

HOW TO INJECT FRESHNESS INTO YOUR COPY

BY COPYOPOLIS

A little ignorance can be a good thing.

Agencies, design firms, and marketing consultancies derive part of their value from bringing an outsider's perspective to client projects. But long-term relationships and daily contact with clients can erode that independent vision and foster an insider's mindset — undermining the objectivity, innovativeness, and originality that are essential parts of effective marketing.

One savvy strategy for keeping things “fresh” is to add a professional freelance writer to this creative mix. Here's why:

Professional freelance writers think like customers. Ironically, not knowing everything about a client's business can be a critical benefit, one that makes writers ideal advocates for the client's customers.

With a closed creative circle, agencies, design firms, marketing consultants, and their clients sometimes end up addressing themselves rather than end customers, assuming a level of understanding about the business or a familiarity with its language that might not exist outside that circle. A professional freelance writer detects such problems and helps address them.

Professional freelance writers are accustomed to writing for the audience. Besides being the objective outsider in the creative circle, they have

the specific talents needed to develop effective copy that reflects the customer's point of view.

Professional freelance writers are strategic thinkers, capable of asking tough questions such as:

- Does our messaging and copy speak to the customer or down to the customer?
- Are we providing information of real value or merely engaging in self-promotion?
- Are we making correct assumptions about what customers may or may not know?
- Are our levels of friendliness and familiarity appropriate?
- Does our approach respect the time and intelligence of our customers or is it wasting both?

Professional freelance writers can detect costly oversights. They come to the table with an early warning system for information that can shorten the shelf life or usefulness of produced materials — names, claims, even verb tenses — and thus save clients real dollars. The same goes



Photo illustration by Berry Villegas

for the writing process itself with unnecessary research, revisions, and so on.

Professional freelance writers are focused on results — not on formal writing. When asked to write, some people tend to “go formal” and overwrite, remembering their English lessons on sentence structure, grammar, and composition. So they write (for the most part) correctly, but maybe not effectively. Professional freelance writers know that correctness in marketing writing has more to do with understanding audience, message and objective than with rigid textbook rules. Appropriate and effective style is relevant.

Professional freelance writers enjoy injecting that fresh point of view into marketing. By nature, they are quick learners with inquiring minds, adept at mastering and sharing knowledge. They have an enthusiasm for asking the kind of “what if” questions that can unleash pent up creative thinking and propel creative thought in new directions.

Strengthening your team with a professional freelance writer will help you create more effective and customer-oriented marketing for valued clients. It's a solid investment for keeping them happy and connected to your organization. ■

**STUDIO
TOP 5**

**WAYS TO KEEP YOUR
MARKETING FRESH**

- 1 Embrace the customer's point of view.
- 2 Be strategic and ask tough questions about established assumptions.
- 3 Watch out for mistakes that can shorten a project's shelf life or usefulness.
- 4 Avoid the grammar police. Remember, being effective is more important than being correct.
- 5 Add a professional freelance writer to your team. It's a great way to propel the creative process in new and more effective directions.



Copyopolis is a joint marketing venture of six Atlanta copywriters. Together, they have experience in every aspect of marketing communications for agencies, nonprofits and Fortune 500 companies in industries from agriculture to utilities, writing everything from sales literature to scripts to sweepstakes promotions. If you don't have a staff or you just don't have the right in-house talent for a specific project, take a trip to www.copyopolis.com.