

Checklist - 12 Things Your Copywriter Should Ask You

Thinking of getting a copywriter to help write your marketing materials? Here is a basic checklist of things the copywriter should ask you for.

And if you want to get on the good side of your copywriter, have this information ready to give them. While they will likely go into more detail once they start on your project, they will be impressed that you've already done this work. Don't forget – they're looking for good clients to work with too!

A good copywriter will ask for more than this, but this basic checklist will give you a good idea of whether or not your potential copywriter knows what they're doing. If they're not at least asking these questions, you may want to reconsider your choice.

1. Product or Service

Give the name and a description of your product and service.

2. Marketing Project

What kind of marketing piece do you want done – salesletter, brochure, ad, webcopy, direct mail package, whitepaper, radio or TV ad, video script, etc?

3. Purpose

What do you want this copy to accomplish for you? Do you want to make a sale? Do you want the prospect to call you for a consultation or appointment? Do you want them to sign up for a newsletter or a free e-book? Do you want to get more leads for your mailing list? What do you want this marketing piece to do for you?

4. Target Market

Who will this piece be aimed at? Who is going to buy your product or service? Who would be a good prospect for you? One way to think about this question is to ask "Who is my ideal client?" Take the time to create a picture in your mind (and better yet, on paper) of what your ideal client would be like. Are they male or female? What age? What income bracket? Where do they live? What education do they have? And anything else that will give you copywriter a good picture of your best client.

5. Pain/Problem

When you go to sell something you need to do more than just present what that product or service is. You need to give the prospect a reason for buying it. One way to do that is to ask what pain or problem this product resolves. Paint a picture for yourself of what life is like for your client with this problem, and then one of what life is like when they have the good fortune of having your product or service to solve that problem.

6. USP

What is your Unique Selling Proposition? What makes your product different, better, unique? What do you do that is better than the competition? Why should someone buy from you instead of from them? If you can give your copywriter details about your competition, that would be very helpful as well.

7. Features

What are features? They are the facts/data about your product. How big is it? What color is it? What does it do? How fast does it go? What model is it? A good exercise to do here is to list everything you can possibly think of about your product or service that describes what it is and how it works.

8. Benefits

Here's where we start to get to the secret of good copywriting. It isn't the features of your product or service that make people want to buy it. It is what the product or service will do for them. What benefits does the prospect receive when they have/use this product? For example, I'm an artist. Do I really want to pay big bucks for a frame for the painting I did? No. What I really want is the way it will enhance the painting and make my home look beautiful, which makes me feel good. Your copywriter should dig deeper here to the hidden benefits too.

9. Promise

What promise can you make and deliver about this product? This is an important part of your copy. And the best place to go looking for a great promise is in the benefits you just dug up. What is the best benefit your product or service can give your prospect? Your copywriter will help you with this, but take the time to think through what you see as the biggest and best benefit.

10. Offer/Price

What is the offer – price, package, payment options, shipping details, etc?

11. Call-to-Action

What do you want the prospect to do in response to this copy? Do you want them to come into your store to buy something? Do you want them to click a link and enter their information to buy something online? Do you want them to sign up for something? It is hugely important that you tell the prospect very clearly what you want them to do in response to your marketing. And explain why you want them to do that. Just remember that they will be buying for their reasons, not yours – so make sure the why includes a major benefit for them.

12. Past Performance

What other ways have you marketed this product in the past? What response have you gotten from that? Which marketing projects gave you good results? Which didn't? This information will help your copywriter see what has and hasn't worked in the past so they will have a better idea of what to focus on.

There – a dozen basic questions to answer before you get a copywriter involved. Be sure to check out the companion article at www.copywhisperer.com on the questions *you* should be asking of your copywriter.

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After starting business life about as allergic to marketing as you could get, it was the discovery of copywriting and its amazing effectiveness that led Evelyn to become the Copy Whisperer. She has a passion for sharing and using what she has learned to help her clients create more effective marketing copy, whether you are a client who already understands the power of great copywriting or a small business who is hearing about it for the first time.]