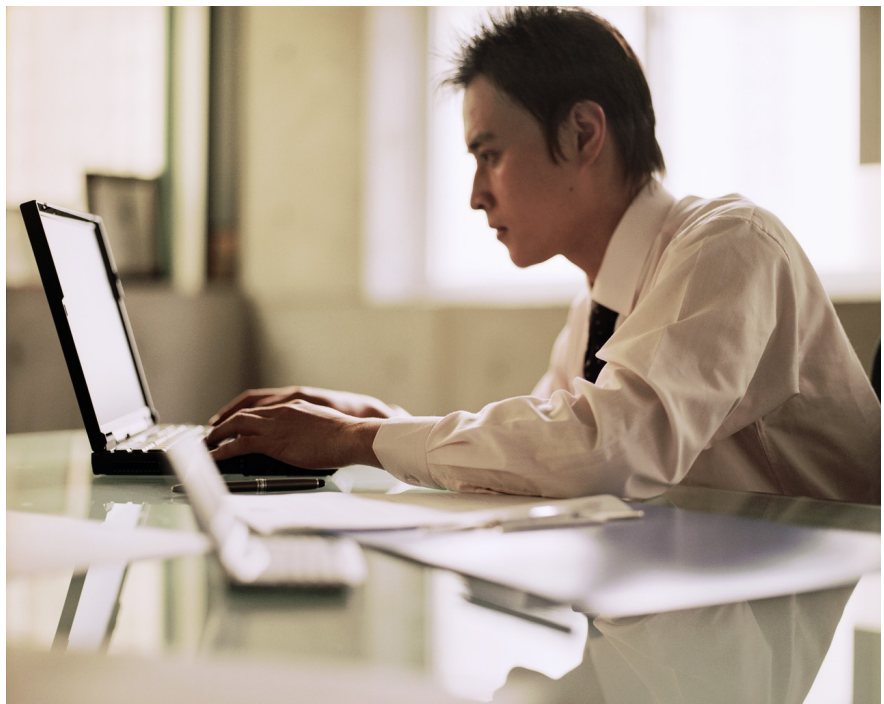


# Creating Compelling Web 2.0 Copy

Simple Tips and Strategies To Create Your Compelling Web 2.0 Copy



## Simple Tips and Strategies To Create Compelling Web 2.0 Copy

Web 2.0 is one of those terms that seem to have gotten out of hand. Everyone has his or her own perception of what Web 2.0 is. Some people believe that it is a technology. Some people believe that it is a made up phrase – a buzzword so to speak used only for falsely enhancing a company's image. Others believe it is specific software, and still others believe that it is a 'theory' of operating on the web.

### Web 2.0 Defined – Finally!

Web 2.0 is a concept. Yep, it is an abstract idea. The O'Reilly Network, owned by Tim O'Reilly the creator of the Web 2.0 concept tells people to “visualize Web 2.0 as a set or principles and practices that tie together a veritable solar system of sites...”

The sites that he's referring to are sites like Wikipedia, Google, Amazon, YouTube and other websites that offer users a rich experience. Using an online bookstore as an example, Web 2.0 is the difference between going to an online store and purchasing a book and going to a store and being able to read reviews, leave reviews, participate in a chat room or blog, create favorites lists, and even communicate with the author. In many cases websites that use the Web 2.0 concept, the users define the content.

So if users are defining the content, how does an online marketer create content for the web? What is different between Web 1.0, or the time before the big dot.com bubble burst, and today Internet concept?

### Content Goals and Web 2.0

*With any website, pre or post 2.0, you have a few goals:*

- You want to drive traffic to your website
- You want to keep people at your website
- You want to encourage people to return to your website
- And you want them to make purchases.

These tasks are all still accomplished by the content that you provide. Whether it is in the form of an advertisement placed on another website, information in the form of articles, tutorials, ebooks, reports, or blogs, or it is sales material you want to accomplish two main goals.

1. You want to grab your prospects attention. This is most often accomplished with a compelling benefit driven headline or subject line.
2. You want to provide them a benefit. This means that the content must provide quality information.

Web 2.0 doesn't make these goals trickier or more difficult, in fact the ability to interact with your customers makes marketing, and marketing copy easier, more interesting, and significantly more effective than offering your prospects a standard brochure and hoping that they buy.

### **How to Use Web 2.0 to Your Company's Advantage**

With any website, the more you can make it interactive and user friendly the better it will be. Take a moment and consider your favorite website. When you're sitting on the couch in the evening watching television, what website do you surf? Why do you surf it?

Conversely, when you're looking for information on the web, what sites turn you off? What websites do you leave immediately?

Chances are the difference between a website that causes you to linger and spend hours of your time exploring and a website that is forgotten as soon as you click away, is the level of interactivity available.

*You can add this type of interactivity to your own website in a number of ways:*

- Blogs
- Reviews
- Forum or chat room
- Articles with embedded links
- Testimonials
- Quizzes, surveys, and even newsletter subscription forms
- Searchable index of content
- Tutorials
- Interactive web pages

Let's take a look at each of these content tools to see explore how they can improve your traffic and conversion rates, how they relate to the web 2.0 concept, and how you can craft content for maximum results:

## [How to Write a Blog](#)

The first rule of any interactive web 2.0 site is that the higher the quality of content already on the site, the more likely other people will want to contribute. The more people want to contribute, the higher the quality of the site. It's a circle of success, if you start with good, quality content. The goal of any website utilizing a Web 2.0 philosophy of enabling your customers to contribute to the content of the site is that you need to create a desire to contribute to your site.

An easy way to begin providing quality content, that motivates people to contribute, is by adding a blog to your website. A bit of a warning – blogs take time to catch on. Don't expect replies to your first post, or even your tenth post. Just keep posting and offering quality information and it will catch on.

The secret to writing a blog is to first establish a theme for the blog. If you have a website that sells beauty products than your blog could address beauty emergencies, beauty remedies, beauty 101 and so on. Your blog must have a theme. You don't want to be talking about how to eliminate frizzy hair one day and then discussing how to get a raise the next. So establish a theme for your blog.

Next, make sure you have a compelling headline for each blog. Your headline will want to be SEO optimized so that people searching for your information may come across your blog and your website. Just make sure your keywords are in your title and if your blog software enables you to tag it then use those tools to help the search engines find you.

Now to the writing part...an effective blog, meaning that it is compelling to read, offers a statement and a benefit and invites comment, is generally written with a conversational tone. Don't be afraid to interject personal experiences and stories into the content. General Motors has a great blog called Fastlane where executives talk about their experiences with cars, their favorites, and so on. It's personal, it's informative and people are compelled to check it out regularly and contribute.

Keep the content of your post focused on one simple idea. Blogs that wander and lose focus are not interesting to read. Amplify your posts with active verbs, a little story telling and of course a point that invites people to comment. Don't be afraid to take risks with your blog. One last note of caution: while it is okay to post-personal stories in your blog, be careful to keep most of your personal information out of it. You don't want people to know where you live or be able to invade your personal life.

## How to Write a Sales Page

Sales pages in theory cannot be interactive. You don't want to imbed links and send your prospect to another website and you don't want them to be distracted by activities. You want your sales page to engage your reader and compel them to purchase. Like traditional sales pages, Web 2.0 sales pages have the same goals – to generate a sale.

- You need to have a compelling headline
- You need to stress benefits instead of features
- You need to establish credibility
- You need a call to action

Where Web 2.0 copy and standard sales copy may differ is in the length of the copy. As users become more savvy the standard “but wait, there's more” kind of copy won't work. They don't have time or patience for long drawn out sales pitches. They want their benefits bulleted, organized by quick and compelling subheads, and stressed early in the copy. They want the headline to make a promise and provide a benefit.

They want to know exactly what they're reading and what they're expected to do.

This means that your copy must be tight and not 'look' like a sales page. Copy that converts readers into buyers provides a benefit right in the copy. Copy that sells online in today's Web 2.0 minded market informs.

Assuming that you're selling a software product that creates sales pages, here's a quick example. “How to Write Copy That Converts The Savviest of Online Shoppers – Use Our Simple Blueprint and Increase Profits Today.” The headline makes a promise “Increase Profits Today.” It also offers a benefit “Learn how to write copy that converts savvy shoppers.”

Your goal for the rest of the article/sales page is to educate your consumer, giving them a few simple tips about how to convert savvy shoppers. This way you're offering your readers a benefit right in your sales page. You're educating them and establishing your credibility.

The main difference between a Web 2.0 sales page and an old fashioned sales page is that you acknowledge the intelligence of your consumer. Your sales page is quick and to the point, it uses bullet points and easy to follow formatting, it offers information upfront that provides a benefit, and it tells your prospects exactly what they need to do to buy.

## How to Write Other Web Pages

The other pages on your website can be more interactive.

*Here are a few interactive elements that are fairly easy to add to your website pages:*

- You can welcome your visitors with a guest book
- Invite them to subscribe to your newsletter
- Embed links in your copy that link to other pages on your site and to other relevant websites.
- Offer a links page with links that you know your visitors will be interested in. Make sure that the links open in a separate page so they can stay on your website too.
- FAQ page
- Testimonials and reviews
- Case histories/studies
- Videos and audios
- Articles, free content, and information pages

As you write each page of your website, consider what other pages you can promote or link to. For example, your articles page can quite easily link to your blog however you may not want your contact us page to link to your articles and free information area.

Keep in mind that each individual page needs to be formatted so that your reader can quickly assess the contents. This is best done with compelling headlines and subheads as well as bulleted or numbered lists, bold print, and underlined copy. Use these tools to draw your reader's attention to the important keywords on the page.

Another important feature for compelling and interesting web copy is to break it up occasionally with a photo, graph or chart. Give the reader a break and provide them with a visual example or even a cartoon to liven things up.

The goal of your website is to offer value and keep people visiting and exploring your content, services and products. Update your copy often and provide as many opportunities as you can for your visitors to participate in the content - whether it is through a blog, forum, video or audio message, or even a guest book.

## How to Write an Email

*Today's market has a few basic demands from their email messages:*

- They must not look like spam
- They must be easy to read, their point must be clear and concise
- They must not be too frequent
- They must have a point
- They must provide a benefit

Taking the first demand, SPAM is fairly easy to avoid. Don't send an email to people that haven't requested that you do so. Additionally, make sure that your "From" line is clear. Send your emails from your business name or from you personally.

Making an email easy to read, and with a clear and concise point can be handled a number of ways. First, make sure that your subject line is compelling but not goofy. Subject lines that offer a benefit are more frequently opened than those that don't.

If your email is a promotional message then state the offer in the subject line. 10 Days to Save More than 50% off Everything.

If your email is a newsletter that your reader has subscribed to then a subject line that announces the newsletter is perfect. News and Views: August 2010

The body of your email then must be easy to follow. Format it so that the reader can quickly decide if the email is relevant and beneficial to them. Bullet point your benefits, make a promise, and don't forget to include a call to action.

Don't forget to include links in your email back to your website or offer page. If you're emailing a newsletter or ezine, don't forget to offer a forward to a friend option and give your readers the ability to comment on your newsletter or contact you.

## How to Write an Autoresponder

Autoresponders are the email messages that are sent to customers or people that have expressed an interest in your website products or services. They can be used to send transactional emails – thank you for your purchase, attached is your download etc.

They can also be used to deliver classes, lessons, or tidbits of information broken up over a series of emails.

The main thing that you have to remember about autoresponders is that they enable you to immediately contact your prospects and customers. They are an immediate response to an action that your customer has taken.

In effect, autoresponders are an integral part of the Web 2.0 concept. Your customer makes a purchase; they get an immediate thank you response. Your customer makes a return; they get an immediate 'we're sorry' response. Your customer asks for more information and 'bam' they have it in their inbox before they can leave your website.

Autoresponders are instant need based communication tools.

How do you write an autoresponder? That depends on its goal. Like any communications your reader wants them to be professional, to the point and easy to follow. An online course delivered via auto responder is generally about 400-500 words long. If the course is any longer, you run the risk of losing your audience before they get to your call to action. If you have more to say than 500 words, put it in a book or report that your reader can download.

Again, like all other Web 2.0 copy make sure that it is formatted to be easy to read. That your headlines and subheadings offer a benefit and that each paragraph sticks to the point. You can use your content to embed links to your website, products, services, other articles and even other relevant sites. This will make your copy more interactive. As with all embedded links, design them to open on a separate page. This way your reader doesn't leave your website or auto responder message.

## **Build a Good Foundation**

Regardless of your website's mission, the products or services you sell, or even your target market you absolutely must have a good foundation.

As a business owner, adding Web 2.0 strategies to your website cannot be done effectively if you do not already have a solid website to build on. Focus on getting your website's foundation, navigational structure, search engine optimization and traffic generating strategies down before you implement any new technologies.

Adding a blog, forum or content exchange area will further enhance your website and help improve your brand's strength and image if they're handled professionally and well monitored. Rather than adding several user friendly tools to your website at once, add one at a time. Get your blog up and running and receiving favorable comments before you venture to add a chat room, forum or content exchange area.

Remember that you can use other sites to network and enhance your brand too. Forums and chat rooms are a great tool, not only to help other members solve their problems, but to enhance your brand. The key to positive forum and chat room posts is to provide quality information, no sales pitches and to offer a benefit to the reader. Use your forum or chat room signature to promote your website and company name.

The content that you provide for all copy mediums will be compelling, to the point, easy to read and follow, and when possible will offer your reader an action - whether they're making a purchase, filling out a survey, providing feedback or asking a question.

Web 2.0 as you can see, is nothing to be afraid of. It is simply the new way of doing business online and you're probably already incorporating many of the ideas and tools discussed. Continue to grow your business and brand image by adding features that enable your website visitors to learn, grow and contribute and you'll have the online success you desire.

### **Resources Pages:**

[Business Tools & Resources](#) (Business services directory)

[Business Training Center](#) (Marketing & business skills improvement)

*\*You may share this report (no changes) with your staff, , website visitors, email list.*