



Writing Copy

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Copy Structure

- ▶ Headline
- ▶ Subhead
- ▶ Body Copy
- ▶ Tagline
- ▶ Mandatories (the fine print)

Copy Structure

► Creative Pyramid

1. Attention → Mostly the visual, sometimes the headline
2. Interest → Headline, subhead
3. Credibility → Body Copy
4. Desire → Slogan
5. Call to Action → Contact Information

Before your writing process

- ▶ Knowledge first
 - ▶ Know everything you can about the brand
 - ▶ What are the benefits?
 - ▶ Know the prospective client (target audience)
 - ▶ Know your competition
 - ▶ What is the strategy?
- ▶ Experience the brand or product

Functions of Headlines

- ▶ Grab attention
- ▶ Illustrate product benefit or proposition
- ▶ Create curiosity
- ▶ Set mood
- ▶ Select audience

Headline Styles

- ▶ Direct benefit
 - ▶ Emotional or functional
 - ▶ Answers the question: “Why use the product?”
- ▶ Reverse Benefit
 - ▶ Why you should not go with someone else
- ▶ Simple Statement
 - ▶ Supporting the visual
- ▶ Selective
 - ▶ Singles out specific segment
- ▶ Curiosity
 - ▶ Tempt with just enough information

Approaches to Writing Body Copy

- ▶ The Standard Approach
 - ▶ Starts with a lead-in paragraph that bridges the headline and the rest of the copy
 - ▶ The interior paragraph focuses on selling the benefits
 - ▶ The closing paragraph ties the ad together
- ▶ Copy as Story (Narrative)
 - ▶ Reads like a piece of fiction: sets a scene and presents characters
- ▶ Dialogue Copy
 - ▶ Usually found in radio and television
 - ▶ Make certain that your copy sounds realistic
- ▶ Bulleted Copy or Listings
 - ▶ Can bullet or list advantages of the product
- ▶ Poetic Copy
 - ▶ Poetic imagery
 - ▶ Rhythmic writing

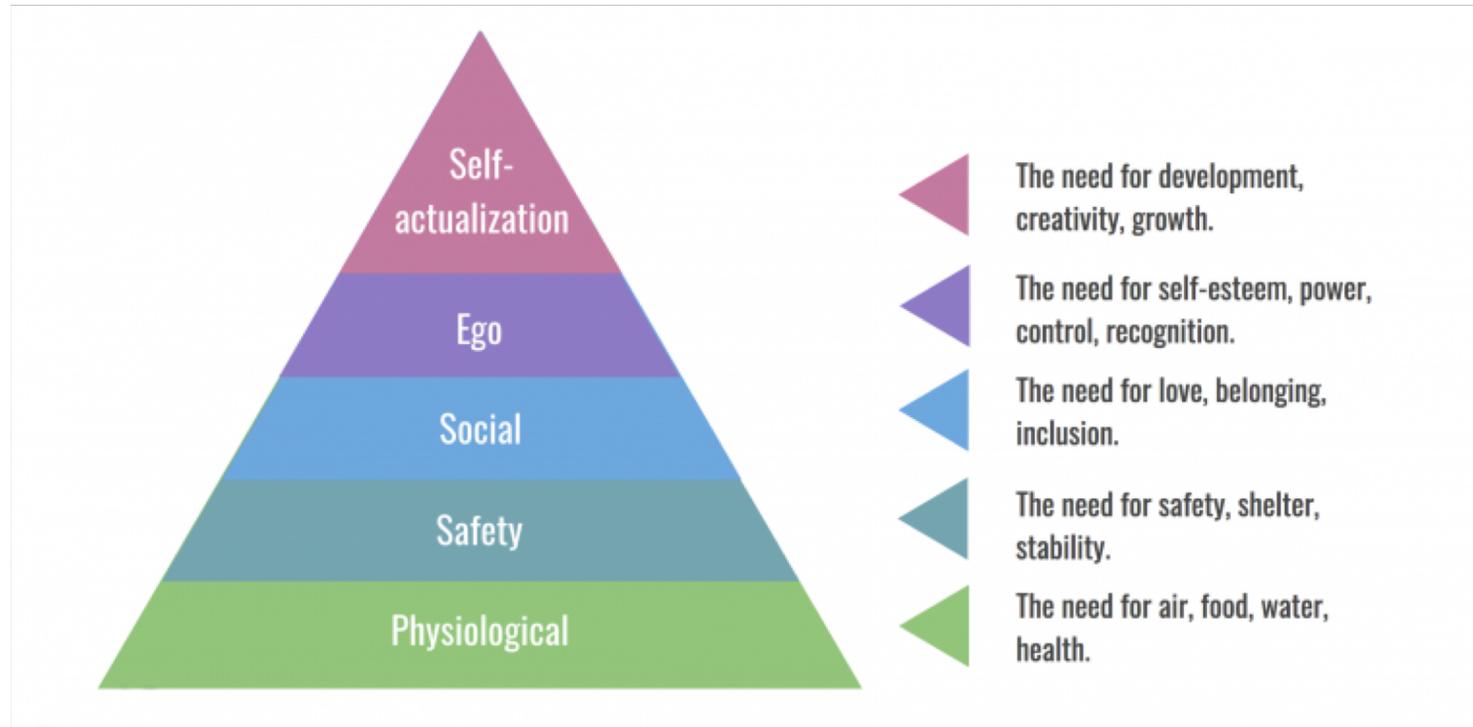
Advertising Copy Must:

- ▶ Use contemporary words
- ▶ Be short
- ▶ Pique curiosity
- ▶ Flow
- ▶ Tell a story
- ▶ Be well informed
- ▶ Easily understood
- ▶ Hit the target audience
- ▶ Relate to the target audience
- ▶ Break the rules when necessary

Important Words

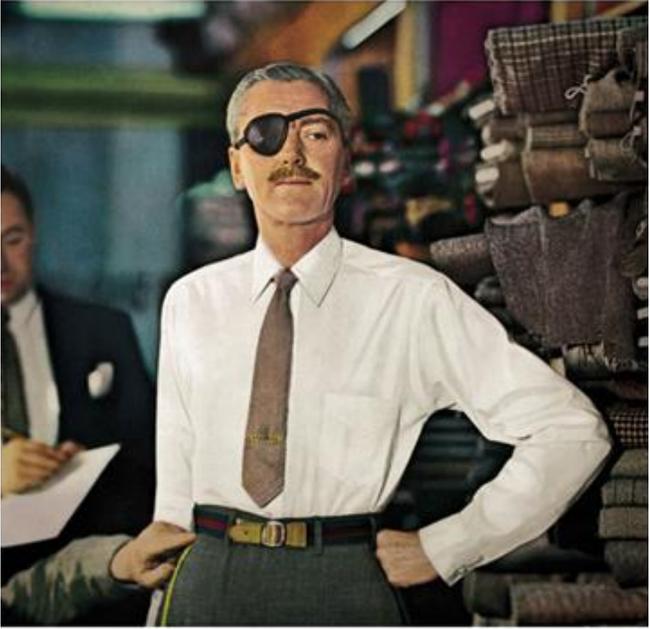
- ▶ “You”
 - ▶ “Because you deserve..”
- ▶ Convey “new”
 - ▶ Fresh, breakthrough, contemporary
 - ▶ Specifically using the word “new” can result in legal complications
- ▶ Comforting words
 - ▶ Safe, proven, guarantee
- ▶ Promotional words
 - ▶ “Limited Supply/Edition”
 - ▶ The brain feels the need to buy because the supply rate is lower than the demand
- ▶ Caring words
 - ▶ Family, love
- ▶ Words to use for “learning a guarded secret”
 - ▶ “Forbidden”
 - ▶ Human behavior has proven we are curious creatures. If told not to do something, we will
- ▶ Copywriters know that certain words evoke a particular feel and they understand every single word must be considered for this reason

Method: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



- ▶ By using this pyramid, you can sell your product to the consumer based on the needs that the product fulfills
- ▶ The most basic, important needs are at the bottom and must be achieved in order to work your way up the ladder
- ▶ Ask yourself: how does the product fit into Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs?

Examples:



The man in the Hathaway shirt

← Sparks curiosity

AMERICAN MEN are beginning to realize that it is ridiculous to buy good suits and then spoil the effect by wearing an ordinary, mass-produced shirt. Hence the growing popularity of HATHAWAY shirts, which are in a class by themselves. HATHAWAY shirts were definitely longer—a matter of inches. They make you look younger and more distinguished, because of the subtle way HATHAWAY cut collars. The whole shirt is tailored more generously, and is therefore more comfortable. The tails are longer, and stay in your trousers. The buttons are mother-of-pearl. Even the stitching has an extra-beautiful elegance about it. Above all, HATHAWAY make their shirts of remarkable fabrics, collected from the four corners of the earth—Vicuña, and Acaña, from England, woaden stuffs from Scotland, Sea Island cotton from the West Indies, hand-woven madras from India, broadcloth from Manchester, linen from Paris, hand-blocked silks from England, exclusive cottons from the best weavers in America. You will get a great deal of quiet satisfaction out of wearing shirts which are in such impeccable taste. HATHAWAY shirts are made by a small company of dedicated craftsmen in the little town of Waterville, Maine. They have been at it, man and boy, for one hundred and twenty years. At better stores everywhere, or write C. F. HATHAWAY, Waterville, Maine, for the name of your nearest store. In New York, telephone OX 7-5566. Prices from \$5.95 to \$20.00.



← Shortest headline possible

Lemon.

This Volkswagen missed the boat. The driver sits on the glove compartment is bleached and must be replaced. Clauses are you wouldn't have noticed it. Inspector Kurt Kruger did. There are 2,300 men at our Wolfsburg factory with only one job: to inspect Volkswagens at each stage of production. 6,000 Volkswagens are produced daily, there are more inspectors than cars! Every third oscillator is tested (not checking what's not, every windshield is screened. VWs have been expected for surface scratches barely visible to the eye. Final inspection is really something! VW inspectors run each car off the line onto the Funktionsprüfstand (car test stand, test up 189 check points, get ahead to the automatic brake stand, and say "no" to one VW out of 10. The preoccupation with detail means the VW lasts longer and requires less maintenance, by and large, than other cars. It also means it used VW's depreciation less than any other car! We stick the lemons, you get the plans.

Considerations

- ▶ Lead with story
- ▶ Reward
- ▶ Don't start with the brand name too early on in your copy
- ▶ Spark curiosity
- ▶ Safe and simple doesn't get noticed
 - ▶ Example of why you should “break the rules”
- ▶ Biggest impact in the fewest words
 - ▶ Edit down to the tightest, most impactful sentence or headline possible
- ▶ Ask yourself:
 - ▶ Is it relevant?
 - ▶ Does it resonate?

Lastly...

- ▶ Write “out loud”
 - ▶ Use spoken language in your writing, not written language that you would use in an academic paper
- ▶ Use contractions
- ▶ Test your copy
 - ▶ Read it aloud
 - ▶ Test on an individual belonging to your target audience
- ▶ Revise your work
 - ▶ Editing is crucial
- ▶ Proofread your final version

References

- ▶ <https://peacheypublications.com/applying-maslows-hierarchy-of-needs-to-the-use-of-educational-technology>
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