

E-MAIL COPY TIPS

When writing your email copy throw everything you learned in English 101 out the window.

1. Personalize

There's nothing better for a person to see their name. Use personalization in the subject line and inside the body of the email (but don't overdo it so it looks hokey).

2. Write just like you talk

Use plain, easy to understand English. Nobody cares if you can use xenophobia and ostentatious in a sentence. Write almost like you're talking to a buddy over a beer. So that means use contractions. Be friendly and personable in your writing.

3. Put passion into your email

Since you won't have the luxury of seeing your prospect eye-to-eye to gauge their reactions you need to put extra passion into your message. Even if you think you are overdoing it when you write, your letter will end understated when it gets read. Get enthusiastic!

4. Write to one person

Try to think of the ideal prospect as you are writing and make the message just for them. Even if your web site will be read by thousands of people each day -- every person will read it one at a time. Use "you" and "your" liberally. Focus on them, not yourself.

5. Keep your sentences and paragraphs short

Keep your sentences and paragraphs short and simple. Period.

Sentences (and even paragraphs) can even be one word like that last one. And paragraphs should be no more than 4 or 5 lines. You want your email to look easy to read with a lot of white space. Make it inviting. Long blocks of words are scary. Paragraph breaks do not need to be determined by content.

6. Use plenty of compelling subheads

Subheads should be like mini-headlines. Use them to break up large bodies of text and to bring people back into the body of the letter. A lot of people will scan your email so you need to make your subheads give a complete selling message by themselves. Also, be sure to use different graphic embellishments.

7. Eliminate excess wording

Simplify. Convey your message in a clear and concise manner -- but remember that doesn't mean keep it short. You need to ruthlessly edit your email for flow.

8. Use action verbs whenever possible

If you see too many "as", "is", "was" or "were" replace them. Sentences using action verbs are more powerful.

When writing your email you want it clear enough so any 6th grader could understand it.

Now you probably think your prospects are a lot smarter than 6th graders but nobody has time anymore to sit down and figure out what you're trying to say -- so keep your writing simple and straightforward.

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