

The Best Judge of a Product's Benefit

I'm a firm believer that all copywriters should regularly read the product reviews and testimonials submitted by customers. You want to know a product's true benefit? Who better to tell you than a satisfied customer! They zero right in on what makes a product special (or not.)

And you get this information from their perspective, which makes the feedback even more valuable. Copy succeeds when it tells shoppers what *they* want to know about a product, i.e., its benefit, not what you *think* they want to know.

Good copywriters always try to "get into" their customers heads. Reading their reviews gives you direct access. It can also inspire your copy.

Here's an example. I saw this copy for doormats:

"These thirsty polypropylene mats are designed to take the worst that weather can dish out; side channels allow water to drain quickly, thick fibers scrape off mud and snow, and thin fibers remove moisture from the soles of boots and shoes. Strong rubber backing gives traction on all floor surfaces. The mats are easy care; just hose off to clean."

Workmanlike copy for sure, but I'm not convinced it clearly spells out any benefits.

(What do you think? And keep in mind the definition of benefit and feature. To save you the trouble of looking them up, here they are:

Benefit - something that is advantageous or good; an advantage.

Feature - a prominent or conspicuous part or characteristic.)

Now, here's the accompanying review for these doormats:

"I bought the 2X3 and 3X5 mats for my RV. I do not want to spend my vacation(s) sweeping or vacuuming. These mats are great for catching dirt, dust and mud from my very active grandchildren and a Labrador retriever (sic). The mats can be carried outside and shaken or hosed off. But even though they are utilitarian, they look good too."

I see an image of mats that contain everyday dirt and grit at the door, so no one drags it through the house. (I also see a woman who refuses to be a slave to housecleaning!) Less dirt and grit means less time cleaning, and more time relaxing, a definite benefit in anybody's book!

Below, I've written a lead-in that transports that image into the copy.

"Tired of constantly cleaning the crud that everyone tracks through the house? Put the broom away and take back your life with these doormats..."

Trust your customers' feedback. They'll tell you the true benefits of a product. Use their insights to help you write inspired and compelling copy.