

WRITE BENEFITS TO SEDUCE *Buyers*



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Write Benefits to Seduce Buyers

Imagine you live in Toronto.

You've met a fantastic girl and she's agreed to come out for dinner with you.

You've booked a table at the famous Sushi Kaji restaurant. It's one of the best and most expensive restaurants in the world. You've managed to secure seats at the bar, where you can watch the chef prepare his sensational sushi. Could there be a better place to impress a girl?

You're excited about your evening. You meet up for an apéritif nearby. While you're having a beer together, you reveal what the plan is for tonight.

Her smile disappears. She frowns. She looks almost angry. What's up?

You've booked the best restaurant in town. You've secured the best seats in the restaurant. But it turns out she's not so keen on seafood.

This might sound like a silly story, but it happens to businesses all the time. They highlight features and specifications without thinking whether their ideal reader is interested. They highlight a low price while their ideal customer wants to avoid reliability issues. They focus on ease of use while their ideal customer wants to look trendy.

You can rave about the exquisite taste of the sushi, but if a girl prefers meat to seafood, you're wasting your time.

Before you consider what your product or service offer is and how you

HOW TO WRITE BENEFITS THAT SEDUCE BUYERS

want to sell it, think about who you want to sell to first.

When you can visualize your ideal customer, it becomes much easier to consider how your products and services can make their life better.

People are interested in themselves. They want to know how you can help them to be happier, healthier, or more productive. Which problems do you solve? How do you help your customers save costs or make more money? Those are the important questions you need to answer before you can start writing your web copy.

In this article you'll learn:

- Why you should focus on benefits and problems
- What the difference is between features and benefits
- Why people don't buy from you

At the end of this article you'll find two worksheets that help you plan your web copy before starting to write.

Any questions or comments?

Email me: Henneke [at] EnchantingMarketing.com

Enjoy!

Henneke

Why you need to focus on benefits and problems

Of course you love to talk about your company. Your products. Your services.

Maybe you're excited about the recent improvements you've made to your service, or about the new skills you've learned. Or maybe you have spent many months developing new features for your products.

You're selling your product or service, so that's what you need to write about.

Right?

No. The hard truth is that nobody is interested in you, your company, or your products.

Why not?

People are only interested in themselves.

To sell your product or service, you need to address your ideal customer's self-interest. Such as:

- Save time
- Reduce costs
- Make more money
- Become happier

HOW TO WRITE BENEFITS THAT SEDUCE BUYERS

- Become more productive
- Become healthier
- Reduce stress
- Work less and have more leisure time

Famous direct response writers like John Caples, Eugene Schwartz, and Joe Sugarman have all said it: To sell your products, you need to focus on the benefits to your readers.

So, what about problems? Why are problems interesting for your reader?

Features, specifications, and even benefits are dull. Writing only positives slowly lulls your reader to sleep because nothing grabs his attention.

To keep your reader paying attention, you need to introduce a few problems. A problem makes your reader's heart rate go up, gets him excited, and makes him pay attention to the solution you offer to deal with that problem.

You can't just talk about the benefits of working with you; you also need to mention the hassle you prevent, the headaches you cure, and the glitches you avoid.

For instance: Imagine you're a web developer in Austin. You build websites in WordPress. This means the content on a website can be easily updated by your customer. Your customer avoids the hassle of having to ring or email you to change a word here or there because they can do it themselves.

Most benefits can be reformulated as a problem you avoid. Your

HOW TO WRITE BENEFITS THAT SEDUCE BUYERS

restaurant service is quick, so you avoid delays. Your cruise control keeps your eyes on the road rather than on your speedometer, so you prevent accidents. You automatically bring fresh flowers to your customers every week, so you avoid the hassle of re-ordering flowers.

Which is better? A straightforward benefit or the avoidance of a problem?

That depends on your reader. What interests her more—gaining a benefit or avoiding hassle? If you're not sure, ask your customers or test different web copy.

The difference between features and benefits

Features and benefits often get mixed up. The distinction sounds simple: Features are facts about your products or service. Benefits are what your product does for your readers.

Features often get translated into fake benefits. Fake benefits are benefits your readers aren't interested in. Or they are advantages rather than benefits.

Imagine you're selling an oven. One of its special **features** is a fast preheat system. The **advantage** of this system is that the oven heats up to 400° F (200° C) in just five minutes. The **benefit** is that a cook doesn't have to hang around until the oven is finally warm enough. It makes cooking less stressful and you have a much better chance to get dinner ready in time even if you're extremely busy.

Let's go back to the web developer example. You're based in Austin, working with local businesses. The advantages of your location are that you can meet with your customers quite easily, you can gain a better understanding of their business, and therefore create a better website.

None of these advantages are real benefits. To find the real benefit, ask yourself, *So what?*

For example:

You're based in Austin so it's easy to meet with local customers.

HOW TO WRITE BENEFITS THAT SEDUCE BUYERS

So what? You can gain a better understanding of their business.

So what? You can create a website that's better aligned with their business.

So what? The website can target the right audience, and your customer can make more money.

That's a real benefit! Making more money is something most of your customers are interested in.

Once you can't answer another *So what?* question, you've found a real benefit.

In most cases, you can create a combination of a problem, benefit, and feature.

For instance: You're a coach helping small business owners take their business to the next level. You work one-on-one with clients. You offer a structured approach to developing a business strategy and action plan.

Below follow two examples of a problem >> benefit >> feature:

Example 1:

*Avoid getting stuck (problem) >> grow your business (benefit)
>> structured coaching sessions (feature)*

Example 2:

*Avoid business burnout (problem) >> a more balanced life (benefit)
>> development of an action plan to improve your time management (feature)*

Why people don't buy from you

You want to be persuasive because you want people to buy your products. But it's not enough to tell your audience how good you are and how much they'll benefit from working with you. You also have to anticipate their objections and overcome them one by one.

You need to reassure potential buyers. Do they think you're too expensive? Do they hesitate because they don't think they need your product? Or are they concerned about quality?

If you're unsure, call a few customers and ask them: Before they decided to buy from you, why were they in doubt? What were the obstacles to buying from you?

Your Worksheets

On the next pages you find worksheets to help plan your web copy.

List all potential reasons why your ideal customer might be interested in buying from you. Don't worry whether these reasons are important or not. At this stage you just want to be as complete as possible.

Once you've created a list of problems and benefits, try adding the features that match.

As a small business owner, you are an important part of your business. Don't forget to think about what's special about you. What's the benefit of working with you? Think about how you run your business, how you treat customers, and your approach to business. Include your personal "features" and "benefits" on your list.

Your list of features, benefits, and problems

Features are facts about your products. Benefits are what the product does for your ideal reader.

<i>Features</i>	<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Problems you avoid</i>
<i>Cruise control</i>	<i>Keeps your eyes on the road</i>	<i>Fewer accidents</i>
<i>Action plan to improve time management</i>	<i>A more balanced life</i>	<i>Burnout, feeling overwhelmed</i>

Your list of objections

Why does your ideal customer hesitate to buy from you?

Consider how you can address these objections.

<i>Objection</i>	<i>How to address this objection</i>
<i>Too expensive</i>	<i>Do you save your customer money in the long run? Do you provide more value? Do you help your customer make more money?</i>

Further reading



This article is based on chapter 2 of the book *How to Write Seductive Web Copy*.

*“If you’re looking for an easy-to-read, easy-to-apply guide for writing your own copy, you want *How to Write Seductive Web Copy*. It could well be the most practical guide on the market today.” ~ Kathryn Aragon, Managing Editor, The Daily Egg*

This book describes a 6-step process for writing persuasive web copy:

1. Make your copy persuasive by describing your ideal reader
2. Create a comprehensive list of features and benefits; highlight the problems you solve for your customers
3. Write an enticing value proposition
4. Decide how many web pages you require and write a first draft
5. Edit your draft copy to make it more appealing, engaging, and persuasive
6. Optimize your web text to seduce search engines to send you more web visitors

Each chapter includes one or two assignments. You can plan, write, edit, and optimize your web copy while reading this book.

The book has received a star rating of 4.7 out of 5 (based on 37 reviews on Amazon.com). [Click for further details.](#)

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