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222 Chapter 6 - Writing Great Copy for Search Engines (and Readers Too!)

B2C6-1

SEs care about words!

Writing great copy takes time + practice

Hiring is an option - but will cost you!

Setting a routine makes writing easier

I. Writing Online copy

222 A. Brainstorming Tips - call out box - what to write if can't think of anything

1. Think about what your customers most often ask
2. Write down the most ridiculous claim your ^{competitors} make
3. Search for latest news of your industry
4. Look at every p/s you offer - break it down + write
ex accounting = tax, bookkeeping, cash flow
5. Get thoughts written down first - then tweak it
6. Now - edit: remove stop or filter words

B. Avoiding stop + filter words

223 Stop words = words SEs ignore. a, about, are, at
slow reader's progress

Removing them → clearer writing

Filter words - words that may cause SE to ignore page!

224 Ex - adult entertainment. Ex. bullshit

Stop characters - words that confuse a SE

special characters & , @ : use entity: +amp;

C. Keeping it simple

1. Pare down # of words wherever possible
2. Avoid slang + colloquialisms
3. More syllables + make you sound smarter
readers may skip sentence altogether

- 225 D. Using active voice = clearer, easier to read & to optimize
 Ex. ~~was~~ learned vs. were taught
 Ex. our mechanics perform top notch bicycle repair
 you already know ripe greens health benefits.
 Frank says I love this EPA form vs. we are Frank's favorite

E. Getting to the point

Standard writing style: $\begin{matrix} & & x & x & x & x \\ & & & x & x & x \\ & & & & x & \end{matrix}$

Starts broad then gets to the point

226 But 5E lend more weight to text at top of page
 If point is at the bottom

1. 5Es accord it less relevance - if includes target phrase
 move it up!

2. Readers are likely to give up

State your value proposition at the very top!

F. Writing scannable copy

Break imp. points up in to separate bullets
 + short, punchy paragraphs

G. Finding the right keyword density

- 227 1. Write your copy first, w/o considering key phrase
 2. Look at competitor's pages
 3. Review what you wrote - inc. 10% $\rightarrow$ copy than comp.
 4. Use same keyword density they did, with a
 max. density of 3 to 4 %

Replace synonyms with key phrase

II. Writing a Great Title Tag

5Es display keyword tag at top of each item in 5E
 well-written tag $\wedge$ chances readers will click it

A. Getting past your brand

Don't put brand first! Focus on a high ranking and a click

Ex. Seattle Bike Repair - Harrison's Bikes

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better: Seattle Bicycle Repair + Sales

SE ignores anything over 65 characters

B. Avoiding Keyword Stuffing

Avoid putting keyword into title tag > once

C. Telling your story

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Title tag = first, so make it say something imp.

What sets you apart?

Ex. Bicycle Repair + Sales - Rated Seattle's #1 Bike Shop: ^{Harrison's} Bicycles

D. Making it readable

Should make sense all alone

Ex. Seattle Bicycle Repair + Sales - gives a rel. in local search

If people create a link to your page, they'll use title tag

Should clearly define the pg. to which it points

If use database-drive site: make sure you can edit title

III. Writing a Great Description Tag

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Meta description tag ≠ directly affect ranking

But, well-written one can → a searcher to click it!

Search engines often use it as snippet

If you don't have one, SE uses other text

+ guarantee what it'll choose!

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Keywords will be in bold format, so choose words well

Put in a call to action - and your phone #

For db, make sure you can edit the meta tag

IV. Connecting Headlines to Copy

Heading = first text that customers see. Like title,
Needs to stand on its own + contain key phrase

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And - needs to directly support the H below + who + title

Writing should get to the point, + the point
= should be clear in 1st paragraph

Writing a great landing = an art all its own
www.copyblogger.com - by Brian Clark

Ogilvy on Advertising by David Ogilvy

V. Avoiding a Verbal Meltdown

Write for your customers

Keywords > ≠ matter if your customers

Rankings leave page within 10 seconds!

VI. Setting a Writing Routine

His schedule - writes about w. 3 times/week for 30 min

Writes whatever comes to mind

$\frac{2}{3}$ of time - edits copy + puts it online

$\frac{1}{3}$ of time - yield a nice list of ideas to use later

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1. Find at least 30 min/week + schedule it on calendar

2. Get egg timer or some way to keep time

3. Go somewhere quiet, or put on noise blocking headphones

4. Set timer, + write for 30 min. straight

+ ponder - just write! Edit later

5. Stop, after 30 min.

6. Later in day, review what you wrote

Check typos! If worthy, post. If not, keep - add to it later

Brainstorming before you write helps

VII. Hiring Writing Help

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Bus. owners rank fear of writing almost as high
as fear of public speaking

Do the necessary brainstorming (section I A of chapter ^{p. 222})

Then go to www.elance.com or similar site

Book I chapter 7 has other hints

someone will still need to organize the copy +

create the title + meta description tags

Or - hire an SEO pro