

## Copywriting - Why Words Matter

Hello everyone. And welcome to the Virtual Ingenuity Business Podcast. Our guest today is Naomi Greenstein. She is an SEO-friendly copywriter with seven-plus years of experience in marketing, SEO, and copywriting. And she serves business leaders and entrepreneurs worldwide. Through her copywriting agency, Glas House Media, which is based in Buffalo, New York, by the way, she helps her clients increase their search engine visibility, conversions, and revenue online with strategically aligned copy that speaks to their ideal audience. And I want to preface this because she's in Buffalo, New York, that's where she's housed, but she is virtual. She services clients worldwide. Welcome, Naomi.

Naomi Greenstein:

Thank you so much for having me. I'm so excited to be here and talking to you all today.

Claudine Land:

I'm so thrilled to have you on the podcast today. So, let's talk about copywriting and why words matter. This is such an important topic because I have clients, Naomi, that ask me what exactly is copywriting and why is it so important. Let's talk about that for just a minute.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah.

Claudine Land:

I feel that copywriting is an art and it's the art of creating text for the purpose of advertising and marketing, simply put, but not as easy to do, not as easy to create. The product really is called copy, and that's written content that increases your brand awareness and connects with audiences, wherever your audience is, wherever your target market is, and with the goal of moving someone to action.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah, absolutely.

Claudine Land:

So, words really do matter. They make us think, they inspire us and they influence our behavior, don't they?

Naomi Greenstein:

They definitely do. And yeah.

Claudine Land:

With this in mind, developing cohesive memorable content should be a part of every organization's marketing strategy. I think that it's an essential part and a foundation of good marketing. Wouldn't you agree?

Naomi Greenstein:

I absolutely agree. And you might say that I'm biased because I'm a copywriter, but truly, I've come from marketing, so I'm from the marketing world and I've done most facets of marketing. I've been an SEO strategist. I have experience with paid ads. I have done account management. So, I'm creating these campaigns to make my clients more money and bring more revenue into their business. And I have found over the years that the copy is generally the most important part because it's what sells, you can have all of these other elements that are still very strategic and are important to creating a very well-rounded digital presence, but if you don't have the copy that is speaking to your audience and it's conversion-driven in that way, you're just not going to see the return that you're hoping for. So, I think it's hugely important. I know that it's hugely important.

Claudine Land:

Yes. For sure. So, let's now talk about what is content writing and what is copywriting. How did the two differ?

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah. Okay. That's a really good question. And I get that a lot too, because I did a lot of content writing in college and it took me a bit to realize that copywriting was something completely different. The two are not really interchangeable. Content writing, just to put it quite simply, content writing is writing to entertain or inform. So, think blog posts or those little listicles that you'd see on BuzzFeed, things like that. That'd be more content-type writing. Copywriting is what you would see on a website or a sales page. I'm sure you know, we're all in business, we've all seen those really long sales pages. The reason why those are so long is that they're very strategic in what they're trying to get you to do. So, content writing, not that there's not a strategy in content too, because, in blog posts, there's still an action you want them to take, whether it's to follow your blog or subscribe to your newsletter, or send you a message, whatever it is. But with copywriting, you're actively trying to sell a product or a service.

Naomi Greenstein:

So, because I work with service-based business leaders and entrepreneurs, a lot of the time what we're working on is somebody's coaching program or a health and wellness type of program. So, it's really important to make that strategic so that it's selling and it's talking to all of the right points so that the person who comes on that hopefully ideal customer sees that and is like, oh my God, you're taking my thoughts right out of my head and putting them on paper in front of me. And that's when you know that you've done it right when you get those because I've gotten that from my website too, even people have said to me, "Oh my God, you took the words out of my mouth." And I'm like, "Yeah, girl, I know, I know what you need."

Claudine Land:

That's right. That's right.

Naomi Greenstein:

So it's speaking to that need in a way that gets people to make the conversion of sending you the contact form, clicking the button to download your pricing guide or your freebie guide, getting them to sign up for your intro offer or hopefully your higher level offer. So yeah, it's super crucial.

Claudine Land:

Yeah. So you want your target audience to take those steps necessary that you've provided for them to buy your product or your services. Naomi, what you do is so special because you have to figure out your client and how to get that content across to them, and how to tell their story. And you want to strengthen that connection between the brand and the consumer.

Naomi Greenstein:

Absolutely. Yeah. That's huge.

Claudine Land:

And I think now since a lot of companies are virtual and reaching your audience, I think now is more important than ever before. And it's also important to make sure that your message is intentional and consistent. We're going to talk a little bit about strong content for a minute. So you want to make sure that you're telling your customers what you want them to know and what they need to know in order to purchase your service or product.

Naomi Greenstein:

Well, and it's also getting really... That's what copy does, copy that's conversion driven, it's also backed by psychology. You have to think about how you get people to buy.

Claudine Land:

Yes.

Naomi Greenstein:

And it's finding that message, it's finding that very deep meaning. And it's hard sometimes because you have to dig very deep beyond just what you think is the surface level. Like, people want my coaching program because they want to make more money in their business. Yeah, but why do they want to make more money in their business? We all want to make more money. What's the driving factor? Is there something else there? Maybe it's that they want to buy a house for their family, or maybe it's that they want to spend more time with their kids because they are sick of working so much and they want a business that works for them and doesn't just work them.

Naomi Greenstein:

So it's like, it's really getting to the nitty gritty of, what are these people who would want my service? What do they actually want? Because usually what you're selling isn't what they actually want. It's that underlying part.

Claudine Land:

So true.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah.

Claudine Land:

That's right. And then you also want to tell, get across too with copywriting, what differentiates you? What sets you apart from your competitors? You really want to be deliberate about what you're sharing about your business and your company.

Naomi Greenstein:

Absolutely. This is a technique that I have pulled together from a couple of agencies I worked at, but I have a pretty extensive brand questionnaire, it's part of my process because it allows me to really get into who my client is, what they do, and what the transformation is. And it's also interesting to see what they think about their business and then versus what I'm seeing on the outside, because sometimes it's like, when you're so close to something you're not seeing clearly. So, it's a way for me to get their perspective, but also take the research that I've seen that will work for them and implement it together.

Naomi Greenstein:

And as part of that questionnaire, I do ask them, what are your three unique characteristics about your business that set you apart? Because it's like, if you can pick up three things that make you different, that's great. And let's talk about those. Let's put them on your main pages, let's put them front and center so people can see them because there are so many people in web design and in coaching and in all of these things, and we need to make you different. So that's, yeah, that's definitely a part of my process.

Claudine Land:

Very important.

That's a great process. So why do we need strategic copy to sell? Let's talk a little bit about SEO and what SEO can do. The first page of Google usually receives nearly 92% of all web traffic. And experienced copywriters usually will identify specific words. Now SEO, let me back up a little bit, is search engine optimization.

Claudine Land:

It's really important for a copywriter to identify specific words and phrases to boost a company's SEO and to find ways to weave them into, if it's a website, whether it's a blog, any social media posts, or anything of that nature, that's marketing for them. Do you want to talk a little bit about SEO and how you go about improving SEO for your clients?

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah, for sure. So really SEO, you said it perfectly, it's search engine optimization, it's the act of getting your... It's the process, I should say, of getting your website to rank higher in search engines so that when people do look for somebody who offers a service that you provide, you're showing up on page one or two, because it's, like you said, it's pretty rare that people go past page two, let alone page one even we're just, we're busy people and we don't want to wait and we want instant action, instant results. We're very results-driven creatures. So, we want to know what we need to know now, we don't want to wait.

Naomi Greenstein:

So, for SEO, it's really important to pick out keywords that people are typing in that resonate with your business. So, it's a little game of a puzzle of getting keywords that are long tail, which means not just like cakes or wedding cakes, but lace and pearl wedding cakes, or classic wedding cakes, because it's making sure it's not so broad, like wedding cakes, so that you're going to be buried underneath hundreds and hundreds of search results, but also not too specific so that there are maybe two people looking for you and they might not choose you anyway. It's just like, statistically speaking, we have to make sure there are enough people looking at you so that your chances of somebody clicking on you and choosing to go with you are worth it.

Naomi Greenstein:

So, like I said, it's definitely a game and I have a couple of tools that I use to help me determine the keywords that I want to use, but I think SEO is super important. And there's a lot of, I'm going to say old school SEOers out there who, there's not as many anymore, we've weeded them out, but there are still some people who do those black hat tactics like, oh, let's just put a bunch of white text, keywords in white texts on this white background and nobody will see it, but it'll help. That's bad for many reasons, number one, it's just gross and unethical, but two, Google, she's not stupid. She knows, she's gotten very smart. There have been a lot of advancements with Google, there are over 300 updates to it a year. So, it's a search engine that's constantly learning. So it knows when it crawls your website, whether or not you're being shady with your SEO.

Naomi Greenstein:

And so, implementing it into your copy is a great way to make sure that you're showing up in search engines and growing visibility. And I also, for my clients, write title tags and meta descriptions for them as well. So that when they get the copy, literally all they have to do is go implement it on their website.

Naomi Greenstein:

I want it to be so beyond easy for them that they don't have to worry about it. I think that's what most of us service providers want to do. We just want to make their lives easier, make them more money, and get them more clients that they want to work with. So, I think SEO can help with that a lot.

Claudine Land:

Absolutely. I agree. A hundred percent. And so updating your website is also key because you talked about SEO a lot and Google.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yes.

Claudine Land:

You're right. Google is so smart and Google is updated so frequently. So if you have a website and you have content on your website and it's just sitting there, well guess what? And if you don't update it after a year or so, your website's going to fall to the bottom. You have to keep updating your website, and creating new key terms, because the language, the English language does not stay the same. We have key phrases that change.

Naomi Greenstein:

Absolutely. And that is the thing too, is that people change all the time, the way things are phrased. And even, it's interesting actually. There's a tool that I use, it's just a free thing called Google Trends. And I use this for location-specific businesses...

Claudine Land:

Great tool.

Naomi Greenstein:

...where they're not working with people across the nation or worldwide. They're just working with people in their specific locale that I love. You said that you've used it before?

Claudine Land:

Yes. I love Google Trends. Yes. It's great.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yes. It's awesome to see like, somebody, where you live, might use a completely different term, like for tennis, down south, they say tennis shoes, instead of sneakers.

Claudine Land:

Yes. That is so true.

Naomi Greenstein:

Is it the same? Yeah. It's like, if you're making an ad or making content for tennis shoes, but you're serving people specifically in the north we're like, what the hell are tennis shoes? You mean sneakers? So, it's like, you need to know who you're talking to.

Claudine Land:

That's right.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah. Another example is, that I used to work for a small marketing agency and we cater to the automotive aftermarket and we would have to check out in this, like in the west, are they saying auto repair or auto shop, or are they using a different term? Because it's like just one little tweak like that can mean the difference between your SEO doing well, or it not serving you in the way that it should be. So, it's fun.

Claudine Land:

And so, it does entail, you touched on it well. It does include a lot of research. You've got to identify your audience and establish whom you're intending to reach. And then you've got to speak their language. They're different messages and mediums that resonate with different people.

Naomi Greenstein:

Absolutely.

Claudine Land:

You have to really focus on using the appropriate language for your specific customer. And then also not just that too, Naomi, but you have to use a language that's also going to compliment your brand as well.

Naomi Greenstein:

That's true too. And that can be hard because if you're maybe a younger person in your twenties, a millennial or something, but you're serving, for example, women who are in their fifties, or sixties, you need to find that delicate balance between sounding like yourself, but also sounding like you are catering to women who are not in your generation because the way that I speak is not the way that my mother who's in her sixties speaks. It's completely different. So, you have to find that balance between being true to yourself, but also speaking your client's language.

Claudine Land:

That's right. And then you also have to relay that across social media platforms. If you're on LinkedIn versus Facebook, they're two different audiences, two different target audiences.

Naomi Greenstein:

A hundred percent.

Claudine Land:

Yeah. Two different languages.

Naomi Greenstein:

And they have different goals too.

Claudine Land:

That's right.

Naomi Greenstein:

There are completely different goals. So yeah.

Claudine Land:

Okay. So, let's talk now about email copy versus any other copy, and why email copy can increase your revenue faster than any other copy that's out there.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah. Okay. I love this question. So, I think, when was that? Was it in the fall maybe or in early spring when Instagram crashed for a full day and the internet was losing its minds?

Claudine Land:

Yes.

Naomi Greenstein:

And understandably so, because us creative business owners, and all creators and influencers, we put a lot of energy into our content creation for Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, whatever. So, it's scary to think that there's a possibility that, that could go away and we would have no access to our followers. So, it's frustrating, but it's a very real possibility. And so, what I always say to people and well, this is not a hot take, because people said this after that Instagram crash, you don't own your followers, you own your email list though.



Claudine Land:

That's right.

Naomi Greenstein:

And the other thing with your followers too is you can't guarantee that people who are in your list of followers are actually engaging with your content and they're there for the right reasons. People play this game on Instagram specifically that really frustrates me as a business owner where they do this, oh, I'm going to follow you until you follow me back, and then I'm going to unfollow you so that I can add you to my tally, but I don't have to actually engage with your content. So, it's definitely very rude and it's pretty frustrating. And so it's like, you never really know if somebody trying to follow you is truly interested in what you have to offer and what you have to say too. Your email list is a totally different beast because people don't just find their way there, there's a reason. It was like maybe a freebie that they wanted to try out, or they wanted to see your pricing, or there was something else that they opted into and they specifically told you, yes, I want to receive your content, whatever it is.

Naomi Greenstein:

Those are warm leads right now, sitting in your inbox who are at some point, even for a split second, expressed an interest in working with you. So it's like, why would you not take advantage of that? And I think there's so much power in creating automated email funnels too, because, for example, as a service provider, you need to have a funnel that's associated with your pricing guide and your freebie guide that walks them through how to use both and what you offer and how you can help them, but even after that, for example, if somebody were, if you're a coach and somebody opted into your intro offer, an intro offer would be something like an audit, something small, but still helpful, that's under \$200-\$300. Give them an email sequence to keep nurturing them along the way. And then you can loop them into another one where it's talking about maybe a higher tier offer because even if they don't want it, they're going to opt out and that's fine. They're not the right person for you anyway, because they're not interested.

Naomi Greenstein:

But if they do, you've just increased the lifetime value of that client, of that customer, whatever, because of your sequences. So it's basically retargeting these people who've already expressed an interest in working with you, who are already sitting there with an interest in whatever you have to do. So I think it's very smart to have strategic email funnels where you're like, all right, you've opted in, let's talk a little bit to see what they're looking for.

Claudine Land:

And the thing is, you don't have to opt-in too. So you have that option, which is great. I have clients that come to Virtual Ingenuity and they want to design a website or they want to revamp their website.

So why should... And they tell me this, let me back up. They say, well, I have the design. I know exactly what I want for my website

Naomi Greenstein:

Oh no.

Claudine Land:

But they don't have the copy. So why is copy so important before the actual design of your website and sales pages?

Naomi Greenstein:

Oh gosh. Yeah. Great question. Yeah. Copy is huge. It's huge. We've been talking about that this whole time, but it's huge for websites and sales pages and it has to come before the design because the copy is what dictates the tone, the placement of things, the direction of the website, or the sales page, whatever it is. And the design comes after. The design is very important. I don't want to shove that to the side. It's very important and it plays into the strategy quite heavily, but the design draws attention to the words, but the words are the thing that sells, your copy is what's selling. So if you're like, oh, I want this image here and that here and this here, yadda, yadda, and there's too much above the fold, for example, and you're not sending that message home right away. You're just losing out on conversions. You're losing out on the possibility of working with this person or that person because the copy just isn't, it's not there, it's not engaging.

Naomi Greenstein:

So, if there's too much focus on the design and the layout and making it look gorgeous, which there are some really gorgeous sales pages out there that have amazing copy, you can do both, but you need to lay that framework first and know exactly what you're going to say so that the design can be like, okay, great. This is a testimonial section. Let's play this up a lot and make it really cute and go from there. But yeah, the copy is the strategy. If you don't have that, it's really, it's not a good idea to spend money on design because it just doesn't make sense. It's like the chicken before the egg.

Claudine Land:

That's right. I agree. A hundred percent. So, what do you think about this? I'll throw this out at you, Naomi, what do you think the most important copywriting skill to master is? I think that a lot of people will argue that it's probably a standout headline. I don't think so, for me, I think you have to understand how your target market thinks. What are your thoughts on that?

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah, I like that question a lot. I do think headlines are really important. I think even more so I'm going to say subject lines for emails are crazy important.

Claudine Land:

Yes.

Naomi Greenstein:

Tweaking one or two words in an email subject line can take the open rates from 25% to 65%.

Claudine Land:

Absolutely.

Naomi Greenstein:

That's a huge difference. But I honestly, I agree with what you said, I think that getting the voice down and getting the message across is huge because when you're a copywriter unless you're very, very niche and you only work for one specific type of provider, you need to be able to be flexible. I've worked with people who are in website design and brand new design, yes, but I've also worked for physical therapists and sleep specialists and wedding vendors, and Ayurvedic practitioners. None of those are consistent, they're not the same at all. It's really important to be able to get into the voice of your client and communicate their message to their clients so that it feels consistent and it feels cohesive.

Naomi Greenstein:

And that is part of the strategy, is making sure that it resonates because if it doesn't, then you're really not speaking to anybody, you're just throwing words out into the void. So yeah, I would say getting into the voice and making that message really come through loud and clear is, it's one of the most important skills and it's hard to master. It takes time. Yeah.

Claudine Land:

And you've been a copywriter for over seven years, so you've learned the skills that are necessary to really be in tune with your client.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah. And I was lucky personally, sorry to interrupt you there.

Claudine Land:

No, it's fine.

Naomi Greenstein:

I like to say that I feel like I was lucky because I also had a lot of great mentors, I was an English major and writing a lot of papers and things like that, and reading my freshman year research papers to my graduate dissertation. No, that's a completely different ball game from copy, but just having those mentors who can help you with those types of papers and also then your copywriting in a business setting is huge because you're getting feedback from professionals. So that helped me a lot, but yeah, like I said, it doesn't happen overnight.

Claudine Land:

You're right about that, for sure. So, the benefit of good copywriting is this. I want to recap a little bit. We know that it's important to craft a story, entertain your readers, and make sure it resonates with your readers. You want copy that's going to cause your readers to take action and promote your product or business in a way that's going to pull in your audience, it's a vast audience of who your target market is. Another thing that we didn't touch on, Naomi, is that good copy builds relationships.

Naomi Greenstein:

Absolutely.

Claudine Land:

It builds relationships with your audience. And I feel that it's the bridge that will build a longstanding connection between you and your customers because, in essence, your customer loyalty all begins with the message that you convey with your words. And then also I think that good copy transforms products into must-haves. You have to know the advantages of your product and you have to get with a great copywriter such as yourself at Glas House Media, that's going to take the skill of copywriting and give a new twist that will really stimulate the imagination of your audience and just make them crave what you offer. And then you also have to provide measurable results. That's super important because that will lead to increased engagement across your social media platforms and just improve your conversation rates.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah, absolutely.

Claudine Land:

And I think also that good copywriting does not need to be defined to one method. There's really not a defined method for copywriting. I think it's-.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah.

Claudine Land:

Oh, go ahead. Go ahead, Naomi.

Naomi Greenstein:

I just, yeah, no, I agree. I think there are so many copywriters out here and there's more than one way to do it, I think that people have their own process and however you get it done is up to you, but if you have a great process and are very established in it, you're going to be great.

Claudine Land:

Tell me what working with Glas House Media looks like. What's the process that you use to get clients to get their end results?

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah, sure. So, for me, when I have clients inquire, usually people contact me through DMs or email or just shoot me a message through the contact form on my website. We usually just start talking a little bit and, before we hop on a call, sometimes I try to just make sure that we're on the same page first. And once we get on that discovery call, that's really the chance for us to get even further into it, into their goals, into what they're looking to do with their copy, because their goals help frame how I want to tackle the copy, because I'm like, all right, well, we're strategizing to get this or achieve that. So, that's helpful. Once we book, I have a couple of different packages like VIP days and things like that. Those are really nice. They're a very fast turnaround service where I essentially write full copy with SEO for a website, for a sales page, launch copy, or whatever in a day. It's a really awesome service for people who need their copy yesterday, as I say.

Claudine Land:

That's great.

Naomi Greenstein:

So, for me, once we get to the booking stage, they either can open book a VIP day, which is a set price, or I'll send them a custom proposal so that they can understand what they're getting into and what everything entails, once that happens they get the brand questionnaire that I referenced earlier. And they have a couple of days to do that because it is a bit in-depth, but it is for a reason, it's giving me everything that I would possibly need that I can include on their website. I might not use all of it, but I use most of it. And it all plays into the final result.

Naomi Greenstein:

And while they're doing that, I'm off doing keyword research for SEO purposes and compiling a list of keywords I'm going to work from. And I'm also framing out the document. I find for me, and also coming from the world of education and being an English major, I have to map out all of my projects. I did that with my 60-page dissertation in grad school. I mapped out every single chapter, put my research points in, what I wanted to write, and then it's just filling in the gaps.

Claudine Land:

Yes.

Naomi Greenstein:

I'm working on all of that. And then once I get the brand questionnaire back, I'm reviewing it. We hop on a call one last time, if necessary, just to clarify anything. And then the writing begins, which is where it gets fun.

Naomi Greenstein:

For me personally, I don't know if other copywriters do this, but I like to give my clients a bit of a peak, I call it a first look halfway through their copy. Whether it's a VIP day and they get their first look at lunchtime that day, or if it's a two-week project for a bunch of email funnels, and I'm just sending them the first email funnel that I've written, I want them to see what's happening so far so that we can both be on the same page and make sure it's feeling aligned before I move on.

Claudine Land:

That's great.

Naomi Greenstein:

I think it's important to get their input right off the bat. Once I know that we're on track, I continue writing. They get the copy in a Google document that is shared with them. And for the round of revisions that they get, that varies depending on the project, we go into that Google doc together, we can do it on a Zoom call or just remotely, a lot of times I'll be doing other things in the background, and so are they, and they can comment directly in the doc what they want changed. And I go ahead and fix it for them. It's a very collaborative back and forth process, which I like, because they're getting to tell me exactly what they want to change, if there are things, usually it's just little verbiage tweaks here and there, and then yeah, we're off to the races. And they can take that copy and implement it where it's needed as soon as possible, whether it's they themselves that do it or their designer, they're all set with it.

Claudine Land:

Great. That's awesome. I love that process because it's really important when you're a copywriter to get your client involved in the process because writing for someone that doesn't really understand the process or what you're trying to say can be difficult. So getting them involved is great.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yeah, absolutely.

Claudine Land:

Glas House Media can be found where? And it's there's an interesting spelling to Glas as well. So, explain that, Naomi.

Naomi Greenstein:

All right. Yes. So, Glas, it's pronounced "gloss" actually, which sounds a little snooty, but I swear it's not. Glas is an Irish word, it means green and it's a play-off of my maiden name, which is Greenstein. And it's because I lived in Ireland for a while, it's where I went to grad school. Glas House Media is spelled G-L-A-S House Media. So, that's the story behind it.

Claudine Land:

Okay. So, we can reach you at <https://glashousemedia.com/> and contact you there. Thank you so much, Naomi, we had a wonderful conversation with you.

Naomi Greenstein:

Thank you so much too. Those were really fun questions to answer too. I love getting into this stuff.

Claudine Land:

I know. I can tell. I love it. I love writing too. And it's so important because there are so many individuals out there that have difficulty writing. And this is an important skill to have.

Naomi Greenstein:

For sure.

Claudine Land:

Yes. Okay. So, thank you to our listening audience. We always appreciate you here at Virtual Ingenuity, LLC. As you know, I will have a transcript available so that you can reach out to Naomi at Glas House Media. Until next time guys.

Claudine Land:

Naomi, thank you so much for being here.

Naomi Greenstein:

Yay. Thank you so much. It was so much fun.

Claudine Land:

Okay, guys, let's impact together! Thank you so much. Until next time.