



How to Write Better Copy part one transcript

Welcome to part one of How to Write Better Copy. In this part of the course, we are going to look at the importance of understanding your target market. So let me start with a question. Who are your clients? I'm willing to bet that whether you said the answer out loud or whether you said it in your head, or whether you've scribbled it down, your answer will have run something along the lines of, my clients are SMEs, or they're engineering companies, or they're blue chip companies, or they're financial advisors, or their solicitors or their homeowners, and so on, and so on, and so on. You get the picture, they're perfectly valid answers. If you were to say to me in a conversation, who are my clients? I would say to you that my clients are small businesses and marketing agencies, and those answers are right, but let's think about stop and think about that for a moment.

And think about the age old cliché. That is a cliché for a very good reason. Businesses don't buy from businesses. People buy from people. It's a cliché that you need to bear in mind when you are writing because you aren't writing for a business, you are writing for the person in that business. So let me give you my example. So I might say to you that I work for small businesses and I work for marketing agencies. But more specifically than that, I would say to you that I work for small business owners. Specifically I work for one small business owner called Peter, who is in his mid fifties, who owns his own business and it's reached a certain level of success, but he recognizes that if he wants to take it to the next level, he needs to start outsourcing more work and specifically outsourcing his marketing. So that one, it's saving him time, and two, it's helping him to get better results. I work for marketing agencies, specifically, I work for account directors in marketing agencies. And even more specifically than that, I work for a marketing director called Sarah who has got a team of copywriters in house, but sometimes the, the company's going so well that she needs extra copywriting support. And when that happens, she needs to find somebody that she can trust that she can outsource that copywriting to.

What have I done there? I've created two client avatars. Client avatars are virtual people that embody the characteristics that your typical clients or your ideal clients have got. Why is it important to create a client avatar? Lots of reasons. It helps you focus much more clearly on the things that are important to your customers and your potential customers. It helps you write in a way that connects you with your reader and speak to them so that it feels like or they feel that you, they, you really understand the problems that they're facing. And I think more prosaically than that. It also really helps when you sit down in front of the blank screen or the blank sheet of paper. It helps overcome writer's block because rather than writing for a potential audience of thousands, you are actually only writing for one person. And it's like, Hey, you can have a conversation with them when you are writing. So let's have a recap. Client avatars are virtual people that embody the characteristics that your typical clients or your ideal clients have got. If you've got one target market, you've got one client avatar. If you've got two target markets, you've got two client avatars potentially, and so on and so on. When you build a client avatar, it helps you see your clients as real people with real lives and real fears and real successes. And when you've got that picture in your mind, you'll find it much easier to write copy that appeals to them.

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I would guess that you know what's coming next, and it is the exercise to create your own client avatar. Attached to this video, below this video, you will see a pdf download that gives you the list of questions that's coming up on the next slide so that you can work through them. So let's have a look at what those questions are and what those things, things you need to know about your avatar so you can start to see what it involves. Okay, so you need to know the gender of your client avatar so that they've got a persona for you. You need to think about their age because somebody in their twenties has got different fears and different interests and uses different language even to somebody in their fifties. You need to know where they're based because it puts them in a place where you can picture them.

It's also a, a practical consideration. If you only work with people within a 50 mile radius, then you know you need to think about that. And, and it means that when you're writing copy, you can, you can refer to places that they will understand and recognize if you think that's appropriate. It might not always be if you are. You also need to know their education level. This is purely practical. Somebody who's only got GCSEs is gonna have a different standard of language or a different level of language to somebody who's got a PhD. So you need to, you'll be able to pitch your language and your writing at an appropriate level. You need to know about their income. So you start to get an insight into whether they're struggling or they're successful. And then following on from that where your product or service fits into that, whether it's gonna be an aspirational purchase for them or whether it will be a day-to-day purchase for them. You need to know their occupation

If you're writing business to business, then that's, that's a kind of given really that you'll, you'll know what their occupation is. But if you are writing for consumers away from their working lives, then knowing their occupation gives you an idea about whether they're a blue collar or a white collar worker, for example. You also need to know about their shopping habits, whether they're shopping waiters or whether they shopping Tescos, for example, whether they like designer clothes or whether they're just looking for essentials all the time. You need to know about their interests so you know what they're like in their spare time. You need to know about their motivations that might be getting more security for their family or getting more security for their old age or whether it's more for their, for them about enjoying their life and making memories for the future, for example.

And you need to know about their fears. I.e. what keeps them awake at night that might be losing their job or losing their business if they're a business owner. Or it might be, you know, taking their career to the next level or taking their business to the next level. And finally, once you've done all of that, you need to give your client avatar a name so that they become a real person in your mind.

How do you know the answers to all these questions? I think there are several ways to do it. One is to think about your customers – your favourite customers who you enjoy working with – and use them to compile an avatar. If you're just starting out and you don't have customers yet, you can imagine who you want to target. If you really want the gold standard, you can speak to a few typical customers and get the real answers directly from them.



And don't worry that you're excluding people by creating a client avatar. Your copy will focus on how your product or service solves people's problems. It doesn't matter if they're male, female, 20 or 50, they'll be able to see your problem. And by the tone of voice you take in your writing, whether it's formal or informal, light-hearted or serious, they'll know whether they like the sound of you and the way you work.

So good luck with your client avatar. So just to conclude this section, when you are writing, you need to write as if you're talking to your avatar and it will help your writing to really come alive. So good luck creating your client avatar, and I will see you in part two.

