

MODUL PERKULIAHAN ELEARNING

MATA KULIAH - MCJ 301 - PENULISAN ADVERTORIAL

PERTEMUAN 4 – *ELEARNING*

**STUDI KASUS ADVERTORIAL – MAKANAN DALAM KEMASAN**

Dosen

H. Andri Budiwidodo, S.Si., M.I.Kom.

(ID 7715)

Sumber penulisan modul:

Bly., Robert W. 2005. *The Copywriter’s Handbook. A Step-by-Step Guide to Writing Copy that Sells*. 3rd edition. New York: An Owl Book Henry Holt and Company. Halaman 34–xx.

Catatan: Setelah mempelajari BODY COPY pada pertemuan sebelumnya, kali ini mari belajar tentang WRITING TO COMMUNICATE, sebelum melanjutkan pada studi kasus produk makanan dalam kemasan.

**WRITING TO COMMUNICATE**

In an article published in the Harvard Business Review, Charles K. Ramond described experiments designed to measure advertising effectiveness. The experiments showed, not surprisingly, that advertising is most effective when it is easy to understand. In other words, you sell more merchandise when you write clear copy.

In theory, it sounds easy. Advertising deals, for the most part, with simple subjects—clothing, soda, beer, soap, records. But in practice, many advertisements don’t communicate as effectively as they could.

**TIPS FOR WRITING CLEAR COPY FOR ADVERTORIAL**

1. **Put the Reader First.**

In his pamphlet, “Tips to Put Power in Your Business Writing,” consultant Chuck Custer advises executives to think about their readers when they write a business letter or memo.

“Start writing to people,” says Custer. “It’s okay that you don’t know your reader! Picture someone you do know who’s like your reader. Then write to him.”

Think of the reader. Ask yourself: Will the reader understand what I have written? Does he know the special terminology I have used? Does my copy tell her something important or new or useful? If I were the reader, would this copy persuade me to buy the product? One technique to help you write for the reader is to address the reader directly as “you” in the copy, just as I am writing to you in this book.

Copywriters call this the “you-orientation.” Flip through a magazine, and you’ll see that 90 percent of the ads contain the word “you” in the body copy.

The column at left shows examples of copy written without regard to the reader’s interests. The column at right gives revisions that make the copy more you-oriented.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Advertiser-Oriented Copy*Bank Plan is the state-of-the-art in user-friendly, sophisticated financial software for small-business accounts receivable, accounts payable, and general ledger applications.The objective of the daily cash accumulation fund is to seek the maximum current income that is consistent with low capital risk and the maintenance of total liquidity.To cancel an order, return the merchandise to us in its original container. When we have received the book in salable condition, we will inform our Accounting Department that your invoice is cancelled. | *You-Oriented Copy*Bank Plan can help you balance your books. Manage your cash flow. And keep track of customers who haven’t paid their bills. Best of all, the program is easy to use—no special training is required.The cash fund gives you the maximum return on your investmentdollar with the lowest risk. And, you can take out as much money asyou like—whenever you like.If you’re not satisfied with the book, simply return it to us and tear upyour invoice. You won’t owe us a cent. What could be fairer thanthat? |

1. **Carefully Organize Your Selling Points**

The Northwestern National Bank in Minneapolis wanted to know if people read booklets mailed by the bank. So they included an extra paragraph in a booklet mailed to a hundred customers. This extra paragraph, buried in 4,500 words of technical information, offered a free ten-dollar bill to anyone who asked for it.

So, how many bank customers requested the free money? None. Obviously, the organization of your material affects how people read it. If the bank had put “FREE $10!” on the brochure cover and on the outside of the mailing envelope, many customers would have responded to the offer. When you write your copy, you must carefully organize the points you want to make. In an ad, you might have one primary sales message (“This car gets good mileage”) and several secondary messages (“roomy interior,” “low price,” “$500 rebate”).

The headline states the main selling proposition, and the first few paragraphs expand on it. Secondary points are covered later in the body copy. If this copy is lengthy, each secondary point may get a separate heading or number.

The organization of your selling points depends on their relative importance, the amount of information you give the reader, and the type of copy you are writing (letter, ad, commercial, or news story). Terry C. Smith, a communications manager with Westinghouse, has a rule for organizing sales points in speeches and presentations. His rule is: “Tell them what you’re going to tell them. Tell them. And then, tell them what you told them.” The speechwriter first gives an overview of the presentation, covers the important points in sequence, and then gives a brief summary of these points. Listeners, unlike readers, cannot refer to a printed page to remind them of what was said, and these overviews and summaries help your audience learn and remember.

Burton Pincus, a freelance copywriter, has developed a unique organizational pattern for the sales letters he writes. Pincus begins with a headline that conveys a promise, shows how the promise is fulfilled, and gives proof that the product is everything the copy says it is. Then he tells the reader how to order the product and explains why the cost of the product is insignificant compared to its value.

Before you create an ad or mailer, write down your sales points. Organize them in a logical, persuasive, clear fashion. And present them in this order when you write your copy.

1. **Break the Writing into Short Sections**

If the content of your ad can be organized as a series of sales points, you can cover each point in a separate section of copy. This isn’t necessary in short ads of 150 words or less. But as length increases, copy becomes more difficult to read. Breaking the text into several short sections makes it easier to read.

What’s the best way to divide the text into sections? If you have a series of sections where one point follows logically from the previous point, or where the sales points are listed in order of importance, use numbers.

If there is no particular order of importance or logical sequence between the sales points, use graphic devices such as bullets, asterisks, or dashes to set off each new section. If you have a lot of copy under each section, use subheads.

Paragraphs should also be kept short. Long, unbroken chunks of type intimidate readers. A page filled with a solid column of tiny type says,“This is going to be tough to read!”

When you edit your copy, use subheads to separate major sections. Leave space between paragraphs. And break long paragraphs into short paragraphs. A paragraph of five sentences can usually be broken into two or three shorter paragraphs by finding places where a new thought or idea is introduced and beginning the new paragraph with that thought.

1. **Use Short Sentences**

Short sentences are easier to read than long sentences. All professional writers—newspaper reporters, publicists, magazine writers, copywriters—are taught to write in crisp, short, snappy sentences.

Long sentences tire and puzzle your readers. By the time they have gotten to the end of a lengthy sentence, they don’t remember what was at the beginning.

D. H. Menzel, coauthor of Writing a Technical Paper, conducted a survey to find the best length for sentences in technical papers. He found that sentences became difficult to understand beyond a length of about 34 words. And the consumer has far less patience with wordiness and run-on sentences than does the scientist studying an important report.

Rudolf Flesch, best known for his books Why Johnny Can’t Read and The Art of Plain Talk, says the best average sentence length for business writing is 14 to 16 words. Twenty to 25 words is passable, he adds, but above 40 words, the writing becomes unreadable.

Because ad writers place a premium on clarity, their sentences are even shorter than Flesch’s recommended 14- to 16-word average. Here’s a list showing the average sentence length of some ads and promotions:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ad** | **Average sentence length****(number of words)** |
| Velveeta cheese spread Lanier dictaphone IBM PC software Porsche 944 3M/Audio-Visual Division IBM PC database communication Jack Daniels  | 6.78.310.610.613.614.516.2 |

The average sentence length in these and dozens of other ads that measured ranges from 6 to 16 words. The average sentence length of your copy should also fall in this range.

Now, let’s take a look at how you can reduce sentence length. **First**, you should break large sentences into two or more separate sentences whenever possible:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Today every penny of profit counts and Gorman-Rupp wants your pumps to work for all they’re worth.This article presents some findings from surveys conducted in Haiti in 1977. These surveys provide retrospective data on the age at menarche of women between the ages of 15 and 49 years. | Today every penny of profit counts. And Gorman-Rupp wants your pumps to work for all they’re worth.This article presents some findings from surveys conducted in Haiti in 1977 that provide retrospective data on the age at menarche of women between the ages of 15 and 49 years. |

Another method of breaking a long sentence is to use punctuation to divide it into two parts.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| One purpose is to enable you to recognize and acknowledge the importance of people who handle people from the company president right down to the newest foreman.The outcome is presentations that don’t do their job and make others wonder whether you’re doing yours. | One purpose is to enable you to recognize and acknowledge the importance of people who handle people—from the company president right down to the newest foreman.The outcome is presentations that don’t do their job . . . and make others wonder whether you’re doing yours. |

Copy becomes dull when all sentences are the same length. To make your writing flow, vary sentence length. By writing an occasional short sentence or sentence fragment, you can reduce the average sentence length of your copy to an acceptable length even if you frequently use lengthy sentences.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Over thirty thousand aerospace engineers are members now. To join them, send your check for $146 with the coupon below and become a member today.Now, discover the Splint-Lock System, a simply beautiful, effective, and versatile chair-side splinting technique that helps you stabilize teeth quickly, easily, and economically. | Over thirty thousand aerospace engineers are members now. Jointhem. Send your check for $146 with the coupon below and becomea member today.Now, discover the Splint-Lock System . . . a simply beautiful, effective, and versatile chair-side splinting technique that helps you stabilize teeth. Quickly. Easily. And economically. |

Train yourself to write in crisp, short sentences. When you have finished a thought, stop. Start the next sentence with a new thought. When you edit, your pencil should automatically seek out places where a long string of words can be broken in two.

1. **Use Simple Words**

Simple words communicate more effectively than big words. People use big words to impress others, but they rarely do. More often, big words annoy and distract the reader from what the writer is trying to say.

Yet big words persist, because using pompous language makes the reader or speaker feel important. Some recent examples of big words in action:

In his sermon, a Unitarian minister says: “If I were God, my goal would be to maximize goodness, not to eternalize evil.”

In a cartoon appearing in Defense News, a publication of the Westinghouse Defense Center, a manager tells his staff: “I want you to focalize on your optionalizations, prioritize your parametrics, budgetize your expendables, and then schedualize your throughput.” Fred Danzig, writing in Advertising Age, asks why an E. F. Hutton executive says the market might “whipsaw back and forth” when he could have said it “will go up and down.”

In advertising copy, you are trying to communicate with people, not impress them or boost your own ego. Avoid pompous words and fancy phrases. Cecil Hoge, the mail-order expert, says the words in your copy should be “like the windows in a storefront. The reader should be able to see right through them and see the product.”

The column at left lists some big words that have appeared in recent ads, brochures, and articles. The column at right offers simpler---and preferable—substitutions.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Big Word** | **Substitute Word or Phrase** |
| assist automobile container database diminutive eliminate employ facilitate facility finalize garment indicate obtain operate optimum parameters prioritize procure perspiration purchase substantiate select superior utilize terminate visage  | HelpCarbottle, jar, packageinformationsmallget rid ofusehelpbuilding, factory, warehousefinish, complete, concludesuit, shirt, dresstell, say, showgetrun, usebestfactorsset priorities, rankgetsweatbuyprovepickbestuseend, finishface |

Small words are better than big words whether you’re writing to farmers or physicists, fishermen or financiers. “Even the best-educated people don’t resent simple words,” says John Caples. “But [simple words] are the only words many people understand.”

And don’t think your copy will be ignored because you write in plain English. In Shakespeare’s most famous sentence—“To be or not to be?”— the biggest word is three letters long.

1. **Avoid Technical Jargon**

Industrial copy isn’t the only writing that uses technical jargon. Here’s a sample from a Porsche ad that ran in Forbes:

The 944 has a new 2.5-liter, 4-cylinder, aluminum-silicon alloy Porsche engine—designed at Weissach, and built at Zuffenhausen.

It achieves maximum torque of 137.2 ft-lbs as early as 3,000 rpm, and produces 143 hp at 5,500 rpm.

The 944 also has the Porsche transaxle design, Porsche aerodynamics, and Porsche handling.

Like many Forbes readers, I’m not an automotive engineer. I didn’t know that torque is achieved in ft-lbs, or that 3,000 rpm is considered early for achieving it. I know hp is “horsepower” and rpm “revolutions per minute,” but I don’t know whether 143 hp at 5,500 rpm is good, bad, or mediocre.

The point is: Don’t use jargon when writing to an audience that doesn’t speak your special language. Jargon is useful for communicating within a small group of experts. But used in copy aimed at outsiders, it confuses the reader and obscures the selling message.

Computer people, for example, have created a new language: bits and bytes, RAMS and ROMs, CRTs and CPUs. But not everybody knows the vocabulary.

A business executive may know the meaning of “software” and “hardware,” but not understand terms like “interprocess message buffer,” “asynchronous software interrupt,” and “four-byte integer data type.” When you use jargon, you enjoy an economy of words, but you risk turning off readers who don’t understand this technical shorthand.

Computer experts aren’t the only technicians who baffle us with their lingo. Wall Streeters use an alien tongue when they speak of downside ticks, standstills, sideways consolidation, and revenue enhancements. Hospital administrators, too, have a language all their own: cost outliers, prospective payments, catchment areas, diagnostic-related groups, and ICD-9 codes.

Because advertisers are specialists, it is they—not their copywriters—who most often inflict jargon on the readers. One of my clients rewrote some brochure copy so that their storage silo didn’t merely dump grain; the grain was “gravimetrically conveyed.”

When is it okay to use technical terms, and when is it best to explain the concept in plain English? I have two rules:

**RULE #1**: Don’t use a technical term unless 95 percent or more of your readers will understand it. If your client insists you use jargon that is unfamiliar to your readers, be sure to explain these terms in your copy.

**RULE #2**: Don’t use a technical term unless it precisely communicates your meaning. I would use software because there is no simpler, shorter way to say it. But instead of using deplane, I would just say, “Get off the plane.”

1. **Be Concise**

Good copy is concise. Unnecessary words waste the reader’s time, dilute the sales message, and take up space that could be put to better use.

Rewriting is the key to producing concise copy. When you write your first draft, the words just flow, and you can’t help being chatty. In the editing stage, unnecessary words are deleted to make the writing sparkle with vigor and clarity.

One copywriter I know describes her copy as a “velvet slide”—a smooth path leading the prospect from initial interest to final sale. Excess words are bumps and obstacles that block the slide.

For example, a writing consultant’s brochure informs me that his clients receive “informed editorial consideration of their work.” As opposed to uninformed? Delete informed.

Another such brochure refers to “incomplete manuscripts still in progress.” Obviously, a manuscript still in progress is incomplete.

Make your writing concise. Avoid redundancies, run-on sentences, wordy phrases, the passive voice, unnecessary adjectives, and other poor stylistic habits that take up space but add little to meaning or clarity. Edit your writing to remove unnecessary words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs.

Here are some examples of wordy phrases and how to make them more concise.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Wordy Phrase** | **Concise Substitute** |
| at first glance the number 20 free gift whether or not a general principle a specific example he is a man who they managed to use from a low of 6 to a high of 16 a wide variety of different models approximately 17 tons or so expert specialists simple and easy to use can help you can be considered to be most unique the one and only comes to a complete stop the entire issue dull and boring on an annual basis in the form of exhibits the ability to as you may or may not know as a substitute used in place of features too numerous to mention John, Jack, Fred, Tom, etc.feminine hygiene products for women children’s toys where you were born originally your own home a product that you can use RAM memory\*  | at first20giftwhethera principlean examplehethey usedfrom 6 to 16a variety of modelsapproximately 17 tonsspecialistseasy to usehelps youisuniquethe onlystopsthe issueboringyearlyascanas you may knowa substitute formany featuresJohn, Jack, Fred, and Tomfeminine hygiene productstoyswhere you were bornyour homea product you can useRAM |

1. **Be Specific**

Advertising persuades us by giving specific information about the product being advertised. The more facts you include in your copy, the better. Copywriters who don’t bother to dig for specifics produce vague, weak, meaningless copy.

“If those who have studied the art of writing are in accord on any one point,” write Strunk and White in The Elements of Style, “it is this: the surest way to arouse and hold the attention of the reader is by being specific, definite, and concrete. The greatest writers—Homer, Dante, Shakespeare—are effective largely because they deal in particulars and report the details that matter.”

When you sit down at the PC, your file of background information should have at least twice as much material as you will end up using in the final version of your ad. When you have a warehouse of facts to choose from, writing copy is easy: You just select the most important facts and describe them in a clear, concise, direct fashion.

But when copywriters have little or nothing to say, they fall back on fancy phrases and puffed-up expressions to fill the empty space on the page. The words sound nice, but say nothing. And the ad doesn’t sell because it doesn’t inform.

Here are some examples of vague versus specific copy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Vague Copy** | **Specific Copy** |
| He is associated in various teaching capacities with severallocal educational institutions.Adverse weather conditions will not result in structural degradation.*Good Housekeeping* is one of the best-read publications in America. | He teaches copywriting at New York University and technical writing atBrooklyn PolytechThe roof won’t leak if it rainsEach month, more than five million readers pick up the latest issue of*Good Housekeeping* magazine. |

.

..