



Ray Edwards Show, Episode 590 Copywriting Q&A

[00:00:00] Announcer: Ray Edwards Show, Episode 590- Copywriting Q&A

The Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for Prosperity with purpose.

[00:00:18] Kris Edwards: Hello. Welcome to the Ray Edwards show. This one is gonna be great. For those of you word junkies out there that like episodes hyper-focused on the art and craft of copywriting. You're gonna love this because it's just Ray answering questions submitted by copywriters.

These questions came from Facebook, from YouTube comments, from emails, and if you like what you hear and have a question you would like answered on a feature episode, you can reach out on any of those channels. We'll keep an eye out for you. And with that, let's jump into the questions we got for this week.

[00:00:48] Ray Edwards: Let's go ahead and jump right in. Let's see if I can answer any of their questions. If not, we can edit out the part where I look them up.

[00:00:55] Kris Edwards: All right. Question number one from Amanda. B says, "I've been building a copywriting business for about a year now. I work with mostly local businesses, mainly their social media and some occasional promotional emails and website content.

I've actually used your system to get my effort down to about 16 hours a week. The clients are happy. I'm making around 10K a month", a nice job, "and all is well for now. My question, my fear is this, how much longer will I be viable? This seems too easy and I just feel like at some point I will be replaced with some AI service.

Is that a legitimate fear or am I just being paranoid? Thanks for all your help. I couldn't have built what I have without you" signed Amanda B. And I am curious to hear your answer on this because if it's too sun-shiny, I'm gonna step in with some reality.

[00:01:47] Ray Edwards: Well, first of all, Amanda, congratulations on making 10 K a month and it being easy. That's \$120,000 a year and you just alienated a lot of wannabe copywriters cuz they're not making that much money yet. But it is easy once you figure out your niche and you're good at it and you're good at getting along with people. There's a few things that are, make it easy, easier for you maybe than for other people.

But anybody can do it. I'm convinced if you can write copy, you can make a good living doing it. Now, does it seem like you might be in danger of being overtaken by AI, and made obsolete? , entirely, but you're wise to be thinking about this. This is why I recommend you build a personal brand and you have to build some, some personal appeal that makes you different better than, more interesting than, more attractive than an AI because they're already AI that write pretty darn good copy. Have you had any experiences with these kind of AI, Kris, played around with 'em at all?

[00:02:39] Kris Edwards: A little bit. I've not been super impressed with the ones that, the free ones that I've sampled.

[00:02:45] Ray Edwards: I've paid for a couple, and they're not bad. They're good enough to get my attention, and it's good enough to make me think that Amanda's not far off here by thinking about this.

I, I don't think you need to be afraid of it, but I think you're aware of it already. That makes you a step ahead of the game. And then just building your personality brand so that people know you, they know your unique story, building your own framework about how you work with clients, about how you write, copy, those kinds of things cannot be duplicated by an AI yet.

Now they'll figure that out too. So we always have to say a step ahead, but just the fact that you're thinking about this strategically, it's no different than any other competitor. You just gotta think ahead and it comes down to your personal appeal. There are people who like me and they want me to be their copywriting teacher or their copywriter, and they don't like other people.

And it's, there's also people who like the other people and don't like me. That's because that's how people are. So letting people develop an affinity for you, get to know you, getting to know your unique way of thinking about writing copy, and your unique personality, sense of humor, if you're brave enough to put that out.

That's what's gonna be un-duplicatable. Your personality, your beliefs, your idiosyncrasies, your sense of humor. Those are things that are gonna be very difficult for machines to duplicate so far. Dun, dun, dun .

[00:03:54] Kris Edwards: I will say that if you asked me two years ago if I could go to AI or one year ago, if I could go to an AI and say, Hey, make up a picture of Harrison Ford eating a hot dog, I would say, Nah, they can't do that.

[00:04:08] Ray Edwards: Oh.

[00:04:09] Kris Edwards: But, uh, they can.

[00:04:10] Ray Edwards: That stuff is spooky. I've got friends who are artists and I've shown them the Art AI's and they're, they get depressed. It's like, well, not only is it fast and simple, it's, it looks better than anything I could ever do.

[00:04:23] Kris Edwards: Yep.

[00:04:23] Ray Edwards: But you know, there's just certain kinds of art that can produce that way, and it still comes down to your unique vision. So I would just, my advice, Amanda and anybody else thinking about these kinds of things, whether it's for copy or images or graphic design or whatever, AI is gonna become more and more of a factor. Learn to use it as a tool. That's my advice. And develop your own personal brand. Use the tools to make your workflow easier, faster, and use your personal brand to differentiate yourself.

[00:04:48] Kris Edwards: Amen. Are you ready for question two, sir?

[00:04:50] Ray Edwards: I'm ready.

[00:04:52] Kris Edwards: This is from Charles.

[00:04:54] Ray Edwards: Is he in charge?

[00:04:56] Kris Edwards: Well, his last initial is C. It could be charge. When you were first getting started, did you use contracts? I've been doing some work for people that I have personal relationships with, so it hasn't felt necessary. Now I have someone approaching me about doing some work, and I'm feeling a bit unprofessional and unprepared. I not only worry about getting paid, but also about getting sued. If I say the wrong thing or something, I'm just not in a financial position to retain an attorney. What should I do?

[00:05:27] Ray Edwards: First of all, use contracts because a written agreement helps clear up any misunderstandings later, and you don't, Okay, First, lemme say this, I'm not an attorney. I'm not giving you legal advice. I'm giving you my opinion based on my personal experience.

You should seek the services of a qualified professional if you need professional advice. I know what you said, but the fact is, at some point you're gonna have to face the fact you can't afford not to get an attorney. At least to look at your basic contract. But until that time, I can tell you what I did.

I'm not recommending you do this. I'm just telling you what I did. I found a good generic contract on Legal Zoom and I changed out the words to fit my business, and I put the specifics of every deal I did with any copywriting clients into that contract template, and that's what I used for my agreements, and I actually do to this day.

The only difference is I did hire an attorney eventually, and I had the attorney look at my contracts and see if they're okay, and he said, yep, they're okay. For which he charged me, I think \$1,500. Just at the very least, have a have an agreement that spells out what's the project, what's the scope, what's the deadline?

What do they expect? What do you expect them to give you to make it happen? Like the research, the background info, whatever you need from your client, how much they pay you, when they pay you, all the specifics of the deal. You wanna get those in writing, and you may not call it a contract, You may call it a civil letter of agreement that you both sign, even if it's only by email and you both agree to the email, the contents of the email, that's better than no kind of agreement at all.

[00:06:51] Kris Edwards: I would think about the, uh, worried about saying the wrong thing. Just make sure that they approve the copy. I mean, it's pretty weird to get cart launched and just, uh, you know, take over for somebody's social media. But it is not unheard of that somebody just says, I don't wanna deal with that. You take care of it.

[00:07:05] Ray Edwards: Yeah, and I, all my contracts have some kind of paragraph in them to say, I don't take legal responsibility for you using my words for your marketing or for your business. That's up to you, Mr. Client. Mrs. Client, you have to make sure you're in compliance with the law, with the regulations of your state or whatever industry you're in, not me. I take no legal responsibility for those things. That's not your responsibility at all, and you don't wanna let them make it that way.

[00:07:28] Kris Edwards: Excellent. All right. Question three is from Amber F. Um, this is a good one because it's, uh, I have felt this way as well. Have you ever written something and then thought, "Did I write this or did I steal this from somewhere?"

And just don't remember? I'm not sure how to explain it any better, but I'm getting to the point where almost everything I write seems familiar. I end up going through my archive stuff to see if I'm doing some all-new promotion that I actually already did two years ago. I'm not really looking for a solution, I think I just wanna make sure that I'm not losing my mind."

[00:08:03] Ray Edwards: You're not losing your mind. Anybody who does any writing at all, Kris, you're laughing cuz you know this feeling as well. If you also do a lot of reading, and so you take in a lot of stuff that you've read, you're taking things that you've written, and it does become confusing sometimes, especially if you find a really good phrase that you really like.

Like for a long time I marched around telling people marketing is not something you do to people, it's something you do for people. And I thought I came up with that and I sort of did. But it, I found out later on that, uh, when Zig Ziglar family became my corporate or my, uh, my client, I did work for them, I discovered going through some of his old material that he actually said a long time ago, long before I was even probably an adolescent,

that selling is something you don't do to people, something you do for people. So obviously, that idea was planted in my mind many years ago, and it came out again as a different, slightly different phrase. So thank goodness I didn't like try to trademark it or something like that. But, um, it's a, it's a natural function of doing a lot of reading, taking a lot of words, sales copy, marketing copy books, and your own stuff that you write.

It's eventually, you're gonna have this occur to you. One thing I have done with my own copy sometimes, if I start feeling that way, like, Man, this feels awfully familiar. Did I, did I write this for somebody else at a previous time? I'll sometimes put it through a service called Copyscape, which will analyze your copy and see if it's similar to or very close to, or even a rip-off of somebody else's copy.

So if you start feeling spooked about it, then maybe run it through something like Copyscape and see if you can find evidence of a similar or the same wording somewhere else. Otherwise, I wouldn't worry too much about it. It's normal. You're not losing your mind. You just have more.

[00:09:38] Kris Edwards: I've never heard of Copyscape.

[00:09:39] Ray Edwards: Yeah, Copyscape is pretty handy for checking for copyright infringement or plagiarism. Joe Biden might wanna check it out.

[00:09:47] Kris Edwards: You gotta bring politics into everything.

[00:09:49] Ray Edwards: Politics, schmololitics.

[00:09:51] Kris Edwards: I'll put a link to Copyscape in this week's Show notes.

[00:09:54] Ray Edwards: Good idea.

[00:09:55] Kris Edwards: Um, I think musicians probably have that worse than copywriters. You know, cuz at least copywriters, we got 26 letters and millions of words. Musicians have, uh,

[00:10:06] Ray Edwards: three chords in the truth.

[00:10:08] Kris Edwards: There you go. The Twinkle Twinkle Little Star guy probably didn't realize he was ripping off the alphabet song or vice versa.

[00:10:16] Ray Edwards: Oh my gosh. I don't think I ever realized that before.

[00:10:18] Kris Edwards: Yeah. Mm-hmm. It's the same

[00:10:19] Ray Edwards: Who stole from whom?

[00:10:22] Kris Edwards: This is the last one that we have here for this one. If this goes well, I think we should do a series of these because, you know, we do have people that say, Hey, talk more about copywriting. So I say we just, uh, put 'em in charge.

[00:10:37] Ray Edwards: Absolutely.

[00:10:37] Kris Edwards: Get some more.

[00:10:38] Ray Edwards: I love this.

[00:10:39] Kris Edwards: Okay, this is, uh, the last question is from Mark who says, "I'm one of those old souls who still gets paid to write emails. . Um, open rates are not trustworthy these days." Ain't that the truth? "And the stats can be depressing. Is the data bad, or are my subjects sucking? At the end of the day, my clients are still making sales, so I know that the content is working, but I have to ask, what is the best formula for a subject line?"

[00:11:08] Ray Edwards: That's, It's kind of like he threw us a curve ball at the end there. He started out talking about

[00:11:14] Kris Edwards: I, I, I get it though.

[00:11:15] Ray Edwards: Yeah, I do too. You want people-

[00:11:18] Kris Edwards: You write something amazing and then you think, Oh, this is one of the best emails I've ever written, and then you screw it up with the subject, nobody sees it.

[00:11:26] Ray Edwards: Yep. Subjects are tricky because they need to be short. In my opinion, the best subject lines are short. They all fit within the preview pane of whatever email client people happen to be using. They don't get cut off, but they, they need to create enough curiosity to make people wanna open the email. So it's gotta be either sensational or confusing.

And it can be too confusing. It can be so confusing. People just think it's nonsense, or if it's just confusing enough, they may open it. So I would encourage you to develop a swipe file of subject lines, not based on open rates or click-through rates. But based on, did you open the email that had this subject line?

Like if you use Gmail, you just go to all mail and look at the emails that you actually opened and didn't delete or skip over immediately. The ones you opened, you had to open. Ask yourself what made me wanna open that email? And without a doubt, some of my, some of my best subject lines are the ones that are, They're so weird.

You have to know what, like, one of our most popular subject lines that even our clients have used over and over again is, I had a BFO. Well, people are like, What in the world is a BFO? It's a blinding flash of the obvious. You could substitute your own words for BFO, I guess, but that's one of the reasons it works. People wanna know what you're talking about.

[00:12:34] Kris Edwards: I like that. It's like in radio, you know, when you, you're going into a commercial break, and you ask some weird question. Not as powerful now with the Googles and all, but, uh, there was a time that people would hang through six minutes of commercials just because they had to know the answer. So I think if you, you know, create that same kind of, uh, well, I gotta know what that.

[00:12:53] Ray Edwards: Those were the days, man, when people would sit through six minutes of commercials.

[00:12:56] Kris Edwards: I guess if I'm looking for, uh, people that are really good at writing subject lines, I look at movie posters because the people who write taglines, you, you gotta take a whole movie

[00:13:07] Ray Edwards: and sum it up in one condensed phrase

[00:13:09] Kris Edwards: Yeah. In a, in a phrase. And so, uh, if I write some kind of epic email, I'm trying to think, what would the movie poster be?

[00:13:17] Ray Edwards: You know, it occurs to me we have a download of subject lines. Our 101 best testing subject lines, we should link that up for this episode.

[00:13:27] Kris Edwards: I will do that. Do like a direct download or should I make 'em Uh.

[00:13:31] Ray Edwards: No, make 'em opt in so we can send them more emails. We'll send you some of our best, best new subject lines. Keep you up to date. So just go to this episode in the show notes, you'll find a link to be able to download. That list is our best testing subject lines. And you can rip ours off.

[00:13:44] Kris Edwards: We are up to episode 590, I do believe. So, Rayedwards.com/590. We'll get you, uh, all kinds of useful links, information, transcripts, all that stuff will be at that address.

[00:13:57] Ray Edwards: All right, well, I like this. This was much easier to create content for. We should do this again.

[00:14:02] Kris Edwards: Probably after this is all, uh, clipped up and done. It's probably gonna be about 15 minutes, which to me is a pretty good link podcast.

[00:14:09] Ray Edwards: Yes. It's better than listening to me bloviate for an hour for sure.

[00:14:13] Kris Edwards: Bloviator. New subject line. I'm such a Bloviator.

[00:14:18] Ray Edwards: Okay, there you go.

[00:14:20] Kris Edwards: All right. That wraps it up for this week for a complete transcript, show notes, links that we mentioned; all that stuff you will find at Rayedwards.com/590. You can also grab a whole bunch of Ray's best-performing subject lines right there and leave a comment if you have a question that you would like answered in a future episode. We're back with fresh new stuff next week. Until then, see Ya!

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