INFO PRODUCT BLUEPRINT

WORKBOOK

Your Comprehensive Blueprint and Action Plan for Creating and Selling a Successful Info Product

CREATED BY **Kenneth A. McArthur**

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INSTRUCTION SHEET

Congratulations on taking action and starting your journey to create your Info Product!

One of the first things I would like for you to realize is that this will take work. For some people this will be one of the toughest things you have ever done in your life.

Build A Success Path

In order to get the most out of this workbook you will want to study it several times. I recommend that as you are going through the workbook you take notes and use highlighters.

As you go through each module, break the sections down to see if each area is one you personally want to tackle or will hire or partner with someone who is an expert in that area.

Answer the Questions and Design Your Plan

As you proceed through each module make sure you pay attention to the questions. As you answer each question follow through with the action steps. These actions steps are designed to make sure you stay on track and accomplish your goal-your very own info product.

Tips And Hints

Italics: Throughout the workbook if you see part of the article in italics, this means that section is from Dan Giordano the workbook editor. Dan will sometimes introduce a contributor, give an overview of the section, or add some comments at the end of a section. It's just our way of letting you know a different person is writing, not the author of the section.

Section Overview: At the start of each section you'll have an overview of the article. As we have many contributors, you'll receive a brief introduction of the author. (For a more detailed contributor information go to the Appendix for information on Info Product Blueprint Contributors).

Things You Will Learn: In the boxes at the start of each topic you will find a list of key points covered in the section. Other points will be covered, but the section emphasis is on the ones in the box.

Notes: Take notes as you read. This is designed to be a working tool for you. So mark it up, highlight and write notes. We want you to succeed and noting important or ah-ha's will help you when designing your plan.

Questions: In the workbook, there are questions included to guide you in the development of your own info product. Take the time to thoughtfully answer the questions. This is the basis of your plan. Some questions will look simple and even repetitive. But it's all part of the blueprint. So take the time and invest in yourself. You will use the information to develop your product and your action plan.

Be patient with yourself. There's a lot of information included in Info Product Blueprint. We've included audios, video and plenty of printed material to help you in your product development. We're already planned on some more updated material that will be posted on the resource page. So make sure you register for the updates (www.infoproductblueprint.com/developer).

We want this to be your reference tool, your guidebook.

YOUR Blueprint for developing an info product.

Seize your opportunity and share your success with us.

The Info Product Blueprint Team

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Dan Giordano, Workbook Manager and Editor
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Ben Blakesley, Audio Editor

Module 5: Copywriting

Info Product Blueprint was created by
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Ben Blakesley, Audio Editor

InfoProductBluePrint.com
your blueprint for creating and launching a profitable info product

Info Product Blueprint
1st Edition

Copywriting

Module 5

Section 1: Copywriting

By Carl Galletti

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Info Product Blueprint

Section 1

Copywriting

Carl Galletti is one of the most successful copywriters online. Read as he shares his tips for making your copywriting effective in selling your product.

What you will learn in this Section:

◆ The 3 critical questions a reader needs to know about copy on your website

◆ Starting points for effective headlines

◆ How to use subheadlines to focus the reader's attention

◆ Tips on formatting and layout to improve conversion

◆ Keys to meaningful testimonials

◆ Search engine optimization through keyword rich copy

Overview

Copywriting is often misunderstood. It is not so much about writing as it is about selling.

Many years ago, an advertising genius, Albert Lasker, made a lot of money in the advertising business. Yet, he couldn't define it to his satisfaction. He knew that if he had a proper definition, he would be able to create even more successful advertising.

Along came an former Canadian mounted policeman named John E. Kennedy who spelled out the definition to Lasker's satisfaction… in only 3 words: "Salesmanship-in-Print."

Lasker went on to be one of the most successful ad men of all time. To this day, no one has come up with a better definition.

So, there you have it. The foundation of all advertising, salesmanship-in-print. Of course, to update it to modern times and go beyond just print advertising, you could call it "salesmanship multiplied." That applies to any medium, whether the Internet, or radio or TV.

Well, now that you have the proper definition, what are you going to do with it?

I suggest that you evaluate all your promotions, paid or not, on the basis of the results it brings in rather than on how pretty it looks or how good it makes you feel to see it. This is the trap that most people get into. They have someone produce a good looking ad and run it. When someone hands them an ugly ad, they reject it and go with the pretty one.

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I've seen this happen over and over again. Yes, and even today, nearly one hundred years after Kennedy defined advertising for Lasker.

If you doubt this, just test it and find out for yourself. But, ever since Kennedy defined advertising as salesmanship in print, people have been turning out ugly ads that get better results than pretty ones. So, don't be quick to judge on looks alone.

In this section on copywriting, I'll try to give you some of the important points you'll need to look out for to produce your own successful ads, websites, etc.

I won't talk much about graphics…only to the point that it makes it easier to get the sales message across. What I focus on is results, not aesthetics.

Getting results makes you money. Aesthetics makes you pretty. Which would you rather be, pretty broke or filthy rich? It's your decision.

The Personal Touch

The first thing you need to learn about the actual writing of the copy is that you should write as if you are writing to one person. This makes it easy for your reader to realize you are directing your thoughts to him or her. It also helps to build rapport with your reader. It further helps you to focus on the most important thing: your reader. And not yourself.

Imagine your reader thinking this as you ask them to read your ad/website:

- So What?
- Who Cares?
- What's In It For Me?

Now, start from there. You have to break through that barrier. There are thousands of advertisers/websites competing for your reader's attention. Therefore, they have to skim everything they come upon and make a quick decision about whether to read further or not.

If the first words they read don't break through this barrier, you will not have a sale.

So, you'll need to say something which grabs their attention (it's the headline and we'll get to that in a moment) and HOLDS their attention throughout.

Here are some ways you can do that.

Notes

First, use "you" and "your" instead of "I," "me," "we," and "us" whenever possible and when it makes sense. This will force you to focus on your reader.

Rather than say, "We have the best product," say, "Your sales will double when you use this product." Do you see how the focus shifted from "you" the seller to "you" the reader?

Another way to add the personal touch is to relate a personal story. Make your product the hero of the story and remember to slant it so that you are always focusing on how the product benefits the user, even though the user may be you.

Headlines

David Ogilvy, one of the most famous of all advertising men, said "Headlines, more than anything else, decide the success or failure of an advertisement."

The first thing an advertisement must do is attract the attention of the reader. Without the reader's attention, nothing else will be read and therefore no sale will be made.

Why is this?

Well, the headline got it's start in the newspaper industry. When the newspaper got so big that no one had time to read every story, they needed a method to pick out the stories that interested them most.

The newspaper industry invented the headline to solve this problem. By putting a short few words in bigger type at the top of the story, readers could decide if they were interested in that story and read it or not based upon their interests. Obviously, different readers had different interests but regardless of what their interests, they could use the headlines to find which stories they wanted to read.

The advertising industry, being allied closely to the newspaper industry (that's how newspapers made their money), quickly adopted the same technique.

So, how do you create good headlines?

The scope of headline writing is well beyond this piece, so I'll give you some resources to follow up on. But, here are some quick tips that will make your headlines much more interesting.

First, address the reader. Yes, that means use the words "You" and "Your" whenever you can.

Here are some famous examples of successful headlines using these words:

- ◆ "Do You Make These Mistakes in English?"
- ◆ "You Press the Button – We do The Rest"
- ◆ "The Skin You Love To Touch"

In general, you should be a collector of successful headlines. By studying them you can possibly find out what made them work and adopt that technique for your own headlines.

There are many different types of headlines that have been successful.

One type introduces a story. Some examples:

- ◆ "They Laughed When I Sat Down…But When I Started To Play…"
- ◆ "A Hog Can Cross The Country Without Changing Trains – But You Can't"
- ◆ "Oh, Darling – You Shouldn't Have!"
- ◆ "The Kid in Upper 4"
- ◆ "The Lazy Man's Way to Riches"

My favorite type of headline is the "How To." For example,

- ◆ "How To Tune A Piano"
- ◆ "How To Win Friends and Influence People"
- ◆ "How To End Money Worries"
- ◆ "How To Get A Better Job"

Another variation of this is to just use the word "How" without the "To." Some examples are…

- ◆ "How I Raised Myself From Failure To Success Through Selling"
- ◆ "How Pepperidge Farm Bread Helps You Keep That Radiant Look"
- ◆ "How This New Invention Is Revolutionizing Concrete Construction"
- ◆ "How The Tin Lizzy Became a Lady"

Here are some things to inject into your headlines:

- ◆ News
- ◆ Specifics
- ◆ Price
- ◆ Special Offer
- ◆ Easy Payment Terms
- ◆ Something for FREE
- ◆ Information of Value
- ◆ Quote/Testimonial
- ◆ Challenge

Notes

For more information on headlines, you may want to pick up the following books:

- ◆ "Tested Advertising Methods" by John Caples
- ◆ "How To Write A Good Advertisement" by Vic Schwab
- ◆ "The Robert Collier Letter Book" by Robert Collier
- ◆ "Ogilvy On Advertising" by David Ogilvy

Subheads

Imagine your reader going through your copy and being challenged for his attention by other things going on in the room. A telephone ringing, a spouse or child wanting something, etc. All of these things are competing for your reader's attention and somehow your copy must prevail.

Subheads, like headlines, grab the reader's attention and re-focus it on what you are saying.

The rule for subheads is to use them to break up the "block" of text that is your copy. They are used in combination with paragraphs, which work fine for a while but every few paragraphs you will want to place a subhead which grabs the reader's attention and announces what's coming next.

I always bold the subhead (just like the headline but in smaller type, closer to the size of the body copy, sometimes slightly larger but never as large as the headline.

On websites I use color to further call attention. Red and dark blue are my favorites. Black is also acceptable as long as it is bold.

Format and Layout

Take a look at popular, successful examples of what you are writing copy for and use the same or similar format for your piece.

In print, I like to use a Times Roman font for the headline and either a Courier (typewriter-like) font or Times Roman for the body copy.

On a website it's different. I use a san-serif type font like Arial or Tahoma for the headline and make it big, bold and red.

Use a smaller version of the same font in black for the body copy – 12 to 14 points is good for most fonts but again, look for examples that look good to you and are easy to read. And, hopefully, are successfully getting results (i.e., "sales"). Then copy their style.

Notes

Do not use a pattern or dark color as a background to your copy. It makes it hard to read. You want your copy to be easy to read. Don't risk chasing your reader away because it was too hard to see the words.

Always stay away from "reverse" copy. That is white letters on a black background or any light color on a dark background. Again, it makes it hard to read.

Don't use more than one font for your body copy. You can use one other font for your headline/subheads but that's it. Too many types of fonts make it look cheap and gaudy. You don't want your reader to look down on your writing even before they read the words.

Use italics sparingly. Italics are very often used for quotes but when the type size is small, it makes the quotes hard to read. You don't want your reader having trouble reading your testimonials, do you?

Italics are best used for emphasis in headlines and only for one to three words at a time.

If you use italics for quotes, try to make the point size big enough to be easily read but not look out of place.

On websites, one technique that is used successfully is to put the testimonial in a box with a border around it and to put a very light yellow background in it. And then use a courier font because that is what most people read personal email in. It therefore gives your testimonials a more "personal" touch.

Stories

Stories are one of the most successful copy techniques of all time. Two of the longest running ads (each ran for about 40 years) are:

- ◆ "They Laughed When I Sat Down – But When I Started To Play…"
- ◆ "Do You Make These Mistakes in English?"

Both of these tell a story.

Other examples include:

- ◆ "The Lazy Man's Way To Riches"
- ◆ "The Story of Two Men"
- ◆ "The Story the Street Car Tells"

The first thing you should know about using stories for copy is that the story "shows" or "demonstrates" the product solving the problem it was designed to handle.

Notes

What many do not know is that the reader injects himself (or herself) into the story, usually as the narrator or user of the product…the one who receives the advantage of using the product.

The whole thing happens at a very subliminal level, which is why it works so well.

The best way to learn how to write story copy is to read a lot of ads that use this technique and practice writing them yourself.

Testimonials

Testimonials are some of the most powerful tools for the copywriter. They represent a user of the product or at least someone willing to endorse the product and certify that the product really does work as described.

Let me tell you a story about a testimonial that helped me in my career. One day Direct Marketing magazine came in the mail and I noticed a picture of Tom Collins on the cover. Tom was a legendary copywriter, so I turned to the article and read it.

A few months later I received a brochure from New York University for their extension classes in the evening. As I was paging through it I noticed a class being taught by Tom Collins.

Even though I lived nearly two hours away, I immediately signed up for the class and drove to New York City once a week for eight weeks to take the class. Mostly, I wanted to be taught by the master himself.

The class was filled with students much younger than I was and they all regarded Tom as being "some old guy" who was probably out of touch with the subject. Nothing could be further from the truth. I was the only one who knew he was one of the world's greatest copywriters.

So, I made sure I got to know Tom. We'd talk after class about marketing and got to know each other on a friendly basis.

After the class was over – I got an "A" by the way – I called Tom on the phone and said I was thinking of looking around at some of the ad agencies in New York for a copywriting position and did he have any advice for me?

Well, yes he had and he made some very good suggestions. Later, I decided to go the freelance route but a couple days after our telephone conversation, I received a "recommendation letter" from Tom.

I later made good use of Tom's recommendation in constructing a testimonial for my copywriting services.

Notes

That testimonial helped get me credentialed as a top rate copywriter and paved the way for me getting assignments with Gary Halbert, Jay Abraham and many other top marketers.

It helped establish my career as a copywriter.

That's my testimonial story.

So, how do you get testimonials? Well, the first thing you do is ask for them from your customers. Usually, your customers will send unsolicited comments about how great your product is. This is especially true of products which are high in quality.

When someone sends you an unsolicited comment, contact them immediately. First, thank them for the kind words and then ask for permission in writing to use their testimonial. It's best to send them a "release" form which basically gives you the right to use their testimonial in any way you see fit and for whatever reason. There are a lot of "standard" release forms around but be sure to check with your lawyer to make sure it adequately protects you.

Sometimes, to stimulate the inflow of testimonials, a company runs a contest or gives away a prize for the best testimonial. You can also give away something of value but low in cost to every person sending in a testimonial.

You should also know that whatever is said in the testimonial is treated by the governmental regulatory agencies as if it was said by you. In other words, if one of your customers makes a claim in the testimonial and you use it in your advertising, you will be required to back up that claim with scientific proof that it is true.

For example, if the customer claims in a testimonial that your skin crème makes them look twenty years younger and you use it in your advertising, a government regulatory agency can ask you to provide clinical proof. You must also show that you had the clinical proof before running the ad.

If you have any questions about the legal ramifications of testimonials and product claims, be sure to consult an appropriately experienced attorney.

One last thing about testimonials that many do not know is that you do not have to include the entire testimonial. In fact, you shouldn't. Just pick out the salient point or points you want to make and leave out the rest, putting in ellipsis (…) for missing words that occur in the middle of the quote.

Notes

Keyword-Rich Copy

On the web there is a special requirement for using words which will get you a better ranking with the search engines.

You can consult the Overture Keyword Search Tool to find what keywords have been used over the last month to search for subjects that fall into your category.

You can find an easy software tool to do the same thing at GoodKeywords.com.

Let's say you are selling "golf clubs." A search at Overture reveals that the third most common search term used with "golf" in it is "golf club." How would you use this information?

Well, the first thing you'd do is use the full term "golf club" whenever you need to refer to a "club," especially at the beginning of your copy.

So, the sentence, "Now pick up your club and hold it…" would then become "Now pick up your golf club and hold it…."

As you can see, it might be a little awkward for a human reading the second sentence but it is still very readable. And for the search engines "golf club" would give you more points than just "club" would. "Club" could mean an organization, etc. With the word "golf" next to it, it would be more closely associated with the actual term you want.

Also, look for other terms that don't exactly have the words that describe your product but are closely associated with it. For example, in the above example, you might notice that "golf gift" is the sixth most searched for term with "golf" in it. Well, your golf clubs would make an excellent "golf gift."

So, instead of saying "These XYZ clubs make an excellent present for that special person in your life," you would, instead say "These XYZ golf clubs make an excellent golf gift for the golfer in your life."

Now, your English teacher would not approve and professional writers might cringe, but the search engines would more accurately place you in their searches.

One other thing, be sure to use proper names and product names in your copy, if those names are searched for terms.

For example, you might mention Callaway golf clubs, if you sell those because they are the eleventh most searched for term with "golf" in it.

And you might want to mention Arnold Palmer, if relevant, because 2500 searches were done for him last month.

Reading Level

The reading level of a piece of copy is a measurable score which approximately tells you what school grade level a piece of text is written for, on average.

This term is often misunderstood.

Those who wish to reach a college market might assume that their copy needs to score at the college level and nothing can be further from the truth.

The fact is that powerful words score at lower grade levels and are much more effective regardless of what your market is.
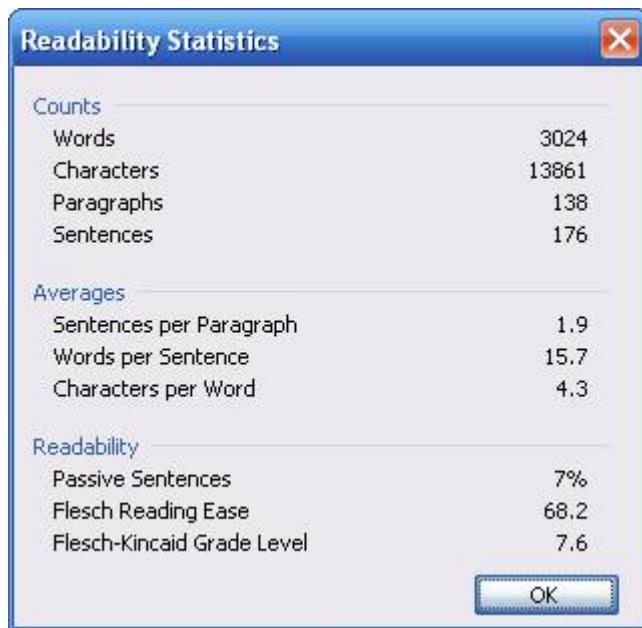
I recommend going for a low grade level on your score. The lower the grade level, the more people will be able to read and understand your copy. If you are trying to reach the most buyers, you will need to appeal to the larger numbers.

If you want to limit your sales, aim for the higher grades (why would you?).

Now, how do you tell what the grade level of your copy is? Simple. If you use Microsoft Word, you must turn on "readability statistics." To do this, pull down the "Tools" menu, select the "Options" choice, select the "Spelling & Grammar" tab and make sure the "Show Readability Statistics" box is checked in the "Grammar" section at the bottom of the box.

If the "Show Readability Statistics" box is not able to be checked, first make sure the "Check Grammar with Spelling" box is checked.

When that is done, the "Show Readability Statistics" box will now be able to be checked. Then, pull down the "Tools" menu, and select "Spelling and Grammar F7." When Microsoft Word finishes checking spelling and grammar, it displays information about the reading level of the document.

Notes

Readability Statistics

Counts
Words	3024
Characters	13861
Paragraphs	138
Sentences	176

Averages
Sentences per Paragraph	1.9
Words per Sentence	15.7
Characters per Word	4.3

Readability
Passive Sentences	7%
Flesch Reading Ease	68.2
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	7.6

Notes

This is an example of what you'll see. The bottom score "Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level" is the one you're looking for.

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Attention Span

Remember, your readers are bombarded every day with demands for their attention. They are continually interrupted. That's why it seems like they have a short attention span.

If you make your copy easy to read and understand, and make sure it is also interesting, you will hold your reader's attention for as long as you need…which is until the sales process is complete and you have the order.

Info Product Blueprint

Copywriting Self-Assessment Questions

1. If you have absolutely no interest in writing copy at this time, the best thing to do is hire or partner with someone who is good at it.

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2. If you are ready to learn more about copywriting, take the time now to watch the DVD with notepad in hand to make sure you get the most out of it.

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Next . . . Module 6: Designing Your Website