

Why Direct-Response Copywriting Is Here to Stay

By Rebecca Matter



Recently, I sent out an important update on the state of copywriting.

In it, I explain why content marketing is a MAJOR opportunity for anyone wanting to live *the writer's life*.

The market is huge — quickly approaching \$300 billion a year. The demand is super high.

And the projects are short ... You don't have to "sell" your reader on a product or service like you would in a traditional sales letter.

And, most clients are happy to pay hefty retainers (\$5,000 a month is fairly typical for larger businesses).

Little did I know this update would cause quite a stir!

Many interpreted what I said to mean that traditional direct-response copy is dead.

Let me be perfectly clear:

Direct-response copywriting is far from dead.

We've been here before ...

When the Web was first starting to gain some traction in the late 90s and early 2000s, many people feared direct-mail and direct-response copywriting would die off.

As we all know, it didn't. The Web didn't make traditional direct-response copy go away.

It only helped it grow and created MANY MORE opportunities for writers.

In fact, the need for direct-response copywriting has only GROWN thanks to the Internet.

Companies need copy that get people to take action — whether it's to click on a link, open an email, follow them on social media, fill out a form, or get them to buy their product or service.

It's the same right now with Content Marketing.

It's a big trend that's creating big opportunities for writers, due to the sheer amount of content these companies need.

The Reason Why Content Marketing Is So Hot Right Now

What IS happening now, more than ever, is that companies need to create TRUST first and foremost.

That's because people have become more skeptical.

Think about it:

In the early days of the Web, people would get BOMBARDED with pop-up ads, banner ads, flashing animation ads, spam emails, hype-filled sales letters, and more.

This has made web visitors tired of being "sold to," so their guard is always up.

As a result, marketers are now doing the opposite. Instead of leading with a "sell, sell, sell" mentality, it's now all about building trust.

Content marketing does this perfectly.

Because it's not about leading with trying to make a sale. At least, not immediately.

Instead, it enters the conversation with a prospective customer by giving value up front — before any kind of financial transaction has been made.

At Its Core, Even Content Marketing Is Still a Form of Persuasion

In his book *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, Dr. Robert Cialdini talks about the Rule of Reciprocity.

Essentially, when someone gives us something, we feel slightly indebted to that person. We typically WANT to reciprocate back, in one way or another.

Content marketing is the rule of reciprocity at work. A company leads by giving away great, free content on a subject a prospect WANTS to learn about. This, in exchange, builds trust and confidence in the company. And ultimately, the prospect reciprocates back with their attention and interest.

Remember that even just a few years ago, companies were NOT doing this. Instead, they'd just try to sell. This is why companies are doing the opposite and leading with giving value.

Of course, even though you lead with value, in order for content marketing to be effective, you still need to know *some* direct-response principles.

For example, you still need to know how to write an effective headline, so someone will actually want to read the content in the first place.

You still need to know how to present an argument, so your content makes sense and is engaging.

You still may want to have a call-to-action at the end of your content, inviting someone to sign up for a newsletter or blog updates.

And you still need to understand human psychology and what makes us want to buy from one company over another.

That's why as someone who wants to live *the writer's life*, it's probably in your best interest to know how to write for BOTH content marketing and sales.

Just Like "Yin and Yang," Direct-Response Copywriting and Content Marketing Dovetail Perfectly with Each Other

And because of that, companies will need BOTH now and in the future.

I mean, think about how we all buy stuff ...

Let's say you want to buy a new pair of running shoes.

First, you'd do some research by searching for the type of running shoe you need. Maybe you need a wider shoe, or one with special arch support.

As part of your research, you'd read articles and blog posts about the different styles of shoes (*content marketing*).

You'd read reviews and possibly some firsthand accounts of people who used each type of shoe (*content marketing*).

Then, you might decide on one particular brand that makes the type of running shoe you want. So you head over to their website and notice they offer a free report on choosing the best running shoe for your body type and gait (*direct-response*).

Next, you start reading about a specific set of shoes this company sells and learn all about the features and benefits (*direct-response*).

At this point, you might start getting emails letting you know about special deals and offers for their newsletter subscribers (*direct-response*).

You're really tempted to buy now, so you go to their social media pages and check out what people are saying (*content marketing*).

Finally, you receive a 20% off coupon that makes getting the shoes too hard to pass up (*direct-response*).

You head to the site and see that they offer a full money-back guarantee on all their shoes and even pay for the return shipping if they don't fit (*direct-response*).

You make your decision and order the shoes and can't wait to get them. They send you a "thank you" email with a link to watch a video that explains how to take good care of your shoes so they last for years to come (*direct-response AND content marketing*).

As you see in this simple scenario, content marketing and direct-response work synergistically to create a great experience for a prospective customer.

This is why direct-response isn't dead. And it's why content marketing is growing like wildfire.

Companies ARE still using it and will continue to do so. It's just that now they are adding content marketing into the mix.

Because in order to stay competitive and in business, companies need BOTH.

For you as a writer, it means a HUGE opportunity.

Related Content:

- [A Secret Way of Starting a Clientless Copywriting Business from Scratch](#)
- [How to Be the "Jeff Bezos" of Clientless Copywriters](#)
- [Master Eight Online Content Writing Projects with AWAI Verified](#)
- [3 Smart Social Media Goals and How to Achieve Them](#)
- More by [Rebecca Matter](#)
- More from [The Writer's Life](#)

Copyright © American Writers & Artists Institute(www.awai.com)

American Writers & Artists Institute

220 George Bush Blvd, Suite D

Delray Beach, FL 33444

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