

GOOD ADVERTISING HEADLINES

-and why they were so profitable

WHY ARE YOU starting to read this advertisement? First, you must be interested in Advertising or in a closely related field, either professionally or as a layman. Secondly, the headline has promised you that reading this ad may prove rewarding to you.

These are the two principal attributes of good headlines. They select, from the total readership of the publication, those readers who are (or can be induced to be) interested in the subject of the advertisement. And they promise them a worthwhile reward for reading it.

What kinds of rewards do good headlines promise? How important a part does the headline alone play in the success of an advertisement? Let's tackle this second question first.

How Important Is the Headline?

Perhaps you have read somewhere that 50% of the value of an entire advertisement is represented by the headline itself. Or 70%. Or 80%. The truth is that you can not possibly evaluate it in percentages.

For example, what percentage better is an automobile that runs beautifully as compared with one that won't run at all? It's the same with headlines. One can be almost a total failure in accomplishing even its primary purpose: to induce people to start reading the body matter (the copy) of the advertisement. Another headline can work almost like magic in inducing readers by the thousands into an ad whose copy moves people to action and thus moves products off the shelves.

Yes, There's THAT Much Difference...

... In the power of headlines. It isn't enough to cram persuasiveness into the body matter. Some of the most tremendous flops among advertisements contain body matter filled with convincing copy. But it just wasn't capitalized into a good headline.

And so the excellent copy did not even get a reading! For, obviously, it is the headline that gets people into the copy; the copy doesn't get them into the headline. In other words, the advertising copywriter's aim in life should be to try to make it harder for people to "pass up" his advertisement than to read it. And right to his head-line he takes the first, and truly "giant," step on the road to that goal.

So much for the importance of headlines. And for the staggering waste and loss of effectiveness when expensive advertising space is devoted to displaying poor ones.

The Sole Purpose of a Headline
Now, before we tackle the second question (What kinds of rewards do good headlines promise?) let's clear up one fundamental. What is the sole purpose of a headline? To make it crystal clear we'll use a simple, and sufficiently accurate, analogy.

The headline of an advertisement is like a flag being held up by a flag man alongside a railroad track. He is using it to try to get the immediate attention of an approaching train—so that he can give him some kind of message in the case of advertising, or that a flag is printed the headline of an advertisement.

Let's carry the analogy further. The train consists of a fast-moving modern Diesel engine and one car. The engine never will (most often) be the mother and/or father of a family. The one dependent car contains the rest of the family. They are all speeding along on the track of their daily lives—moving fast in accordance with the hectic tempo of today.

The message on that flag (the headline of the advertisement) must be persuasive. Yes, and persuasive enough to compete with all the other distractions of life in these times. It must capture attention. And it must offer a "reward for reading." This reward must be sufficiently attractive to induce the reader to continue reading under the headline. (In the case of a negative-type of "warning" headline—some of which are listed among our 100—we might even draw a further analogy and go so far as to say that it is then made in the nature of a red flag.)

What Kinds of Rewards Do Good Headlines Promise?

That brings us to the answer to this second question. Of course there are many types of headlines, too numerous for us to review here. So we will concentrate upon 100 examples of the two types which in too unquestionably have the best record of resultfulness. (The criteria upon which the selection of the 100 headlines was based are explained in a panel on the second page of this two-page advertisement.)

Both types promise desirable "rewards for reading." One does it through a positive approach; the other through a negative one. Here is how they do it: a) By managing to convey, in a few words, how the reader can save, gain, or accomplish something through the use of your product—how it will increase his mental, physical, financial, social, emotional, or spiritual stimulation, satisfaction, well-being, or security.

4. The Child Who Won the Hearts of All

This was a legend result ad which proved spectacularly profitable. It appeared in women's magazines. The emotional-type copy described (and the photograph portrayed) the kind of little girl any parent would want his daughter to be. Laughing; rolling; running forward, with arms outstretched, right out of the ad and into the arms and heart of the reader.

5. Are You Ever Tongue-Tied at a Party?

Pinpoints the myriads of self-conscious, inferiorly-complexed wallflowers. "That's me! I want to read this ad; maybe it tells me exactly what to do about it."

6. How a New Discovery Made a Plain Girl Beautiful

Wide appeal: there are more plain girls than beautiful ones—and just about all of them want to be better looking.

7. How to Win Friends and Influence People

This helped to sell millions of copies of the book of the same title. Strong basic appeal: we all want to do it. But without the words "How To" the headline would become simply a trite wallflower.

8. The Last 2 Hours Are the Longest—and those are the 2 hours you save

An airline ad featuring a faster jet-powered flight. Headline is a bull's-eye for air-experienced travelers who know that those last two interminable hours that take them to their nerves and patience. Like many fine headlines, it doubtless came right out of the personal experience of its writer.

This headline (and all the others discussed here) would have been good even if it had been suggested by any picture at all. But its effect was heightened by a photo of a wrist-watch with the hour-marks indicating 10, 11, and 12 stretched wide apart.

9. Who Else Wants a Screen Story?

Who doesn't? Except men—and this successful and much-run ad is not addressed to them. "Who Else" also has a "get on the band-wagon" connotation: "not just be done" but "who else wants to have it?"

10. Do You Make These Mistakes in English?

This old-timer still keeps going. A direct challenge. Now read the headline, eliminating that vital word "These." This word is the "hook" that almost forces you into the copy. "What are these particular mistakes? Do I make them?"

In this first "breathalyzer" test we stop to impress upon your mind how significant a part the "specific" plays in so many good headlines. It discards, eliminating that vital word "These." This word is the "hook" that almost forces you into the copy. "What are these particular mistakes? Do I make them?"

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Where, When, What, Why, How. Also note how frequently exact amounts are used: number of days, evenings, hours, minutes, dollars, cents, types of.

The "attraction of the specific" is so much worth your special attention that you may want to include examples of it as you continue reading.

11. Why Some Foods "Explosive" in Your Stomach

A provocative "Why" headline. Based upon the completely understandable fact that some food combinations virtually "explode" in the stomach. (Relevant picture of chemical rocket shaped like a stomach, starting to explode.)

12. Hands That Look Lovelier in 24 Hours—Or Your Money Back

Universal appeal to women. Results guaranteed: "Or Your Money Back."

13. You Can Laugh At Money Worries—If You Follow This Simple Plan

Something everybody wants to be able to do. A successful key ad upon which many thousands have been spent.

14. Why Some People Almost Always Make Money in the Stock Market

A profitable checked-result ad selling a book written by a partner in a well-known and highly-regarded brokerage house. Important key words: "Some" and "Almost"—which make the headline credible.

15. When Doctors "Feel Rotten" This Is What They Do

What's the secret of the success of this well-known ad? First the suggestion of paradox. The seldom-think-of doctors as being in poor health themselves. And when they are, what they do about it is information "right from the horse's mouth"; carries a note of authority and greater assurance of "reward for reading the ad."

Also, the use of the frank colloquialism, "feel rotten" gets attention; sounds human, natural. Besides, it has "surprise value"—since the vocabulary of the advertising pages has a certain sameness and stilted quality.

This ad pulled only half the number of responses when a test was made changing when doctors "feel rotten" to when doctors don't "feel up" to "Par." (Other examples of the use of common colloquialisms and "surprise" words are given in some of the 100 good headlines.)

16. "SEEK INCREDIBLE! That You Can Offer These Signed Original Etchings—For Only \$5 Each!"

Anticipates the reader's natural incredulity concerning such an exceptional bargain. This helps to overcome his doubt in advance, by acknowledging the likelihood of it.

17. Five Familiar Skin Troubles—Which Do You Want to Overcome?

"Let me keep reading—to see if I have one of the five." The old "Which of These" selling technique.

"Not do you want to know what they do you want?" (Interrogative headline helps center reader into the copy. Note how many of these 100 are interrogative headlines.)

18. Which of These \$2.50 to \$5 Best Sellers You Want—For Only \$1 Each?

This keyed ad sold hundreds of thousands of books. Strong comparative-price bargain appeal.

19. Who Ever Enjoyed of a Woman's Love—And Hearing of 3 Delicious Meals at the Same Time?

Another example of a headline which anticipates incredulity in order to help overcome it.

20. How I Improved My Memory in One Evening

"This is the famous 'Addison Sims of Seattle' ad which coined that household phrase. Could you expect wanting to read it?"

21. Discover the Fortune That Lies Hidden in Your Salary

One of those good "discover what lies hidden" headlines. (Note others here.) A proven ploy for an advertiser offering sound securities on a "pay out of income" basis.

22. Doctors Prove 2 Out of 3 Women Can Have More Beautiful Skin in 14 Days

Women want it. "Why 2 out of 3? Am I one of the 100? How have doctors proved it? Quick results are what I want... only 14 days!"

23. How a New Kind of Clay Improved My Complexion in 30 Minutes

Promises a desirable "reward for reading." And the true experience of another person (with something relevant to our own desires) is always interesting.

24. How to Give Your Children Extra Iron—These 3 Delicious Wines

It obeys the wise maxim of newspaper reporters: "Start where the reader is." In other words, the public already accepts the fact that children's blood should contain plenty of iron. So the headline goes on from there—promising "Extra" iron and "3 Delicious Wines" to get it.

25. Everwearer Women Are Raving About This Amazing New Shampoo

The colloquial: "Raving About." The "success word": "Everwearer." (Nothing succeeds like success.) And the overworked "Amazing" still seems to have some power left.

26. Do YOU Do Any of These Ten Embarrassing Things?

Bull's-eye question. All of us are afraid of embarrassing ourselves before others. Being criticized, looked down upon, talked about. "Which Ten are they? Do I do any of them?"

27. How a 'Fool Stun' Made Me a Star Salesman

"What is the 'Fool Stun'? Why did people call it that? How did it transform this fellow? I'd like to be able to 'sell myself and my ideas—even though selling may not be my vocation.' (A large appropriation was spent profitably on this ad after its results—'which do you want?') were made the most of them.

28. How to Take Out Stains... Use (Product Name) and Follow These Easy Directions

An example of a good "service" ad—one which, besides being relevantly linked up with the product, also provides helpful information useful in itself. (Such ads often have considerable longevity because they are cut out and used for future reference.)

29. Today... Add \$10,000 to Your Estate—For the Price of a New Hat

Who wouldn't want to do that? Doubt as to the promise is offset by the fact that the advertiser is a large and reputable insurance company.

30. Does Your Child Ever Embarrass You?

Direct; challenging; a common criticism. Brings up a flood of recollection. How can such unpleasant experience be avoided in the future?

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33. Is the Life of a Child Worth \$1 to You?

Trenchant headline for a brake-line service. How the life of a little child may be snuffed out by an accident due to your ineffective brakes.

34. Profits That Lie Hidden in Your Farm

Widely run in farm papers, with exceptional results. The "hidden profit" idea and the suggestion of "retrieving a loss."

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37. Six Types of Investors—Which Group Are YOU In?

This ad produced inquiries in large quantities. Investors reviewed the characteristics of each of the six groups, as described in the ad; then inquired about a program designed to meet the investment purposes of their particular group.

AND NOW WE COME TO "BREATHERS" #3. It's a short one because you already know its "lesson" very well. But to stress its importance let us point out this to you: #2 of these 200 headlines contains one of these actual words—You, Your, or Yourself!

In many of the other 58 headlines the "you" is implicit, even though it may not actually appear.

Even when the pronoun is first person singular (for example, How I Improved My Memory in One Evening) the reward promised is so unusually desired that it is, in effect, really saying "You can do it too!" That's all for that. No use adding more than a little "test you forget" to the thousands of words already written about the "point of you."

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Direct; challenging; a common criticism. Brings up a flood of recollection. How can such unpleasant experience be avoided in the future?

41. Is YOUR Home Picture-Poor?

A rife-stone question hitting thousands of readers. Illustrated by photo of an otherwise attractive living room with blank areas on its walls with X's indicating where pictures would improve the room's appearance.

42. How to Give Your Children Extra Iron—These 3 Delicious Wines

It obeys the wise maxim of newspaper reporters: "Start where the reader is." In other words, the public already accepts the fact that children's blood should contain plenty of iron. So the headline goes on from there—promising "Extra" iron and "3 Delicious Wines" to get it.

43. To People Who Want to Write—But can't get started

Unflattering selection of subjects, which is largely-stylized.

44. This Almost-Magical Lamp Lights Highway Turns Before You Make Them

The word "Almost" lends believability. Headline promises an automatic no-effort method of relieving an annoying condition or avoiding a dangerous emergency.

45. The Crimes We Commit Against Our Stomachs

Another "start where the reader is" headline—because most people already believe they often give their digestive processes some pretty rough treatment. This support, between the theme of the ad and the common belief of its readers, make the "We" and "Our" practically equal in effectiveness to "You" and "Your."

46. The Man With the Grasshopper Mind

An immediate association with himself leads to the mind of the reader. He wants to check it out on the personal parallel. What are the symptoms? Starting things one never finishes? Jumping from one thing to another?

"How much am I like him? It's not a good trait. What did he do about it? What can I do about it?" (An example of a negative headline that strikes home more accurately and dramatically than would a positive one.)

47. They Laughed When I Sat Down At the Piano—But When I Started to Play!

Another one that has entered our language. Sympathy with the underdog. Particularly interesting, structurally, as an example of a headline which "turns the corner" by using a final tagline to make itself positive instead of negative.

48. Throw Away Your Car!

When Elie Vinograd, the outboard-motor king, ran a small ad with this headline he took the first step toward building his one-room machine shop into a big business. (A similar headline, *Throw Away Your Aerial*, was also one responsible for building a business in the radio field.)

This type of headline is worth thinking about when your product eliminates the need for some beforehand-necessary piece of equipment, some onerous job, or some sizable item of expense.

49. How to Do Wonders With a Little Land!

Successful headline which pulled 75% better than *Two Acres and Security* and 40% better than *A Little Land—a Lot of Living*. The reason: "How to" and "Do Wonders With."

50. Who Else Wants Lighter Cakes—In Half the Mixing Time?

Strong appeal. Another good "Who Else" headline. (#9, *Who Else Wants a Screen Story*?)

51. Little Lucks That Keep Men Poor

A key "retrieving a loss" ad whose checked results justified frequent repetition.

52. Picked by 301 Nails... Retains Full Air Pressure

Who wouldn't be interested in reading more about a tire like this?

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Brace Yourself...

this is only the first page of a two-page "article" about advertising. Since every one's reading-speed is different we don't know how long it will take you to read these almost 7,500 words. But we hope you will find the two pages sufficiently interesting and informative to justify reading them in full; that you will consider the time well spent; and that you may even want to keep them for future reference.

Schwab and Betty, Inc., Advertising

488 Madison Avenue • New York City 22

RADIO and TELEVISION DEPARTMENT • 510 MADISON AVENUE

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GOOD ADVERTISING HEADLINES

—and why they were so profitable

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must have some good reason for existence. It has. What is it?

One of the principal objectives of a headline is to strike as directly as possible right at a situation confronting the reader. Sometimes you can do this with greater accuracy if your headline pinpoints his "a-ha-moment" rather than the alleviation of it. (For example, in *YOUR HOME PICTURE-POST—Have YOU A "Hairy" Shock-Little Looks That Keep Men Floor?*)

So when you face that kind of situation don't be afraid to "accentuate the . . . negative."

Now let's proceed to another great headline which captured a place in our everyday language.

54. Often a Bridegroom, Never a Bride
So poignantly true so pointed—and so common.

55. How Much Is "Worker Tension" Costing Your Company?

An ad which was successful in business magazines reaching executives. "I want to know which are the kinds of 'Worker Tension,' specifically. What is 'Worker Tension' costing other companies in net profit? How much is it costing us? If it is, to what can we do about it?"

56. To What Do You Want to Quit Work Some Day?
Selects its readers without warning. (And who can say that the audience isn't kind of large?)

57. How to Plan Your House to Suit Yourself
This pulled almost 20% better than *How to Avoid Thieves, Minimize the Planning Your House*. Apparently, people expect the architect to avoid the mistakes—but feel that they themselves know better than anyone else what will best suit their particular needs and preferences.

58. BUY NO DESK . . . Until You've Seen This Sensation of the Business Show
Strong stopper type of headline . . . adaptable for many uses. Copy quickly follows with "until you have checked as to whether it has this feature, and this one, and this . . ."

59. Call Back These Great Moments All The Operational
Sometimes it's a good idea to "start where the reader was." This nostalgic headline was used to sell phonograph records of great operas. The idea can be used in a positive way: bring up with a headline in remembrance. Or it can be used negatively: contrasting a certain product-advantage with an undesirable remembrance.

60. "I Lost My Bulge . . . and Saved Money Too!"
Word "Bulge" is a stopper; not commonly used in advertising's lexicon. Double-edged appeal: the promise to end an unwanted condition and to save you money also.

61. Why (Brand Name) Bulbs Give More Light This Year
This one illustrates an important point. It is usually not a good idea to tell the name of the company (or the brand name) in the headline—or to make it tell too much of the story. When this is done right in the headline itself it often "gives the whole thing away" and does not tempt the reader into the copy.

However, as in this case, when the advertiser is a nationally famous company (particularly when it is noted for its enterprise, innovations, improvements, and research) the use of the company (or brand) name can add new value to the headline—and help to substantiate the truth of the claim made in the headline.

62. Right and Wrong Farming Methods—and Little Painters That Will Increase Your Profits
Exceedingly profitable in farm papers. A combination of negative and positive appeal, with a lot of "come hither" for farmers.

63. New Cokes—Improve Gets You Compliments Galore!
There are three things which advertising can tell its readers. 1) What the product is. 2) What it does. And . . . this headline utilizes the third (and often overlooked) one. In terms of the advertiser it is this: What other people will say of you, think of you, envy you, imitate you—because of what my product can accomplish for them.

In terms of the prospective customer it is this: Because of what your product can do for me, people may think more of me!

64. INAGINE ME . . . Holding an Audible Spellbound for 30 Minutes
A possible variation of headline. Broad interest in this kind of ability. Narator's surprise and apparent hub.

74. ANNOUNCING . . . The New 1959 Edition of the Encyclopedia That Makes It Fun to Learn Things
The "announcement" type of headline is a good one. It brings out a new product with attention because people are interested in new things.

THIS "BREATHER" #5 reminds you that in a whole book of these headlines you find the word "New"—or connotations of it. Americans are partial to the new or novel; they do not suffer from neophobia. To them the mere factor of "newness" seems to be prima facie evidence of "betterness."

Undeviating affection for the old and tried may be strong in other countries; in ours the desire to try the new is stronger. The great achievements of our inventors and enterprising manufacturers have trained us to believe that if it's new it's likely to be better.

And now we come to another familiar headline . . .

75. Again She Orders . . . "A Chicken Salad, Please!"
You still hear it quoted. It sold hundreds of thousands of copies of an entertaining book because it expounded a common and embarrassing situation.

76. For the Woman Who Is Older Than She Looks
This headline was a stopper to thousands . . . and more successful than the subtle different *For the Woman Who Looks Younger Than She Is*.

77. A Program of Superhuman Importance To Anybody Who Ever Buys Classical Records
A keyed ad widely used by a record club. Pinpoints its audience. The savings and other benefits enjoyed by its members are prominently displayed in subheads.

78. Check the Kind of Body YOU Want!
Check-list displayed at top immediately invites reader's participation in specifying "which of these" improvements he would like to make in his physique. Keyed ad repeated frequently by well-known physical culturist.

79. "You Kill That Story—Or I'll Run You Out of the State!"
A true-narrative ad run by a nationwide chain of newspapers. Could you flip over the page without wanting to know what happened?

80. Here's a Quick Way to Break up a Cold
In simple everyday words, a direct promise to end an undesirable condition—no ifs, ands, or buts.

81. There's Another Woman Waiting For Every Man—and she's too smart to have a "morning mouth!"
Had quite an impact on women readers. This toothpaste ad. Obviously, for there is a lot of "morning mouth" in this theme: "No woman waits her husband to carry the memory of her morning breath to work with him. The attractive woman he meets during the day doesn't have it."

82. This Pen "Burgs" Before It Drinks—But Never After!
Headline expressed in a few words a high credence credited with pushing one brand of fountain pen up to a leading position.

83. If You Have Given \$200,000 to Spend—Isn't this the kind of type of product that you would buy?
A "self-inducement" (and widely applicable) way to have the reader help to specify what he himself would value most in such a product.

The copy follows through along these lines: "Surely you would not let this feature into it. You would be sure that it brought you this advantage, and this, and this. . . Well, we done it all for you. As you can see, this product was really created for you!"

84. "Last Friday . . . Was I Scared!—By Boss Almost Fired Me!"
A human narrative people wanted to read because it did—or could—"happen to me."

85. 67 REASONS WHY It Would Be Paid for You to answer our ad of a few months ago
An interesting example of an ad that backtracks—pointing out in detail what the reader has missed by not buying the product before—a frequently repeated ad by a well-known news magazine to pull for subscriptions.

86. Suppose This Happened ON YOUR Wedding Day!
A profitable narrative headline which makes it pretty hard to flip the page. "What if this magic happening could hit—or did it—happen to me?"

87. Don't Let Athlete's Foot "Lay You Out!"
This pulled three times better than *Relieve Foot Itch*. It gives the disease a relevant name; points out its unwanted effect.

88. Are They Being Promoted Right Over Your Head?
Another question aimed at a big target: the legion of frustrated, discouraged people who feel that their ability and conscientiousness are not being amply rewarded by recognition and advancement. (Frequently used by an educational institution which checks the restlessness of its students.)

89. Are We Needed to Live-News?
This headline helped to sell inexpensive editions of the classics, hundreds of thousands of copies of them. It "starts where the reader is"—because they, as a nation, are not used to the greatly added to the high-news type of literature.

Yet this successful campaign showed that Americans know very well the difference between the meritorious and the accretitious—and, if challenged, can prove it with orders. The "We" angle avoids the accusatory "You."

90. A Wonderful Two Years' Trip At Full Pay—but only with Imagination can take it!
This ad about a course for business men was repeated again and again, for a period of 7 years, in a long list of magazines. It offers a worthwhile "reward for reading"—with an intriguing challenge in its second line.

91. What Everybody Ought to Know About This Stock and Bond Business
The headline of a full-page newspaper ad crowded with small-size type—and a single picture! It drew 5000 replies when first published; has since appeared in more than 150 newspapers. Promised helpful information of interest to a large audience. The ad was run by a big investment house.

92. Money Saving Bargains From America's Oldest Diamond Discount House
Of course the "bargain appeal" is more fit—so this headline is a good example of straight-forward presentation.

93. FORMER BARBER EARNS \$6000 In 4 Months
As a Real Estate Specialist

Featuring an actual testimonial can make a good headline. In this case, the reader's first reaction is "if a barber can do it maybe I can too!"

94. FREE BOOK—Tells You 12 Secrets of Better Lawn Care
If you are offering something entirely free (such as a booklet or sample)—and want requests for it in quantity—feature it right in your headline.

95. Greatest Gold-Mine of Easy "Things-To-Make" Ever Crammed Into One Big Book!
Perhaps you have a new product (or even an old one) and still lack sufficient accurate data as to which, specifically, are the strongest single selling-appeals to feature in your advertising.

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can be won; secondly, what you have to do to win some of it.

97. NOW! Own Florida Land This Easy Way.
\$10 Down and \$10 A Month
This one also represents a commonly used headline offer: Easy Terms—and conveys it forcefully and persuasively.

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An example of the ever-popular Coupon-Redemption Offer. "Limited Offer" to increase response. (Sometimes an actual expiration-date is stated, to spur quicker action.)

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FINALLY . . .
When you must think it's about time! (Remember that it is vital that your first paragraph hold the interest which your headline has aroused. It is essential to the successful accomplishment of your entire objective. For the longer your copy can hold the interest of the greatest number of readers, the likelier you are to induce more of them to act.

Both of these subjects should be discussed here because they are closely related to the purpose of your headline. Subheads (which are given a "one over lightly" treatment in a pond on this page) are made to do a big job in helping to carry your reader into, and through, your body copy.

Importance of Your First Paragraph
Your first paragraph, as it is, will determine whether or not the reader will continue reading your ad. Briefly stated, it should:

- follow through with the idea expressed in the main headline—which is the idea which attracted the reader in the first place
- be short, with quick easy-to-read sentences
- start immediately to carry out the "reason for reading" promise made in your headline. Compress into this paragraph a few of the major advantages of your product. Don't clutter it up with minor details.

This first paragraph is usually the most difficult to write. And it often happens that writing your first few paragraphs has simply been a warm-up exercise. So you discard those and start the ad with your next one.

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ALL of These 100 Headlines . . .

• were written (with only about so exceptions) by advertising people not associated with our particular agency.

• made the reader want to read the body copy—which is the primary function of a headline.

• are ones whose success was due mainly to the headline itself—rather than to an extraordinary quality of copy. That is why such notable ads as *The Penalty of Leadership*, *The Princes Ingriden, Somewhere West of Laramie* (and others characterized by superlative body copy)—have not been included in this review concerned only with good headlines.

• are, likewise, ones whose effectiveness was not due in its inordinate measure to any supporting picture or artwork—or to any trick "gimmicks" of layout which almost make it stand on its own in an attempt to force attention. In other words, the headline was good enough, alone, to carry out successfully its primary function.

MOST of Them Are . . .

- backed up by a record of resultfulness sufficient to justify their inclusion here. This record is either based on the high reading rate of the ad they head-lined—or, in the case of ads which carried a key

The "So What?" Dept.
Here, for comparison, are just a few of the many poor headlines which have appeared in expensive advertising space.

Their Extra Values Are Hidden Values!
For Finer Flavors
Beauty and Utility United!
"When I Was a Boy . . ."
Anyone Who Knows Can Tell the REAL THING!
Behave! It Goes Any Further!
You Hear Such Nice Things About It!

Value Is a Feature
Superiority and Almost Unbelievably Successful!
Youth Crisis Unto Youth
Blow Blow—Blow Blow!
This Little Girl Went to Market . . .
Oh, Ye Daughters of Eve!

93. FORMER BARBER EARNS \$6000 In 4 Months
As a Real Estate Specialist

Featuring an actual testimonial can make a good headline. In this case, the reader's first reaction is "if a barber can do it maybe I can too!"

94. FREE BOOK—Tells You 12 Secrets of Better Lawn Care
If you are offering something entirely free (such as a booklet or sample)—and want requests for it in quantity—feature it right in your headline.

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THE LOWLY SUBHEAD

(A Few Words About a Subject Worth Many)

SURPRISINGLY LITTLE has been written about the importance of subheads. They can be made to do an essential job in getting more of your body copy read, and read more thoroughly. Subheads are like ladder-rungs in an advertisement. They make it easier and more inviting for the reader to keep going down through more of the body matter. If they are weak (and, particularly in longer copy, if there are too few of them) the more likely it is that your reader will stop beyond any further interest in continuing to read your message.

Here are some ways to use subheads more effectively:

- In long-copy ads, use them liberally to relieve the formidable appearance of solid copy-blocks.
- Even short-copy ads can often use one or two to advantage.
- Don't wait too long to introduce your first one. Two short opening paragraphs and then your first sub-head is not a bad rule to observe. (Reader interest wanes more quickly than you may like to believe.)
- Make some of them interrogative in form—to excite curiosity and interest in the body matter which follows.
- Avoid declarative subheads which answer themselves and don't lead anywhere.
- Some subheads reiterate in capsule form the information already given in the preceding paragraph of body matter. That doesn't get you ahead very far. Instead, make each subhead capsule the "new lead" of what the next paragraph is going to reveal to the reader. Lead him on with subheads that move forward.
- Let them speak out strongly. Make them stand out physically—larger in size and/or in a different face—than as compared with your body copy.
- Don't worry if using them liberally

and displaying them prominently, makes your ad look a bit more sporty or intimate. You are not creating a work of art; you are producing a work of business.

Integrate your subheads into the visual context of the copy. Don't plan simply to place them out of a shaker after the fact of its initial sales points. In this form they provide a sequential character—a kind of Sequential Subhead Synopsis of your sales story.

In long-copy ads it's a good idea to display beneath the headline, a main subhead of three or four lines. This provides a link between the headline and the body matter—highlighting in street and lodging the gap between the two.

AS YOU CAN SEE, the "body subhead," well planned, can become an active force in your ad. . . a "booster station" which takes up the current of interest transmitted to it, amplifies it to greater strength, and then sends it on to the next station.

Yes, subheads can do a job, a big one—but they must be "part of the plot" and not casual acquaintances picked up somewhere along the way.

The "announcement" type of headline is a good one. It brings out a new product with attention because people are interested in new things.

THIS "BREATHER" #5 reminds you that in a whole book of these headlines you find the word "New"—or connotations of it. Americans are partial to the new or novel; they do not suffer from neophobia. To them the mere factor of "newness" seems to be prima facie evidence of "betterness."

Undeviating affection for the old and tried may be strong in other countries; in ours the desire to try the new is stronger. The great achievements of our inventors and enterprising manufacturers have trained us to believe that if it's new it's likely to be better.

And now we come to another familiar headline . . .

75. Again She Orders . . . "A Chicken Salad, Please!"
You still hear it quoted. It sold hundreds of thousands of copies of an entertaining book because it expounded a common and embarrassing situation.

76. For the Woman Who Is Older Than She Looks
This headline was a stopper to thousands . . . and more successful than the subtle different *For the Woman Who Looks Younger Than She Is*.

77. A Program of Superhuman Importance To Anybody Who Ever Buys Classical Records
A keyed ad widely used by a record club. Pinpoints its audience. The savings and other benefits enjoyed by its members are prominently displayed in subheads.

78. Check the Kind of Body YOU Want!
Check-list displayed at top immediately invites reader's participation in specifying "which of these" improvements he would like to make in his physique. Keyed ad repeated frequently by well-known physical culturist.

79. "You Kill That Story—Or I'll Run You Out of the State!"
A true-narrative ad run by a nationwide chain of newspapers. Could you flip over the page without wanting to know what happened?

80. Here's a Quick Way to Break up a Cold
In simple everyday words, a direct promise to end an undesirable condition—no ifs, ands, or buts.

81. There's Another Woman Waiting For Every Man—and she's too smart to have a "morning mouth!"
Had quite an impact on women readers. This toothpaste ad. Obviously, for there is a lot of "morning mouth" in this theme: "No woman waits her husband to carry the memory of her morning breath to work with him. The attractive woman he meets during the day doesn't have it."

82. This Pen "Burgs" Before It Drinks—But Never After!
Headline expressed in a few words a high credence credited with pushing one brand of fountain pen up to a leading position.

83. If You Have Given \$200,000 to Spend—Isn't this the kind of type of product that you would buy?
A "self-inducement" (and widely applicable) way to have the reader help to specify what he himself would value most in such a product.

The copy follows through along these lines: "Surely you would not let this feature into it