Jennifer Klitzke

Mary Ringstad

Advertising Copywriting

Assignment: Chapter one summary and editing exercise

Draft 1: 400 words

Edit: 200 words

Final edit: 169 words

11 February 2009

<center>Advertising vs. Creative</center>

In chapter one of <u>The Copywriter's Handbook: A Step-By-Step Guide To Writing Copy That Sells</u>, author Robert W. Bly notes that there are two "camps" in advertising: creative and hard-sell (7). This chapter was written to inform and persuade readers to know the difference between effective and ineffective advertising.

Aside from Bly's obvious bias toward graphic designers and creative types, illustrated through sweeping generalizations that they are all inept to think like salesmen, the author makes solid points about effective advertising. Effective advertising does three things: 1) It gets the reader's attention; 2) communicates; and 3) persuades the reader to act with the goal of increasing sales. Ineffective advertising, on the other hand, seeks to be clever, entertaining, fashionable, and beautiful for the sake of winning awards, inflating egos, and padding portfolios.

An effective advertising "copywriter is a salesperson behind a typewriter" (1) and "sells the product without drawing attention to" himself (6). An effective advertising copywriter writes clear, concise copy that respects the intelligence of the reader and presents the product with

integrity and without fluff that softens the sales message. Ineffective advertising copywriters seek to use advertising as a means of self-promotion and seek applause rather than sales.

Bly also provides an overview about the contents of his book: step-by-step instructions to writing clear, concise copy; writing persuasive copy that gets attention; the variety of media; the copywriting industry as a business; and roles within advertising.

Finally, Bly concludes with the Internet's impact on copywriting. While the Internet is cost effective, fast, and accessible, the proven principles used to write effective advertising still hold true. Four challenges that copywriters encounter with the Internet are: 1) consumers have a reduced attention span; keep copy concise; 2) consumers are bombarded with sales messages, so copywriters need to carefully choose words that speak directly to the target audience and bring product benefits to life; 3) consumers are skeptical and resist hype and fluff, so copywriters need to provide solid, credible content; and 4) consumers are busy, so save readers time.

In conclusion, while there is a place for entertainment, fashion and beauty, it isn't in advertising copywriting. An effective advertising copywriter knows the target audience and chooses words that grab attention, bring product benefits to life, and inspire consumers to act; all the while doing so in the most cost-effective format that generates the greatest return on investment.

The Copywriter's Handbook: A Step-By-Step Guide To Writing Copy That Sells

by Robert W. Bly

Aside from Bly's bias that creative types are inept to think like salesmen, he informs readers in chapter one to know the difference between creative and hard-sell advertising. Bly makes three points about effective advertising. 1) It gets the reader's attention; 2) it communicates; and 3) it persuades the reader to act. In contrast, creative advertising seeks to entertain for the sake of winning awards, inflating egos, and padding portfolios.

Effective advertising copywriters promote products, not themselves. They write clear, concise copy that respects the reader's intelligence and present products with integrity by omitting fluff that clutters the sales message.

Bly describes the Internet's impact on copywriting. While the Internet is cost-effective, fast, and accessible, the proven principles used to write effective advertising still apply. Consumers are busy and have reduced attention spans. They are bombarded with messages, are skeptical, and resist hype. Effective copywriters choose attention-grabbing words that bring product benefits to life before the target audience, and inspire them to act, while utilizing cost-effective formats that generate the greatest return on investment.

There is a place for entertainment, but it isn't in advertising.

Creative vs. Hard-Sell Advertising

In chapter one of <u>The Copywriter's Handbook: A Step-By-Step Guide To Writing Copy That Sells</u>, author Robert Bly describes two "camps" in advertising: creative and hard-sell (7); the latter works best. He informs and persuades readers to know the difference between ineffective creative advertising and effective hard-sell advertising.

Creative advertising copywriters seek to entertain for the sake of winning awards, inflating egos, and padding portfolios. In contrast, effective hard-sell copywriters promote products, not themselves.

Bly makes three points to writing effective hard-sell advertising that also hold true for today's Internet writing. It must 1) grab the reader's attention; 2) communicate; and 3) persuade. Effective hard-sell copywriters carefully choose credible content that cuts through the clutter and clearly communicates product features and benefits—quickly and concisely—to targeted readers in ways that inspire action; all the while doing so in the most cost-effective format that generates the greatest return on investment.

While there is a place for entertainment, it isn't in advertising copywriting.