



Marketing Moxie Podcast

Episode 56: Copywriting for Conversions with Jen Havice

MAGGIE: Hey, guys. I am so excited about today's show. We are talking about conversion copywriting with my friend and the absolute genius at conversions, Jen Havice from Make Mention Media.

Now, before you decide you don't need conversion copywriting, you do. Everyone does. If you actually want to sell, if you actually want to create an experience for your customers that gets them where they want to go and helps them make the right decision, you need this information. Let's dive in.

INTRO: Welcome to Marketing Moxie with your host, Maggie Patterson. This show is dedicated to practical and proven, online and offline, marketing ideas that you can take away and apply to build your business, all with Maggie's signature, to the point, style and sass. Let's go.

MAGGIE: I had the pleasure, probably about 18 months ago, connecting with Jen in a networking group. We just hit it off as fellow copywriters. I'm really excited to have her on the show today because this woman is so smart about conversion copywriting. She knows things that just absolutely blow my mind.

Most copywriters nowadays are very focused on the fluffy kind of copywriting or personality driven without a lot of focus on this kind of stuff because it's dry, it's math, it's numbers. Jen has a really great way of bridging that gap into helping us understand why we need to do these things, but not making it so boring that we fall asleep. Let's listen in on my conversation with Jen.

Hey, everyone. Today we are continuing our series on copywriting. We have Jen Havice here. She is an absolute expert in all things conversion copywriting. I definitely dabble and study conversions, but Jen exercises all kinds of tests that I wouldn't even dream of doing on a day-to-day basis. Jen, welcome to the show.

JEN: Hey, Maggie. Thanks for having me. I'm really excited to have a chat.

MAGGIE: We're totally going to geek out on conversions. If this kind of stuff scares you, don't go away because Jen has a really great way of explaining it in a way that's simple, and we're going to talk about this from the perspective of--as a small business owner, as a solopreneur--what you can actually do about it. Jen, let's talk about the number one conversion killer. What's the thing, when you're out there on the Web, you see people doing and you think, "Ah, face palm. Please don't do that anymore"?

JEN: Well, there are two things. The first thing, and we'll just talk from a strictly copy standpoint because that's what we're talking about.

MAGGIE: Yes.

JEN: The main thing is people who, you go to their homepage, you land, and there's no headline, or there's maybe a headline, but it's not a solid value proposition. I think a lot of people get a little freaked out, like, "Oh, my God. What does value proposition mean?"

It's basically having a headline and maybe a subhead that keep people into exactly where they landed and what's in it for them. You've only got a couple of seconds to grab people, and you need to let them know that they've landed in the right place and they're going to find what they're looking for there. That's generally with a lot of, even big sites, not just small sites.

You land and it's like, "Oh, my God." There's no solid value proposition. There's not even a headline, like, I'm not even sure where I am. That's the biggest. Then, sort of, in addition to that is having these rotating sliders.

MAGGIE: Eh!

JEN: Even if you think, okay, great, but I've got five different headlines, and I'm just going to keep rotating them so people can see. No. Please, please stop. Don't do that anymore. It's terrible. It's a huge conversion killer, and you're confusing them. You're not giving them enough time to just understand what the number one thing is why they're there.

MAGGIE: I was having this discussion with my project manager. She was going to Traffic & Conversion Summit, which is going on this week. We were talking about this whole thing. We love to look at websites at the time,

and we were discussing how many websites we end up and we have no idea what we're supposed to do.

JEN: Right.

MAGGIE: I'm like, hey, we're pretty smart. If we can't figure this out, there's a problem.

JEN: Exactly, exactly. You just have to think about your mother, your grandmother, or just somebody who you know is not terribly tech savvy or Internet savvy, and they're jumping onto your website. You've got to spell it out for them and make it super clear where they are, where they've landed, and why they should care.

MAGGIE: Here's just a question. Especially in the solopreneur, small business kind of space, it's very, very heavy on focusing on the design of the site.

JEN: Yes.

MAGGIE: I think a lot of times the copy is the afterthought. If you were sitting down, and you really want to think about conversions for your new site, what kind of things would you recommend people tackle as part of that so that basically their message doesn't get lost in the design?

JEN: Yeah. I think the first thing you need to think about is every page needs to have a goal, and it should have one goal. It might have more than one call to action, meaning a button that's going to take you someplace else, but it should really have one goal, and it needs its own reason for being.

Every page you create needs to push people further along their journey to either buying something, getting more information, or achieving whatever goal that they have on your site. You need to really think about it in terms of your customer and what they're trying to achieve when they come versus, "Oh, I've got this really phenomenally beautiful site and, oh, let's slap some words on there and just sort of let them know the basics." It may look beautiful, but if it's not getting people to where they need to go, it's not going to help you out, definitely, and it's just going to annoy them.

MAGGIE: Yeah. Ultimately, the more decisions you're asking them to make, like the classical page where you arrive and you're like, "Oh, there's 87 decisions for me to make right now. Guess what I'm going to do?"

JEN: Right, right.

MAGGIE: Good-bye.

JEN: Exactly, exactly.

MAGGIE: One of the things in the conversion world is we talk a little bit about conversion testing. We talk about A/B tests. We talk about all kinds of different things. But obviously, if you have a smaller site, you might be

doing your copy yourself. What are some kinds of conversion basics that we need to know?

JEN: Well, going back to figuring out, the very first, number one thing, is figuring out what the goal of the page is.

MAGGIE: Yeah.

JEN: Then, after you've done that, you need to give people enough information so that they can make a decision to move on to the next thing. And you need to give them the right information in the right place. Think of it like, let's say, your call to action. That might be a Buy Now button or it might be you've got a service or something and you want them to move further into the funnel and sign up, do whatever they need to do.

You really need to think about: Does it make the most sense for where your customer is at that point on the page to put that button? A lot of times I'll see people putting a call to action at the very top of the page because they think, "Well, it has to be at the top of the page on the right-hand side, and then I need to have it show up five more times on the page."

What you need to think about: Is your customer ready at the top of the page to even be thinking about whether they want to go to the next step? They may need that argument, that great headline, bulk of copy, and bullet points to kind of persuade them and really get them to understand, "Oh, okay, this is why I really need to do this." Then give them the opportunity to click.

Some of that is, even if you don't have the traffic to do "A/B testing," you can still try it. Move your call to action based on just looking at your analytics; looking at how many packages have I sold.

MAGGIE: Yeah, I mean that's always a good, basic indicator. If you're not selling stuff, there's a problem.

JEN: Right, exactly, exactly. That's just something to think about. You always want to think about your site from the perspective of the customer, what they want to achieve, and how ready they are at every step on the page to take a certain action. If you're sort of bombarding them from the get-go with what you want them to do and they're not ready, that's a big turnoff.

MAGGIE: Yeah. I was actually looking at a sales page, I think it was last week, and it was a relatively short sales page that I might have placed two Buy Now buttons. It had five different Buy Now call to action buttons. I was just so completely overwhelmed because the message the page said was, it didn't matter how good the copy was, you must buy this now - buy, buy, buy.

JEN: Right.

MAGGIE: Pushy, pushy, push.

JEN: Right.

MAGGIE: I think the immediate reaction is if you have a Buy Now button above the fold for something that's over a \$1,000 investment, we've got a big problem.

JEN: Right, right, exactly, exactly, especially for a long form sales page. You really need to establish that argument as to why what you're selling is so great and so much better than whatever else is out there. The fact that there's even this problem that needs to be solved before you hit people with that call to action.

MAGGIE: Jen, what's the absolute best trick you have when it comes to helping with creating copy that converts?

JEN: Going back to the call to action piece of it, and this just sort of illustrates the point, but beyond wanting to give people the right information at the right point on their journey, you also want to go out of your way to alleviate any friction points.

MAGGIE: Yes.

JEN: That means: What are people concerned about? What's their biggest hesitation to buying a product or a service like yours? Is it the price? Do they think they're not getting enough value for the money? It's all those types of things. As you move them down to the call to action, just putting some language around your calls to action and your buttons to alleviate sort of endpoint anxiety, whether it's credit card logos.

MAGGIE: Yeah, yeah.

JEN: People feel like they're actually buying from someplace secure. Having three bullet points that tell people, if it's a ten-day free trial, no credit card required. Giving people a sense of the fact that they're not going to have to find something nasty on the other side when they press that button. Then the other thing is just with the button copy itself, everybody who has "Submit" in their buttons--

MAGGIE: Yeah, please stop.

JEN: --please, please stop. You are not selling 50 Shades of Grey.

MAGGIE: That's exactly what I think when I read it!

JEN: And if you are, go for it. But, hey, we don't need "submit." That's a big turnoff.

MAGGIE: Yeah, it's huge.

JEN: It's also not telling people where you're taking them. You want to give people the sense that you're not making them work to buy or get whatever you're giving them. Using button copy that's "Get My Free Trial," or "Teach Me How," things that give them the sense that they're going to get instead of they're going to have to actually work to get whatever they're buying or what you're giving them. That's a super easy fix and something that's really easy to play around with and test whether you have traffic or not.

MAGGIE: Yeah. I love those ones, especially with the "Submit" button because that obviously puts my back up. I'm like, "Please. Why don't you just write something nice and friendly?"

JEN: Right, exactly. Exactly, yeah. Yeah, so that's just super easy things that you can do to kind of alleviate unconscious anxiety. I don't think a lot of us necessarily think about that, but there's just been a myriad of tests, A/B tests, done out there in just changing button copy, how that's really helped with conversions and giving people information that alleviates whatever sort of anxieties they have around pressing that button. Giving it to them there where they need it, it makes a huge difference.

MAGGIE: I'm glad you brought up the anxiety issue because I was writing a post for this week on social proof, and I'm going to do a couple on different issues, but the number of tests, if you guys really want to delve into it, even on things like how do use social proof, negative social proof, wrong placement of social proof. It's pretty mind-blowing what you can find out there with a really quick, solid Google search.

JEN: Yep, yep, yep, and how important social proof is.

MAGGIE: This is. I'll link up this blog post in the show notes, which will be at Episode 56, but I was reading something for a very expensive coaching program, and there wasn't a single customer testimonial on that page.

JEN: Mmm.

MAGGIE: It was \$25,000-plus. I literally threw up in my mouth a little because I was like, "What? Where?"

JEN: Right.

MAGGIE: Show me the proof. If you're going to sell me--

JEN: Show me the money. Yeah, yeah.

MAGGIE: Yeah. If you want more than \$99 from me, I need some proof. I'm skeptical.

JEN: You know what? Even if you want \$29.95--I'm sorry--people want to know it works. They want to feel like, "Oh, there's an actual person

behind this testimonial and it's telling me something that is going to inspire me to want to buy this," not, "Oh, this was great."

Yeah, social proof is super important, and I think people, they forget that, especially when you're trying to sell anything. You're selling yourself. You want to believe that other people trust this person.

MAGGIE: Yeah. Ultimately, if I don't trust you, I'm not giving you my money.

JEN: Exactly.

MAGGIE: It's that simple. If we're going to boil down conversions, that's what it all means.

JEN: Right, exactly, exactly.

MAGGIE: Jen, where can everyone find you if they want to learn more about you and the work you do?

JEN: Yeah. You can come to my site, which is www.MakeMentionMedia.com. Check it out. I've got a blog. I've got lots of posts on there that talk about all this kind of stuff. You can find me on Twitter, @JenHavice. Yeah, I'm out and about. Just send me a message.

MAGGIE: I will link up Jen's stuff. Plus, I will link up her post she wrote not that long ago about sliders and all the issues they have there.

JEN: Yeah.

MAGGIE: If you're not convinced, you can see the data because it's pretty compelling once you read it. Those will be over at www.MaggiePatterson.com/episode56. Jen, thank you so much for your time today.

JEN: Oh, thank you. It was great. I appreciate it.

MAGGIE: I'm sure, if you had a pen nearby, hopefully if you weren't jogging, on the treadmill, or in the car, you were trying to do this, but there were a lot of takeaways in this episode. I want to just call out the kind of top three takeaways from my perspective.

The number one, and this is something I cannot stress enough, we need to make sure, with any page of website copy, that we have a clear goal for the page. What do we want the customers to do? Jen did a really great job of explaining that in the interview because, ultimately, if you don't have a goal in mind, it's going to be very hard to create copy or even a design that really hits the mark.

Number two: We really talked about the importance of the customer. Jen really talked about that context of what does your customer need to make the decision. What do they need to feel comfortable, to reduce friction, to

answer questions they might have about your return policy? How do you do that in your copy in a way that really answers that? A lot of it is research, anticipation, and understanding their needs.

A great example that Jen and I talked about was really around the call to action buttons--Buy Now, other buttons you have on your website-- understanding what questions they might have and kind of eliminating any fears they might have about actually pressing that button. If you are using a call to action button, please don't ever use the term "Submit." It's not doing your website any favors.

Finally, understand that conversion and understanding the numbers behind your website is not just for big websites. No matter how little traffic you have, look for indicators that your site is not converting. Conversion issue number one: you're not making sales; you're not getting opt-ins. If you're not getting the desired result, really look critically at the structure of your page, the copy on your page because something is disconnected. Maybe you need to move things around. Don't be afraid to experiment with how you do it.

If you want to learn more about Jen, everything you need to know about Jen and Make Mention Media is linked up over in the show notes at www.MaggiePatterson.com/episode56.

If you want to join the Marketing Moxie group, we would love to have you over there. Jen is also in that group, so if you had a question for her after the show, you can pop it in there. You can join the group over at www.MaggiePatterson.com/group.

That's it for this week. On Friday--and if you're not listening to this in real time, don't worry--right after this episode is my very first, what I'm calling, Feisty Friday. I'm really excited to share this with you. They're very short because, on Friday, you don't have a lot of time to listen to me. They're about five minutes long. We're going to tackle some trends, issues, and take a stand on a few things and be productive in the process because we're not just going to complain. We're actually going to look at the issue, how we can fix it, and how we can avoid it in our own marketing.

I wish you a great week, and I will talk to you again soon.

OUTRO: Thank you so much for listening. Hop on over to our home base at <http://www.MaggiePatterson.com> for the show notes and more episodes. And you can join the Marketing Moxie Facebook group at www.MaggiePatterson.com/group. And remember, as Yoda says, "Do or do not. There is no try." That's what having moxie is all about.

Show notes at: <http://maggiepatterson.com/episode56>