

“Bla Bla Notices”

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Do you feel like your website is not helping you accomplish your marketing goals? Then in this free report, I’m going to show you ...

“How To Carry A Conversation That Actually Makes Sense Between You & Your Prospect”

As a veteran copywriter turned creative writer and author, I know a thing or two about selling. Let me teach you how to infuse the power of ethical persuasion in everything you put on your website, from your about page to your blog posts.

**From the desk of Razvan Rogoz
Taipei, Taiwan**

Dear friend,

What makes good content be good?

It is not SEO.

I guarantee this.

Writing for Google is a losing game. If you want to write for algorithms, you are about five years late to the game. After Penguin and Panda and all the other Google updates (generally Google names updates to Google's ranking algorithm after animals), the only reliable way to get on the first page of Google is to have an old domain, to have a lot of good backlinks or simply to pay and use their advertising service.

It still amazes me how people try to write for SEO and how many believe that having 20% KW density actually makes a difference.

Google SEO reminds me of a small story / fable that I've heard at a self-improvement event.

A young girl was sitting with her mother in the kitchen. Her mother was preparing her fish, her favorite food. Her mother cuts the fish in two before putting it into the frying pan.

She's intrigued and asks why.

Her mother tells her that her grandmother prepared her fish the same way and that she learned this way from her. If she would like to find out how, then she should ask her grandmother.

So the little girl goes to her grandmother and asks the same question.

The old woman shrugs and tells her that when she was her age, her mother, our little heroine's grandmother used to cut the fish in half and since she learned from her mother, this is the way she knows how to do it.

Frustrated, the little girl goes to her grandmother and asks the same question. The very old woman looks at her with a look of curiosity (as she couldn't understand why she is being asked this) and replies.

“Darling, when I was very young, a bit older than you, we had a very small frying pan. We used to cut the fish because otherwise it would not fit in it”.

It's amazing how many people do the same thing. They do what others have done and others have done that because others before have done it without even realizing why.

Personally, while SEO is still an important tenant of Internet Marketing in general, writing for algorithms and not for humans is such an error. It worked ten - fifteen years ago but this idea has been so popular that even if the algorithms changed, even if content farms are penalized heavily, even if Google now rewards good content (it is hard to understand though what is classified as good content) and long form content, people still use a method that was valid a decade ago and this trend won't stop anytime soon.

So no.

It is not SEO. Ask any SEO expert (which I'm not) and he'll tell you exactly the same thing.

So is it the ability to write as a true writer - as a published author? Is it about using complex metaphors and touching on deep and complex themes?

Well, in all honesty, if your website sells construction equipment or you are doing web design or you are a clothing store, that's a big no.

Sure, artistic writing has a purpose and there are places where it helps. But as a general rule of thumb, writing in a fancy way just makes people lose patience and interest. Everyone asks "what's in it for me?". Nobody wants to read poetry or complex literature on your about page or on your home page.

They want to understand why they are here ... what they're going to find useful ... why they should believe you ... and what is the next action to take. I've seen many copywriters who come from a liberal arts background and fancy themselves as Proust as opposed to actually writing for an audience.

Marketing materials are not literature.

If I pay \$25 on Amazon for a book, I pay to read it. Nobody wants to read marketing materials. They'll read them only up to the point that is helping them improve their lives. The difference between a book like *Of Men & Mice* or even as *Fifty Shades of Grey* and your website content is that there is an intrinsic motivation to read the books while there is no such desire for your content. Literature has value in itself, marketing materials rarely do (unless they're advertorials) so keep literary writing when you're writing literature.

When you're writing marketing materials - keep it simple and to the point.

So it is not SEO and it is not the ability to write as a literary genius. Please, don't do this, in my extensive experience as a copywriting coach and marketing trainer, I've seen this mistake repeated more than any other mistake combined. You don't want to sound fancy. You want to educate and persuade. It's a huge difference.

I can also add here writing as an academic. You never want your copy to sound as a manual or as a dry academic book. People have an obligation or a desire to read those for achieving your goal. Yours are marketing materials. There's no momentum whatsoever for doing this.

So if it is not these two - what it is? What makes good content?

Well, I'm glad you've asked.

Good content or copy accomplishes a goal. In 99% of the cases, the goal is the same. This is to get the reader to take some action. You don't want to inform. You want to use any communication that you have towards the purpose of moving the relationship forward.

This action can range from a sale to opt-ing to finding out more about your company. Each piece of content on your website, no matter if it is your about page, your contact page or even your team page must be used towards the purpose of either establishing, straightening or evolving the relationship that you have with your reader.

Let me better explain this to you.

If the visit of a prospect on a website would be the equivalent of a phone call, most businesses would go like this.

“Hello ...

Hello ...

How are you?

I'm good, you?

I'm good, thanks.”

... uncomfortable silence.

I kid you not. This is the reality of most marketing communications entrepreneurs do in their about pages, home pages, landing pages, email marketing and especially in their blog posts.

They either don't carry a conversation with the prospect whatsoever (talking about them as if they are on Wikipedia - which is a deadly marketing sin, if your copy sounds like an Wikipedia page, you're doing something wrong, very wrong) or they carry a meaningless conversation that leads nowhere.

It is a waste of your time and it is a waste of his.

I mean, imagine this.

You're a salesman. You've been invited into the office of a prospect. You have five minutes of his time. Would you rant about things that don't matter? Would you talk about things he doesn't give a crap?

Sure, you can do that but you'll head home empty handed. I don't think any salesman would ever do this. Yet, many entrepreneurs do this on their website. Instead of talking about what is relevant to the prospect, instead of talking about his needs, his skepticism, his obstacles, his goals, they talk about anything but that.

There is a reason to this. Most entrepreneurs don't have a marketing or a sales background. For me or for someone working in marketing this is obvious but for someone working in an operational role, of course it is not. I can't ask an accountant (CPA) to understand this by default just as you can't ask me to understand a financial statement, no matter how simple it may be.

So most entrepreneurs think in terms of organizational structure or in terms of products but less in terms of the prospects. As a trained copywriter, it is a

habit to think in terms of “what’s in it for him”, “he’s skeptical, every claim must be proved” and “make a value proposition through almost everything you do for him”. But when I think about it, before reading about 100 books on sales and copywriting, of course I didn’t knew this.

Well, no matter if you are qualified or not, you’re going to find the following lessons useful. In the next pages, I’m going to develop on seven strategies / principles / things you must do in order to successfully market on your site. I’m not going to include sales letters / VSLs as this is not a guide on direct response copywriting but rather, how to make content work for you, be it an about page or an blog post on Wordpress.

“Strategy #1 - Define Your Goal”

Writing for writing sake doesn’t make a lot of sense.

Yet, this is how most people write. Writing is a vehicle. Once you understand this, it becomes far simpler. Writing is a form of human expression, of taking a concept, an idea and transmitting it to others.

This is especially true on a website and it is quite simple.

When you write your about page, what is your goal? To tell him about you? Well, he doesn’t care about this. Chances are that unless you’re Elon Musk, your prospect cares a bit more about what you can do for him than who you are.

Is it to show authority and credibility? This is a good goal. Is it to show how you are positioned different, how you do things differently from everyone else in your industry? This could be too. It is how you go against the status quo or maybe how you are very conservative and this conservatism has kept

your business growing for the last 110 ten years - like many businesses in the UK are? This works too.

But nobody wants to know the boring information about you. That's what you use to get a bank loan, not to sell. People want to have a reason to work with you and the purpose of your about page should be expressing this reason. If you are the cheapest, make this a theme and explain why you're the cheapest and why they are not sacrificing anything when working with you. If you have a reputation, focus on that.

Focus on transmitting something. At the end of the page, the prospect must be one step closer in the sale process. He can trust you more or be inspired by your story or have a strong reason in the form of your USP (unique selling proposition) on why he should deal with you.

Before you write a single word, decide on what are the purpose behind those words. Imagine that you're sitting with your customer at a table. Would you ramble about who you are and what you do or would you simply tell him what you can do for him? That's a goal and different markets have different goals.

Another way to make everything goal oriented is to end it with a call to action. After the page is done don't just leave him. Tell him to call. Tell him about that discount you're offering for first time customers. Invite him to take a survey. Ask for his emails. Push the sale forward. This is the most important thing - push the sale forward. If your content doesn't get him closer to becoming a buyer (or buying more if he already is one), then it is hard justifying it having on your website.

Once again, you're not writing literature. You're writing content and copy. It is action oriented, goal oriented. Even when you write a blog post, the rule applies. This is because while you may not tie the blog post to selling

something (you can definitely do, it's called an advertorial or at least this is how marketing pieces that combine education and selling are called), you want him to take some action like implementing the lesson, reading the next blog post, visiting a website, downloading a report, etc.

There are only three steps here.

The first one is to determine upfront what is the goal of your page. Remember, writing for writing sake doesn't make sense. Each piece on your website is like a sales call. It may not make the sale but it will get you closer to your sale. Sometimes you write to build credibility, other times you write to position yourself in the mind of your prospect but write knowing that you're heading somewhere.

The second one is to determine how you're going to do this. When you set a goal, the means generally become obvious. It is hard to write if you don't know why you're doing it but if you want for example to share a story that positions you as an expert, the how-to becomes quite easy. Even so, now that you have your goal, ask yourself what is the best way to implement it.

The third one is to look at everything from the eyes of the prospect. Imagine that you're not the boss. Imagine that you are just a person on the street that doesn't know you, doesn't like you and just wonders what you can do for him. Keats call this the negative capability but in practice it is just seeing things impartially. As an entrepreneur this is the hardest thing you can do because you are too close to the product and you expect everyone to know what you know. In the moment you gain that new perspective, 90% of writing copy is solved for you.

If you can answer the question "what's in it for me" to every paragraph that you make (in this case, what's in it for your prospect, that makes him actually want to read that), you'll be ahead of 90% of all entrepreneurs.

“Strategy #2 - Talk To A Single Person”

Your market may be made out of 500 people or 500.000.000. However, when your prospect visits your website, he is not doing it in a group. He's doing it alone so it make sense to talk to that person.

Your content must always be a conversation one on one. Imagine that you're talking to a friend. A good mind trick is to imagine a real conversation. In a normal conversation you don't start a monologue that takes 30 minutes to listen about your company mission statement. You actually carry a conversation.

Of course, in writing he can't reply but even if you can't have a two way conversation, you can be conversational. This means that you're talking to him, like I do now. I imagine my reader and I write accordingly. I don't write to my market. I write to you, whoever you may be. You may be a man or woman, young or old, liking my attitude or despising me but I write directly to you and this is why I was also writing great copy before.

This is not so much a writing trick as it is a psychology trick. Good music does this. There are many songs that talk directly about your feelings, your emotions, your circumstances even if that person never knew you. That's the definition of conversational. There are many movies in which you feel like the characters deal with you or you identify yourself in a character. House MD is a great example, many people identified themselves with the anti-hero.

The closest thing you get to this is writing an email or having a conversation on Skype. Aim for that style. Imagine that you're writing an email to your prospect. This will prevent you from writing for writing sake and from talking about things that has no interest for him.

“Strategy #3 - Back Up Your Big Claims”

This is a tricky one.

In theory, when you make a big claim (we’re the best, we’ve done the most sales, we have the best product, etc), you should back it up with proof. Proof should be linked to big claims like peanut butter goes with toast.

However, in practice, most people aren’t thinking that critically. There are some folks out there who can see inconsistencies and who are very skeptical of everything you say but most will simply accept something you say as true.

Nevertheless, if you make a big claim, it is better to back it up with proof and not need it than to need the said proof and not have it. It can’t hurt you.

Proof comes in many forms.

The most basic one is reason why. If you say something, explain why it is true. On a most complex level, you can add anything from newspaper clips to scientific journals to authority statements.

This is among the first lessons you learn as a copywriter but honestly, knowing what works online nowadays, I’d say proof is important but you don’t need a water-tight case. You’re not facing cross-examination in front of a persecutor so add some reasonable proof and move on.

At the same time, I don’t know a single website that was hurt by having too much proof so it is a balancing act. You don’t want to encumber your reader but you want to acknowledge his skepticism and not expect him to blindly believe whatever you are saying.

“Strategy #4 - Promote Benefits, Not Features”

A feature is the physical aspect of something. A benefit is what it does. A feature is the stainless steel construction in a kitchen knife. The benefit is that it cuts very well and you never need to sharpen it. A feature is the camera on your phone. The benefit is taking pictures with it.

People don't buy features. When you buy a car, you don't buy the steel and the glass that makes the car. When you buy a house, you don't buy land and the bricks that the house is made from. You buy transportation and prestige in the first case and comfort and security in the second.

If I go to Ikea and I buy a drilling machine, contrary to what my girlfriend may sometimes believe, I'm not buying it because it is a piece of machinery and men like these things. I buy it because I need to make some holes in the wall.

This is common sense and yet, most people have no idea on how to do this.

Let's take writers. I've got myself a Fiverr account. I don't think I'll ever work there but I do buy gigs, especially for proof-reading. I've also read a few of the writing gigs being offered. Almost everyone is offering words or writing. They're selling the feature. But nobody wants to buy words. They want quality content that they can use towards accomplishing a given goal. They don't want to hire per hour, they want to get the job done. They don't want 5000 words, they want a small eBook. It is a small but such a considerable difference in knowing that everyone wants what your product or service will do and not what it is. While we may use words that signify the features (because we don't go to the car dealership and buy transportation nor do we go to the coffee shop and buy instant energy), we always pay for the benefits of those given words.

Now if you want to get fancy, there are theoretically five levels in the feature benefit scale. This is not like a framework so this doesn't mean you need to use each one, but rather, they are more and more complex ways of expressing a feature.

The first level, obviously is a feature. It is the physical aspect. No explanations required here.

The second level is the reason why. Why this feature exists. This is different from what it does.

The third level is the functional benefit. This is what it does on a practical level. The phone is the feature. It exists so you can communicate. It helps you make phone calls.

The fourth level is the dimensionalized benefit. This is a situation in which you use it. You're selling not only the benefit but the experience itself. "You'll be amazed at how clear the voice of the other person sounds, like he's sitting just beside you. You'll be able to stay in touch with your loved ones and hear their voice as if you are having a dinner conversation even if you're 5000 miles away".

The fifth level is the emotional benefit. Usually the dimensionalized and the emotional benefits get tied together or at least this is how I like to do it. This is what emotions your benefit will bring like joy, release from frustration, pride, etc.

Here's an example for something quite simple - a lawn mower machine.

This is a lawn mower machine (feature). It exists so you don't have to mow your lawn manually (reason why). It allows you to cut the grass really fast and effective in just 30 minutes (practical benefit). You'll start it up, get behind it

and in just 20 - 30 minutes you'll have a lawn that looks like it has been painted or that it is a football court. Everyone will ask you what have you've done to have such a beautiful lawn (dimensionalized). You'll feel relieved because you don't have to work hard anymore, you'll be proud of your lawn and great work and you'll enjoy every moment of doing this (emotional).

Now I don't know how accurate is the above as I don't have a lawn and I don't like lawn mowing machines but this is how the progression looks. From such a skeleton you can move to a paragraph of benefit based copy or even several.

Don't use this as a checklist because it is not. It is more a mindset, that of taking what you're selling and putting it through several filters (reason why, practical, experience, emotional).

“Strategy #6 - Stories Sell Quite Well”

Information was passed from generation to generation in form of stories. Long before writing, reading and other forms of recorded information, knowledge was passed verbally from the elders to the youngsters and generally, it was done through the form of stories.

It is safe to say that stories are wired into our psyche just as the idea of love and friendship is.

Now, honestly, I suggest you read the book on story-telling, the one and only “The Hero With One Thousand Faces” by Campbell. It is a book that deals with mythology, psychology and the archetypes in story-telling and while extremely dense, it is a fascinating read about story-telling, like something you never read before.

Getting back to our topic ... people don't want to read mission statements and biographies. Those are boring. They carry no emotions. They carry no drive. They'd rather hear about how you've come with your idea, how you've struggled to get here, how you've become who you are today.

You have a story to tell. Chances are that you haven't woken up one day an entrepreneur but rather, you've went through a rollercoaster of circumstances, with good times, bad times and a lot of drama. Most people had. You think nobody cares. People do care about that. People care more about the stories you share with friends after two beers than a mission statement that sounds just like everyone else in the industry. People want to see that there's a human being behind it, a personality, especially when the company is small.

As with everything else, it is about striking a balance. You don't want to go on and on about your life but you want to show that there's some romanticism, some drama behind how you got here, you want to give people something to relate. This is true no matter if you're big (think Apple and Steve Jobs) or if you're small (think solopreneur or a one person service provider).

In the past I hated using stories about myself. Yet, when I've started doing it, both in my personal interactions and in my marketing materials, people became far more receptive to me. They weren't dealing with a salesman anymore. They were dealing with a human being.

I don't know if I can teach you how to write a story here. There's a lot to it. My advice is that if you don't formally learn story-telling to just express yourself as you would to a friend. We are all story-tellers. It is in our genes. We know how to express ourselves through stories than through any other means. The only difference is that all people are able to tell stories while only some know how to write them.

“Strategy #7 - Actually Have Something To Sell”

There's a sad truth.

The world is not getting smarter.

The content on most platforms is getting dumber by the year. If in the past, thought provoking was good and evolution was asking more questions and thinking at a higher level, now we slowly move back to instinct based consumption.

I don't want to go on a rant on this. You know it too. Fake news, videos that are getting smaller and smaller, tweets that have no relevance to our lives and so on.

So be the person who is not like that. I'm not saying that if you operate at a higher level you're going to make more sales. The truth is that a YouTube channel that offers trivial advice about life is going to get 100 times more views and readership than a book like “Fooled by Randomness” by N. Taleb. But I can tell you that you want to be positioned as a very intelligent person and business in your prospect's mind.

Yes, you're going to not appeal to most people but you're going to be special to a few who really appreciate what you have to say. So if you really want to build a strong brand, don't dumb down your content. Don't make it appeal to the lowest common denominator. Be smart. Talk smart. Show to people that you're different. Yes, you're going to turn away many but you're going to become the preferred business or provider of those who appreciate you for this.

Of course, this works for lawyers, CPAs, writers, designers, web designers, consultants and maybe even for some small business. But you can make it

work in almost any niche. In any market, any group, any niche there are a lot that are doing the same thing and one that acts as an authority. There are clothing stores and there's that place where you get your own consultant that spends four hours with you to pick the perfect suit or dress. There are places that sell cars and there are places where there's a guy that knows even the weight of the pistons in the engine. There are places where you buy computers and there are places a guy or gal with glasses (I know, it is a cliché) will explain to you in great detail why option A is better than option B.

Being an expert, an authority helps a lot. Most people don't look for an authority, most people don't want to carry a 45 minute intelligent conversation on potential options but simply hear "this is the best, I promise you" but I've tried this strategy and I've attracted my dream clients. It works.

“So What Now?”

I don't know how to teach you everything there is to know about writing efficiently and effectively. There are many books on this topic. Stephen King on Writing is a great book on storytelling and generally how to structure plots. Ogilvy on Advertising is a great book on creating ads for TV and media. On Writing Well is a great book on how to write stylistically well, one of the must read for any advertising man.

If you want to learn more about this, do your own research. Writing has been along for such a long time that you can find advice that is 500 years old or 5 days old. If anything, you'll find a huge similarity between what the old philosophers have to say and what the content marketing experts of today are promoting.

What I can do for you is help you with your project.

I'm a content marketing expert for hire.

I'm new at this in role, but not in practice. This is because copywriting is generally considered far, far harder than writing articles or eBooks and I have at least 5000 hours invested in practicing copywriting. That may not sound impressive but it is writing about two hours a day, each day, for about seven years.

I haven't become a content marketing expert because it pays better. Copywriting is the highest paid form of specializing writing. I've become this because I enjoy writing and expressing ideas and I'd like to do this for you too.

I'd like to help you with your eBook, with your website content and with your articles. So here's my advice. Let's have a call or a chat. Drop me an email at razvan@razvanrogoz.com and let's take it from there. Let's see how I can help you, one step at a time.

Sounds good?

Thank you for reading and I'm looking forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Razvan Rogoz

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