

# The Most Important Question to Ask Your B2B Copywriting Clients

*By Steve Slaunwhite*



Recently, I was chatting with a copywriter with a very interesting problem. He was talking with a potential client, a rather large company, and they said, "Please tell us what you can do for us. Take a look at our website and give us a proposal." The company was very interested in hiring this copywriter, but they wanted to know what he could do for them.

It's a great question to be asked for many reasons. First, it shows the client is really interested in what you offer and is curious about how you can help. And second, you have an opportunity to recommend additional ideas you have for their marketing.

This copywriter wasn't sure how to respond. He didn't know about the most important question to ask B2B clients, which I'm going to reveal to you in just a moment.

If he had asked that important question, he would've been able to gather the information to help him pitch an idea to this company. The good news is, he's able to go back to them and ask this question, and give them his ideas.

This scenario works with any potential B2B client you're working with. If a prospect calls you and asks, "Can you re-write our website?" and you respond with this question, you'll be able to do a better job on the website and possibly create the opportunity to do a lot more work with that company.

So, what *is* the most important question you should ask any potential B2B client?

The question is, "**How does your sales process work?**"

You can supplement with additional questions, such as:

- How do buyers find out about you?
- What's the first step they take towards buying your products and services?
- Do they buy them right away or do they need to talk to a salesperson first?
- What do they need to get to know your company better?
- How does that happen?
- Do they need to sign up for something on your website?
- Do they call a salesperson?
- Do they read information on your website?
- Do you communicate with them through emails?
- What is the sales process?

If you get that information from every potential B2B client, you'll get a big picture overview of their marketing and all the ways you can help them as a copywriter.

There are three big benefits to asking the most important question.

1. It gives you insights into other potential projects you may be able to help them on. So, it could expand the amount of work you get with that client.
2. Clients will see you more as an expert, consultant, and partner. You demonstrate that you're someone who can help them with their marketing, simply because you're asking that question and showing an interest. I can tell you, just asking that question will separate you from 99% of other copywriters out there who wouldn't even think of asking that question.
3. It helps you write better copy. If you know where a marketing piece fits in the sales process the company uses, your copy will be better because you know where it fits in the process and what it has to do to get prospects to the next step in the sales process. And when you write a marketing piece better, clients recognize it, and then they'll hire you for more projects.

Let me give you a real-world example, just to illustrate this a little bit more.

Let's say that you have a new prospect, Chill-O-Matic Coolers. The company makes large commercial coolers used by restaurants and hotel kitchens.

The Marketing Director contacts you about updating their website. You chat about their website, and then ask them about their sales process, from lead generation to closing the sale.

They might respond by explaining that they travel all over the country to demonstrate the coolers at trade shows frequented by restaurant owners and hotel owners. They collect business cards at these trade shows and then send an email follow-up series that explains financing options, special deals, and all the different reasons why they should buy the Chill-O-Matic Cooler. Ultimately, the prospect will agree to meet with a salesperson and decide to buy the cooler.

That's a typical answer you might get from a prospect when you ask about their sales process. As your prospect describes their sales process to you, it is very easy to see all the opportunities you have to help them.

Looking at our Chill-o-Matic Coolers example, how can you help them now that you know a little bit more about their sales process?

Well, you know that their website is very important, even though they go to trade shows. Their prospects are likely to visit their website and review the product descriptions, so the copy needs to be engaging and clear.

Another opportunity is the follow-up email sequence sent to their leads from the trade shows. So you might want to look for ways that you could re-write the emails and make them better. That could be something you could suggest to your client, either right away or after you've done the initial website project.

You could also offer to look at the emails and ads they use to bring prospects to their booth at the trade shows.

The fact is, once you ask the first most important question, you'll get the big picture of their marketing. You will see opportunities where you can offer your services beyond the initial project they originally contacted you about.

So the next time you talk to a potential B2B client, don't get tunnel vision and just talk about that project and nothing else. Ask that most important question, "How does your sales process work?"

If you do, it can open up a whole new world of opportunities and potentially give you a long-term B2B client!

This article, [The Most Important Questions to Ask Your B2B Copywriting Clients](#) was originally published by [B2B Writing Success](#).

Published: September 14, 2017

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220 George Bush Blvd, Suite D

Delray Beach, FL 33444

(561) 278-5557 or (866) 879-2924