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"Preflight" Direct Response Copy Checklist

**"Roger, Roger. Flight DR007 ready for
takeoff...destination...PROFIT!"**



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Before we begin...

Let's take a step into the mind of our prospective client/customer and break down their key question, "what's in it for me?" into four questions.

1. Why should I read your pitch or listen to you?
2. Why should I believe you and what you have to say?
3. Why should I do anything about what you're offering?
4. Why should I act now?

A couple of options.

1. Answer the four questions above

OR

2. answer the 23 questions below

Note: Please take a few minutes to review the items on this checklist. The goal is to make sure I have all the direction and information I need BEFORE I write.

Accurate completion of this checklist significantly reduces time spent rewriting copy and almost always ensures an accurate first draft that's very close to being ready to mail or go live.

Rewriting copy is painful and expensive for client and copywriter. It can be easily avoided.

This checklist also helps to define the product/service plus the vital components of a successful direct marketing campaign.

Please fill in the details in a Word or Pages document or you can record an MP3 or even record a video directly from your computer—or we can speak on the phone or through Skype... whichever is easiest for you. Save as a PDF if you prefer. Please feel free to include links to websites and attach any and all marketing materials...EVERYTHING is useful and valuable.

If we have already spoken, I have included information from previous conversations...plus included any research to date. This information is in RED and please verify this information.

Thank you for your business and for taking the time to go through this "pre-flight" questionnaire. And yes, I fully admit the "destination profit" thing is a touch "outré" but hey, it's all about conversion, right?

Direct Response Web Copy Questions

Note: the success of your sales effort for the product/service depends in large part on making every answer simple to understand. For example...being able to tell someone in 15 seconds or less why they should pay attention to what you have to say (the elevator speech)...or an offer that can be understood in 15 seconds or less...or a crystal clear guarantee...

Response decreases when the product/service tries to do too much and the product tries to be everything to everyone...ditto with the offer, etc.

Name of the product/service...

Please describe the product/service in detail (features)

What is the primary problem this product/service solves?

Please describe the people in this conversation.

The person/company doing the persuading is...

The person you're trying to persuade is...

If you had a gun to your head and you had to list the ONE benefit that's most likely to make someone buy the product or service, what would this be?

EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AND IN BLUE FOR A REASON...what YOU think is important about the product/service is often COMPLETELY UNIMPORTANT to the potential client/customer. Your clients/customers will tell you what's important if you ask...for example, I always ask potential clients...what's most important to you when it comes to a copywriter? The answer almost always differs from what I think is important.

What sort of social proof can you provide?

Articles about your and the product or some type of article about what you offer from the media...

For example...The ACME Halitosis Eliminator recently appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show and was even mentioned in an article in The Wall Street Journal!

Reviews...Amazon uses reviews (stars). Google uses reviews (stars)...put these in the copy or below the P.S. Can you get some of these? Even three or four can be useful.

If the copy is from a specific person, (e.g. owner of company or the inventor of the product) please detail and provide a bio.

How does the copy fit into the marketing strategy/tactics?

Please list the benefits of the product/service.

What are specific numbers associated with the results this product generates?

For example...from 2000-2010, if you had invested in this stock fund, you would have generated a 2% return. But if you had used the Vector Stock Investing System, your \$100,000 would be worth \$312,555 today

OR

Last month, a client saved \$5,670 over list price on a home.

OR

A Vector Insulation customer reduced their July power bill...in the heat of summer, from \$149.55 to \$54.20.

What's the emotional trigger?

What is the unique selling proposition of the company and the product/service?

What is the value proposition of the product/service?

What would you recommend as the primary motivator (can be one or all).

- FEAR
- GUILT
- GREED
- EXCLUSIVITY

- SOLUTIONS

What do clients especially like about the business and the product/service?

Is there are a story associated with this product/service?

What is the price of the product service? Do you want it on/in the sales page/copy or just the order form/page?

If for web...which pages are required?

Home page

Landing page

Squeeze page

About/why us

FAQ

Contact

Testimonials

Resources

Please list other pages required.

What is (are) the offer(s)?

I'm always trying to sell happiness...what makes your clients/customers especially happy about you and what will make them happy about this product?

What can you do to instill a sense of urgency so that people are motivated to buy quickly? What will generate the sense of urgency? Please include a date...expiration...

What is (are) the step(s) you want the reader to take after reading the copy?

Please describe the PSYCHOGRAPHIC of the buyer. Please describe the demographic, although the demographic is usually less important. Here's a definition of psychographic.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychographic>

Psychographic factors include lifestyle, interests, attitudes, values, and personality.

Please list competitors. How is this product different/better?

What does the client/customer stand to lose if they don't get the product/service?

What is the call to action?

Is there a downsell or upsell? Please detail.

What are the other pages in the sales process?

How are people getting to the landing page or website? If direct mail...how did you define the list?

Phone/email/other contact information.

What makes you especially excited about the product or service?
For example,

What has worked before in the client's copy? What has not worked?

What are the next steps you want the reader to take? Two options work best.

Please include/attach testimonials or send a link to testimonials.

If the company has a significant history, please detail the prominent and important points and/or moments. Or include a link.

THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION...

The reader is reading the copy thinking, consciously or subconsciously, "what's in it for me?" and the copy has to answer the question. Put yourself in the shoes of a potential customer and answer the question.

Will there be sidebars? If so, please detail.

Please include a disclaimer or link.

Please attach video and/or photos, if applicable.

Are you split testing? If so, please detail what you want to test...

- Product
- Price
- Offer
- Guarantee

If you were selling the product/service and you really wanted to shock the potential customer and really get their attention, what would you say?

What are the limitations of the product/service?