

The ALMIGHTY HEADLINE

The headline is THE MOST IMPORTANT part of your ad. It catches attention and sets the theme for the rest of your message. If you don't give them a great reason/benefit to read further, they'll read the headline and skip over your ad. So, think. What does your prospect want that you are able to give them?

90% of the time, the headline is read, and the reader moves on.

They move on, unless you catch their interest and cause them to think you may help them make their dreams come true.

Knowing this, you MUST be very particular about what your headline says. Make sure it delivers a powerful benefit to your prospect.

Start writing headlines after you've written your strategy

Your strategy should be written before you write the first headline. With the strategy, you have already decided WHAT you're going to say. The headline is the beginning of HOW you're going to say it.

Sit down and write at least 50 headlines. When you've written about 30, it gets difficult. That's when you begin to come up with good stuff. Go back and refine the others on the list. Use your list of benefits and monologue to create the most compelling headline.

Headline= The BIGGEST benefit to your prospect OR frustration you can solve.

If the reader glances at your headline and company name, she should at least know what benefit you can give her.

Your headline MUST offer one or more of these four things:

1. An incredible offer she can't resist
2. An amazing guarantee so she knows she can't lose
3. A HUGE promise (benefit) of something she needs or wants
4. A totally shocking statement that grabs attention

All headlines should be a benefit if you want your ad to sell. An incredible offer and amazing guarantee are benefits to the prospect. Use the least amount of words to convey your benefit in the headline. Keep it as short as possible.

Positive headlines are better than negative headlines. It can be tempting to have a headline like “Dirty Carpet?” But, this isn’t a positive benefit. Always look at your headline and think, “Is my customer going to want that?”

Types of Headlines:

1. **Benefit followed by a promise.** The cleanest carpet in Pensacola, or it’s FREE.
2. **Promise.** Finally, no more dirty grout.
3. **Open-ended question.** Do you know how cleaning can benefit your health?
4. **Answer a question** the graphic imposes (see Graphics Section)
5. **How to.** How to keep your tile looking beautiful
6. **Why?** Why would you consider hiring any other carpet cleaner?
7. **Who else?** Who else wants the cleanest carpet in Pensacola?
8. **The secret to.** The secret to keeping your floors beautiful.
9. **Number headline.** 5 reasons why. 5 dirty facts about mold.
10. **You’ll love.** You’ll love your sparkling clean floors.
11. **Parallelism.** Have your carpet cleaned once a year to remove ugly stains. Have your carpet cleaned twice a year so you never get ugly stains.
12. **Personalized.** Pet owners: Learn how you can easily remove pet stains
13. **Shocking statement.** Don’t kill your dog. WARNING: The statement has to allude to a benefit and be relevant to the key point.
14. **Differentiate from competition.** Our technicians are exhaustively thorough.
15. **Say what you’re NOT.** Far from an ordinary carpet cleaning.
16. **Say human truth about what people are thinking.** If the last carpet cleaner left your carpet soaked, stained, and ugly, call us for the cleanest carpet in Pensacola.
17. **Metaphor.** Compare it to something else. Think of it as a 480 Horsepower, twin turbo for your carpet.
18. **Satisfaction.** If you don’t absolutely love our service, it’s FREE.

Use one or a combination of the above headline types.

Headline Examples:

Give me two hours and I'll make your carpet beautiful again

I love my sparkling clean floors

A beauty shop for your carpet

Never worry about dirty grout again

You can only expect beautiful floors with a system like this

Impress your guests with beautiful, clean floors

How to get the most beautiful carpet in Houston

You'll get the cleanest carpet in Pensacola

You wouldn't sleep on the same sheets for one year. Why wait for carpet cleaning?

With technology like this, how clean will your floors be?

Your floors look good, you look good

End dirty grout problems FOREVER

Your vinyl floors will look like new again

Remove stuck in soils from your vinyl floor and make it last longer

Rejuvenate your vinyl floors

I didn't think my carpet could ever be this clean

How a clean home leads to a healthier life

How I can help you end dirty grout problems forever

An urgent message you can't afford to ignore

How to keep berber carpet clean and beautiful

5 reasons you'll love our service

When good pets go bad

How to help your carpet last 20 years or more

Pets gone wild

5 dirty facts about mold

Announcing the newest advancement in fabric protection

New grout sealer protects for 10 years
The magic formula to keeping your grout clean
Suddenly, she had white grout again
Introducing the easiest way to keep your grout clean
Special introductory offer designed for Jane Doe (use with mail merge)
Jane Doe, now you can have the cleanest floors in your neighborhood (mail merge)
Here's a way to keep your grout looking beautiful—guaranteed
Attention homeowners in the 32514 zip code: Get FREE cleaning now
Insider tips on hiring a professional cleaner
Discover the latest breakthrough that keeps your carpet clean for years
The facts about scotchgard
This is the answer to your dirty carpet problems
100% guaranteed way to get your dirty grout clean
I never thought my floors would look this good
I didn't think they could get out all those stains--but they did
The reason why your grout needs to be sealed
I've got the cleanest carpet in my neighborhood thanks to John's Carpet Care
If you're frustrated with your tile floor, we can help
Your carpet will be beautiful again
This is the answer to your pet problems
The truth about pet stain removal
The quickest solution to pet stains—guaranteed
The easy guide to pet stain removal
We turn ugly carpets into beautiful carpets
How could such a BIG stain come from such a little dog?
Don't kill the dog—call for expert pet stain removal

Power words for headlines

Here are some words that make a headline sell. If you notice, many of these are used in the headlines examples I've given. You can also find these same words in headlines that pull readers in to get them to read copy. Learn these words. Practice them.

Beautiful	Hate	Discover
Announcing	New	At last
Yes	How	Breakthrough
Secrets	Why	Mystery
Insider tips	Now	Sale
The truth about	Here is	Miami (or your city)
Amazing	This is	FREE
Love	Facts	YOU

FREE and YOU are by far the most powerful words you can use in an ad. Everyone is looking for something FREE. It's funny when you think about it. Even sophisticated adults who live in huge houses are interested in FREEBIES.

Don't ask a yes or no question

This has already been mentioned in the Hitman Ad Concepts section, but it's important enough to state again. Hesitate to ask a yes or no question in a headline. If you do, you promote closure. If you ask, "Do you want clean carpet?" The reader thinks, "yes," and moves on to the next ad. She answered your question, and she's done. Asking an open-ended question pulls the reader in your ad.

Subheads

A subhead is a mini headline located near the headline or throughout the body copy. It summarizes the content. Your sub-head should be benefit driven just like your headline. Sub-heads are important to keep the reader's attention.

"Quotes"

Placing quotes around your headline somehow makes it more meaningful to readers. Put quotes around important headlines to show it was made by someone important. Of course, if you wrote it, was quoted by someone important.