

Module 10. Copywriting techniques for bloggers

This is the tenth module of your Enchanting Business Blogging course. Today we're talking about two copywriting techniques that you can apply to your blog writing.

These techniques make your writing more fascinating. They also make your readers more excited about learning from you. And they help make your text more credible, and that's how they increase your authority, too.

This may sound like a lot you can achieve from two simple techniques. But I promise you these techniques are powerful.

The first technique we'll discuss is using specific details. This is what beginning copywriters and bloggers often get wrong. Specific details are important because they make your content more credible and fascinating.

Let's have a look at a couple of copywriting examples first.

When someone writes on their website *Our panels are strong*, you think *yeah, yeah*. That's what everyone says. You don't really believe it.

A sledgehammer can't break our panels is more specific and this immediately increases credibility.

An alternative would be: *We scoured Europe to find the strongest panels*. This is not as strong as the *sledgehammer* example, but it conveys that you've made an effort to find strong panels. And it almost feels like the start of a story. And it's far better than simply stating *our panels are strong*.

Let's look at another example.

Imagine you're selling kitchens, and you want to explain that you take care of your customers. You could simply say something like:

We manage your whole kitchen project. And treat it as our own.

But that's rather boring and it doesn't sound convincing. Let's make it more specific:

We manage your whole kitchen project – from flooring to decorating. And when we're installing your new kitchen, we lend you a small cooker so you don't need to rely on take-aways or eating out.

And if you like you can still add the last sentence:

We treat your project as if it's our own.

You probably notice that the text gets much longer when you're including more details. And just like Henrietta you might wonder whether you're not supposed to write tight? And use as few words as possible?

Well, there's a big difference between being wordy and using filler words on the one hand, and telling fascinating details on the other hand.

Filler words are bad. And we talked about meaningless words in module 4. But what are fascinating details?

Fascinating details paint a picture (and when I say that I mean they make your reader see, hear, feel, or taste something). These details help explain something. And they're used in a limited dose.

Good details show, they don't tell.

Let's look at an example Henrietta is working on. She's writing a blog post to help John, her ideal reader, use visuals in his presentation. In the post she engages John by asking him whether his listeners are bored.

Instead of just writing *Are your listeners bored?*, she could use specifics:

Are your listeners fiddling on their seats? Glancing at their watches? Checking their Blackberries? Twiddling their thumbs? Or are they yawning?

These details are all good because they help you picture the listeners being bored. They show that readers are bored without telling they're bored. This is what copywriters mean with *show, don't tell*.

But Henrietta has overdone it a little, because we don't need so many details. I'd take out two, and just include three quick details that explain whether listeners may be bored.

If you're not sure whether you have too many details, then reduce the number of details. Fewer details are almost always better. As a rule of thumb, using more than three details is almost always too much. It's not a strict rule, but it works most of the time.

In the reading material you'll find more examples of using details in your blog posts.

I promised you two copywriting techniques today. So let's look at the second technique now. This technique is about sharing the *Why* to make your readers excited.

Each blog post should cover three things: the What, the How, and the Why. But often the Why is forgotten. We're so busy sharing our knowledge that we forget to tell why people should care. This is a big mistake.

The Why is what copywriters call the Benefit of your product. For a blog post the why explains why readers should care.

Let's look at a copywriting example first. To find the benefit, you keep asking *So what?*

- We improve server reliability...
- So your servers keep running smoothly...
- So you avoid server downtime...
- So you avoid frustrations and maximize working hours.

As you can see a benefit can be positive such as keeping your servers running smoothly or it can be negative: avoiding a problem such as server downtime. This works exactly the same with your blog post. Let's have a look.

Do you remember that Henrietta was writing a blog post about visual communication? The *How* are the tips she's sharing to include more visuals in presentations. But what's the *Why*? Why would John include visuals in his presentation. There are several options here: Visuals help engage readers, they help persuade them, and that's how John can grow authority, perhaps earn more money, and even become CEO – that's his big dream.

The *Why* connects Henrietta's blog post to the wishes and dreams of John, her ideal reader. The *Why* explains why he should care to read her post and to implement her advice. This is the most important part of your blog post. The *Why* makes your reader excited. It makes him understand the benefit of investing his time.

To sell your ideas as blogger, you need to remind your reader *Why* he should care.

And I want to point out this word "selling". Because you shouldn't think you're just sharing tips. The internet is chockfull of tips. To stand out you need to sell your tips. And that's why the *why* is so important. The *Why* explains a benefit. And benefits sell.

So here's a quick summary of the two copywriting techniques we've discussed. And I bet you notice how I don't just tell you what the techniques are. I also tell you why you should care. Being more specific makes you more credible and more fascinating. And explaining the *why* makes your readers excited.

That's it for today. In the reading material you find more information about both techniques.

Cheers!