

From:
Nick Laight
Just North of The Angel
Islington
London
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Hello

I didn't want to write this email . . .

You see, I've just heard the news that someone died and I felt so moved by that I had to put something down.

Now, I should point out that this guy is not a family member, friend of business colleague.

In fact I have never met him and if he were still alive he wouldn't know me from Adam.

I never emailed him or had any form communication. I never bought one of his products, attend one of his seminars or paid thousands for his consultancy.

And yet, if it wasn't for this one man, I doubt very much if I would be running my own successful publishing business.

Nor would I have become written marketing packs that grossed more than £12 million. And I certainly wouldn't be so passionate about business opportunities.

Let me explain . . .

Back in 1993, when I started as a junior copywriter for a big US newsletter publishing company, I was handed a looseleaf folder full of letters from this man.

'If you want to know what good copy is . . . read this . . .'

By the end of the first page of the first letter I was hooked.

Twenty eight pages later I was sold! If I could have got my hands on the \$2,850 he was asking for a Lifetime subscription to his newsletter, I would have gladly handed it over.

This was a total career-changing revelation.

A light switched on in my head and I 'got it'. I understood there and then that copywriting was THE skill I had to learn and that if I figured out how to emulate this guy and I would never go wanting again.

So who is this messianic figure?

I'm talking about Gary Halbert. Often referred to as 'The King Of Copy, Prince of Print'. He died on Easter Sunday.

He was a colourful character . . . to say the least!

If his own writings are to be believed he made and lost (and made) millions.

He was a cokehead, dealer, womaniser, Hells Angel and sometime prison inmate. He was also widely regarded by those who know as probably the greatest copywriter who ever lived.

So what made his copy so special?

First, he had a strong personal voice. Rather than the usual sales speak, Gary could immediately establish a rapport with the reader.

If you have ever read The Rich Jerk, then you're pretty close to Gary's voice. It was supremely self-confident, humorous and confrontational (in a beer-buddy kind of way).

He'd draw you in as if he were talking to you over a drink in his favourite Key West bar. He'd ask you rhetorical questions in such a way that as a reader you were nodding, and laughing and answering out loud.

His letters were . . . shock horror - like real letters. They had a date, an address and felt as if he were writing just to you.

How powerful is that?

I'll tell you. He claims - and I have no reason to doubt - that one of his direct mail pieces mailed more than any other ever written.

How many pieces?

Six million? Nope. Not even close.

Sixty Million? Nope.

How about SIX HUNDRED MILLION?

Yep! And no business would ever mail that number of direct mailpieces unless they were making a cartload of cash!

He kept his copy and design elegantly simple. He was wonderfully old school. He used black courier font. His website (address in a moment) was brilliantly simple.

He used short words. Short sentences and short paragraphs.

He used this punchy, telegraphic style to compel the reader to read on . . . and he would punctuate the letter with provocative subheads that would carry the reader on, because . . .

You had to know what he was going to write next!

He'd start off with big tease of the core benefits, but held back the payoff until the end of the letter.

He'd tease, revealing a sliver at a time.

He understood that above all it is the copy that does the selling - not the font, the colours, not the flashy graphics.

Some will call it ugly. But it worked!

He embraced long copy and wasn't afraid to communicate both the emotional and the rational benefits of his offer. He has been much emulated over the years - not only by me, but people like Stuart Goldsmith, Streetwise, Agora Publishing, Fleet Street and scores of other businesses and copywriters!

Gary was a true original. I would put his ability to communicate through the printed medium up there with some of the great literary writers.

The one difference with Garry is that he probably made more money per word than any of the writer bar Dan Brown or JK Rowling!

I never thanked Gary while he was alive, so I guess I better do it now. And the best way of doing that is to share with you and hopefully . . . maybe . . . if I can persuade just a handful of people to go to his website and read his letters and 'get it'

like I did, then I will have done his memory proud.

So before they pull the website down and start selling his collected letters for thousands of dollars, I suggest you go to the site right now and see for yourself. Seriously these will give you a better education in writing good copy than course that costs thousands.

So go now and bow before the great Halbert here:

<http://www.thegaryhalbertletter.com/>

Read them.

Read them again.

And again.

Copy them out by hand. Soak up his teachings and apply them in your business. If you learn just a smidgen of what he has to offer, then you WILL see a massive improvement!

And you can even listen to the man himself and be inspired here on a free 2hr audio interview. He starts slow, but boy does he get fired up!

And as ever, what he says is totally and utterly on the money!

<http://www.boostmyresponse.com/audio-recordings/gary-halbert-and-michel-fortin/>

Thank you Gary - for everything!

Nick

 [Previous](#) | [Next](#)

 [Back to top](#)