in the minds of all your readers, because of what the words mean. You'll get the attention of the maximum number of readers with the first two words of your headline writing.

## OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS

- Your headline writing must motivate. It doesn't really matter if the headline writing get the reader excited or fearful or protective, but it must stir an emotion.

- \* Writing headlines must be done in present tense, not the future tense, because a headline in present tense makes the promise more credible and believable. The present tense headlines are also far more emphatic.
- \* Headlines should be done using the first or second person.
- \* When writing headlines, use colorful, vital and strong verbs.
- \* When writing headlines use short words that create images or pictures in the mind of the reader.
- \* You must eliminate most adverbs and adjectives in your headlines, use them in the body copy.
- \* Do not write headlines trying to be “catchy” or “cute”. You must dramatize the product’s benefits not call attention to the copy itself.
- \* Avoid headline writing that merely create curiosity. Your headline should be strongly related with your product and its benefits, or the reader will feel deceived and will stop reading.
- \* A good headline should prompt an action on the part of a reader.
- \* Writing headlines on ads is like writing headlines on news items. Nobody reads a whole newspaper, you just pick out the headlines that catch your attention.
- \* People do not read ads for amusement. They just don’t read what doesn’t seem interesting through its headline.
- \* Finally, use a wide variety of headlines. Each form of approach will attract different people. You are presenting your product to millions and among them there is a percentage that is interested in some benefits and a percentage that is interested in other benefits. Do not expect to attract every kind of people with just one single headline writing.
- \* Go after your different customers with different headlines, but don’t think those millions will read your ads to see if your product interests them, they will decide at a glance.

So spend some time writing your headlines. Your bank account will reflect your hard work.