

The Underground Marketer – Episode 8 – Transcript

Introduction: 00:00:03 Marketing, explosive growth, and revolutionary secrets that can catapult your business to new heights. You're now listening to The Underground Marketer podcast with your host, Tudor Dumitrescu. The one podcast devoted to showing new businesses how to market themselves for high growth.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:00:35 Welcome to The Underground Marketer. This is the place where we deliver the real truth about marketing and explore big ideas that can help new businesses thrive and grow into big ones. I'm your host, Tudor, and today we're going to discuss writing that sells, and more specifically, why is it so difficult to sell through writing? Because you know, copywriting is probably at the heart of making sales online, and yet most copywriters out there, suck. And it seems that the skilled ones, have some elusive ability, and somehow they just make it work. You know? And so the goal here in today's episode is to demystify writing that sales and show you exactly how you can go about crafting compelling sales messages that get your leads or prospects to take action. And it will come in useful regardless of what kind of marketing you're doing. I mean, you could be writing ads, writing emails, whether that's called emails or within a funnel, sales pages, video sales letters, and so on. So at least in the online marketing world, and if you're selling anything online, writing is going to probably be a key part of it, regardless of how you deliver that content, whether it's through a video or through audio or through written form, or maybe through visual form even.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:01:58 So just getting the concepts right is going to be huge. So, let's think a little, a bit about the first principles of writing that sell, you know, why do some kind of writing move people to take action? Why does it get their attention? Why does it actually influence them? And I would say that the number one thing to know is that people are bombarded with ads and with sales copy. I mean, nowadays the stats show that people encounter between 6,000 and 10,000 advertising messages per day. And so you can imagine that's a whole lot of information and our brains are simply not capable to deal with this overwhelming flow of information. You know, it's like a cascade. It's overwhelming and our brains simply cannot deal with and process all this information. So how do we actually navigate through the labyrinth of information that we have to handle?

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:03:02 How do we actually make sense of it? Because our cognitive apparatus inside the brain is basically overwhelmed. It cannot investigate all of this information and go through all of it and figure out which one really is important and which one is not. So the way this happens is that our brains actually have a filtering mechanism and it's all based on pattern recognition. So basically our brains filter all the information that's not relevant and it gets ignored. So obviously the problem that you want to overcome through your writing, if you want to sell, is the problem of over-communication and by extension, the problem of basically, how do you stay and out in a crowded market. So basically how can you solve this with your sales copy? How can you make sure your copy actually gets read and not just skipped over skim read, or just discarded?

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:04:02 So the first thing you have to understand is the process that the brain uses to actually filter this information. So think about it this way, every piece of information that reaches your brain through your senses gets processed, and then it gets assigned either as being used important or not important. If it's important, the chances are very good that it will be brought into the conscious mind, you know, inside the neocortex, and the rational parts of the brain will process it further. Whereas if the information is deemed not important, it's going to get discarded or ignored. So how does your brain actually decide if the information it receives from your senses is actually important? And the answer here is that it decides through emotion. And basically how does this triggering of emotion happen? Because that's the next step, basically. And to understand that you have to understand that the brain stores references from the past.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:05:05 So these are experiences that you may have had. They could also be things that you have imagined or thought about, but they are stuff that happened in your past. And there was a certain emotion associated with them. If that emotion was strong, I mean the stronger the emotion, actually, the stronger the memory is going to be in your brain. And the stronger that reference is going to be for you. And basically every time new information comes in, your brain basically reaches out for this set of references that it already has, experiences from the past, and so on. And it compares that pattern of sensation that just came in with what already exists in the brain. And yeah, if that pattern that came in matches a previous pattern that already exists in the brain and that pattern triggers emotion, then this new pattern is also going to trigger emotion.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:06:03 It's going to be assigned as important, and it's going to be sent for further processing inside the rational part of your brain, the neocortex, and this can all happen very quickly, right? So this is not this assignment and this comparison of patterns with references that are already out there. It happens almost instantaneously. I mean, it's not something that people consciously control. For example, if you're going out at night and you're in the grass and you see something moving inside the grass. Immediately, your first reaction, probably even before you get any conscious thought in, is going to be automatic. And it's automatic because due to its evolutionary history, your brain associates the pattern of something, moving grass with the possibility of there being a snake or some kind of danger. So this new pattern that comes in gets associated with the old pattern, with the old reference, basically, that's already in your brain.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:07:05 And because there's an emotion attached to that reference, that emotion gets triggered once again, fear in this case. So that's basically how your brain works. So, the way you get your message heard is that you need to identify what those already existing references are and then tap into them. So if you find a reference that exists, for example, in a large number of people, then you can effectively scale your advertising to all those people. You know, there are some references, for example, which have cultural value, like there's sort of things that are shared by a large number of people. And those can be very good hooks, you know, to scale your advertising and to reach the mass market. And everybody who

wants to make a lot of money from advertising or from marketing ultimately wants to reach that mass market.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:08:03 So the strategy is basically that you need to hook into an existing reference that triggers emotion and then basically continue by building interest and redirecting desire towards your own product. And finally, of course, you just have to ask for action. So this is all very similar to the famous AIDA from marketing. So attention, interest, desire, and action. And the biggest mistake that people make is that they fail on step number one, which is grabbing attention. So if you actually succeed on step number one, all the other steps are going to be a lot easier for you. You're going to have a much easier time building interest, increasing desire, and asking for action. Literally, all that you are going to have to do is literally just go through the motion. But the hardest thing in marketing and in advertising is that initial step of grabbing attention, making sure you stand out, making sure that you're not ignored and our society gets more and more crowded with sales messages with each and every day that passes.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:09:18 It's becoming harder and harder to stay relevant, to stay above the noise, and to stand out. And that's why a lot of people are struggling when they're trying to scale their businesses online. And it's all because the market is a lot tougher than it used to be in the past. You know, you don't realize it, but somebody doesn't have to be your direct competitor to increase the difficulty for your business. All the advertising that gets done, even in products that have nothing to do with what you're helping, the problems that you're helping solve, still increase competition for advertising. They still make it a lot more difficult for your advertising message to be heard in the marketplace. So think about it, whether you're selling Coke or something like that, or you're selling computers, it doesn't matter because the more advertising messages that people get bombarded with the harder it will be for them to listen to your message in particular and for your message to stand out.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:10:28 So the fact that there might not be a lot of advertising in your niche or in your industry isn't the only thing of importance here. You have to think globally. And globally the rate at which we communicate is growing faster and faster. So we used to be 10, 12 years ago, we used to get like 3,000 - 5,000 messages per day. And today we're at, as I said, 6,000 to 10,000 sales messages per day. So we're growing very quickly and you need to get better and better at grabbing attention if you want to stay meaningful. And when I say grabbing attention, and we're going to go into this in a bit more detail, I don't mean just grabbing attention for the sake of attention. For example, you could have an email headline, which read something like Cristiano Ronaldo is quitting football forever. And probably you would get a lot of clicks on that email because it's a piece of information that resonates with people.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:11:32 It hooks in with them. And if they're fans of Cristiano Ronaldo, and they're millions of fans out there, they would love to read and find out about that. But of course, that way of grabbing attention is useless, unless your email is actually about that. It's

not going to be helpful, right? So you want to grab attention that's actually meaningful to you. And that means attention for people who later on would actually be interested to buy what you're selling. Right? So for example, if I'm selling computers, the headline with Cristiano Ronaldo quitting football forever would be useless to me, right? And first of all, it would be a lie. And second of all, it wouldn't actually get the right kind of attention, you know, attention from people who are likely to buy what I have to sell, and it's going to actually have the opposite effect,

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:12:27 It will annoy people because then I will fail to do lever on what I brought attention to. So, be careful. We want to bring attention that's relevant to you, not just anything kind of attention. All right. So let's go a little bit into actually discussing the technical aspects of how you can actually go through this process and basically make it happen. You know, how you can use this science that we discussed it with regards to the brain to stand out in overcrowded markets, get attention to your product, build trust, redirect the desire, and finally ask for action. So the first step is grabbing their attention. It's the most important one we've already specified that you need the kind of attention that's actually going to convert later on into sales. And the basic idea is what we've already said. So you need to hook into a reference that already exists in their mind and arouses some kind of strong emotion.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:13:27 So that's the ideal here. And that's why in copywriting and sales, you have a basic understanding of your buyer psychology as the first step. You know, so you should talk with copywriters. If you talk with marketers, most of them would tell you that 70 to 80% of their time is spent not actually writing copy, not actually planning campaigns, but going through materials, going through reading and so on to actually figure out what biopsychology is like. So you need to discover those references that resonate and that have emotion associated with them in the brain art, and that's why everybody talks about building buyer personas, customer avatars, and so on. And they are really important, you know, and they're also really hard to build. So you really have to understand your buyers. And I don't mean just generally, you know like they are frustrated by, you know, something general about the product.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:14:30 You have to get down to specifics and to do that, you actually have to interview customers. You have to listen to sales calls, you'll have to read the thing. These people are reading. So understand the cultural trends that they find themselves in, see what competitors are doing and how people resonate with their messages. And so on, all this can help you basically craft the positioning that's going to be effective for you, and it's going to grab attention. So ultimately the questions that you have to ask yourself are, what does this person already want? What does he already fear? What keeps him up at night? What sort of references are there already in his mind that I can use? And then once you have those references and once you discover them (and remember that great copywriters and marketers spend around 70 to 80% of their time actually discovering what these are, not actually doing the writing and planning campaigns and whatever).

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:15:34 So once you've discovered those, all you have to do is use them as a hook to get into their brain, you know, and hook their brain basically onto your message. So let me give you an example and I will give you an example from the world of PC users, especially people who are familiar with older versions of Microsoft Windows, which crashed very frequently. So you could have a message similar to "tired of the blue screen of death, right?" When you finished your project after five hours of work and you forgot to save it, a message like that, to somebody who has just dealt with the blue screen of death, you know, their machine crashed, they lost all their work. They're frustrated. A message like that, that targets an existing reference from their mind. So notice that this frustration about the blue screen of death must already exist in their mind for the hook to work.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:16:32 If the person has no idea or the blue screen of death is they've never experienced the issue, they don't know how annoying it can be. It's not going to resonate with them. You know, they're going to skip over your message. The brain is not going to find a pattern that matches it. There's going to be no emotion associated, it's going to be not important and it's going to be discarded. All right. So, what you have to do is that obviously, this is going to work for people who already have this frustration in there. And if this frustration existed, the brain is going to match this with a pattern of frustration that's already inside it. And your message suddenly will be assigned with high importance. So that's basically what causes your ad or message to get read or listened to, you know, and it's very important because most people, you know, fail to do this.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:17:31 You know, when they try to grab attention, they don't think in terms of what's already in the mind. And instead, they think in terms of basically all sorts of things that are not very efficient. So let me give you some examples. I would say that many people, when they're starting in copywriting in marketing, they try to be nice to the prospect, or they try to build rapport, you know, or they try to introduce themselves or their company, or they try to tell the prospect about how great their brand is. And you know, all the amazing achievements of their company or all sorts of stuff, how many people they've helped or stuff like that. And then the truth is that none of these grab attention, you know, they do the exact opposite. They cause your message to be ignored. So the key point is that you have to find out what differences already exist in their minds, and what references have high emotions attached to them, strong emotions attached to them, and find that out.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:18:34 It's relatively easy. You know, you just put that into the headline of your video, of your sales page, of your whatever. And you use that as a way to grab their attention to your message and make them want to read the rest of their message because it's relevant to them. Okay. It speaks directly to them. And this entire part of writing that sells is a part that happens at a preconscious level, right? So we're not yet into the fact there's any influence that Cialdini, for example, talks about or any of that stuff. We're at a conscious level. Okay. So it's about patterns that match and have an emotion associated with them. And therefore they trigger that emotion once again. And it all happens immediately before the information actually gets to be processed by the neocortex, which is actually why it's so powerful, and it can make a huge, huge, huge difference for your business.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:19:38 So that's the first step, that's how you grab attention. And it's the most important part. After you do this, you have to build interest in whatever your product or service is going to be. And the way you do this is you basically do it by offering benefits. You tell people what's in it for them, you know, what are they going to get out of this solution. And the core focus is to make those benefits real to them and to make those benefits believable. Because if the benefits don't seem real, or if they seem exaggerated or for whatever reason, they don't believe those benefits, it's not going to work. You know? So, maybe your product is really amazing and it has a very powerful benefit, but it's also in an industry that is rampant, for example, with scammers and people who make exaggerated claims and so on.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:20:39 So if that's the state of the market, then putting that benefit at its full force is probably not going to be effective because there's already a lot of people doing that. And the market is tired of it. People already are aware of the scammers who are out there, they're unlikely to believe it. You know? So in that case, it's actually better to tone down the benefit a little bit, just so that it becomes more believable. So building interest is all about offering them these benefits, you know, just tell them what's in it for them. You know? So you've asked them, for example, in the previous example with the PCs and the blue screen of death, you asked them if they're tired of it, you know? So then after you expand on the problem a bit more, you can actually go into some of the benefits and build interest in the solution.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:21:27 You know, like how it would be if your PC never crashed again, you never saw the blue screen of death again. And your work was always safe, you know? And you had peace of mind that you wouldn't lose your work, or how would you feel to know that you could leave your computer open and with some work that is getting done in the night and when you wake up tomorrow, it's not actually going to be closed with the blue screen of death when you open it, you know? And you're actually going to be able to go in and find out that whatever work you left to be processed by the computer is actually finished. So stuff like that, just offer them benefits, tell them what they could possibly get out of it. And that's going to build interest. And once you've built interest, you basically have to increase their desire for the solution.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:22:17 You know? So you increase their desire really by a technique that's known as future pacing. You know, so basically what you have to do is you have to ask them to imagine themselves in the future when they already have your service or product, and you have to ask them to imagine how they would feel, you know, how would they feel after they have the benefits that you just discussed about how will their life change? What would be different about their life? And as you make people imagine those things and their brain gets active, their brain is actually going to start experiencing the emotions that it will actually experience in practice. You know, so there's actually a very fine line between what's imagined and what's real. And your brain doesn't really know the difference on a deep level. So if they imagine something, you know, it's as if they live through it, you know, so that's why future pacing can be very, very effective when it comes to increasing their desires.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:23:21 So you're basically telling them and giving them reasons why they should desire a product and why they should want the benefits that your product will bring. And then you get them into the state where they can actually imagine that those benefits are actually real for them. You know you make it actually feel real to them. And once you do this, you know, they're probably going to be at a stage where they are very reactive there, very emotionally involved in your copy if they stuck this far, and they're probably ready to take action, which is step number four, you finally have to ask for action. And the key thing here is that you have to be direct. You actually have to tell people what you want them to do. You know? So if you want them to click a button, you have to say, click the button below.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:24:13 You know, you have to be very specific. Don't just let it up to them. You know, even if you think it's obvious, if you say, just "click below to", that's probably weaker, then "click the button below". The more specific you can be about the action that you want them to take, the easier basically it is for them to follow this direction. The more likely you are to get compliance for them, the more likely you are to get them to take the action. And the other thing you want to do here, of course, is you want to give them reasons for taking the action now because after you grab their attention, you build interest, you increase their desire, some of them will be wondering, okay, I do really want this, but let me think about it. You know, let me just sleep over it.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:24:58 Right? And when they do that, a lot of people, and I'm not suggesting that they do this willingly though some of them may, a lot of people, people would forget about it, or they would just delay buying or they would just never buy again. You know? So you don't want that to happen. And to prevent this, you have to give them a reason to take action now. And what's very good to do here is basically to tell them what they will, if they don't take action now, and what they lose first and foremost are the benefits that they would gain by actually buying. So they're not going to have those benefits. So you tell them like, going back to the example above, with the blue screen of death, you tell them the blue screen of death can pop at any moment. You know, just don't take a chance anymore.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:25:46 Don't lose your work once again, just buy this and get it solved once. And for all. So that's basically a reason for them to take action. Now it can happen at any moment. They always need this protection. They should get it right now. You know, they shouldn't take the risk. And of course, you also have artificial reasons for them to take action. So I call them artificial because they're not part of the benefits of the product, but they could be part of what goes into actually marketing the product. So what's an example of an artificial benefit? So for example, scarcity. It is a reason for taking action that's artificial. And I don't mean that you, you are lying to them in there that your product is really not scarce, let's suppose that it is actually scarce. The reason I call this reason for taking action right now, artificial is that it's not part of the benefits that are intrinsic to the product.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:26:44 It's something else. You know you don't have enough stock of the product. It takes a lot of time for you to build it or whatever it is. So you can use something like that on top of everything else to really drive the action and get them to take action. So that's really about it. You know, that's how writing that is effective and writing that sales works. You know the first and most important job is grabbing people's attention, building their interest, increasing their desire for the product, and finally asking them for action and providing the reasons why they need to take the action now. So the final piece of advice here is that you should be direct with all of this, right? So we talked about the process, you know, understanding the brain science behind writing that sales and how it works.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:27:33 And the final piece of advice is to basically be direct because a lot of copywriters suck because they're basically cowards. They're too scared to tell people that their product is the best thing since sliced bread. Even if it actually is, they're too scared to tout and basically quote-unquote, push people to buy. They're not directly about the value that they have to offer. And they try to take all these sorts of, let's say more indirect ways, more manipulative. They think that somehow they need to trick the prospect into buying and they resort to all these funny and really meaningless rapport-building techniques, you know, trying to get some conversation, trying to talk about the weather or stuff like that. So the truth is you need none of that, you know, just tell the guy what's in it for him, you know, and just be like that upfront to his face, tell him what's in it for him and why this matters to him specifically, you know, and if you provide a specific reason, a specific reference that resonates emotionally with him, you will grab his attention.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:28:46 I will summarize briefly, but remember that the most important thing is understanding here, how the brain works. So remember that the brain filters out information that isn't considered relevant and important, and that information gets ignored. And to stand out, your message must actually match a pattern or a reference that already exists in the brain. Preferably that being a pattern that triggers strong emotion or has strong emotion associated with it, and that's how you actually grab attention. And then all you have to do is focus on benefits to build their interest, you know, so tell them what's in it for them directly, and then focus on future pacing to basically increase their desire, you know, tell them how their life is going to be different. Once those benefits are actually a reality for them. And finally, of course, tell them what they lose on and what they lose out of if they don't take action right now.

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:29:48 And if you do all those and you make sure that your writing is to the point, you know, you're not blabbering, you're not flying off to Pluto. You know, talking about whatever that's that nobody cares about, but to the point, you tell them something that resonates with them and excites and puts them into an emotional state. You build their interest by giving them the benefits. You increase their desire by future pacing, what their life is going to be, how they're going to transform once those benefits are a reality. And finally, you ask them for action. If you do all that, your writing is going to be a lot more persuasive. And you're probably going to join the top 1% of copywriters, marketers, and real entrepreneurs who are selling stuff online. So that's about it for now. So stay tuned for the next episode

Tudor Dumitrescu: 00:30:40 And until next time, keep growing your business and providing massive value to the world because remember, entrepreneurs like you are the reason why we're all growing richer, our freedoms are expanding and we're all living in greater prosperity. Thank you and see you next time.