

How to Hire a Copywriter

Effective Marketing



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In any communications project, the copywriter has a crucial role to play. So it is essential that you choose the best writer for the job, and develop a successful relationship. This guide is designed to help you make the most of this business partnership.

What to Look for in a Writer

Writers come from many different backgrounds, offering their own strengths, skills and expertise. In order to choose the best writer for the job, you need to consider a number of key factors.

Natural Ability

You're either a writer - or you're not. While there is much that can be learned about the craft of copywriting, that basic skill with words is an instinctive one. A good writer will produce copy that is easy to read and understand. If you find yourself stumbling over a writers' work, maybe it is time to move on to the next name on your list.

Professionalism

A copywriter is a business professional as well as a creative, and you have a right to expect a business-like response. A freelance who comes across as being disorganised may bring the same approach to project work. Look out for the danger signs - it will be too late when your crucial project is in jeopardy.

Experience and Expertise

All writers have to learn, of course, but for you as the client, there is a definite advantage to choosing an experienced writer. A professional with a few years' experience will be familiar with the many challenges that the copywriting profession throws up, and will be more able to deal with these easily and efficiently.

Industry Knowledge

Actually, this is much less important than people often realise. A good writer will be able to pick up a new subject very quickly. The ability to assimilate new material and ideas is much more important than previous experience in a particular business sector.

Persuasiveness

Copy needs to do more than look good - it needs to work hard. The copywriter's job is to persuade people to buy, or to react in whichever way is required. A good writer will understand the importance of emotional decisions, and how to persuade through effective writing.

Flexibility

The creative world is a fast-changing one, and priorities often evolve as projects progress. The writer needs to adapt to changing circumstances, and still produce quality work.

Commitment to Deadlines

Deadlines are of paramount importance, but some writers are notoriously lax in meeting them. Look for a writer with a proven track record of getting results when they are needed.

Location

This used to be a key factor, but the rise of the Internet has made it irrelevant. It's now easy to work with partners who may be on the other side of the world. There are times when it is handy to have a writer close enough for meetings, but it is by no means essential.

Value

Remember to differentiate between cost and value. A writer who is cheap will be an expensive mistake if the copy fails to deliver, and a campaign fails as a result. On the other hand, a very expensive writer can prove to be an excellent investment if the results achieve or exceed your expectations.

Briefing Your Writer

A good brief is critical if the project is to be successful. A writer can only deliver copy according to the instructions you provide. If the brief is vague or imprecise, it is impossible for the writer to guarantee the right results.

First of all, the writer should always be briefed by the person who will approve the copy. Problems arise if one person provides the initial brief, then another executive with different ideas reviews the resulting work. This can lead to conflicting requirements, which may be difficult to resolve.

Put it in Writing

Secondly, the brief should always be provided in written form. This helps you to clarify your thoughts, and ensures that there is no confusion over what is expected.

It is also important to provide all relevant supporting information, contact details and other information required to start the project.

Agreeing Deliverables and Timescales

The brief should also make it clear exactly what the writer is expected to deliver, and the timescales provided. Where deadlines must be met, it is important that these are agreed in advance. Problems arise if a client agrees a deadline, then suddenly advances this at short notice.

Changing Requirements

The world of business changes quickly, and the scope of a project often changes in mid-course. If this happens, it is important that you re-brief the writer, and make allowances for the change in workload.

Working Together

For the project to be successful, it is important that the client and the writer form a good working relationship. Remember to keep the writer informed of issues which will affect the campaign on a day-to-day basis.

Start Today

Need a good writer? Hi-Text can help. We have over a decade of experience, working with the biggest companies,

Get in touch today to find out how we can enhance the performance of all your communications campaigns, including:

- Direct mail and advertising
- Brochures and annual reports
- Speeches and presentations
- Web projects and multimedia
- Corporate newsletters and magazines
- Press releases and PR material

Hi-Text is based just north of **Sydney**, Australia. However, our client base extends beyond New South Wales to the whole of Australia, the UK, USA and beyond.

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