



How to Write Better Copy part two transcript

Welcome to part two of How to Write Better Copy. In this section of the course, we are going to be looking at using benefits and not features. Now let me just give you an introduction to the concept of features and benefits. Selfish as it sounds, the only thing that anybody really wants to know is what's in it for me? So when it comes to writing marketing materials, you need to keep that question in mind and you need to think about what is in it for your readers. This means always making sure that they know why your product or service is so good and what it's going to do for them. For example, I write marketing materials, but that's not very interesting or useful to anybody. That's because it's the feature. The benefit is that I help you to grow your business by writing marketing materials that attract new customers and retain existing ones. In other words, it's the benefit that makes people realize that they need what it is that you are selling.

Let's take a look at what that means in practice. And I'm gonna take as an example, some text from the webpage for an HD television. Now, the text that you can see on the screen in italics boasting a hundred Hertz blb technology is the feature. And if you were to see that on its own, you would say, okay, fine. And unless you are a technical, a really properly technical person, I doubt that you would know what a hundred Hertz blb technology was or why it was so good. Happily, it's been explained for us. So you can see that blb technology will ensure smooth on-screen motion with reduced motion blur and great picture clarity, even if you're watching fast-paced action movies or sport. And suddenly you can see, oh yes, that is, that's, I understand now why I, I need that technology in my television because it means I'm gonna be able to watch the football and see every blade of grass on the pitch.

I think if you think back to the first part of the course where we talked about client avatars, you'll find this particularly interesting because immediately you'll be able to see that this piece of text is pitched at men and specifically sports fans. I think if, if it were p if it were aimed at, at women stereotypically, it might say something like the a hundred hertz b l b technology, which means smooth onscreen motion and reduced motion blur. So you can see all the details of all the frocks no matter how fast they twirl on strictly. So just to recap, the benefit is what makes people realize why they need the product or service that you're selling. And you can also see that the benefit may differ depending on who it is that you are aiming at. So to take another example, if you were, if you were selling SUV cars, if you wanted to appeal to busy mums on the school run you might highlight the fact that it's got an enormous boot so that you can chuck everything in without having to worry about space.

And then you can drive off knowing that your, you and your family are protected with all the safety features. But if you are appealing to their husbands, then the space and safety are gonna be important to them. But you might want to focus on the sleek styling. That means that they'll look cool and the drivability will be still be good so that, you know, they won't have compromised anything. Having had a family you might say that this incre this is incredibly stereotypical and you'd be absolutely right. But what I would say is next time you are watching any advertising and, and, and car advertising, look at just how stereotypical it is. It's a really interesting thing to do. Another way to look at features and benefits is



something that we use in marketing circles called Selling the Sizzle and not the sausage. So a sausage is a pretty unappealing thing. It's, it's, you know, it's ground up meat in a skin, pretty horrible sounding. But when you think about it sizzling away in a frying pan, it's actually really delicious and you can't wait to start eating it in a similar way. This is from a Marmite advert and in one word and two pictures, it absolutely sums it up. Toast and the black tin of, of yeast based extract, when you combine them, it's yum. It's delicious. It's a really simple concept.

So two tips to help you get to the benefit of whatever it is that you do. You use the, which means that construction. So the feature, which means that this is the benefit. So for example, thinking back to my client avatar of Peter, the small business owner, I might say something like, I write clear and effective marketing materials, which means that my skills will save you time and help you grow your business. I use these words because the two things that business owners are worried about in principle are not having enough time and not having a business that is as successful as they would like it to be. Similarly, if I was writing copy for an account director and a marketing agency, I might say something like, I write clear and effective marketing materials, which means that you can free up your in-house resources and get something you'll be proud to put in front of your clients.

This is because account directors will be worried about having enough capacity in-house and meeting all the deadlines, and also they'll be wanting to make a good impression on their clients so that they can win more work in future. You can see that in both cases the focus is on saving time and making money, but the reasons and the motivations behind those are very slightly different. The other thing you can do is use the so what test. So if you say something about your business and it would be reasonable to say at the end of it, so what, then you are using the feature and not the benefit because you haven't explained why it's important to people.

So to help put that into practice there is an exercise to do on understanding features and benefits and there is a download underneath this video which has got information about a corner store, a corner store called Healeys, and there are several features on the download. And what I would like you to do now is pause the video and think about what the benefits of each of those features might be to you. And when you've done that come back and I will carry on and I will talk you through what I think some of the benefits might be. What welcome back, how did you get on with the exercise? Okay, let's run through what I think could be the benefits are for each of the features on that download. So the first one, Healeys is open from 7:00 AM till 11:00 PM Monday to Saturday. The benefit of that is that the shop is gonna be open when you need it so you can shop before you go to work or after you get home from work. And you don't have to worry about dashing home to catch it before it closes about half past five.

Secondly, Healeys stocks, fresh local produce so you can be sure you're feeding your family well, you'll be reducing your food miles and you'll be supporting other local businesses, is what I would say the benefits to those, to that feature would be. Then Healey's also stock store covered items such as rice, pasta, tins and bleach. In, in other words they've got everything that you could need if you open the cupboard and suddenly realize you don't have the ingredients for tonight's tea, so you don't have to go far to get the



basics that you need in an emergency. And then there is, healeys has been established for 30 years and is a family run business. In other words, they're trustworthy, they're friendly, and they are part of your local community.

I just want to take a moment to stop here for a minute and talk about non-profit making businesses for charities and so on. We've talked so far exclusively about the benefits for businesses that make a profit. So people are exchanging money for, for something that you do or something that you sell. If you're a non-profit making company, you might be thinking how do you pitch the benefits in, in our case there are two ways to do it. You focus on the outcomes of the work that you are doing. So you're appealing to people's better nature. So you are saying that if you, if you donate money to our cause, if you, if you work with us, then other people's lives will be made better. Then you also appeal to the to their selfish side again. So you make, make personal appeals to them. So if they are volunteering their time, they might be making more friends or gaining additional skills that will help them in their working environment or if they're going to be running a race or, you know, taking part in an event, then it might be helping them to get fitter and healthier and so on and so on. You get the idea.

So now I'd like to move on to the second part of the exercise involved in this part of the course, and that is to assess the features and benefits of your own business. So we'll just conclude this video and then there is another download to allow you to kind to list the features and benefits of your own business and start to think about those. But just to recap, in conclusion, when you are writing about your business, you always need to make sure that you are answering the question that your reader will be asking, what's in it for me? Good luck with the features and benefits of your business, and I will see you in part three.