



Engineered Copy: A White Paper on How to Create Sales Copy that Works Like a Precision Machine.

David T. McKee, Copyright 2006 all Rights Reserved. www.mckeecopywriting.com

Who is David McKee?

David McKee is a professional Copywriter and Software Engineer who has been writing articles, white-papers, technical documentation, advertising copy, and professional internet software for over 22 years.

But So What?! All that should matter to you is: “Can this guy make me money? Can he sell more of my products? Can he make new prospects flock to my sites and stores?”

Read this white paper and then go to his site. If you just take all the free stuff he has to offer you will make more money!

Engineered Copy simply means that the copywriter understands the principles of creating copy that targets a specific audience in such a manner as to lead to some decision, whether that is a buying decision, or something else.

The question is how do we carry this out? The first thing we need to do is understand and examine the basics:

- What is a “Product”?
- What is a “Prospect”?
- What is the “Decision”?
- What is a “Customer”?
- What is “Copy”?

These may seem like “obvious” points. That is why everyone misses them.

The Product:

The product is the thing you are trying to sell. Did I really have to tell you that?

You may be surprised at how often this most important thing gets overlooked (usually by the marketing department that has its head up in the clouds designing some cool graphics or some obscure “artistic” message). There are several reasons for this...

The product may be an actual, physical thing, it may be a service, and it may just be free samples you are giving away in order to get customers to commit to a bigger product or service you are offering. These things are all important, but they are not what you are really selling...

More important than even the products themselves...is you.

That's right, you (your company, your name, your personality, etc) are the real "Thing" that the prospect is sizing up whether either of you realize it or not! You created the physical item, or perform the service, or you had it made to your specifications through outsourcing. Your personality is all over it! Properly engineered ad copy must be written with the business owner/developer in mind. The advertising copy must ultimately sell you and not just your product. Why is this so important? Simple, you will most likely have more than one product, and you want your customers to think about you and your brand when they buy things. This is called leveraging from previous sales, establishing a brand, and realizing that a *customer* is always easier to sell (and resell) to, than a *prospect*.



It is easier to sell to a customer (someone who has bought something from you) than to a prospect (they have never bought from you)... *If you did what you said you would, and then over delivered!*

- Market your product by marketing you and your brand.
- Deliver MORE than you promise.
- Always offer a Guarantee.
- Keep you and your brand in front of your customers.

Marketing your brand is establishing and fostering a relationship with a prospect that turns them into a customer, that is, a buyer of what you are selling. To do this, you must tell the truth about your product or service, you must over deliver on what you promise, and you must offer a guarantee that what you said you would do, you will do, or your money back. Finally, you must do all you can to make sure your customer never forgets who you are.

You can see from these bullet points that your product is much more than the current physical thing you are trying to sell, it is a relationship you are selling. That brings us to our second and third items in our "Basics" list.

Prospects and Customers.

Prospects:

Prospects are people that you have not currently established or "sold" a relationship to as described in the previous section. They are, however, people who are in your target market, so they are NOT just "anyone". This is important because countless billions of dollars have been wasted marketing to "prospects" who were simply people not within the target market. They were never going to buy the item advertised. That is a waste, and wasted money is the same thing as lost profits.

How do you target to “real” prospects? First you must be able to establish empathy with the prospect who is reading the copy, as it has been famously said for many years:

“You must enter the conversation already occurring in their [the prospects] mind as they read your copy...”

The problem is to be able to know what your prospect is thinking well enough that your copy appears to say exactly what they are thinking, and then lead them to the conclusion you want them to come to. Good copy must be written so that it communicates that you understand their pain, excitement, passion, and most intimate thoughts.

- Study your market and understand the class, gender, age, race, income level, etc. of the sorts of people who buy the types of products and services you are selling.
- Study your competition and know who is a real player, who is established, who is getting in or getting out of the market, then see who their prospects are.
- Ask. Just ask people: “Would you buy this?” you got to do research!
- Do proper Library, Internet, and phone research as well.

There is a much overused term for the above bullets known as “due diligence”, but overused or not, you have to do it. You need to know with laser precision what your market is. You can hire someone to perform this function for you, but you had better make sure they understand your products as well as you do.

There is a real added benefit in researching your prospects which in today’s internet marketing is called “Finding a Niche”. By researching exactly who your prospects are, you will invariably stumble across other individuals who represent markets that are close to yours, but far enough away to represent a new or differentiated market. They want something “like” what you have, but not exactly. By re-packaging and re-branding your product or service you may be able to satisfy this market as well. That could well be worth many times what you spend in time and money performing the initial prospect research.

Here is an example:

You have created an on-line “Holiday Wreath” company and discovered that upper-middle class, and older families are very interested and will pay \$100.00-\$200.00 for large hand crafted Christmas wreaths. In performing your research you happen to give some wreaths away in order to get the “nitty-gritty” details on what people really think about your products and service. While doing this, one of your research prospects asks you:

“Do you by any chance create hand decorated Christmas Stockings pre-filled with goodies?”



It used to be “find a need and fill it”, but today in our super-fast, microwave, Internet market, it’s find (or create) a niche and fill it.

You have just discovered a new market!

Niche marketing is quickly overcoming “need” marketing because in the first place, in developed countries such as America, everyone has the basic “needs” (food, shelter, water, clothing), and in fact even the poorest in America are not naked and starving as in many other countries. “Need” is now redefined as “whatever I don’t have that I want”. I won’t argue the moral state this presents, nevertheless, a better word for markets today is “Niche”. Like the example above, a niche is just a slight twist or differentiation on something that already exists, or is related in some way to something that is already selling like hot-cakes. Now, getting back to the prospect...

Understanding your prospects so you can perform precision target marketing is a vital step in your advertising. You need to make sure that your copy is laser targeted, and you need to be able to examine your prospect research to find new niche markets.

Ultimately you want the prospect to make a decision...

Decision:

Now, when a prospect buys from you, he or she is no longer a prospect, but is now a customer. How are you going to make it an irresistible path from prospect to customer? How do you create marketing messages that creates in them a desire to purchase your product?



Claude C. Hopkins

*Trained as a
chemical engineer*

Frankly it is straightforward. Over a hundred years ago Claude C. Hopkins wrote “Scientific Advertising” which is still in print today. David Ogilvy is quoted as saying that everyone in marketing should read this book at least 7 times. It’s a good bet that most “marketers” never got beyond the first word of the title if they know about the book at all! This book was written by an engineer... an engineer of advertising, but an engineer all the same. (Incidentally Mr. Hopkins was actually trained as a chemical engineer. There are other notable copywriters who where trained this way as well...)

Unfortunately many advertising agencies and marketers are “artists” and can’t be bothered with all the “boring science”, just take a look at some of the weird magazine or TV ads today! And it is spreading to the internet as well. (*Hey, that just means more opportunity for you!*) That is why properly engineered advertising copy will sell your products; after all, engineering is applying proven principles to achieve desired results.

Mr. Hopkins noted that you must do some specific things:

- Target your customer
- Sell to your Customers Wants and Desires
- Use Psychological Techniques
- Use Specifics and Give Details
- Tell a Complete Story
- Know to the Penny the Cost of Your Advertising
- Create a Complete Strategy
- Test, Test, Test!

These basic items when followed will lead to maximum positive decisions to purchase your product over your competitors. If marketing has been done following these principles, and copy created that demonstrates the tactics spelled out using these points, prospects will become customers.

- 1.) First, you target your customer. Whether by focused mailing lists, opt-ins via a web-site, or some other means, you must eliminate, as much as possible all individuals who are not prospects to your product or service.
- 2.) You must know your potential customers wants, needs, desires, and previous experiences as closely as possible, and you must anticipate their fears about purchasing from you.
- 3.) You must be able to use psychological techniques to keep your prospects focused on the “buying funnel”; that series of ever tightly focused steps that ultimately brings them to a buying decision.
- 4.) The ad copy must communicate specific details and tell a compelling story to the prospect, no generalities should be allowed.
- 5.) You need to know how much any particular advertising campaign is costing you, and be able to calculate a Return On your Investment (ROI). If the campaign cannot meet your target ROI, change it or discard it.
- 6.) You must have a complete strategy for you campaigns, and follow it.
- 7.) You must test your ads, your campaigns, and your strategy, always using the ROI feedback to adapt and modify them, discard what is failing, and bring in new ideas. There is one goal, maximize the overall ROI.

Decision in the prospect to become a customer depends on the ongoing execution of the strategies, plans, and campaigns that you set up for your marketing. Increasing ROI is really increasing the number of positive decisions.

Scientific Advertising is available free on my website, and you can even purchase the complete audio version here:

<http://www.mckeecopywriting.com/html/landing/products/sciad.html>

Customer:

Now we have achieved a sale and in the process “converted” a prospect into a *customer*. Do we stop at this point? Only if we want to stop making money. A customer is someone who already knows you and your product. If they were willing to buy from you once (and you provided real value to them) they are much more likely to buy from you again. They are also walking advertisements because if you provided good value and over delivered, they will rave about you to their family, friends, and associates in classic “word-of-mouth” advertising.

Granted, the ability for a customer to be a “repeat” customer does depend on the type of product or service being purchased. I have a friend who builds decks or “outdoor additions” to homes. He does the best work I have ever seen, nevertheless his product is one where most customers he gains only ever use his services one time. On the other end of the spectrum are people who make homemade candy as an example. Here the customers come back again and again.

Notice that the price points for these products are quite different. A pound of handmade chocolate truffles might cost \$35.00. A new multi-level deck might cost \$15,000.00. Quite a difference, however selling both require proper advertising techniques, and both can leverage the customer in many other ways beside just “repeat sales”.

How can we leverage customers in high ticket marketing arenas such as luxury watercraft, multi-level deck additions, or high-end pools? How can Hidden Marketing Assets (HMA) in these types of businesses be leveraged and utilized to create new profit streams?

What we want to do in these cases is to sell add-ons or periodic services, here are some examples:

- Quarterly maintenance on that new luxury boat...
- Monthly pool testing and water balancing service...
- Yearly deck staining and refinishing to keep that deck looking new...
- Selling affiliated business products: radars and sonar’s for your new watercraft
- etc...

Do you have databases of customer names, telephone numbers, and addresses, maybe even email addresses, etc? This data is a hidden goldmine, and perhaps one of the most underused hidden marketing asset that businesses have. Other HMA’s that could create repeat customers are different ways of packaging your business or service, or as in the examples above, creating a service to maintain a customer’s previous “one-time” expensive purchase.



*It's estimated
that a repeat
customer is five
times easier to
get than a new
customer!*

It is essential to leverage the customers you already have, because they already know your product, and are much more likely to buy again from you... if you have given them good service before. It is estimated that a new customer takes 5 times as much effort in money and time than selling to an existing one. That is a huge asset!

The Copy:

Finally, the copy: Engineered copy, as this white paper defines it, is copy that takes the current state of the art, applies the marketing principles that were discussed, and presents the product or service to a targeted set of prospects. It must embrace the art of writing in convincing and psychologically motivating ways that create a desire in the prospect to want to take a particular action (want the product), and ultimately take that action (purchase the product). Engineered copy uses scientifically tested processes and procedures to do this, and avoid unnecessary and useless “art for arts sake” style presentations. Engineered copy has one purpose: to sell as many products and services as possible. Period.

McKee Copywriting:

McKee Copywriting writes engineered copy to sell your products and services -- to get your prospects to become your customers. A precision machine does what it was designed to do and McKee copywriting creates a precision advertising and marketing machine that delivers more profits into your business.

And in business, that is the bottom line.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. T. McKee', written in a cursive style.

David T. McKee