

# The Power of a Good Headline



Presented by: Julianne Musante

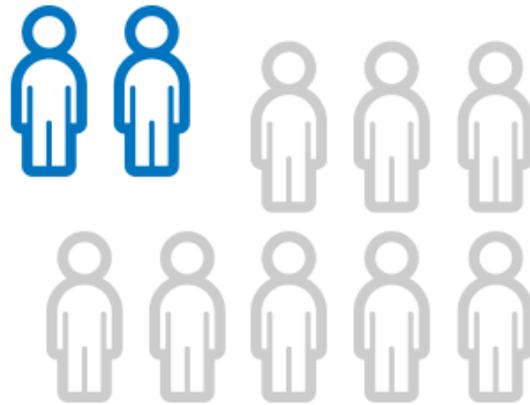
# Overview of Topics

- Why Headlines Are Important
- Elements That Make a Headline Pop
- Is Your Headline Good or Bad?
- 8 Winning Headline Strategies
- Power Words
- Headline Analyzer
- Content & Tagging
- Questions



# Statistics Show...

- On average, 8 out of 10 people will read a headline, but only 2 out of 10 will read the rest.



- The better your headline, the better your odds of beating the averages and getting what you have to say read by a larger percentage of people.

# Why Are Headlines So Important?

You could have the best post in the world, but if you do not have a good headline it is not going to reach its full potential.

- Headlines give the reader a good idea about the content in the post
- It is the first (possibly last) thing people see about the post
- Usually is one of the few elements visible on social sharing sites
- Is the best opportunity to market the article

# Elements That Make a Headline Effective

- Summarize a topic in the post: especially one that will catch the reader's eye
- Choose a topic people are interested to learn about
- Numbers give the reader a definite outline of what to expect
- Be Current: Articles on recent events are going to generate interest
- What is in it for the reader? Tell the readers how they will benefit from your article
- Generate curiosity
- Use key words that emphasize benefits to the reader (i.e. free, easy)

# Is Your Headline Good or Bad? Give it the Breath Test.

- A great headline does not necessarily lie in subtracting or adding one or more word.
  - Try saying your headline out loud. If you run out of breath reading a headline it is most likely too long and you might struggle to recall the contents of the headline.
  - If your reader can't process your headline in a single breath, they can't process it in their heads.
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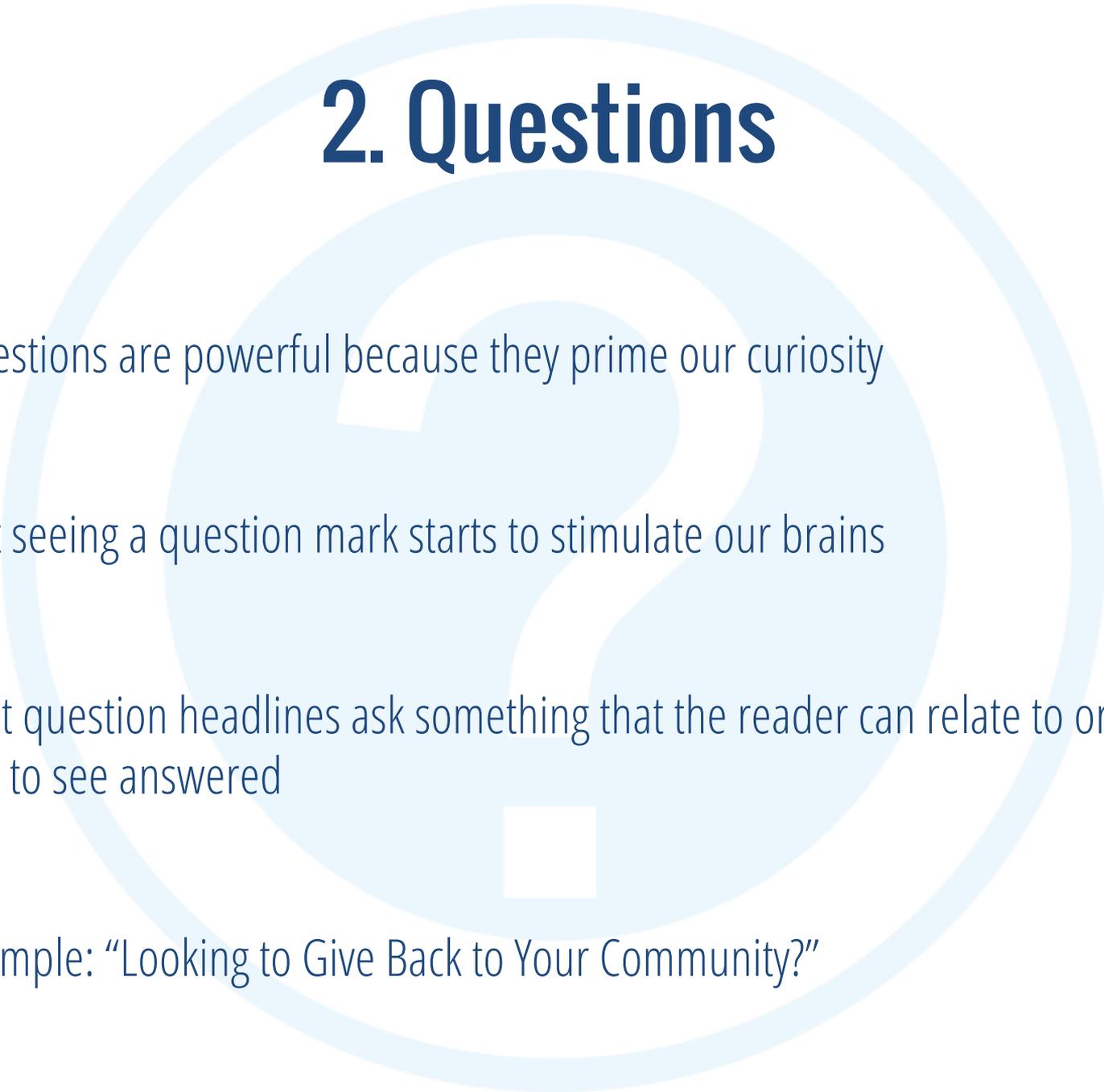
# 8 Winning Headline Strategies & The Psychology Behind Them



# 1. The Element of Surprise

- Presenting something unexpected/breaking a pattern will help you to capture the attention of your audience.
  - Surprise headlines are winning headlines because our brains love novelty. The brain's pleasure centers are more turned on when we experience unpredictable pleasant things.
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# 2. Questions



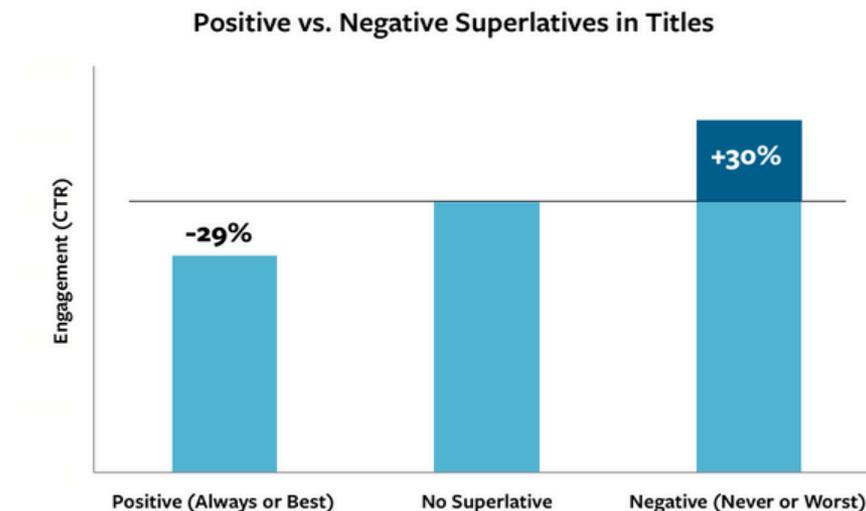
- Questions are powerful because they prime our curiosity
- Just seeing a question mark starts to stimulate our brains
- Best question headlines ask something that the reader can relate to or would like to see answered
- Example: “Looking to Give Back to Your Community?”

# 3. Curiosity

- Also known as information gap or curiosity gap
  - To use this strategy you want to use something intriguing but incomplete information. Tell the reader enough to pique their interest but not enough to give the whole story away.
  - For example: “Riveting Election - Results Are Finally In!”
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# 4. Negative Superlatives

- Words like best, biggest, greatest can be effective but so can negative phrases such as “worst”.
- In a study of 65,000 titles, Outbrain compared positive, negative and neutral headlines. Results show: positive headlines performed 29% worse and negative headlines performed 30% better.



# 5. “How To”

- Try starting your headline with the words “How To”
- People seek secrets, tips, hints, laws, rules and systems
- Other variations on the “How To” strategy:
  - “Introduction To”
  - “The Beginners Guide”
  - “In 5 Minutes”
  - “DIY”

# 6. Numbers

- Numbers work well in headlines because humans like predictability & dislike uncertainty
- For example: Top 5 Reasons to Move to Pleasantville

# 7. Audience Referencing

- Basically means using the word “You” or implicating your audience directly with your headline
- When you are the precise target audience for a headline, your brain automatically says, “That’s for me!”

# 8. Facts

- Specific, quantifiable, concrete facts – especially ones that form pictures in our minds are intensely interesting.
- Try using:
  - Digits
  - Names
  - Descriptions
  - Titles
  - Examples
  - Projections
  - Results

# Power Words!

Power words are words that will help spice up your headline and make your readers feel something.



# Fear Power Words:

Fear is without a doubt one of the most powerful emotions. The news often uses fear power words to keep you from changing the channel.

➤ Assault

➤ Beware

➤ Caution

➤ Danger

➤ Collapse

➤ Plummet

# Pep Talk Power Words:

Positive power words that get your audience excited to read your post.

➤ Amazing

➤ Courage

➤ Blissful

➤ Devoted

➤ Breathtaking

➤ Sensational

# Safe Power Words:

It is important to make your readers feel safe. They need to trust that your website is a good source for reliable information.

➤ Certified

➤ Research

➤ Official

➤ Secure

➤ Protected

➤ Results

# Curiosity Power Words:

The truth is, we are all fascinated by the mysterious and forbidden.

➤ Banned

➤ Insider

➤ Behind the Scenes

➤ Strange

➤ Controversial

➤ Unauthorized

# Content, Content, Content

- Powerful headlines need to follow through with great content
- If you have a great headline and a post with very little content you will lose credibility with your readers
- You want to have AT LEAST one paragraph of content
- Linking to a pdf with no text content is not good for business

# To Tag or Not to Tag?



- When in doubt...tag, tag, tag!
- They are quick and simple to do, and if used on all your content they will help you achieve higher results in the search engines.
- Make the tags relevant to the content of your news post.
- Use a combination of short words, long words and phrases.
- Try to think like someone who is searching for your content would when creating your tags.

# Blog Post Headline Analyzer

Brought to you by: CoSchedule

- What it is and why use it:
  - It will score your overall headline quality.
  - Will rate your headlines ability to result in social shares, increased traffic, & SEO value.
  - Helps you make sure you have the right balance of common, uncommon, emotional, & power words.
  - Also, it checks the length of your headline.
  - It's FREE!!!
  - Check it out here: <http://coschedule.com/headline-analyzer>

**Any Questions?**

