Make Your Classes Stand Out

There are a number of things you can do to make your courses jump out at prospective students. It is important to look at the people who will be searching for your courses and step into their shoes for a moment. You might recognize the following characteristics:

They are most likely:
- searching online,
- quickly scanning to find something that jumps out at them,
- looking for specific pieces of information that will 'rule out' options,
- distracted by eye candy,
- swayed by opinions

Learn to write descriptions that attract the students you want. Here is an example:

**Honey Bees: Keep Your Bees Healthy And on Their Own Six Feet**

This free, web-based course is a guide to keeping bees healthy and on their own six feet. It features the Hives Angels, our Super-Heroines of the honey bee colony, and her Villains (diseases and mites). The course will follow a 5-step approach to combating the villains and keeping your bees healthy.

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**ATTRACTION ATTENTION**

- GRAB ATTENTION IMMEDIATELY WITH THE COURSE TITLE
- POINT OUT BENEFITS
- MENTION IMPORTANT THINGS FIRST
- USE WORDS YOUR CUSTOMERS WOULD USE
- IMAGES ARE WORTH THE EXTRA EFFORT
- REVIEWS ARE THE NEW “WORD OF MOUTH”

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The course title is critical. There are many photography courses out there – you need to be specific about the course content, attract the reader’s attention and encourage them to read further.

Here are some ideas for writing interesting course titles:

GET PERSONAL—"How You Can Develop a Better Business Plan"

BE POSITIVE—You Can Save a Life With CPR.

HAVE SOME FUN—The Ramblings of Dead, Drunken Philosophers.

USE SIMPLE LANGUAGE—Healthy Winter Soups.

USE LISTS—Ten Ways to Tweet Your Way to Better Sales.

An interesting title will garner further attention; an average title will get overlooked and lost in the sea of other courses.

Consumers want to scan quickly; they will stop at titles that jump out at them.
The first 5-10 words of your description will determine whether or not the reader will continue to be interested. It is important to focus on the course content, or the learner, not the course or the Instructor – give the reader something he can identify with. Do away with first liners that start with descriptions like “This class will focus on…”

Readers are often interested in questions. If you ask a question that your reader is interested in answering he will likely read on.

Quoting facts is another way to interest readers, especially if you have surprising or unexpected facts.

Since many student take course to achieve a goal, focusing on the outcomes of your course right up front is a good idea. If the course provides a certification, license or other official certification make it known.

Our generation of consumers lives in a world of instant gratification. You need to feed them well and feed them fast.

FOCUS ON BENEFITS

ASK A QUESTION
Is Social Media Taking Up Too Much of Your Time?

QUOTE A FACT
X% of Businesses use Social Media for Marketing—Do You?

EMPHASIZE OUTCOMES
Let’s Expand Your Business With Social Media.

DEFINE YOUR TOPIC
Finding Your Comfort Zone with Social Media is Key to Good Content.

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Include key information upfront. Consumers need instant confirmation that they are looking in the right place. By starting with the most important information, you can convince the user to read on rather than move on to another listing.

You should go from this:
*The next step beyond the basics. This class will explore some of the more important aspects of personal financial management.*

To this:

Ready for the next step in planning your personal finances? Managing assets, credit, insurance needs, budgets, retirement, and estate planning are key topics.

You will also be introduced to the concepts of investment as part of the planning procedures, as well as career planning. More details about the course....

*Give the learner everything they need to know, focusing on the most important things first, then let them register.*

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Keywords

Consumers are searching for your classes with words that they think will display the appropriate results. Do you know what those words are? Are they part of your description?

Here is an example:
*Fold forming is an exciting technique where sheet metal is manipulated and hammered to create fabulously textured, 3 dimensional, organic forms. This is a quick process, so students will have the opportunity to create a variety of basic forms in this workshop.*

What words in that description do you think students would use to search for a class like this? Is it possible that students would use the following words when looking for classes of this type: metalworking, blacksmithing, metal arts? Including these words in the description will make it more likely you will reach the customers looking for you.

Remember you want to attract students who are interested in the topics you offer, not only the ones who already know the names of your classes. Cast your net wide enough to reach people who don’t know exactly what you offer, but are interested in that sort of thing.

*Professionals agree that usage of proper keywords will fetch you twice the traffic with half the effort.*
Images

Images create an emotional attachment. We certainly didn’t need to use images in this document. We could have given you the same advice with a wordy document. But would you have read it?

- Images are very important for the following reasons:
  - Images can introduce a concept.
  - Images create an emotional response.
  - Images add color and interest. If your class has an image and others don’t, yours will draw more attention.
  - Images break up content into smaller bits.
  - Images named appropriately with key words will help your SEO.

It is great to use your own images if you have them. If not, you will need to be careful where you get them. Don’t use somebody else’s image without permission. There are many places on the web where you can purchase stock images and find free stock images.

- Getty Images—very good quality, expensive
- Shutterstock—bit pricy, but good quality
- iStock Photo—affordable, good quality
- Free Images—very popular with designers
- Veer—good for purchasing images in bulk
- Jupiter Images—searches other stock photo sites for you.

Images are worth the extra effort.

Use attractive images.
Use appropriate images.
Take pictures.
Buy images when needed.
Don’t use images without permission.

Images help to make your content more appealing and engaging and attract more readers.

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Customer reviews are one of the best-researched and supported ways to improve the credibility of your business and drive up revenue and registrations.

If you were comparing two courses and one had reviews and another one didn’t, you would be more likely to look closely at the one with reviews. Reading what another student thought about the course is more important to prospective students than reading what you have to say about the course.

Build getting reviews into your procedures. You probably already gather course surveys at the end of every course you offer, include a review form, or better yet, link to a review page online. The more reviews you have the better.

“I highly recommend this course. The instructor was well prepared and the supporting web site and materials are great. This is an excellent foundation course for design principles and gives an in depth view of design and analysis.”

By using all of the tools at your disposal and following the rules above you should be able to attract more attention to your course offerings and encourage readers to spend a little more time reviewing your information.

88% of Consumers Say They Trust Online Reviews As Much As Personal Recommendations