

Effective blogging—an editor’s perspective

For my blog post this week, I thought it might be interesting to offer a few effective blog-writing techniques from a newspaper editor’s perspective. Since, I’m definitely not an expert blogger, I looked to Simon Payn, former newspaper editor-turned-blogger, in an effort to offer some blogging tips. Here are a few of Payn’s suggestions, in abbreviated form; visit www.copyblogger.com. Hope this helps!

** Chop it down! Space is at a premium in newspapers. And cutting a 800-word story down to 100 words isn’t easy. It’s a skill practiced by editors every day. There’s nothing like brevity to concentrate the mind and bring focus to a story. And a story that gets to the point quickly is more likely to be read and understood by busy readers. So, bloggers...What would happen to your writing if space was limited, and you were forced to edit your blog post down by 50 percent? Would cutting out 300 words make your post punchier and easier to read?*

** What’s the hook? Where’s the lead? Editors across the world scream at reporters, “why did you bury the lead?” Readers want to skim the page and get their news quickly, deciding after a couple of paragraphs whether to read the rest. So, bloggers...Are readers going to get the point of your post in the first couple of paragraphs? Or are they going to get lost, give up and click away from your post?*

** Headlines: the ultimate salesman for your story. If a reader is not grabbed by the headline, only the most ardent follower of the news is going to stick around for the rest of the story. Headlines often tell the story in a succinct manner. So, bloggers... How long do you spend working on the headline of each post? Are your headlines compelling?*

** Newspapers like to think of themselves as the first draft of history, so accuracy is a vital part of a newspaper’s brand. Every article is written carefully by the reporter, and then fact-checked and copy edited by multiple editors before it makes it into print. Of course, most bloggers don’t have that luxury of editorial support. But accuracy—spelling names right, linking URLs to the right places—is important in building your blog’s brand, too. So, bloggers...Have you taken the time to read through your post more than once to ensure there are no howlers?*

[Source: www.copyblogger.com]

(Ironically, I think this is the longest post that I’ve ever submitted.)

Don’t forget to check out the March 26 issue of News & Events.