

# Copywriting Guide

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|------------------------------------|------|
| Intro                              | → 01 |
| Who the hell are you               | → 02 |
| Get those creative juices flowin'  | → 03 |
| Lets make some copy, queen         | → 05 |
| Chill tf out                       | → 06 |
| The moment you've been waiting for | → 07 |

# 5 Steps to Becoming a Copywriting Guru



Copywriting is hard...AF. Whether it's a tweet for an account with 35 followers, or a 40-foot billboard in the middle of NYC, finding the perfect way to message your brand is not an easy task. But when you do it well, you can bridge the gap between creating an emotion in your readers, to getting them to "Add to cart" and buy what you're promoting. With some practice and patience (and this copywriting bible of course), you'll be the next Millennial Shakespeare in no time...



Before you dive into the fun stuff, it's important to do your research. Even if you've been working on your brand for years, taking a second to read over your brand guidelines will really help you hone in on the key elements of copywriting.

Pay attention to:

- 1 **TONE OF VOICE**
- 2 **MESSAGING**
- 3 **AUDIENCE**
- 4 **PAST WORK**

If your brand was a person, who would they be? What kind of emotion are you trying to convey? Are you a caring mother, a bratty teenager, or a relatable comedian? Figuring out who you are as a brand will help determine how you will speak (or write) and what kind of words you'll use in your copy.

Always remember the key elements that you stand for as a brand. Make sure those value props are clear and authentic in your copy. If you stray too far from your brand identity the copywriting won't make sense and won't feel unique.

Audience can go hand-in-hand with tone of voice, because depending on who your audience is, that will help you frame your copy even more. If you're a high chair brand like Lalo, the likelihood is that you're speaking to parents, so you might want to lay off the harsh humor and slang. But if you're JuneShine the hard kombucha brand, you know you're advertising to young adults that are looking to party, so you can be a bit more playful and cooler in your copy.

Whether you're a new brand or one that's been around the block for awhile, looking at past performing work is crucial. If you're new, check out other brands with strong performing copy across their platforms and see what they're doing well - and even what they're doing not so well. If you're an older brand and have your own copy to look back on, see what ads or social posts did well for you and what you can mimic or change to keep that momentum going.



Now it's time for the fun part: brainstorming. Using your research, start jotting down notes - doesn't matter if they make zero sense or if they flat out suck - just get down everything that you can possibly think of when it comes to your brand and the current copy that you're working on.

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For example, if you're working on billboard copy for your skincare brand in downtown LA, start playing word association with everything that comes to mind with LA. If the brand voice is a little humours and blunt, maybe start with a list of LA stereotypes that you think would catch people's attention. Then start listing off specific brand points that you want to ensure are mentioned in your copy, so things like "smooth, skincare, soft, easy..." you get the point.

As you're writing, be sure to remember what you're writing for. Is this a social post, a billboard, a hero for a landing page? Where is your audience going to see this copy? Some quick tips for each case:





## Social post

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As we're scrolling all day every day and seeing the same crap one after the other, what's going to make someone stop, read through your ad, and be curious to find out more. This copy needs to catch people's attention and get them to feel some sort of emotion - humor, curiosity, intrigue, something that will leave them wanting more. With social posts like Facebook ads, you have the wiggle room for several opportunities of copy: in the ad itself, the caption of the ad, and the subtitle. Not everything has to match exactly, but should still be brand-focused. Copy in the ad should be the most compelling and really play to the brand's tone of voice. Copy in the caption and subtitle can be a bit more straightforward - any offers you're running or key selling points, and making it clear of who and what you are.

## Billboard

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You want this copy to stop traffic (well, not literally, but you know what I mean). People likely won't stop in their tracks to read this, so you want to make it short, to the point, and something that will grab their attention and make them think long enough to get on their phone and go to your website.

## Landing page

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So you've got people to your page, great, but how do you get them to convert? This copy needs to show who your brand is, what you're offering, and why people need to click that CTA button to buy it. A title should generally be a brand saying including value prop, but keeping it light and catchy. The subtitle should tell exactly what the product is and why you need to have it, so that next move to click the button is a no brainer.

# With that scary, sloppy list in front of you, it's time to start digging for gold.

1

Go through your list and look for the concepts that you think could turn into solid idea. Start writing sentences or phrases based off of those ideas, along with the key components of your brand that you want to highlight. Keep referring back to both lists and figure out what works together (and what doesn't), and continue building out this new list of copy ideas.

2

Once you have a handful of those sentences, take each and try to rewrite it - keep the same concept going, just try to rephrase what you've already said a little differently. Can you make it shorter? Can you change some vocabulary? Can you make it fit more in your brand's tone of voice? Play around with it. Just because you have a good idea there, doesn't mean you can't make it 10 times better with one little tweak.

# Although this one isn't quite a copywriting tip, it's still just as important.

WRITER'S BLOCK IS REAL. And it sucks. But don't stress yourself out and definitely don't force yourself to keep going when you're fresh out of ideas. Forced writing only ends in sh\*tty copy, and we're not here for that.

Walk away for a little - an hour, a day. I mean, don't mess with a deadline or anything, but if you give yourself a little grace period to not think about it for a second, I promise you when you sit back down to your list, you'll be refreshed, you'll have a clearer head, and you'll be able to look at what you have in a new perspective.

Don't be shy to utilize your resources either - ask friends, colleagues, even strangers (don't be creepy) for their thoughts and if they can understand what you're trying to convey. Just because you think it makes sense from an insider perspective, it might not make sense to someone who doesn't know the brand or the inside joke and you want to make sure you're catering to as wide of an audience as possible.



# Now that you have this beautiful list of copy sitting in front of you, it's time to pick the winner.

1

First things first, you put your blood, sweat and tears into this sh\*t - what do YOU like? Which lines jump out to you and which ones do you think you can let go of. Of course you're probably a little too close to it right now, so other opinions will be necessary, but before you show them off determine your favorites so you can make a case for them.

2

Discuss your options with your coworkers and come up with a solid decision together. Even better, send your top choices to some friends or mentors that aren't close to the project and have them react. Having their outside input and raw opinion is key in making sure that the outside audience will have a strong reaction to your top pick.

3

Once you feel like you've found the one, put your project together - mock up your ad, write out your tweet, design your billboard - so you can get the full picture.

4

Take a step back...and be proud! You slayed that, and the final draft should feel really good. Remember, this sh\*t ain't easy, and it doesn't always "just come to you" like you think it will, but if you put in the time and effort, your copy is going to crush every time.

# Thank you

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