KILLER HEADLINES

Creating A Swipe File To Come Up With Killer
Headline Ideas

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Set Up Your Swipe File Folders

Do you have a swipe file? It's one of the best tools out there for helping you come up with killer headline ideas for any part of your business. These headlines will come in handy when you're getting ready to send out a mailing, are writing a blog post or getting ready to test an alternate headline on your sales page. You simply browse through your swipe files until you come up with something that sparks an idea for a headline that you can tweak into something that will work for your purpose.

There are various different ways to create these swipe files. What it comes down to is that they are boxes, folders, or containers – both digital and actual physical boxes or file folders – where you collect these headline examples in. I'll walk you through the most common swipe file types below and how to set them up.

Email Swipe Folder

Email subject lines are one of the first things you want to collect in your swipe file. If you send out regular mailings, you're always on the hunt for a new subject line that will convince your readers to open your email.

You have two options when you first set this up. If you want to keep your primary email account clutter free and not have to worry about signing up for too many marketing lists, you can create a new free email account for the sole purpose of collecting and saving swipe-worthy emails. Otherwise, I recommend you create a separate folder or label in your existing email account.

Sing up for several good mailing lists. Find marketers you admire, or other big players in your niche that you know are doing well with email marketing. Sign up for their lists and then sit back and wait for the emails to start coming in.

Computer Swipe Folder

You also want a digital file folder on your computer to work as a catch-all for any good headline you come across while you're working on your computer and online.

Set up a digital folder wherever it is easy for you to find. You can add it to your desktop, "My Documents" or anywhere else that makes sense to you. You can then save all sorts of digital files in this folder. If you want to be even more flexible, set up a Dropbox or other file sharing folder that you can access across multiple devices.

You may also want to set up a couple of word or text documents within this folder that you can copy and paste great headline examples into. That way if you are looking for a great sales page or blog post headline you can simply open that particular doc. It will also make it easy to search the document.

Creating a spreadsheet with various different tabs for each type of headline is another great option. Use whatever format you're most comfortable with. You want it to be quick and easy to add new headlines (or else you won't add to this file regular). At the same time, it also needs to be user-friendly and searchable when you are looking for a headline idea.

A Cardboard Box As Your Swipe Folder

If you find it easier to work with a hard copy swipe file, that's possible as well. Get a cardboard box and create some tabs for the different types of headlines as needed. You may also want to keep a stack of blank index cards or note paper in the box. As you come across great headlines, you can write them onto an index card and file them in your box. You can also cut out magazine and newspaper headlines as you come across them and add them to your collection. I find these paper copies will last longer if you paste them on the index cards.

Image Swipe Folder For Using Your Phone

One of the great things about our phones is that we always have them on us. As you come across a great headline idea, snap a picture and save it. When you get home, download the images and save them in your swipe folder. I find it helpful to rename the images and use keywords or the actual headline as the file name. This makes it easier to search these image headline examples.

Of course, you can also transcribe the text and add it to your word docs or cardboard box file.

Start Collecting Killer Headlines

Now that your basic swipe files are set up, it's time to start filling them. The easiest will be the email one. If you've followed my advice and signed up for several different email lists, this will be easy.

Once a week log in and sort through the emails. Delete what you can't use and save the rest in your swipe folder. If you are working in several different niches, or want to organize by solo emails vs. content emails, for example, you can set up different folders and sort in there. Whenever you need a good subject line or an idea for a mailing, log into this folder and browse around until you find something that fits the bill.

Over time you are going to want to sign up for more and more lists until you have plenty of swipes to choose from. If you notice that you never use anything from a particular marketer, or end up deleting them all as soon as you see them, unsubscribe. Curate the list of people you stay subscribed to and make sure this is something that's usable and workable. You don't want the emails coming in to overwhelm you to a point where you don't end up using the swipe file.

Start keeping an eye out for great headline ideas on sales pages, opt-in pages, Product Descriptions, Magazine covers etc. Whenever you come across a killer headline, copy and paste it into a word doc, or text file and save it in your computer swipe file. It won't take long before you have quite a collection in there. If you want a bit of a head start, google terms like "best headline templates", or "great headline examples" and start with a list of headlines from what you can find online.

To keep your swipe file fresh, aim to add at least a handful of new headline copy ideas per month. When it comes to email subject line ideas, I recommend adding a few new ones per week. This is particularly

important if you mail your own list frequently and find yourself going back to your swipe file again and again.

Using Your Swipe Files To Come Up With Your Own Spins

Last but not least, let's talk in a little more detail about using your new swipe files. At first, it will be tempting to just copy and paste what you've collected and use it as is. That's a bad idea. You don't want to plagiarize and violate someone else's copyright. Instead, you want to use these swipe files as inspiration.

You want to find something you like, that you think will work for you and then tweak it for your own needs. In the long run, this will make your swipe file much more versatile and usable than copy and paste.

Start by reading through the appropriate headline examples. Find one that you think will work. Think more about overall hook or style than trying to find something that will work for your particular topic. This is similar to using headline templates.

Then rewrite the headline a few times and come up with versions that will work for your needs. Walk away for a few minutes, then come back and chose two of the best headlines. Plug one into your sales pages and set up the second one to start your split testing. If you don't know what split testing is all about, just go with your favorite and use it on your sales page.

Keep adding to your swipe file and keep getting into the habit of using what you have in there. When you're getting ready to write a new blog post, email, sales page, product description, or opt-in page, or even when you need a title for your latest book or short report, your first thought should be to browse through your swipe file.

Over time, you'll find even more uses for your swipe file. I find it helpful to come up with blog post and mailing ideas, and even to come up with social media posts.

Go ahead and set up your swipe files today. Start collecting killer headline ideas in your files and don't forget to start using it regularly. Once you do you'll notice that writing copy and content will become easier. More importantly being surrounded by and paying attention to this much great copywriting, will make you a better copywriter. That's a skill that will come in handy in all areas of your online business.