Kim Krause Schwalm – Control Winning Secrets

Mikhail: Hey, everyone, and welcome to Health Copywriting Profits, the online event that can help take your copywriting skills and income to the next level. I'm really excited today to have on Kim Krause Schwalm. For more than 20 years, Kim has been writing direct response copy that generates sales in some of the most competitive markets, such as nutrition and supplements, skincare, publishing, and finance. Her list of clients that she's written controls for include Boardrooms, Soundview, Agora Financial, Green Valley, New Market Health, and more.

Welcome, Kim.

Kim: Thank you. It's great to be here, Mikhail.

Mikhail: I'm glad to have you on, and thanks for being a part of the event. I gave a list of clients there, but in reality, the list of clients that you've written controls for is even longer than that. You just have this ability to keep cranking out controls. And you're here today to share some insights into how exactly you do that, but before we get into that, can you tell us how you got into copywriting in the first place?

Kim: Sure. Well, I was always into marketing, and I started my career in various marketing roles working with some bigger companies and helping them to really grow their revenue. But as part of that, one of the many hats I wore was writing copy. And then, when I went to Phillips Publishing, which was one of the premier direct response companies at the time, I found that there were these freelance copywriters, like Gary Bencivenga and Clayton Makepeace and Jim Rutz and these legendary copywriters. Well, they're legendary now, but these were the copywriters that Phillips used to work with and hire. And, it was just a whole fascination I began to develop with long-form copy and the magalogues and the things that they were mailing millions of pieces of that they would hire these top copywriters for.

So, when I was at Phillips, I actually launched their supplement business called Healthy Directions and ran that for three years. And as part of that, I was responsible for copy as well as all the marketing strategy and implementation. I had a whole team of people. And when I was deciding what direction I wanted to go from there, the whole idea of being a freelance copywriter just looked more and more appealing, especially when I was getting ready to launch my first child. And I was like, "Mmmh, we really want to work these 50, 60-hour work weeks and the crazy rat race." And, these copywriters have unlimited earning potential. They have a really great life. Many of them work 20, 30 hours a week. So, I decided to take the leap, even though back in 1998, making $100,000 a year, I just walked away from that. And I mean, I had a whole strategy for how to launch my copywriting business, but I went from there, and I just never looked back, and I just continued to make more than I did in my six-figure marketing job.

Mikhail: Yes. And one of the things I think that kind of differentiates you from a lot of [inaudible 00:03:10] copywriters out there is, you kind of did it on your own, right?

Kim: Well, yes. I mean, not to make myself sound ancient, but there wasn't a whole lot out there for people who wanted to be copywriters. If you were lucky you got a mentor, you got someone to take you under your wing. I didn't really have a mentor. There weren't any formal mentoring programs. I mean, I actually offer a mentoring program myself now and have mentored many copywriters, but yes, there wasn't really anything like that. There wasn't even an AWAI. I would go to different direct marketing association conferences. I would sign up for any kind of copywriting, workshops, or anything that I could find. But a lot of it, I did learn just through being a marketer and working with copywriters and running businesses and having to write copy on occasion and getting it, all marked up and ready and can return back to me by my boss. And then it just kind of went from there when I became a copywriter as a freelancer.

I didn't start off with these plum projects for Boardroom or anything like that. I had to work my way up to that. So, I was pretty much taking whatever projects came along. I mean, luckily, I had a lot of work coming in from my previous employer and referrals from other employees that I worked with that kept a pretty steady stream of clients coming my way. But I wrote for just a wide range of mostly short copy and just learn from there. And finally got my break with one of my small clients and convinced him, "Hey, you should try a magalogue." And he had never done a magalogue. So, he let me write it for like the small little flat fee and, it worked pretty well, but I had my sample. The important thing was having a sample. And so, then somebody else came along and said, "Hey, can you write a supplement magalogue?" And I'm like, "Well, here's my sample." It was really my only sample, but he didn't need to know that. And I was able to get three times as much plus a royalty and kind of went from there.

Mikhail: Right.

Kim: So, it was just a matter of finding, getting those projects that open that next door that opened that next door and that you can also hopefully, learn as you go along and hopefully even get paid for learning as you go along.

Mikhail: Yes. Well, thanks for, I guess, sharing a little bit into that. It's an important takeaway for new copywriters, especially those who may feel intimidated by the longer form sales letters and stuff. You start small, and you work your way up.

Kim: There's a lot of people who make a very good living doing short copy only. I mean, long copy is not the only thing. And I mean, there are a lot of businesses where that is the proven sales generator, but for other businesses or niches, you might be in, maybe shorter or medium copy, may work better. The thing is, all the things that you learn about copywriting, you can apply to any type of copy for pretty much any kind of product. So, but yes, long-form definitely has its own attributes and things that you need to learn to do it well. But all those lessons you can apply to shorter copy as well.

Mikhail: So, we talked about all these controls that you've written. We're in for a real treat today because you've actually gone and gotten three for your longest-running promos. And you're going to give us a deep dive into them and what makes them work? What makes

them click, and kind of your process that you go through when you write these winning controls?

Kim: Yes, actually, I'm just going to have a chance to focus on a few key lessons from each of these. These are three promos that are all currently being used either online and sales pages and, or in the mails promos, because sometimes they're being used both ways at the same time. And so yes, let me just jump in with the first one. I'm going to share my screen, and we're going to dive in here. Let me make sure I don't screw this up here. Okay. So, let's pull up the first one. Okay. So, this is not my control. Can you see this, Mikhail?

Mikhail: Yep.

Kim: Okay. So, I'm going to talk about three different products for which we can learn some key lessons that I would like to share with you. The first one is for product called CircO2. CircO2 comes into this little box. You can see, it's not like a typical supplement. It's actually a lozenge, and you can see; I actually take it. But it's a little [inaudible 00:07:56] stay with you. You put on your tongue, and it dissolves after maybe a minute or two. And I find the taste somewhat pleasant a lot, some people don't, but it's a different way of taking nutrients. And this is very key to understand my approach to writing this promo. So, what this supplement does is it contains certain nutrients that are found to boost your body's nitric oxide levels. And there's a lot of reasons why you want to boost nitric oxide. What you have to know is that's a pretty well-known thing for people who are savvy about taking supplements. They know that nitric oxide is good for circulation, energy, memory, sexual performance, a lot of things that we kind of associate with anti-ageing.

So, what we're looking at here is what the current control promo, and in this case, it was a direct mail magalogue, was for this particular product. And so basically, the lesson I want to focus on here is how to spot any weaknesses in the current control and exploit them by taking a new, better approach. And so, when you are a copywriter, and you're being hired to go up against an existing control promo, your goal and your job is to do everything you can to beat that control. Not just for the bragging rights, so that your client loves you, but if you are doing a deal where you have the potential to earn royalties, you're going to get those royalties only if you're able to beat the control and your promo becomes the new control. So that's what you want. And then every time your new control gets mailed or makes a sale online or whatever, it's like a chain. You're getting paid some royalties. So, your goal is to try to keep that control for as long as possible. And sometimes that means doing subsequent tasks or whatever else you need to just keep that thing kicking back. So that's just a quick lesson on what controls are and why you want to beat the existing control.

So, in this case, it was already a pretty successful promo. This has become one of the company's top sellers, this CircO2. And so, I wanted to just pick apart. I'm honestly not sure who actually wrote this existing control that ended up beating, but it's very well done. So, don't get me wrong. It was already a successful promo, but you always want to look, is there something maybe they didn't do, or there's something that I can maybe do differently.

So here, let's take a look at the flow here. It's the whole idea. The angle here is, basically, if you thought that the best way to boost your nitric oxide levels was with L-arginine, which is an amino acid, you're wrong. That it's not the best way, especially for people over 40, which is definitely the target market for this product and who this promo is going to. So that was the angle. So, the copy starts off with sort of head-nodding copy, you've heard about nitric oxide, you're kind of reminding them why it's important. That the most popular advice on how to increase it is wrong. So, it's kind of this contrarian thing. You don't want to take L-arginine. Everything you thought is wrong, basically, about L-arginine.

Then it kind of quickly jumps over to talking about why you need nitric oxide, how important it is as you get older, but the problem is it starts to decline with age. You can see this little chart here, very good graphic. So, this is sort of the logical structure of the promo argument. And then it gets into, you can take L-arginine, but you can still not have enough nitric oxide. So basically, it's agitating this whole idea that L-arginine isn't the best thing to take to boost nitric oxide. But then here I felt was a little bit of potential weakness. It goes right into the reason it's not working to produce the nitric oxide is that the most important part is basically takes place in your mouth, and having the nutrients interact with saliva.

So, this is basically the unique mechanism of this product. So, in crowded supplement markets, like almost all the [inaudible 00:12:13], you generally have to differentiate your product often by having some kind of unique mechanisms. We'll find a unique way that it does something better, faster, more effectively than the other products that are out on the market. Is a very important part of pretty much any supplement promo that you can write these days. So, in this case, the unique mechanism of the CircO2 product is this lozenge that interacts with saliva in your mouth. And we've got the credibility of the MIT researchers who discovered it. So, it jumps from talking about why you can't just take L-arginine to, "Hey, there's this thing that interacts with saliva, and it's like a better way of taking it."

I found that to be a bit of a weakness because I felt that you haven't really told me what's the better nutrient than L-arginine. And now you want to present me with this different way of taking supplements? And I felt there might be too many possible objections because a lot of people don't like the idea of taking something that melts on their tongue. They just want to swallow a pill and be done with it. So that was a potential barrier, and I felt they were getting into introducing the mechanism a lot sooner than I would. So that's kind of where I was picking apart this.

It then talks about beet extract is the nutrient it leads with as far as the story, which again, I don't think is as exciting as potentially the L-citrulline, which is kind of unique amino acid that to me would be a better alternative to L-arginine. And also, they just kind of brush over these nutrients that kind of speed right through here instead of really flushing out, like in romancing these nutrients and backing up their claims with studies and other proof to increase the credibility of what they're talking about. So those were things that I found were weaknesses of the existing control. And I'm like, "Hmm, how can I exploit those?" Well, here's what I did. So, you can see my new promo Mikhail? This product?

Mikhail: Yes.

Kim: Okay. So, this is the -- let me take this down to 75%. So that you see more of it. Okay. So, this was the initial version of the magalogue that I wrote. And you can see this. Well, this I actually wrote back in early 2017, and it's still running. But yes, so I took the anti-aging approach, and I'm not going to focus so much about the headline on [inaudible 00:14:45]. I really want to focus more about when I decided to the mechanism and how I structured my promo because there's a lot of different lessons here that we could spend like another hour and a half talking about.

But yes, I get into; I have a testimonial lead. I emphasize why you need nitric oxide. And that's kind of the secret for all this. You need enough of this, but unfortunately, there's this problem that once you get older, the more you have, the better you feel, but unfortunately, it declines with age. So, it's like this whole deficiency thing. This is like this hidden cause for why you feel tired, and you have all of this more frequent forgetfulness and illness, et cetera, as you get older.

So now we get into, well, how do you boost the nitric oxide? So that's the problem we're trying to solve. Well, then, we do the same thing. Well, if you thought you could just take L-arginine, which is kind of been around forever, and most people think of when they think of nitric oxide. And then I explain why that's not going to work. So, I'm kind of closing off the doors. I'm agitating that you really need more nitric oxide just when your body's making less of it. But if you thought you could just take L-arginine, that's not the answer.

So, what is the answer? And again, I felt it's too early to get into this unique mechanism. I wanted to save that for later. So now it's like, you don't want to take L-arginine, which is an amino acid. The amino acid you want to take is L-citrulline. And I also decided to lead with that because it had the best studies and the fact that it would sound new and different. And many people haven't heard of L-citrulline. I mean, a lot of people have heard of beets, and they're usually like yuck, some people anyway. But like L-citrulline sounds intriguing. It's like, "Ooh, what is this? I haven't heard of this before." Again, you want to give them a reason to keep reading. You got to give them something new. It's got to be believable. It's got to be convincing that it's going to work for them.

So, I give them a whole story. I don't just introduce it and move on to the next thing. I dug up some really great studies. I'm dimensionalizing the study stories here. I'm not talking about them in very dry, scientific language, but I'm talking about the studies and the benefits people saw, et cetera, et cetera. And I even bring in like a sex side benefit, which is often very helpful with these kinds of promotions. And I actually have a study here that talks about how it helped with certain types of sexual difficulties.

So basically, I have like two or three studies stories about L-citrulline, and I'm basically telling the story of the nutrients. So, then I get into the beet extract, which I really romance with it being the Olympic secret for stamina and energy. And then we get to a couple more studies about that, and then the [inaudible 00:17:46]. So, I'm really spending some time on -- you don't want L-arginine, you want these three nutrients. I'm making

them want to take these nutrients instead of L-arginine and helping them see that this is a much more effective way of boosting their nitric oxide.

But then I raise another potential problem. Even if you take the right nutrients, there is still something you need to do in order to flood your body with plenty of nitric oxide. And that's when I introduce the unique mechanism, which is this, for some people, bad-tasting thing that you have to put on your tongue and let it melt which honestly, I liked the taste, but I know my husband doesn't like it. But you go ahead, and then that's where I talk about that story, bring in the MIT scientist. So, here's that kind of twist. It's like I want these nutrients, and now this is the best way to get it. So once again, do you want them to feel that your supplement is the only option? Like they can't just go online and Google L-citrulline and take an L-citrulline supplement. That they've got to just take this particular supplement.

So, and then I bring it on home with these unique studies from the MIT about this particular formula boosting nitric oxide, 200% more in just minutes. So again, this is how I bring it on home and then into the [inaudible 00:19:09]. It also has these little test strips where you can actually test your nitric oxide levels before and after taking it. So, it's like yet another way of giving them proof and confidence that this is going to work for them. So, there's a lot of other aspects of this promo, but that was the main lesson I wanted to highlight there. Do you have any questions on that, Mikhail, before I move on to the next lesson?

Mikhail: Did have one. Let me see if I can remember what it was. [crosstalk 00:19:36] Yes. Is it that if the old control had used the mechanism, say in the headline, in your opinion, would that be something that would work, or it was still too early to introduce because you kind of talk about that being the unique mechanism?

Kim: Well, actually, it's funny you bring that up. I'm not going to comment on it for the previous control. I don't know, but it's funny because I also want to show you because I'm not done yet. This is the second control, and I'm showing you the online sales page, but I did do a version just like this, but with the new cover. So after about four or five months of running this promo, we decided to do another headline and cover test for my control. And I came up with this new one, which is confirmed by MIT scientist; nitric oxide levels jumped 200% higher in just 20 minutes when you do this. So, I've got the unique mechanism right there in the main headline, but it's outside of the changed opening paragraphs and lead. It's the exact same promo. In fact, and I'm just kind of showing you, this is all the exact same copy in the direct mail promo, but it's also being used as an online sales page.

Mikhail: Okay

Kim: Yes. And so, even though I don't get to the mechanism till later on, I tease about that in the main headline. And so, this actually worked better than the original control for a while, and then even three years later, they're both used. I mean, they're kind of rotated. I think the confirmed by MIT scientists gets a little bit more use online, like the Facebook traffic and that kind of thing, but both of them are controls, and they're still being used

like three and a half, almost four years after I wrote them, and they're doing very well. They're one of their most successful products. So yes, you can bring it up.

In fact, again, in competitive markets, when you look at -- like if you read Gene Schwartz's Breakthrough Advertising, which I highly suggest to every serious copywriter. There's a whole section about sophistication of your market. And when you're trying to come up with that big promise or big idea or hook that you want to communicate in your main headline, you want to think about what is the stage of market sophistication that your market is in regarding your product. And like I mentioned earlier, most supplement markets are definitely further along. You know what I mean? They're crowded markets. There's a lot of competition. Your prospect has heard a lot of the same promises before. So, your whole idea is that you really need to stand out. And what Gene Schwartz says is like in stage three, stage four, that's when you want to potentially introduce a unique mechanism and maybe even into your main headline or main hook. And that's a way of getting across at your product can do it better, faster, more effectively, more efficiently, whatever it is. So, yes, that's exactly what I'm doing here with this main headline.

Mikhail: Yes. That was just one thing that kind of stood out to me when you were kind of running through it as you keep talking about this being such a unique mechanism. Why isn't it part of like what you use to bring in? But that's [crosstalk 00:23:17].

Kim: But I felt like in this case, now other promos, I might've introduced it sooner, but I felt that it became a weakness of the previous control. I explained why. And so, I felt too; it's like it's not as palatable to people potentially. So, I want them to really want the ingredients and be sold on this is going to work a lot better and "Oh, wow. That's like just the cream on top." Now I know it's going to really work even better. And there's like this unique thing. I can't just go buy these three ingredients somewhere else, which they probably wouldn't be hard to find. I've got to take this particular product.

Mikhail: And then you don't actually introduce it. You just kind of tease it, and then it's later on when you've built that interest in it, that you kind of bring it back up.

Kim: Yes, it's exact same promo up to about this point, and then it's the same promo, all the way through. It just looks different because of its sales page. Well, we got two more to go through, so let's keep it moving. The second promo I want to share with you, I want to talk about it being a good example about how to craft fresh, compelling angles in saturated markets that stand out from the crowd. And again, for the same reason I just explained, your market has seen a lot of other things before your product, some of the most skeptical people that you will ever try to sell anything to. So, you have to convince them that it's even worth paying attention to your message, let alone convincing them to actually buy the product. So, you got a lot of hurdles to jump over, and you can't just sound like everything else that's out there.

So, it's important to figure out what are those fresh, compelling angles that you can come up with? So, we're going to illustrate that by looking at this promo. Let me just get this down to a smaller level so more can fit. So, this is a promo I wrote for a product called Integrative Digestive Formula. And believe it or not, I first wrote this back in 2011, and it's

still being used; word for word. I think I might've done maybe one or two headline tests at some point several years ago. It's being used direct mail on occasion. It's also being used on online sales page. So, it's been working very well.

So, what I did with this promo is -- Okay, this is a super crowded, saturated market, anything to do with digestive health. I mean, when I first wrote this promo, some of the most frequently mailed and promoted products for probiotics and all these other like digestive or detox cleansing products and all these -- like we'll just say a lot of the promos were rather disgusting, and that seemed to be what was working. And I was like, "I don't want to just be another poop promo." [crosstalk 00:26:24] You remember those. So, I don't want to get gross, but as honestly, I could just show you some of these things from my files of other promos that I collected from that time, but that was what was working, and it was like, how are you going to stand out? And people have tried probiotics. They've tried these things. The thing with digestive problems, just like joint problems or like arthritis or other things like that, is they're chronic. And a lot of times, they never really fully solve their problems. So, they're always looking for that next solution. Hopefully, this will be the one that works. Right?

So that was how I came up with my whole positioning angle of why you can take all the probiotics enzymes and anti-acids you want and still not fix your digestive problems. So, I'm just hitting that pinpoint right there, and I'm casting a wide enough net. So, I'm getting all the people out there who've tried probiotics, all the people who've tried enzymes, all the people who maybe aren't taking the natural stuff, but they're still taking the anti-acids. And there's this curiosity. I'm not opening a loop why you can take -- but it's like an incomplete statement they have to read on to find out the answer.

And it implied that there is an answer for that's waiting for them to discover. So that's why the headline is worded that way. And then if you look at the subhead, introducing the only permanent solution I've found that actually repairs your digestion. So, you can put an end to heartburn, gas, indigestion, acid stomach, constipation, and other misery. Starts working the very first day. So, a couple of things I'm doing there is I now introducing or hinting that there's a unique mechanism here. Like there's unique action that's happening as a result of the solution that is not just doing like a Band-Aid on your digestion, it's actually repairing and fixing it.

And then I'm also incorporating a speed of result claim with stats working the very first day, which again, you have to make sure what you're saying is true. That you've got some kind of study or something backing up. That at least one of the ingredients in the formula is going to start working the very first day or that they're going to be starting to notice something the very first day. So that's how I came up with a headline and the subhead. So, we can't walk through the entire promo because I literally could spend an hour and a half or two hours going through it, but I wanted to highlight that headline and how it really does stand out in that crowded market in part by just calling out the competition that here's why these aren't working and here's why.

So, then I pretty early on get into the unique mechanism. I opened up with what I call empathy, kind of copy in the lead it's like, "Hey, I understand what you're going through."

You're agitating some of the problems that they have and then introducing [inaudible 00:29:14] authority as being a doctor, talking about her patients, so she understands what they go through, et cetera. And then putting out there the idea of a possible transformation, from bloated and constipated to lighter and more energized.

And that's after I introduce, "Here's what this unique thing is. This is an ancient Chinese mechanism or Chinese remedy." In fact, if I was going back again and doing a new headline, I'd probably use this phrase, "Ancient Chinese gut-healing secret," but so I'm really romancing it. Like I'm not getting into anything technical or scientific, I'm trying to keep it relatable, making unfamiliar familiar. Most people have heard of Chinese medicine. So, it was a way of introducing that there's this combination of nutrients that are doing all these things to basically heal your digestion and make it stronger.

And so, I do that in a way, too, by bringing in this idea of acupuncture. And this was a complicated product to try to figure out how do I explain -- how do I first understand exactly how it works because it's not the typical "take this and it boosts this substance in your body, or it does this or that, like the nitric oxide." Like this one works on many different levels to bring your digestive system into balance, which again is sort of a little bit of a woo woo kind of thing to try to explain in a promotion. But I get through that by talking about acupuncture and how it balances out the energy levels and how your digestive system gets burnt out from stress and everything else that many people can relate to. So, a lot of this is just setting up, like, there's this different approach that they'd never heard of before that will then make them much more receptive to the idea of believing that this is actually going to work for them.

So, there's all these different concepts. So, I'm really educating them. I'm not really selling anything just yet. I'm going through this copy. I'm explaining what cold digestion is, all this stuff. And here's basically why what's going on with their digestive system. Now that they've got a cold burned out digestive system. And then some of them, here's how it should work if it's warm, et cetera, et cetera. So, this is all new stuff. And it's really standing out from all the different promos they're seeing out there that are talking about some of the things that I was referring to. It's like this is a whole new mechanism, a whole new approach.

And then what I do here is I romance the uniqueness and the naturalness of all the different ingredients. And this one has a lot of different ingredients. So, I had to organize it in a way that there's all these different unique actions that it has and then just touch on briefly the different nutrients that were in the formula, but this is how you keep it from getting too confusing. You don't want to feel overwhelmed, but you also want them to feel like, "But I need all of these ingredients if I'm going to get the total solution." And in this particular case, this has a lot of ingredients in it. So, rather than talk about 20 ways that it fixes your digestion, with 20 different ingredients, I'm going to bring that down to just five ways and make it much more simple, but yet all of them play a role in each of those different ways that it works. Does that make sense? You want to try to give as simplified structure as you can.

And then I just take them by the hand and talk about what these things do to all the different digestive problems that they're running into. This whole idea that digestive system needs to be strengthened is another new idea that I bring in. And again, I'm using the analogies. And metaphors are very useful when you're trying to make the unfamiliar familiar. You can't exercise your digestive system to make it stronger, but you can do this. And so, people understand the idea of exercise and strengthening. And so, I'm demonstrating you need a strong stomach and intestinal walls to push food and all this stuff. So, it's kind of the ideas like, "Wow. Well, no wonder I'm getting constipated or I'm having stomach upset or indigestion. My digestive system must be very weak, and I can't do these things." So again, you help them see how this is truly the solution that's going to finally address what's causing their problem.

So, I go through that. It's a pretty long promo. I think like 27 pages. It was all these different digestive actions. And hopefully, by the time you get to the end, you realize, I can't just go buy one or two of these ingredients. I need all of them. And this is obviously going to be the only formula is going to give you all 20 of them or however many there are. So that was my general approach with that. And like I said, it's been working since 2011, which is pretty tough to do in these competitive nutritional supplement markets. And also, has been working online. Do you have any questions about this promo?

Mikhail: No, I think that one is a lot more straightforward in terms of the approach [inaudible 00:34:32].

Kim: If you can see it's, go ahead.

Mikhail: Sorry. One of the things I noticed just at the end is there's a lot of testimonials for it.

Kim: Oh, yes.

Mikhail: - which always helps. Especially when you're introducing all these new products, but I think it kind of ties back into the headline where it would have been people who would have been trying all these different things to get relief for their digestion. So just having the testimonials backs that up, I guess.

Kim: Yes. And that's, and that's a very good point. I'm glad you brought that up. For this promo product and for the other one that I showed you, they were products that already existed. And so, I wasn't launching something brand new. Some of you are launching something brand new. It's a very tough obviously to have a whole lot of testimonials to be able to choose from. In this case, the client had been very good about -- and I think even giving them an incentive to provide a testimony or feedback I think they might've been saving on their next order or something like that. And so, they had a lot of great testimonials to work with.

So as a copywriter, I don't just leave this to the designer to say, "Oh, here's a bunch of testimonials. Figure out which ones you want to put here." Like I specifically chose these three testimonials to put together in a one sidebar and reason being, I wanted to show like a variety of different problems, and I do use little mini headlines based on what is it

within the testimonial. So, like, if you're just scanning through the promo like many people do, you're like, "Oh, okay, this is going to help with my constipation. Oh, this is going to help with acid reflux." Because I'm talking to people that might have maybe one or two of these problems, but not all of them. So, I want to make sure I'm casting that wide net and showing them and demonstrating this is going to work for a variety of different digestive problems. So, I had a lot of good testimonials to work with.

Now, the third one I want to talk about is an online sales page that's been doing really well for the last three years or so since I wrote it, and it's for a product called My Sinus Miracle. And I want to share some lessons here. I mean, again, there's just so many lessons in each of these promos that I can share, but in this case, I want to talk about how you can write a hot, long-lasting control promo in five days. Now I generally will put four to six weeks anyway on my calendar. Block it out to write a whole new promo. And part of that too is I'm usually working on multiple other things, but the fact is it generally takes me at least a week or two to do my research and then another three weeks or so to write the full promo. And I spend a lot of time and care doing that.

And I found myself -- I had one of my longtime clients had reached out and said, "Hey, we got this new sinus supplement, and we want to try to get it launched as soon as possible. Can you work us in?" And I'm like, "Yes, let me work in." I mean, I was getting ready to leave on like a three-week vacation to Europe in about a month. And so, I was like, "Yes, I can get this done." And of course, normally, as life goes, we all know what it's like when you're getting ready to go on a vacation, and everything needs to get done. So, I found myself having done my research, which luckily, I had a big research document that gave me with a lot of great studies, but I was left with like less than a week where I had to actually write this promo. And I'm like, "How the heck am I going to do this?"

So, I'm going to share with you some ways that I did that. Now it helps, obviously, but I've been writing copy for 20 years. So, I'm not saying that's always going to work for everybody, but the main thing is you want to be really focused when doing your research. I mean, if you have the time and you like that kind of thing, I mean, you can literally get completely lost on Google or can take you down here and there, and you could be all over the place. And you might get some cool ideas, but it's really better to be focused about doing your research. So, I knew that there were two main areas I wanted to focus on.

One was I knew I needed to do some avatar research about the target prospect because I hadn't really written any sinus promos before. I mean, I've written a lot of digestive promos and memory and anti-ageing and stuff over the years. So, I kind of have a pretty good idea like who that target prospect is and what they're dealing with, but sinuses, and no one in my family has sinus problems. I don't have sinus problems. I'm like, what's going on with the sinus people. So, I knew I had to really do some focus to avatar research.

And the other thing is I had like a 14-page document that my client had given me that was with so many like research and studies and this and that. It was like, what are the really best studies? Because obviously, I'm not writing a research paper here. I just need the very best study or studies that are going to just really help me make my case for this product and why this is such a superior solution for sinus problems.

So, I just was laser-focused when I did my research, and what I ended up doing and found the most valuable is I started off surveying some people in my neighborhood and just finding people who had sinus problems and talking with them. But it was going online to online forums, and I know a lot of people probably use that before too. But if you just Google like sinus forum or whatever the health problem is and forum, it's amazing how many forums you find, and I just started collecting the stories and the comments and the posts that just really showed like, this is the pain that they're going through. Like, this is what they're dealing with. These are the other alternatives they've tried. This is what hasn't worked for them. This is what frustrates them the most about the problem. Those kinds of things I just wanted to just do a deep dive and really get up to speed on.

And it was through that research that I came up with the headline and subhead and the whole lead. And so, a lot of people talk about like; they're literally just feeling like they're just barely surviving with their sinus problems. They're just trying to figure out how to get by. So, I wanted to bring this idea up of, "Hey, you can be a sinus thriver. Tired of simply being a sinus survivor. Now you can be a sinus thriver in just minutes." I brought in the speed of results claim. And again, that was by really focusing on what the best studies were. And then you're always looking for some studies where you can make some kind of speed of results claim.

So that's how I arrived with that. And then I found another study that had a really dramatic claim that I can make. Helps nearly nine out of 10 patients eliminate their sinus blockages for good in three weeks or less. So, I didn't need like 15 different studies. I really needed just one or two really great studies that would allow me to make these kinds claims.

So, and then the other thing I did to kind of speed along my whole process here and get this written in five days was I just jumped in and started writing the copy. Like once I'd done my avatar research, I had a lot of good copy folder just like collected in terms of what they were dealing with and who they were. And then once I had my very best studies, which you always want to try to get your hands on the full tech studies and not just the little abstracts that you can find on pub med. And a lot of times you can find them for free. You don't necessarily have to buy the full tech study. If you just Google the full title of the study, a lot of times, you'll just find it available as PDFs or on different websites.

So, it's in the full-text study that you can dig out the details like nine out of 10 patients in three weeks or less. A lot of times, you're not going to get those details from an abstract. So, once I had my avatar research done, and I had identified my very best studies, and when I had to work with, from those studies, I didn't write like a whole copy brief or outline. I just jumped in and just started writing the copy. And it just flowed at that point. Sometimes there's a real benefit to actually having your back up against the wall and having to write your copy fast because I have often found, and I have other examples of this too. Sometimes I write my best promos that way. I mean, it's not recommended, especially if you're new to this and you haven't done a lot of these. Please take your time and write good copy. But there's also a factor of the focus when everything's just fresh in your mind, and that's all you're really thinking about for two weeks, it's sinus problems.

It's just, you get in the zone kind of thing, and the copy does just flow. So that's how I found myself here.

And I was literally just taking some of these phrases from the forums that I visited. Like the sinus problems can leave you feeling constantly exhausted like you've been run over by a truck, et cetera, et cetera. They did feel like their doctors don't care about them. And they're getting stuck with every -- sick with every cold is going around and feeling like the walking dead and so much brain fog they can't think straight. I mean, these were all things that I picked up going through the forums or interviewing people who had sinus problems.

So, again, I'm taking kind of that whole empathy lead, agitating the problems, but you don't want to go on for too long with that. You don't want people to feel like, "Oh my God, I give up. I'll never be able to fix it." You always got to combine that with hope. I've got the hope in here that there's a solution, and I'm not waiting too long to get to talking about the solution. All of that is about to change. From this day forward, I'm going to show you how to be a sinus thriver. And so now I'm painting a picture of life as a sinus thriver. This is their desired end result. This is what they dream. They don't want to have to keep doping themselves up with medicines, et cetera. And again, I got a lot of this picture of their dream from going through and doing my avatar research and visiting forums and everything else.

So, then I introduced the spokesperson, and I also interviewed Lee Euler, who is the owner of the company. And he also used to actually be a top copywriter for many years. And so, I positioned him as a health researcher behind the product, and he turns out, also suffered from sinus problems. So, this gives somebody as a spokesperson who's relatable to the prospect. Like, "Oh, he understands. He's gone through the same thing." And talk about his own experience with using this product. Now, remember I had maybe a handful of testimonials to work with because they did have people who went through kind of like a pilot trial with the product before they launched it. So, they did have some users who had testimonials, but I didn't have like a whole file drawer of them like with the other products to choose from.

So, it was also very powerful to use as spokes person's own story and use that as a testimonial. So, I talk about how he went from the sinus survivor to sinus thriver, and now you can too. And then I get into talking about it -- and I here's like my big promises. I'm expanding on the big promise that I had in the headline about starts working the first day and works for nine out of 10 people. I was able to further dramatize that through some of the studies that I found. And again, I didn't need a lot of studies. I just needed the right studies, and I'm able to make these very dramatic speed of result claims. And talking about these specific problems that it solves for people.

And another thing I want to just talk about is when you're looking at studies, you can also -- I don't think any of these studies I've referred to were from big, big-name institutions. I mean, obviously, if I had a Stanford study or a Harvard study, I'd be probably blasting that from the main headliner or something. I'd be at great prominence, but you can borrow credibility from other esteemed publications or institutions. So, in this case, we have the visual of the Journal of the American Medical Association, but I'm just basically

quoting in the caption how a lot research published in JAMA shows people who take antibiotics see more better improvement in their symptoms.

So, it really doesn't have anything specifically to do with the actual supplement, but it's more about the problem. So, I'm doing things like this. And as you'll see, this Harvard medical school warning and this is an article or a sidebar just about the problems with using decongestants. And it's not specifically about the product. The product is going to free you from having to use the decongestants. But again, I'm borrowing credibility from these other institutions, and this is kind of stuff that came up in my research.

Then, I talk about the unique mechanisms of ways that this product works for people, and it has a couple of different mechanisms. It's doing these different steps. Again, with sinus problems, not everybody experiences them the same way. So just like with the digestive promo, I'm trying to focus on specific actions that solve different problems that people encounter because not everybody is going to say, "Oh, that's me, or that's me." So, I'm trying to cast a wide net and address all the common problems that people suffer from when they are dealing with sinus issues.

And then I'm just walking them through the study stories and making the speed of result claims. I keep talking about to -- I'm closing off the doors to all the different alternatives that maybe they currently use or have used in the past for their sinus problems and talking about how they're not good alternatives. Again, making this look like the preferred solution, incorporating the study research here. That's basically how this goes through. It's a lot here to go through, but I'm giving them all those proofs. I'm layering on proof after proof, after proof that this is going to work for them, by talking specifically to their pain points, to what's causing those problems for them, and why other things don't work, but this will.

And then we did have a few -- actually, this was one I think that came in after we'd already launched the product. This person actually wanted to buy 48 bottles of this product to give to his friends and family. Again, I think they get like a ton of reorders on this product because it really works well for people. So, any questions on this?

Mikhail: No, I think that first main point you brought up in terms of the research, I can tell you I've been in the same situation where I have to write a promo, and you just kind of get so off track looking at research. You end up down this rabbit hole looking for things, people, and all of that. So, I think, yes, that point about just being really focused on the best studies that you can use, that will kind of bring all the points you want to bring out. That's one I want to say that that's a really good point.

Kim: Good. And I appreciate you saying that. And like I said, it wasn't until I dug into a few of the full tech studies, I would realize, "Okay, this has given me everything I need just right here." I would not have necessarily gotten that level of detail, especially when I talk about the whole point that I led with here. Where is it? In this whole story talking about how within seven days, all these improvements happened. And then after 21 days, nine and 10 people, whatever the number was, had their sinus problems completely disappear. I

mean, the whole idea that would just within three weeks that would happen for so many people is a really amazing study finding to be able to share with people.

And you want to dimensionalize it. So, I don't just say 31 out of 51 patients taking this experience is a complete remission. I kind of dimensionalize like yes, that's right. They scored a zero on their sinus severity score after three weeks. So, you kind of amplify. Once you make a finding, you kind of restate it again just to dramatize it, or you compare it like by day 21, sinus x-rays were normal, and more than nine out of 10 patients compare that to just one out of 10 of those taking the placebo. So, you find ways to make it like really exciting. Every sentence, every paragraph earns its space. It's doing something to keep moving them forward towards the sale. So, I'm glad I don't have sinus problems, but if you have them, you might want to take this product.

Mikhail: Yes. I'll have to check that out to my wife; she suffers from it very badly.

Kim: But I think I mentioned earlier, so I recently did put together a program where I go really deep into those three controls that I just shared with you. And I go like in the whole process, like how I came up with the big idea and all the way through to writing the [inaudible 00:52:33] and then closing the sale. And I also have three other really long-running successful promos. Some ran for eight to 10 years as controls. And I break them all down in my Million Dollar Control Breakdown Masterclass, which I just launched recently. And so, I wanted to mention that. And I also know that you're on my copy insiders list. I have an email list where I do a free e-letter once a week. And a lot of times, I'll share a different copywriting and marketing lessons. That sometimes, I also will break down other promos that I see that land in my mailbox or my inbox. It's a little feature called What's in Kim's Mailbox. And I [inaudible 00:53:15] one of the reasons you wanted to have me on your program, and you say, "Could you break down some copy for me?" And I'm like, "Well, why don't I just break down some my own stuff."

Mikhail: Yes. Those emails are one of my favorite, and there's so many nuggets of information, valuable information. You're given just those little emails. So yes, we'll definitely have a link below this where people can go and get on your list. And I think you have a copy checklist that they get and a course or something as well.

Kim: Yes. It's like a mini-course. It's like seven days. You'll get a daily email with another success principle for writing successful promotions and something you can apply to any kind of promo that you write. And then you'll share the link for the control breakdown, masterclass, the Million Dollar. And I have a special code for you guys, HEALTH200, if you want to save $200 on that class, just for being on this program and listening in today.

Mikhail: Yes. So those links will be below here. And just want to say thanks, Kim. Thanks for taking the time and being a part of the event. I think this will be one of the more valuable sessions that we have because we kind of get to see a little behind the curtains and the thinking that goes on behind writing winning control. And I think for most copywriters out there, that's kind of the goal. They want to be the ones writing these controls, beating controls, and land in those nice royalty cheques.

Kim: And that is ultimately the goal, but the way you get there is you start with that next project, and you hit that one out of the ballpark and your client's like, "Woo, I need to hire you more. I need to pay you more. I need to give you." That's how you work your way up to those better-paying projects or saying, "Hey, instead of just writing your emails, maybe you'll let me write one of your sales pages." And yes, it all starts with every project. You just want to do your very best work and keep getting better at what you do, and then that's how you do get there for sure. That's what I did.

Mikhail: All right. Thanks again for the time, Kim.

Kim: Oh, you're so welcome. Great to be here, Mikhail.