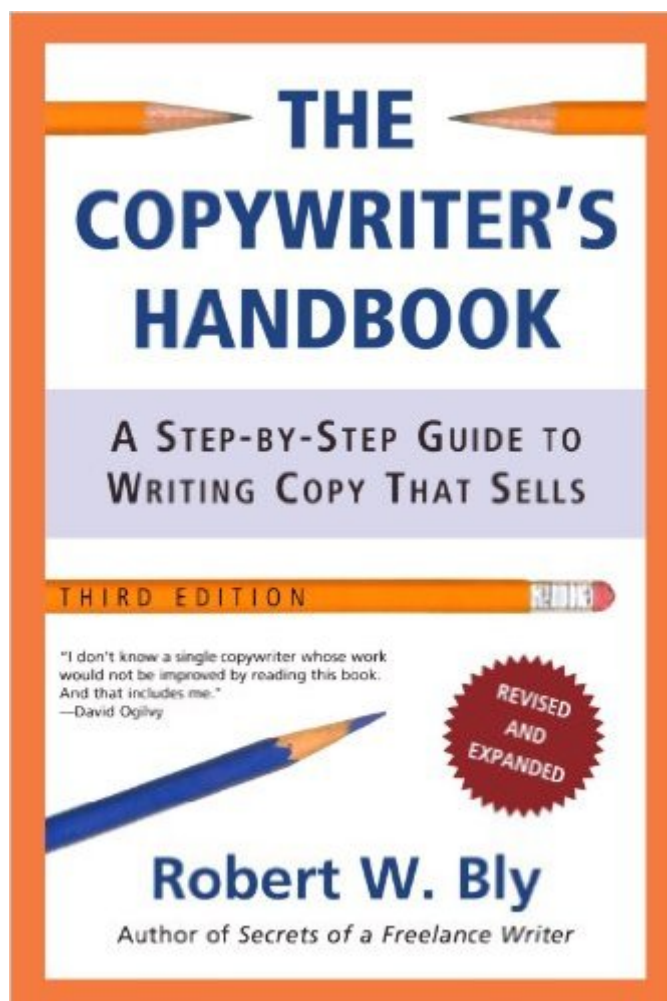


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# The Copywriter's Handbook: A Step-By-Step Guide To Writing Copy That Sells



## Synopsis

The classic guide to copywriting, now in an entirely updated third edition This is a book for everyone who writes or approves copy: copywriters, account executives, creative directors, freelance writers, advertising managers . . . even entrepreneurs and brand managers. It reveals dozens of copywriting techniques that can help you write ads, commercials, and direct mail that are clear, persuasive, and get more attention •and sell more products. Among the tips revealed are • eight headlines that work •and how to use them • eleven ways to make your copy more readable • fifteen ways to open a sales letter • the nine characteristics of successful print ads • how to build a successful freelance copywriting practice • fifteen techniques to ensure your e-mail marketing message is opened This thoroughly revised third edition includes all new essential information for mastering copywriting in the Internet era, including advice on Web- and e-mail-based copywriting, multimedia presentations, and Internet research and source documentation, as well as updated resources. Now more indispensable than ever, *The Copywriter's Handbook* remains the ultimate guide for people who write or work with copy. "I don't know a single copywriter whose work would not be improved by reading this book." •David Ogilvy

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## Customer Reviews

If you want to improve your writing skills for print or the web, this is the book that you need to own. This book is all steak with the fat trimmed off, powerful tips and techniques with absolutely no fluff. While some of the techniques included in the book aren't unique to copywriting guides, Bly offers his own effective spin on them. In the first 60 pages alone, you're treated to a goldmine of tips

on writing effective headlines and crafting easy-to-read copy. Bly tackles copywriting methods for direct mail, catalogs, brochures, websites, and even press releases. Unlike most books on copy, Bly provides great advice on writing for TV commercials and radio spots. As a Search Engine Optimization guru, I found Bly's take on writing web copy to be extremely refreshing, even if it wasn't new information to me personally. I loved that this was probably the only copywriting book that actually stresses finding the balance between writing copy that sells, and copy that is search engine friendly. Most web design books don't discuss copywriting, and most copywriting authors have no knowledge of writing for search engines. Bly certainly did his homework. This is an excellent guide for writing copy, especially if you're writing for websites. This book is probably the best investment that you will ever make.

This book is mainly geared towards people wanting to learn hard sell direct response advertising. Sales letters and web advertising are its main focus. There are chapters on other forms of advertising such as brochures and white papers, but IMHO there are other more effective books on soft sell methods. As for the comments dinging the Bly on his comments about creative advertising... Yes, there is a place for creativity in advertising, but the creativity should never obscure the main purpose of advertising, which is to sell products. As a copywriter, your job is to write the words that get people to pull out their wallets and buy. Are there ads that are both effective and creative? Of course. However, for a copywriter, effective should always come before creative. Never forget that you're playing with other peoples' money, and advertisers want the best bang for their buck. Note that there have been some revisions for the 3rd edition. The section on computer equipment have been removed. No big loss there, since by definition the technology would be outdated by the time the book went to print. The chapter on freelancing has also been omitted, since Bly devotes an entire book to freelancing, *Secrets of a Freelance Writer*.

The knock that some reviewers gave on this book is that its just contains basic copywriting principles for beginners. Have you guys noticed a lot of the print and television advertising? Mostly cute, gimmicky filler that doesn't do the job of selling products. I remember a few years ago when the media blasted the SaleGenie.com Super Bowl ads for "not being entertaining enough" and being a "major fail." Many media outlets blasted SalesGenie.com for running ineffective ads and not knowing who their target audience is. They were wrong and so are the reviewers who criticized this book. By the way, SalesGenie.com GAINED 10,000 SUBSCRIBERS by Monday morning --the very next day. That was over \$21 million in annual subscription sales. So much for not knowing their

target market and target audience. It wasn't a cute commercial, but it was great sales copy that targeted underperforming sales professionals looking to gain a competitive edge over their peers. In fact, the SaleGenie.com commercial had the best ad copy, and it followed many of the principles explained in this book. The Copywriter's Handbook will break down the anatomy of what's behind writing a good ad and how to construct good ad copy that sells products. Many copywriting books will tell you to use a bunch of techniques, but never explain the how or why about it. This is why there's so much inconsistent, bad ad copy proliferating. The author helps you understand why you must follow certain principles of constructing ad copy, and why certain techniques work. If you buy this book and actually read and comprehend what's in this book, you will learn how to write better ad copy.

Before I started my own copywriting business years ago, this one was my first books on the subject. And I still refer back to it periodically. Bob Bly is a copywriting legend who is well-known for making the fundamentals of writing great copy easy to understand. Whether you're thinking about a writing career, or just need to make your marketing materials more effective, this is the perfect primer for anyone who wants to learn how to write to sell!

If you're a practicing copywriter and don't know what a brochure is -- ummmmm...I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but perhaps you should consider another career. Yes, this book actually defines what a brochure is. I am shocked to see that experienced copywriters found it useful. The advice is rudimentary at best. I gave it three stars because a) basic information has its place and b) I didn't want to tarnish the rating. It was my mistake to buy it. If you're looking for a book to inspire award-winning creative, get Creative Advertising by Mario Pricken. After devouring it in one sitting, I wrote copy all night long. For fun. On a weekend. And, no, I'm not a sweltering geek. The Kickstart Catalogue is an amazing tool for bringing out your natural talent. It teaches you from the inside out (you'll understand what I mean when you read it).

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