

# Glossary

of Copywriting & Marketing terminology

**ABOVE THE LINE ADVERTISING:** Pure media advertising (press, radio or television) where the agency makes its money in the form of commission from the publisher, rather than a direct charge to the client.

**AWARENESS:** That's what brand advertising is all about. It doesn't necessarily aim for immediate sales, but attempts to form favourable impressions that will motivate its audience to seek out and buy the advertiser's product or service.

**BELOW THE LINE ADVERTISING:** Promotional exercises that do not employ pure advertising media. Examples include brochures, direct mail, point of sale displays, give-aways etc. The agency makes its money through direct charges to the client for their services. Copywriters work above and below the line.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** A listing of details of works cited in a document in a format that enables their identification – mainly authors, title, publisher and place and date of publication. There are various conventional styles according to which bibliographies can be arranged.

**BODY COPY:** The text of a given piece of copy, as opposed to other written elements such as headlines, subheads, captions, etc.

**BRIEF:** A written or oral expression of the sales-features and marketing strategy behind a client's services or products. A well written brief is a heaven-sent gift for any copywriter.

**BY-LINE:** When I 'ghost' an article on behalf of a client, the client is identified in the journal as the author.

**CALL OUT:** A brief selection of copy that is deliberately designed (often inside a panel or written in a different typeface) to stand apart from the main body of text and draw attention to an important point or feature.

**CALL TO ACTION:** The 'call to action' incites the audience to do something positive - 'call us now on..', or 'complete the coupon now to...'. Often overlooked by marketers because it is a direct measure of the power (or lack of power) of their copywriting, as opposed to their 'creativity'. Creativity can be much easier to achieve than real sales response.

**COLLATERAL:** Printed marketing material such as brochures, pamphlets, case studies.

**COMP:** A mock-up that enables the client to visualise a concept or work-in-progress.

**CONCEPT:** The "big idea" behind a campaign.

**COPY:** The written word in articles, advertisements, brochures websites and so on.

**COPY BRIEF:** A definition of the objectives and strategy behind a proposed piece of copywriting.

**COPYWRITING:** The craft of writing copy. Nothing to do with 'copyrighting', which is all about the legal ownership of 'intellectual property'. The little © symbol denotes copyright.

**DELIVERABLE:** The physical product - be it brochure, case study or whatever.

**DIRECT MARKETING:** What most people consider to be 'junk mail'. Does it work? The success of Readers Digest, one of the most successful, profitable publishers in the world, is based entirely on direct mail campaigns. They have some fiendishly clever copywriters.

**DOCUMENT FORMATTING:** Using a personal computer to create a consistently formatted document from an electronic manuscript according to a style template.

**DPS:** Double Page Spread (an advert or an article where the copy occupies two facing pages).

**EAR SPACES/PIECES:** The small advertising spaces situated on either side of a newspaper's masthead (title)

**EDITING/COPY EDITING:** Preparing the document for distribution or publication through the following: clarifying meaning, eliminating jargon, polishing language by editing for grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation and other mechanics of style; checking for consistency of mechanics and for internal consistency of facts; inserting head levels and approximate placement of art; editing tables, figures, and lists; ensuring that references in the text are correctly cited in the bibliography; notifying the designer of any unusual production requirements.

**FEATURES:** Qualities your product or service has. Not to be confused with benefits (Power steering is a feature, improved safety and ease of use are possible benefits that result from the feature of power steering.).

**FPO or 'POSITIONALS':** For Position Only. In mock-ups or comps, the 'positionals' are placeholders used to identify where graphic elements, such as photos, are to go. They are not intended to be the final illustrations.

**GATE FOLD:** Any sheet of promotional literature folded such that the front pages meet in the middle instead of at the side of the document (opening up like a double gate).

**GREEK:** The text equivalent of Positionals (described earlier). Greek copy is gibberish that simply illustrates where and how the copy will look on-page. Rather than being Greek, it is usually a form of 'cod Latin', looking like: Lorem ipsum dolor sit. Per istem pro astum nos est. Lorus et postatum spur digit pro astrum. Technical existis per idium nos altrum. Bonus est illicum gerontis per information. Per istem pro astum nos est. Teiol pro astrum naurilus lorum est. Technical existis per idium nos altrum. Bonus est illicum gerontis per information. So there!

**HEADLINE (HEAD):** An element of copy above the body text. Of advertisements, articles and case studies, it is said that while 80% of people read the headline, and 60% read the 'call out', only 5% read the body copy. Search Engines love headlines too. A good copywriter spends time crafting headlines, subheads, call outs as well as the main content.

**INTERPRETING:** Converting a speaker's words in one language (the source language) into an equivalent speech in another language (the target language). Simultaneous or consecutive modes of interpreting are possible.

**INDEXING:** Producing a systematic guide or key to the contents of a manuscript; includes reading and analysing the work, choosing subjects and concepts, and arranging entries alphabetically or in some other searchable order.

**JOHNSON BOX:** The headline in a direct mail letter, often literally set in a 'box'. The part of the letter most likely to be read.

**KICKER:** A line of copy just above the headline, used to create context or to kick interest.

**KNOCK-OUT TYPE:** Copy set in reverse (such as white on a black background, also known as White Out of Black, or WOB). David Ogilvey claimed that using WOB reduces readership.

**LAYOUT:** A rough design, visual or 'scamp' of what an advert/brochure will look like on the printed page (or on-screen).

**MASTHEAD:** Title

**MEDIA:** The platform for your advertising campaign - such as press, radio, TV, direct mail

**MEDIA SCHEDULE:** A list of publications in which an ad will appear, including costs and dates. A 'features schedule' on the other hand, is a publishers list of forthcoming themes in their publication.

**PDF:** A computer file format created by Adobe, initially to provide a standard way of storing and editing printed documents. Because documents in pdf format can easily be seen and printed by users on a variety of computer and platform types, they are very common on the internet.

**POSTSCRIPT or P.S.:** An additional message at the end of a letter. According to Ogilvey, the PS. is second only to the Johnson box in readership.

**PROOFREADING:** Checking proofs or final formatted, edited material for adherence to design and for minor, mechanical errors in copy (such as spelling mistakes or small deviations from style sheet), using standard proof-correction marks; may include comparing the document with earlier versions to ensure corrections have been made, checking the accuracy of running heads, flagging locations of art and page references, verifying computer codes, and inserting page numbers in table of contents and cross-references.

**REFERENCE CHECKING:** Checking that in an academic document in-text references are included in the bibliography or list of references and that each entry in the bibliography or list of references is arranged according to the relevant academic convention.

**SIDEBAR:** A vertical piece of copy alongside an article or brochure, usually with its own headline and often within a tinted panel. Often used to present features, benefits or a mini case study.

**STRUCTURAL or SUBSTANTIVE EDITING:** Editing a manuscript for 'global' issues – clarifying or reorganising a manuscript for content, structure, style, length and level; may involve copy editing, rewriting and negotiating changes with authors.

**SUBHEADS:** Mini headlines, in smaller type from the main headline. They can be used to summarise the major points at a glance.

**TAG-LINE (or STRAP-LINE):** A brief phrase accompanying a logo.

**TRANSLATION:** Converting a written text in one language (the source language) into an equivalent text in another language (the target language).

**USP:** Unique Selling Proposition, distinguishing a product, service or company from its competitors.