COMMON THREAD
COLLECTIVE

# Copywriting Club 4 : Longform Copywriting

March 10, 2022

# A Good Copywriter Knows:

## Exactly who their reader is ...

# Where their work will be seen …

**What action they want the reader to take.**

# What We're Going to Cover

Copywriting Club

| | |
|---|---|
| Week 1 | Writing Basics |
| Week 2 | Understanding Your Audience |
| Week 3 | Understanding the Medium: Shortform |

# What We're Going to Cover

Copywriting Club

| | |
|---|---|
| Week 4 | Understanding the Medium: Longform |
| Week 5 | The Psychology of Choice |
| Week 6 | Tips & Tricks |

## What writing skill do you most want to improve?

31 responses

# The Agenda

1. Lesson 3 Review: Writing With Purpose
2. Scriptwriting 101
3. Email
4. Q&A

CHAPTER ONE

# Lesson 3 Review: Writing With Purpose

THE GOLDEN RULE

# Omit needless words.

THE INVERSE

# Give every word a purpose.

**What** you write depends on **where** you write it.

# Write an objective statement:

I want to:

Get people who need to (job),

are (awareness of brand), and

(awareness of product category),

to (specific action)

on (platform and device).

I want to:

Get people who need to
**spend less on razor blades**,

are **familiar** with **Harry's**, and

**familiar** with **monthly-delivery razors**,

to **tap the CTA button**

on **Facebook mobile**.

## Question 5

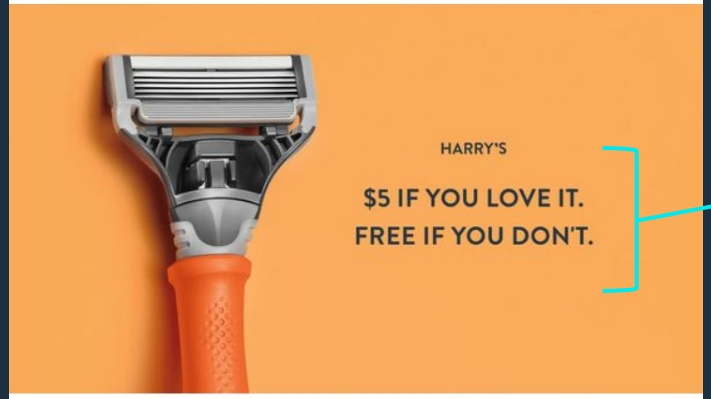
**What is the *immediate next step*
I want my prospect to take?**

Text

Harry's
Sponsored

"Got my Harry's razor trial set today and just have to say holy cow. Literally, the best shave I've ever had. I hate shaving but if it's going to feel like *this* all the time, I might become a regular!" - Jay S.

Our risk-free Trial Offer comes with a 5-blade razor, shave gel, and travel cover. The best part? Replacement blades are as low as only $2 each.




Creative Copy

Headline

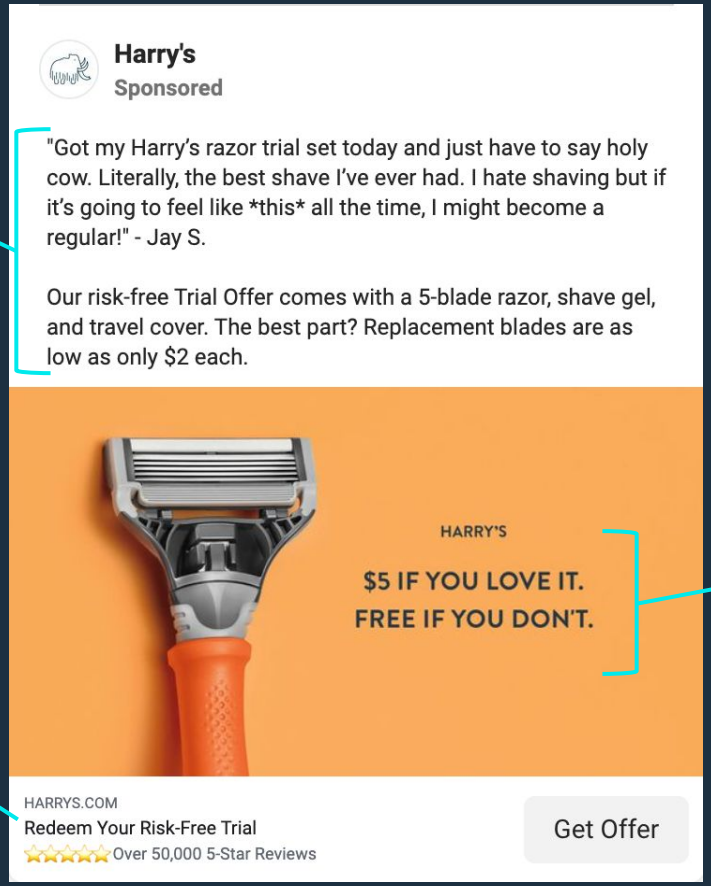
Details

HARRYS.COM
Redeem Your Risk-Free Trial
Over 50,000 5-Star Reviews

Get Offer

CTA Button

2. Explains creative




1. Grabs attention

3. Drives action

# Our Definition

## Shortform

- Paid social ad copy
- Organic social captions
- Paid search copy
- Copy on creative

## Longform

- Email
- Video scripting
- Blogs
- Website Copy

# Our Definition

## Shortform

One major piece of copy

## Longform

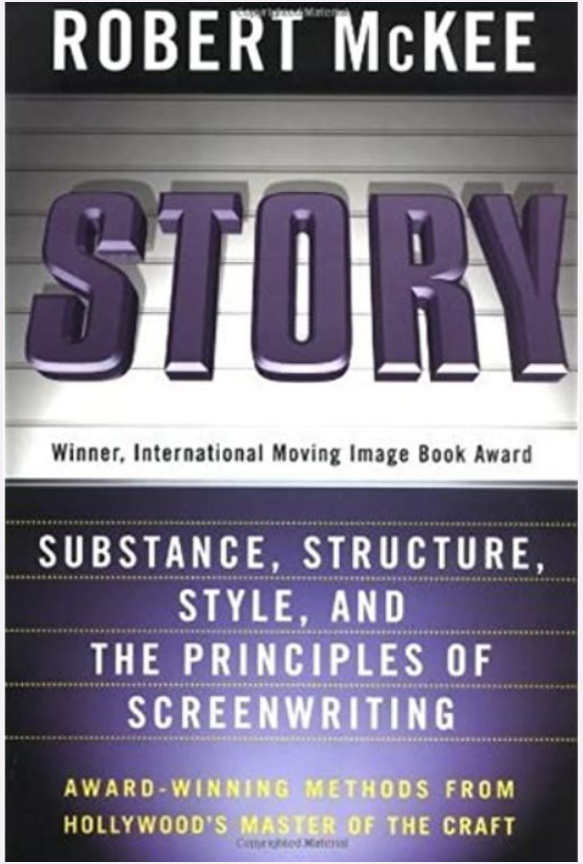
A copy sequence

THE BIG QUESTION

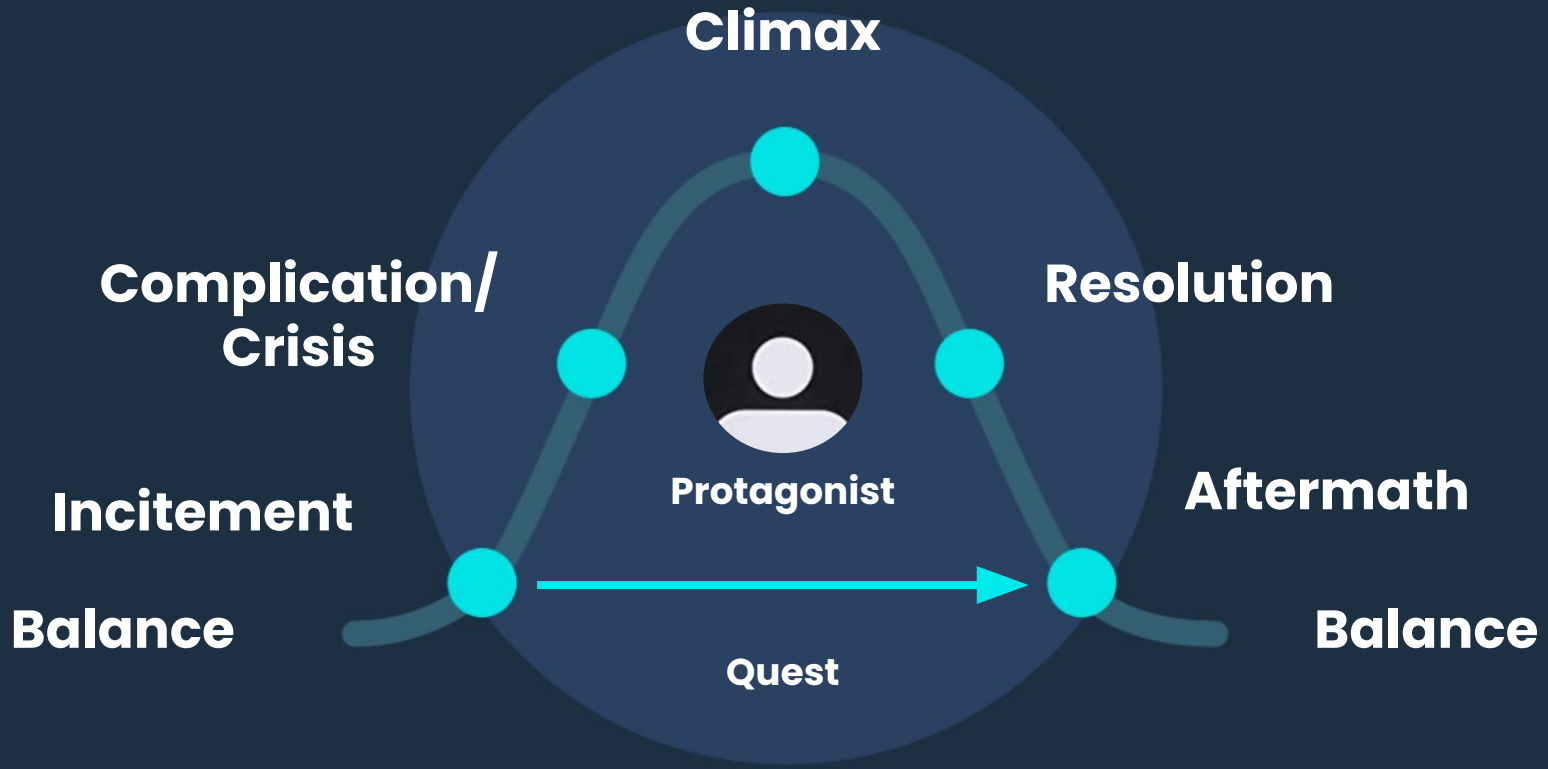
# How do you build a compelling copy sequence?

CHAPTER TWO

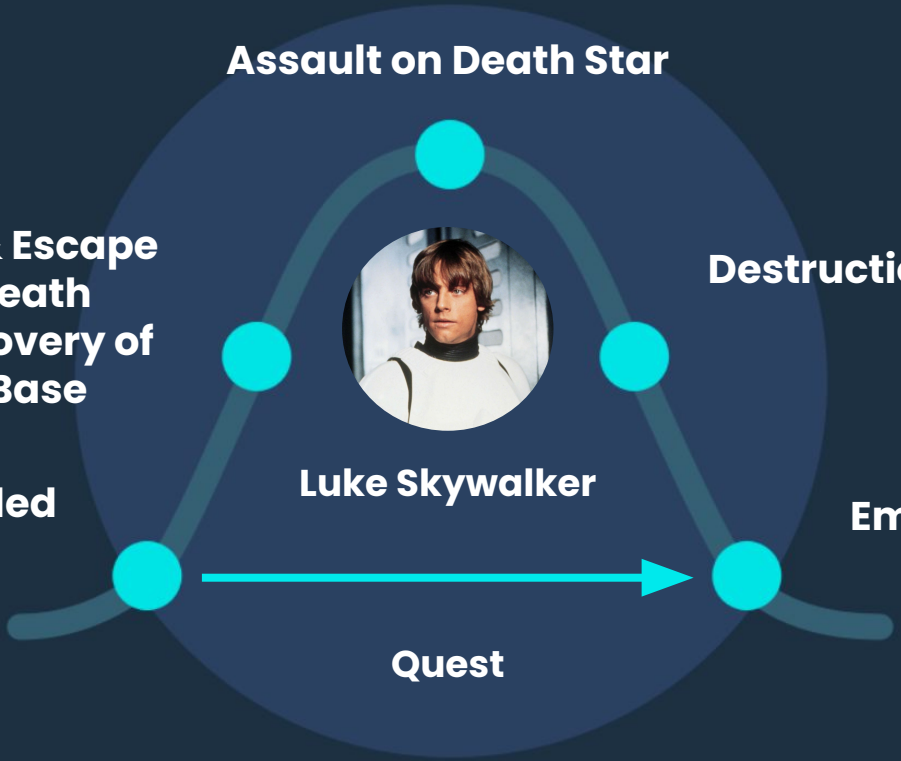
# Scriptwriting 101


ROBERT McKEE
STORY
Winner, International Moving Image Book Award
SUBSTANCE, STRUCTURE, STYLE, AND THE PRINCIPLES OF SCREENWRITING
AWARD-WINNING METHODS FROM HOLLYWOOD'S MASTER OF THE CRAFT

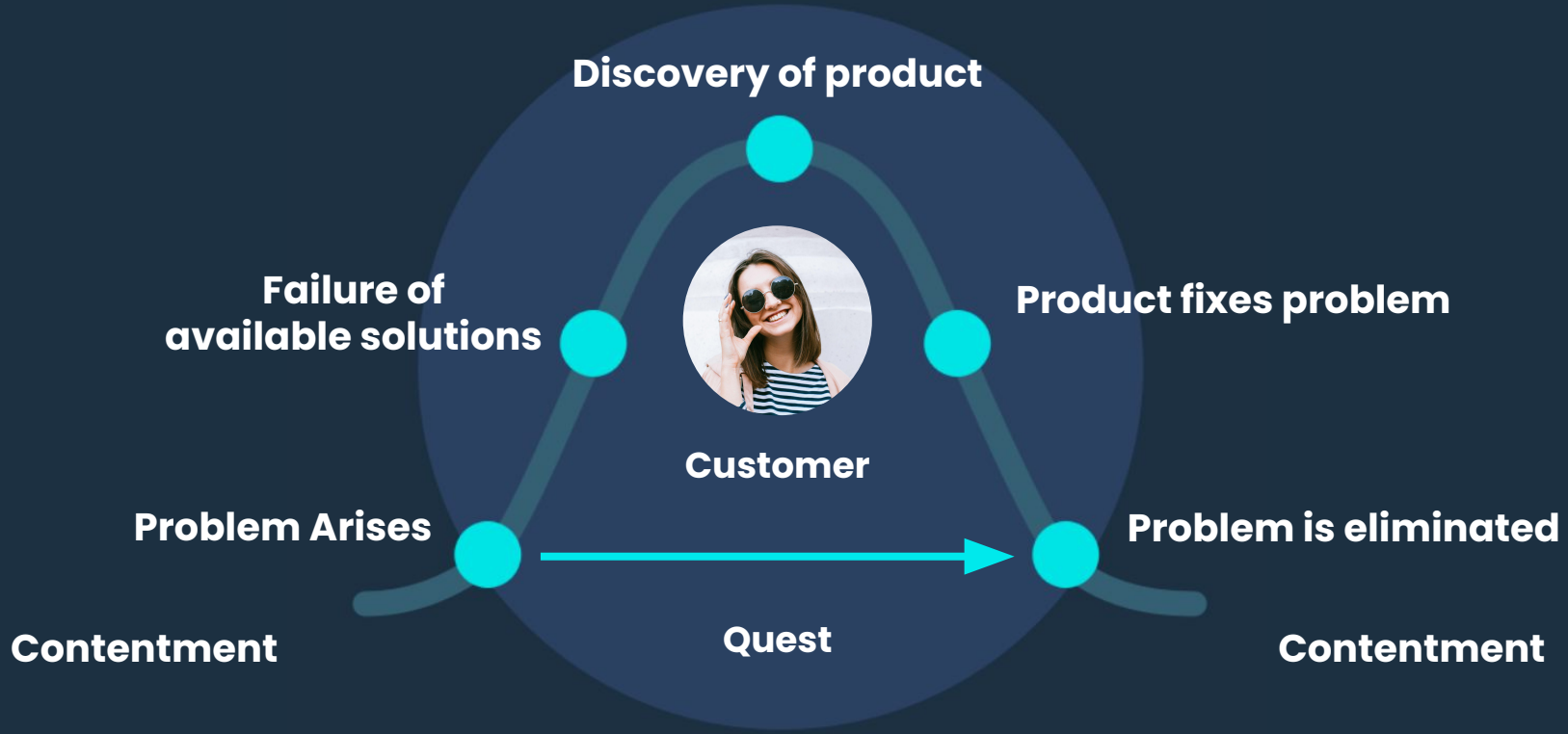
# Traditional Story Arc



# Star Wars


Assault on Death Star
Capture & Escape from Death Star/Discovery of Rebel Base
Destruction of Death Star
Luke Skywalker
Aunt & Uncle killed
Empire on the Run
Life as a moisture farmer
Quest
Life as a Pilot/Jedi

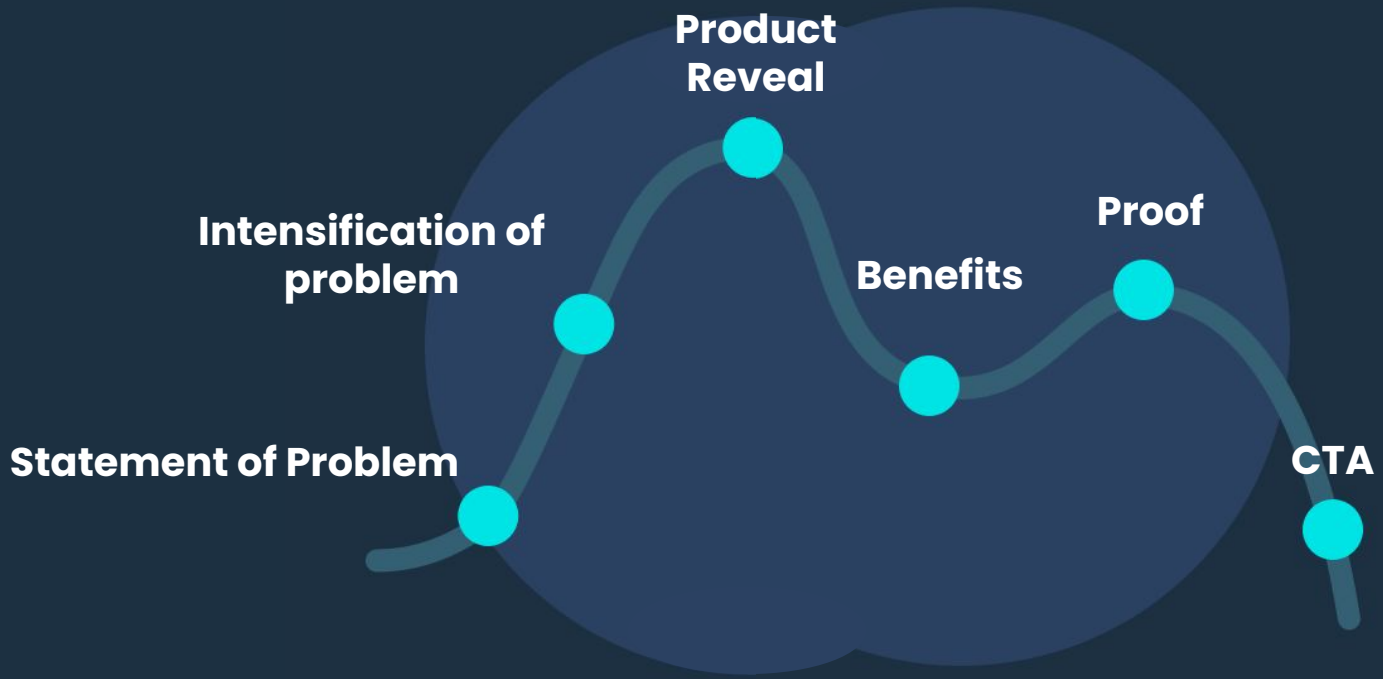
# Customer Journey



# Advertising Story

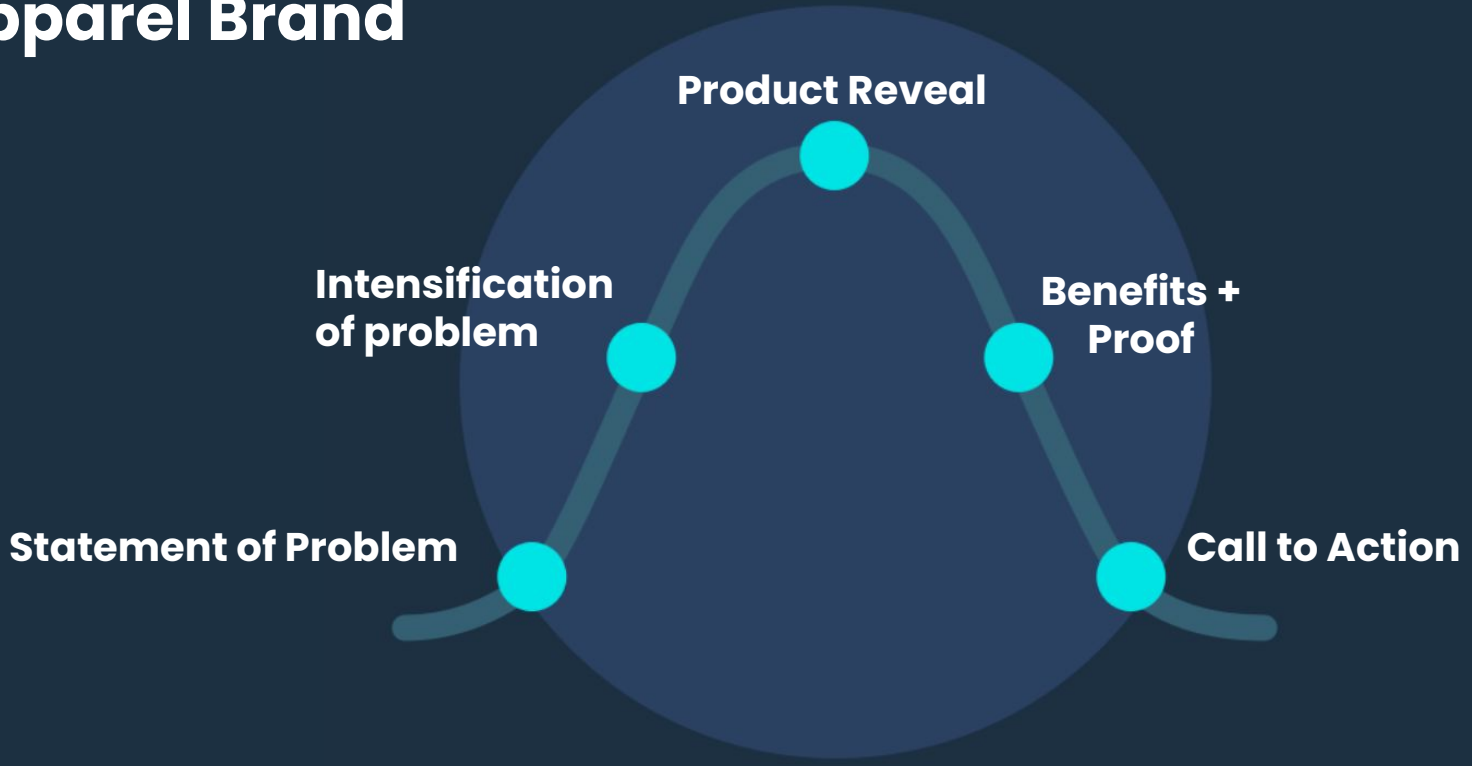
# Emerging Story Arc

# Advertising



# How much story needs to be told?

# Ex 1: Fashion Apparel Brand



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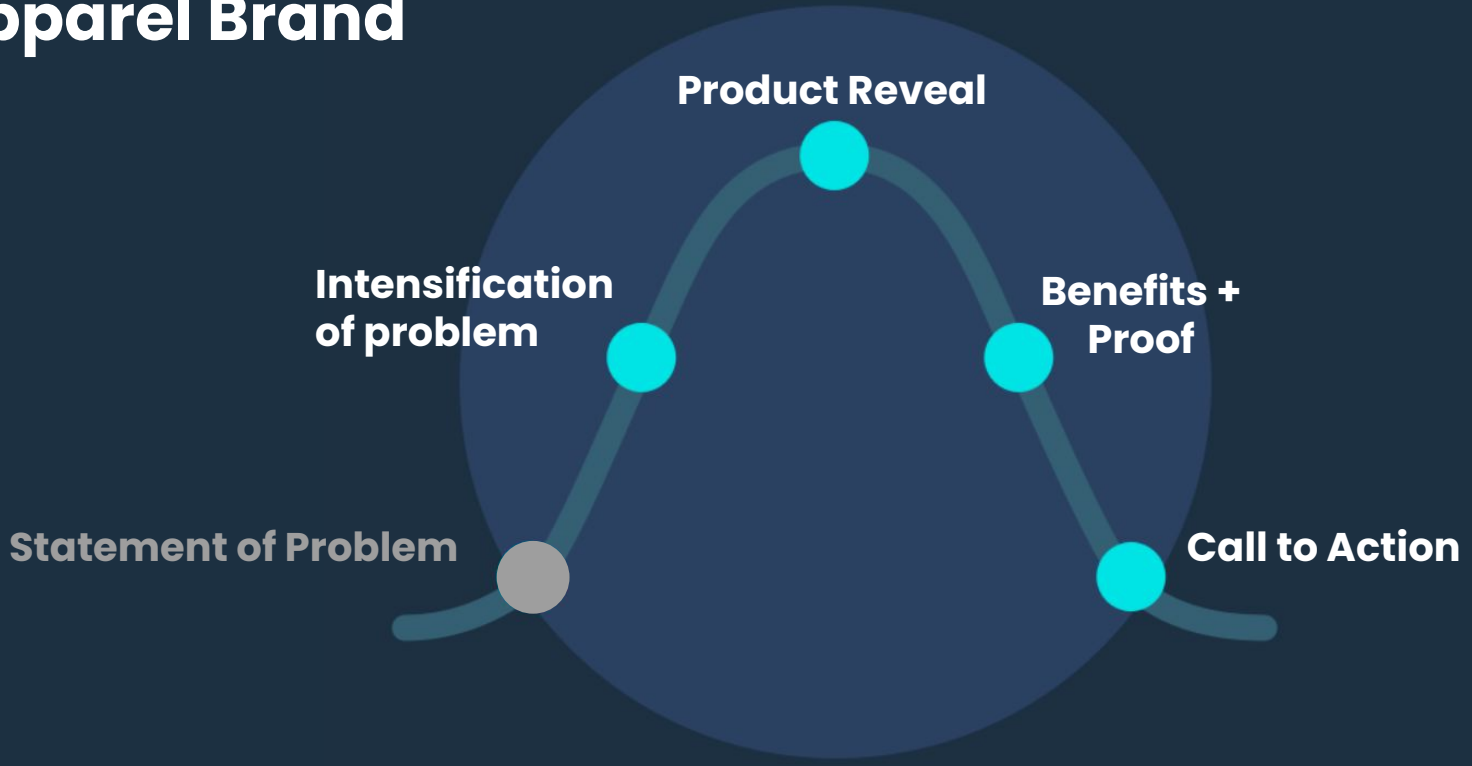

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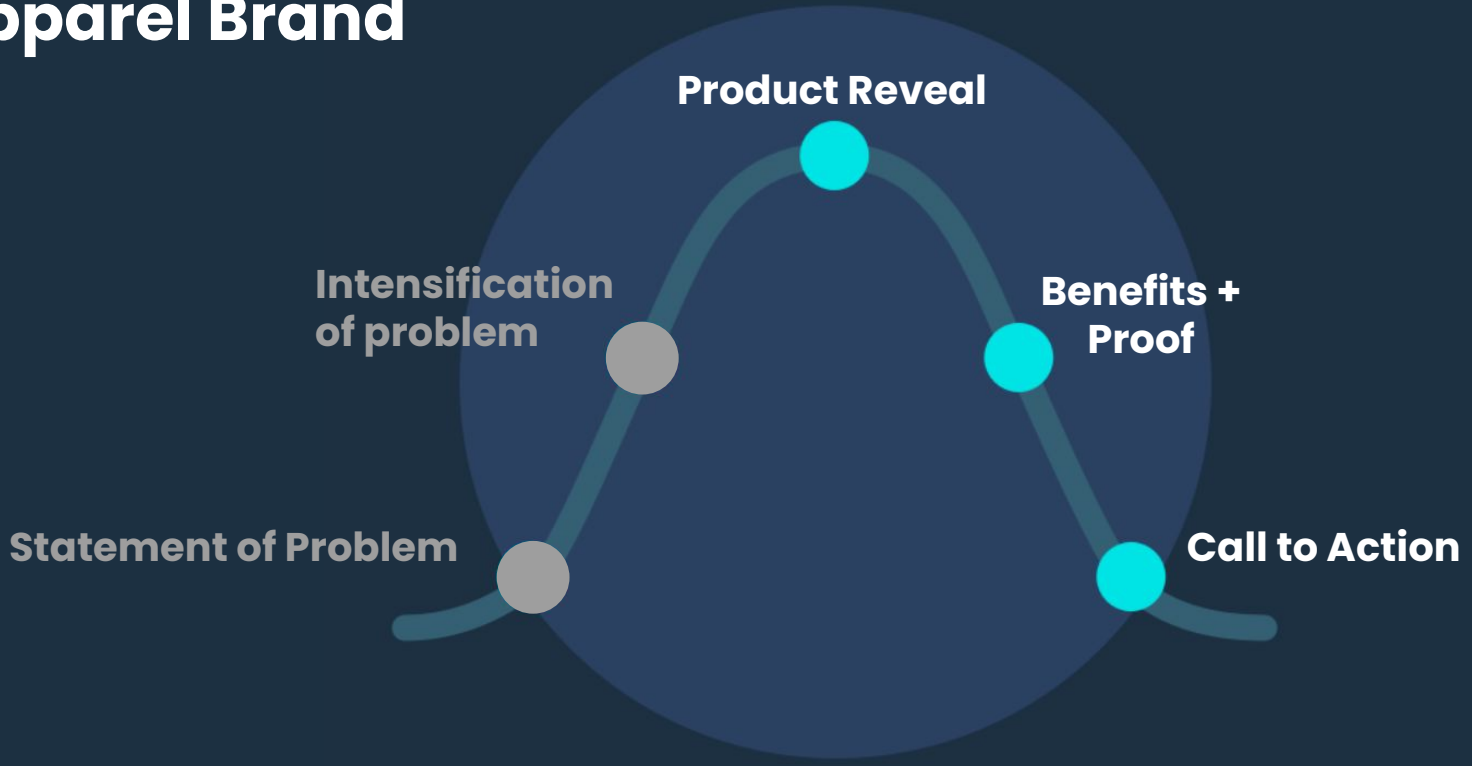

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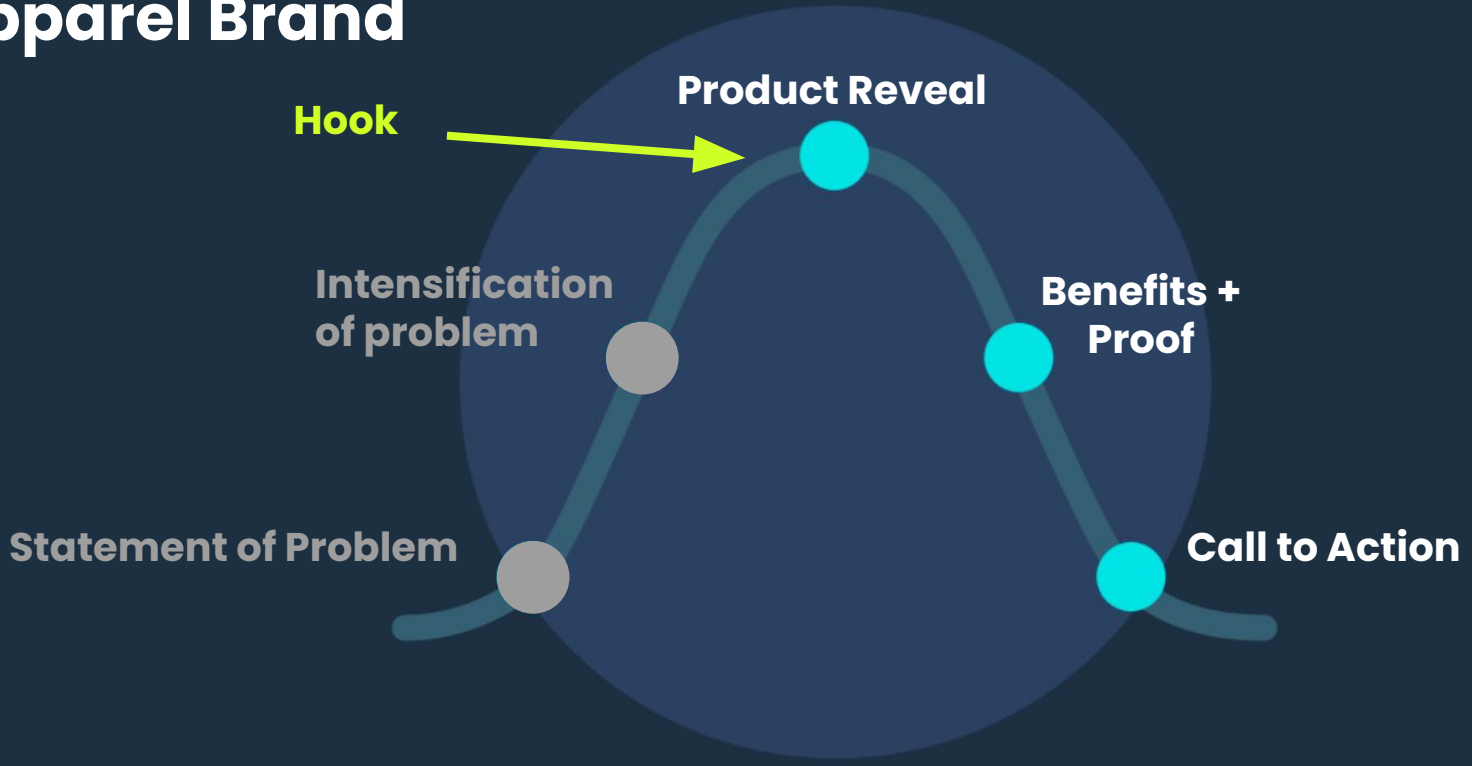
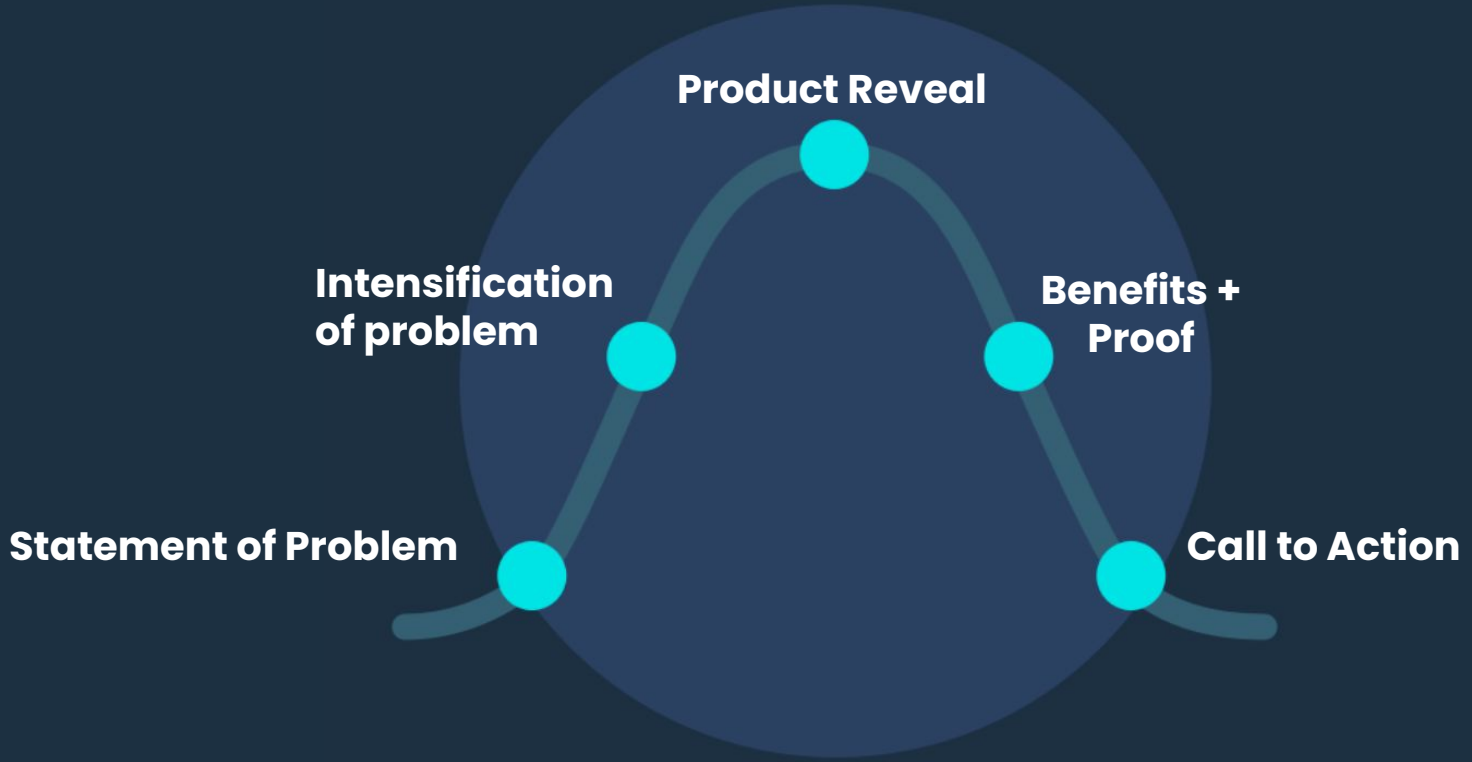


# Ex 2: Haircare Product



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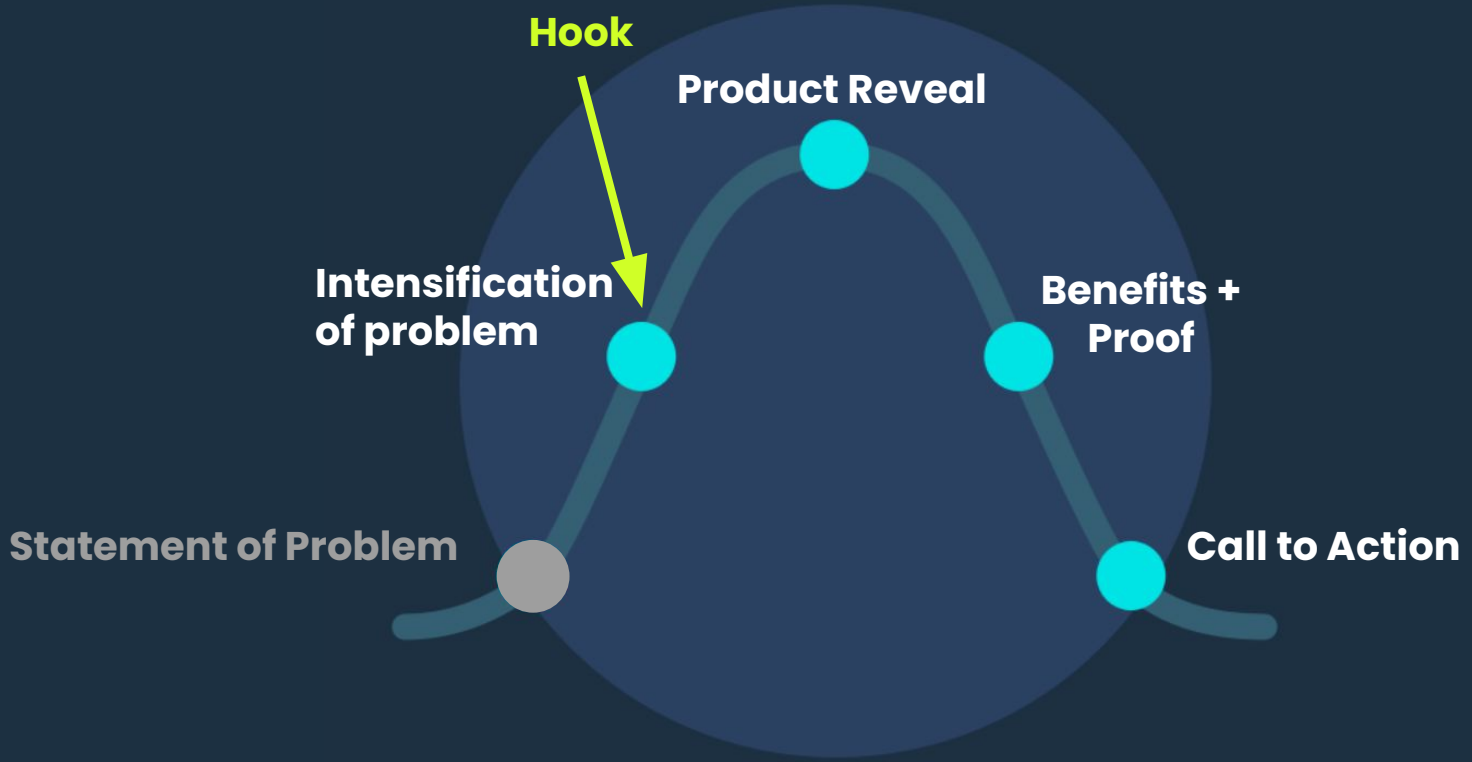
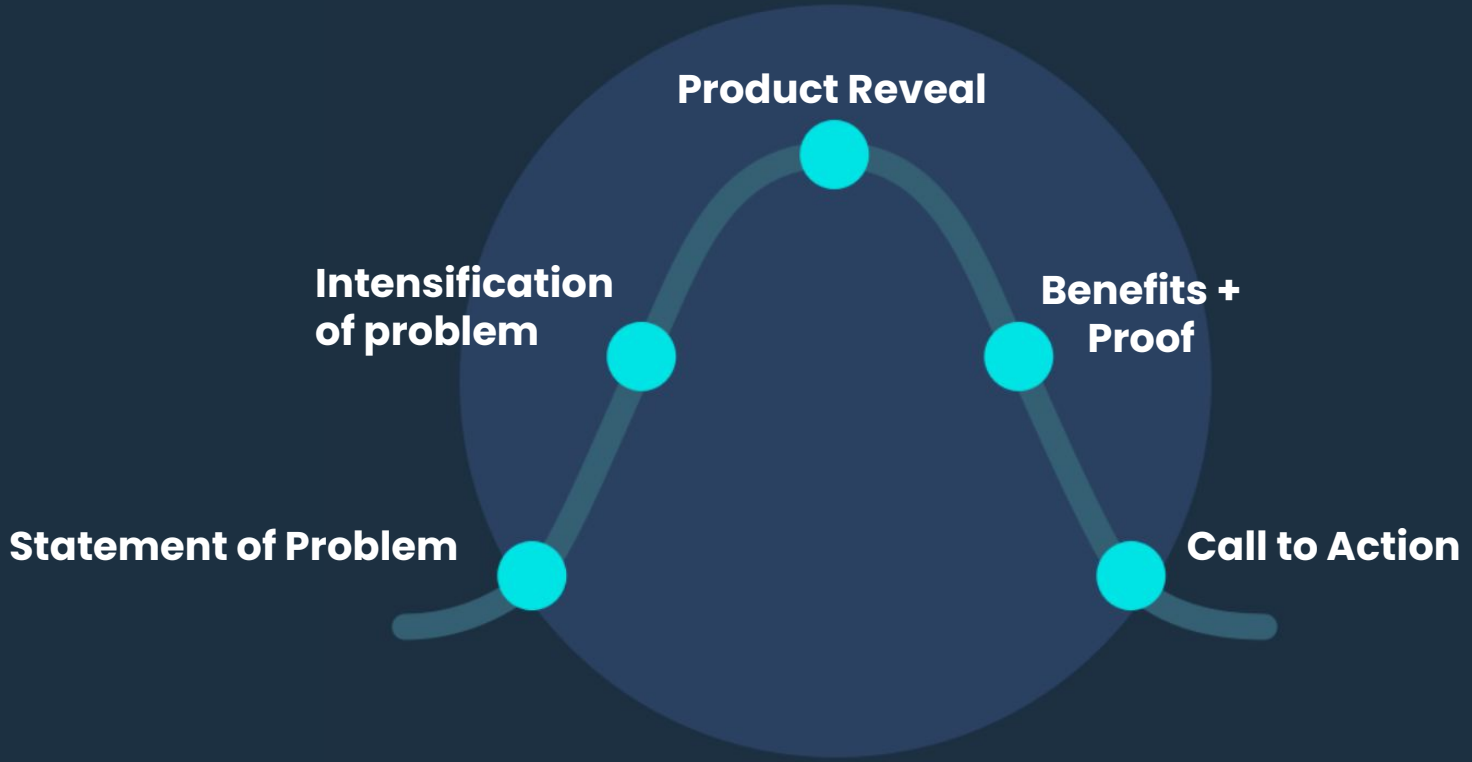


# Ex 3: Lotion in a Bar



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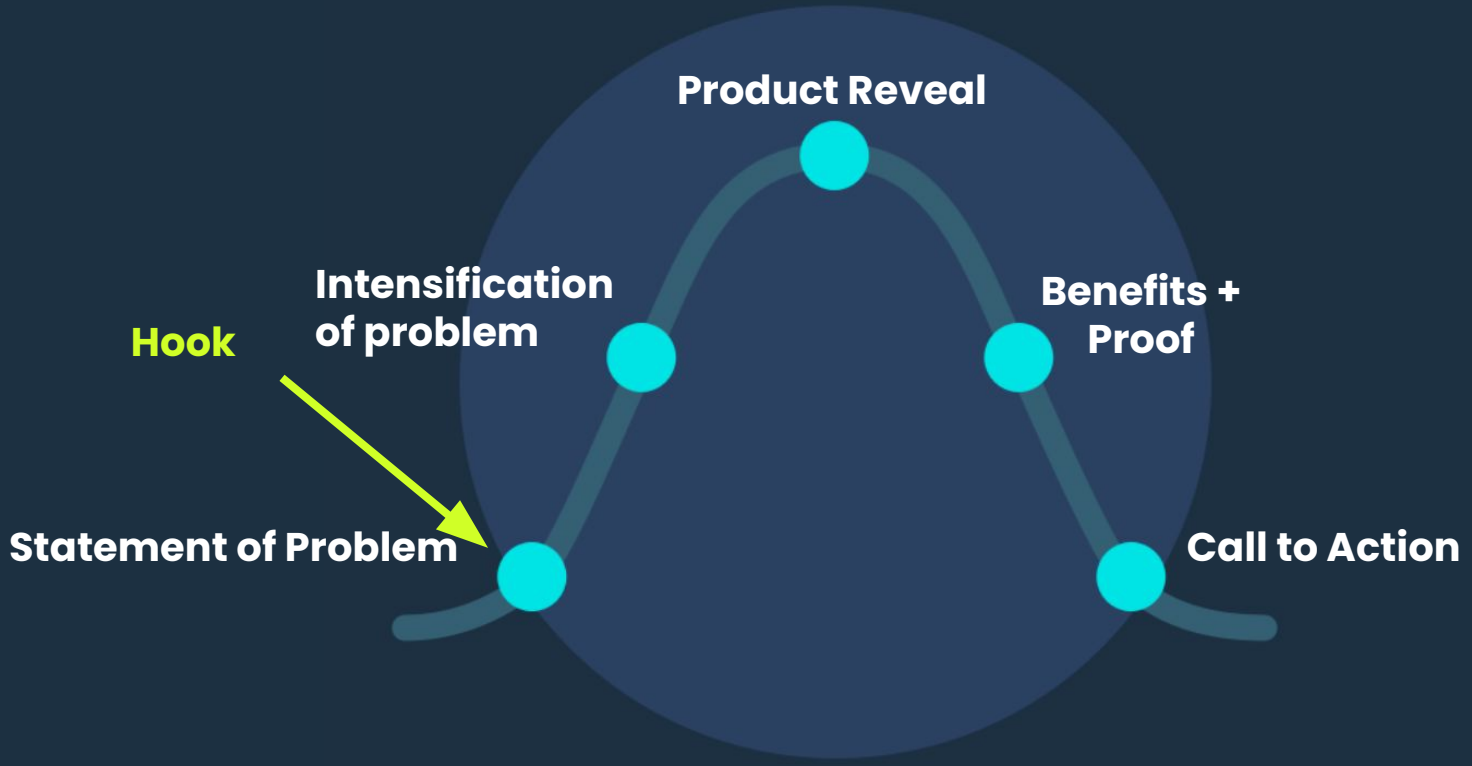
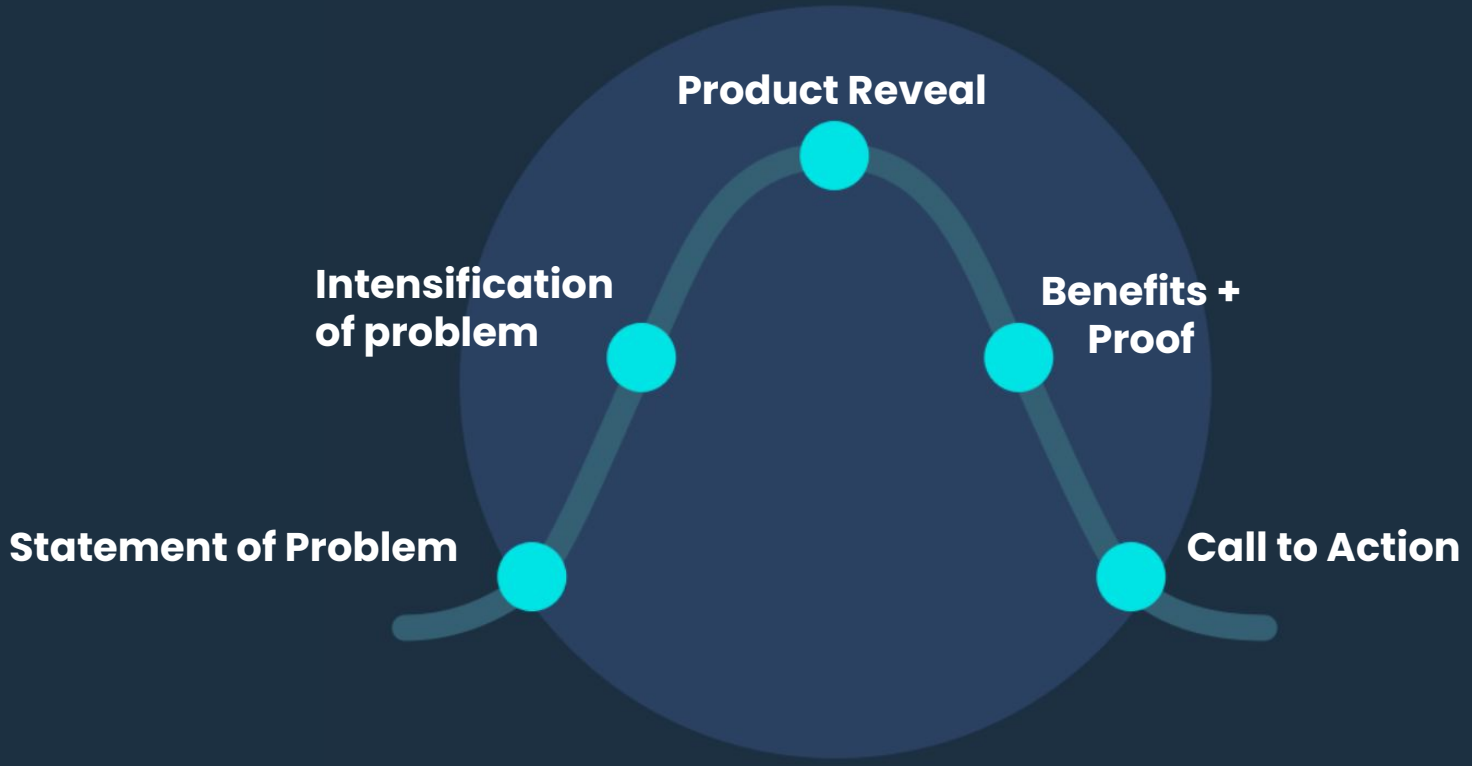


# Ex 4: Remarketing



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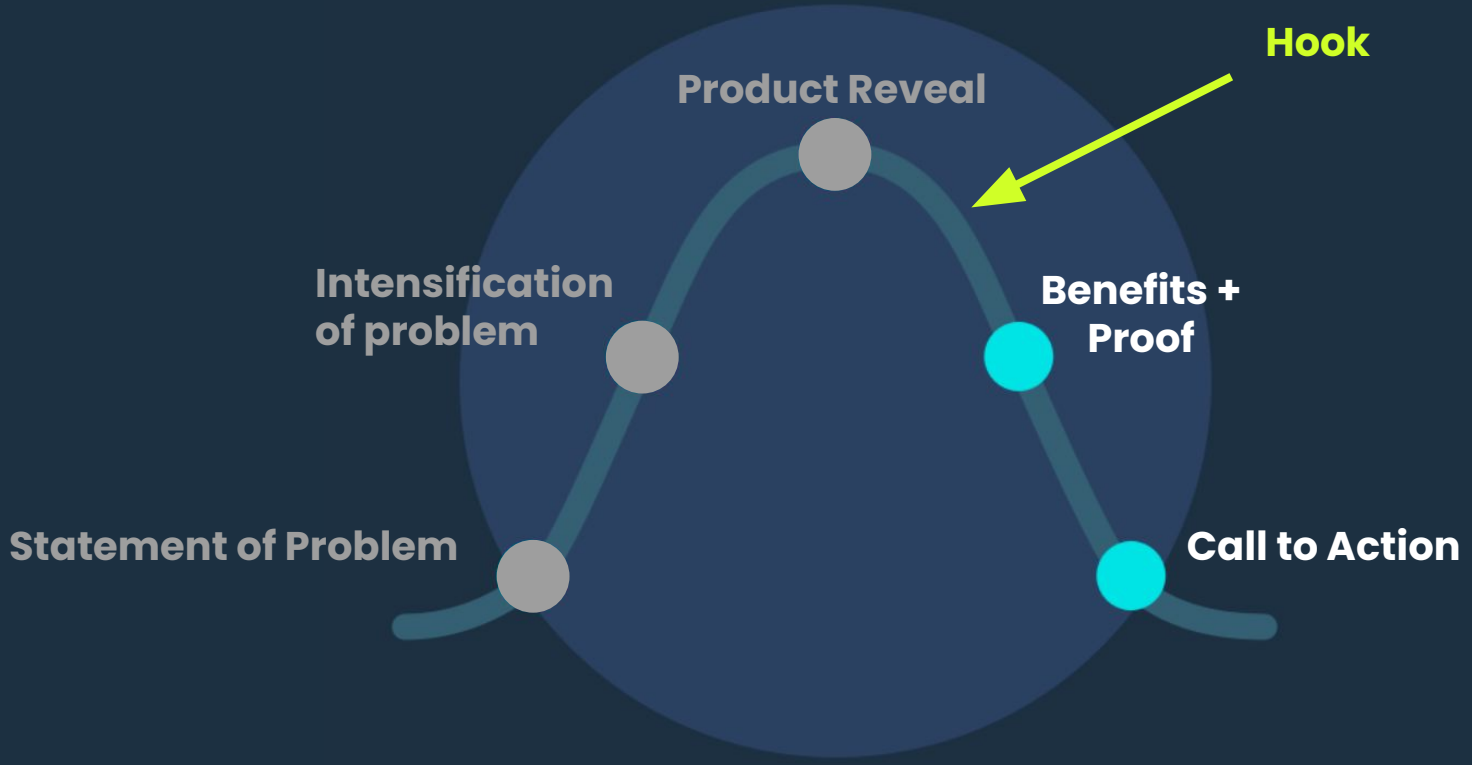


## THREE RULES

1. Don’t retell the parts of the story your audience already knows.

2. Put the most interesting piece of information first.

3. Never make anything other than your customer the protagonist of the story.

# Email

# What We'll Cover

- ✅ Email as a "copy sequence"
- ✅ Parts of emails that need writing
- ✅ How to approach email copy
- ✅ Content, tone & audience
- ✅ Evaluating copy success

## Review ...

*"Your headline has only one job — to stop your prospect and compel him to read the second sentence of your ad.* In exactly the same way, your second sentence has only one job — to force him to read the third sentence of your ad. And the third sentence — and every additional sentence in your ad — has exactly the same job."

- Eugene Schwartz, *Breakthrough Advertising*

## Let's think about email ...

*"Your **subject line** has only one job — to stop your prospect and compel him to **open your email**.* In exactly the same way, your **headline** has only one job — to force him to read the **first** sentence of your **email**. And the **second** sentence — and every additional sentence in your **email** — has exactly the same job."

- **Not** Eugene Schwartz, ***Not*** *Breakthrough Advertising*

# Copywriting for Email

# Copywriting for Email

**Special thanks to our Adjunct Professors!**

**Cassidy Monforte**

**Cara Wood**

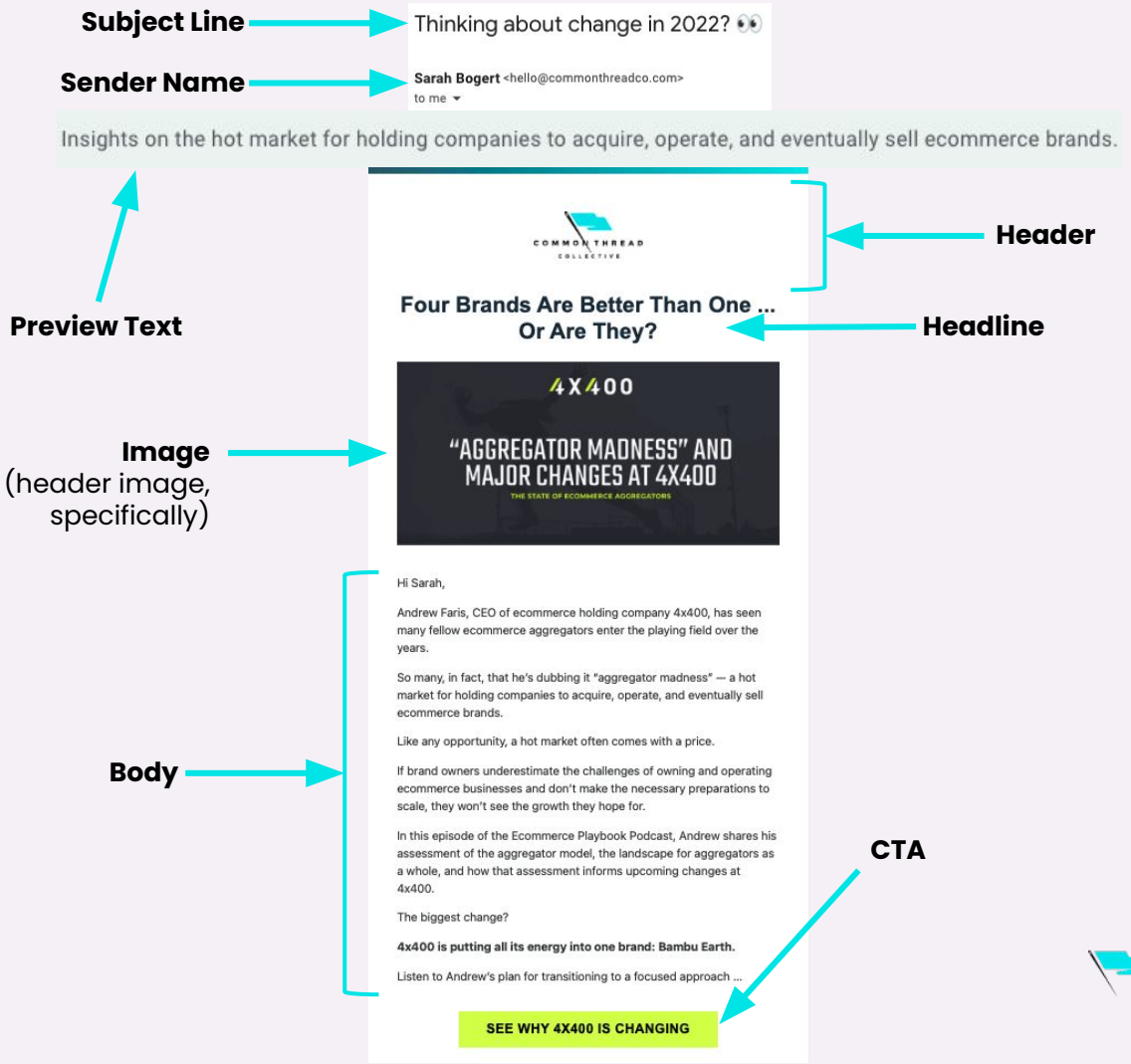
**Diandra Morales**

# Parts of an email

(that need writing)

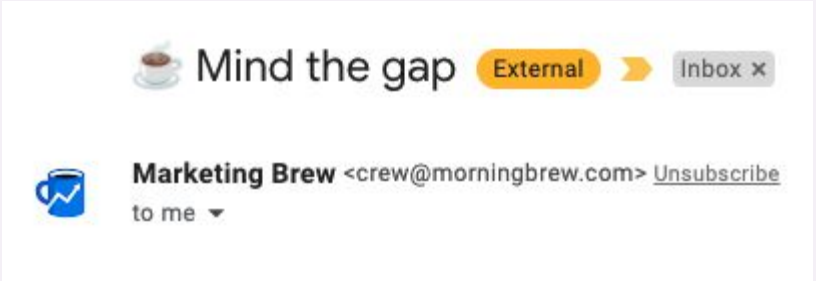
# Email Parts

Email is ultimately a sequence of copy that guides you to a specific action.



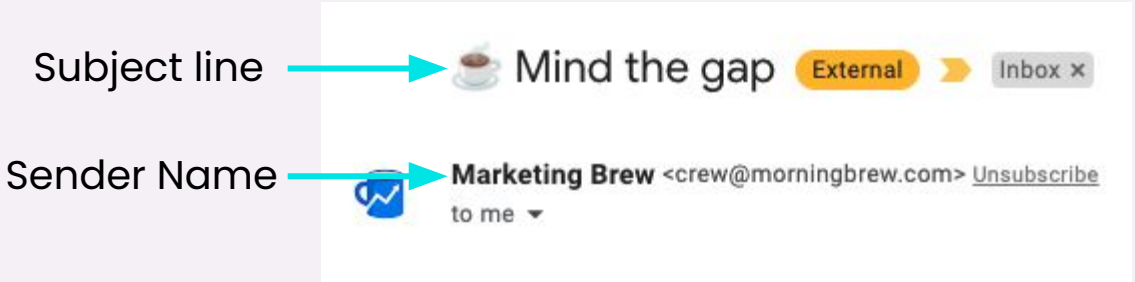
# Subject Line & Sender Name

## An email's first impression



# Subject Line & Sender Name

**An email's first impression**



# Using Sender Name

✅ Connect to your brand & campaign

✅ Consider using the actual name of a sender or person in your organization (i.e. CEO name)

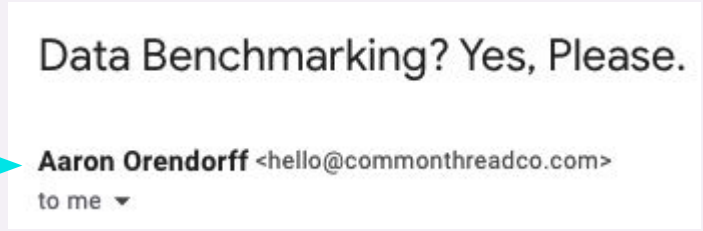
✅ Consider this part a “friendly from” — it makes your email more conversational

# Use friendly froms that match your campaign

INBOUND is a conference hosted by HubSpot, but here they use a specific INBOUND campaign

# Use friendly froms with a person's name

Aaron spoke at a conference, so we used his name in the follow-up email



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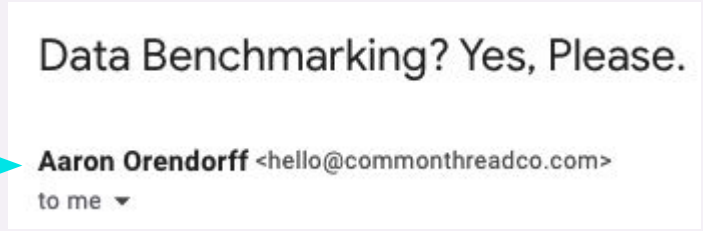


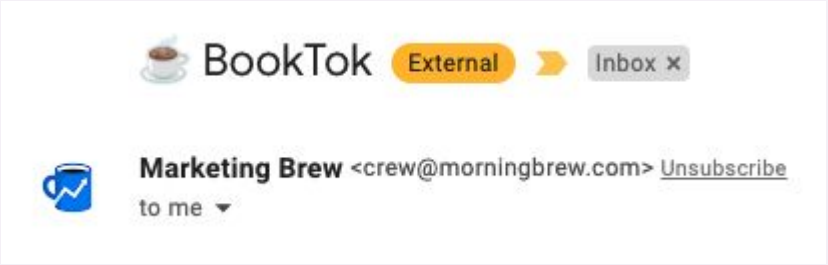

44.1% Open Rate 🔥

**TIP:**

When “friendly froms” match the topic of the subject line, open rates can increase **~30%** (B2B)*

– Jay Schwedelson, *Worldata*

# Using Subject Lines

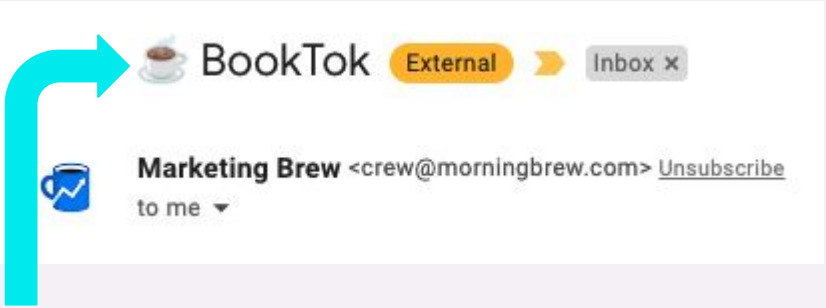



✅ Your chance to convince the recipient to open your message

✅ Remember: Be conversational

✅ Being vague doesn't make you creative

# Using Subject Lines




Morning Brew always uses a coffee cup emoji in every subject line

✅ Your chance to convince the recipient to open your message

✅ Remember: Be conversational

✅ Being vague doesn't make you creative

# Subject Line Tips

✅ Put or allude to the offer or topic in the subject line

✅ Use “you” or “your” – conversational

✅ Mind the length: Test your email to see if the subject line gets cut off in the email client

✅ Experiment with emojis, questions, ellipses, or other aspects to help it stand out

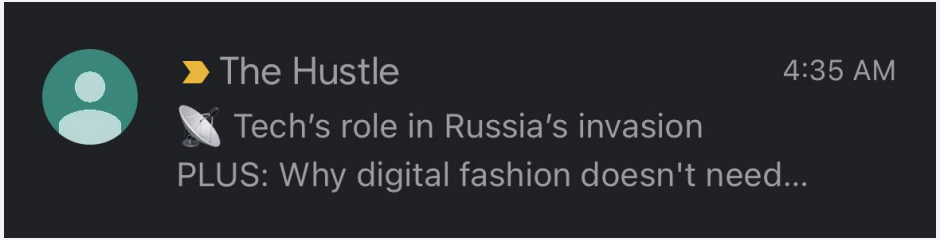
✅ Make it punchy, and always omit needless words

# Preview Text

## Desktop

# Preview Text

## Mobile



# Using Preview Text

✅ Preview text is an additional opportunity to capture interest

✅ Concisely state the content of the email

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte:**

Not all inboxes display this text, so it should support the overall message without being essential.

# Header & Headline

**Keep reading 👀**

COMMON THREAD
COLLECTIVE

## What's Next for Ecommerce?

Hi there,

TIP:

# Not every email has a headline. That’s okay.

YOUR OBJECTIVE:

# If you use a headline, make sure it’s clear and not redundant.

# What's the headline?

# What's the headline?

Header image (branding)

# What's the headline?

Header image (branding)

COMMON THREAD COLLECTIVE

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Header image (branding)

Headline

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Header image (branding)

Headline

# What's the headline?

# Using Headers & Headlines

✅ Use your header & logo to identify your brand

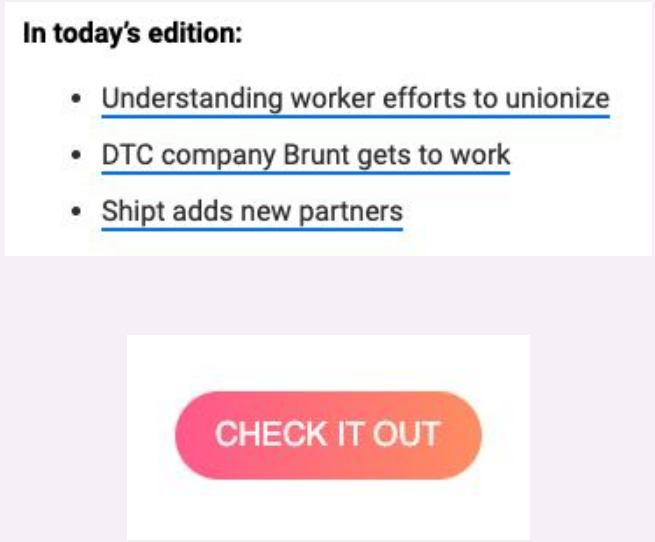
✅ Use the headline to highlight the main feature or topic of your email

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte:**

Headers can sometimes also contain navigation options, rewards program info, etc.

# CTA

**Click that 💩**



# Types of CTAs

**And how to use them**

# CTA

## Short sentence

SPONSOR

**It's a subscription gold rush out there**

Every DTC merchant wants to get the most outta their subscription program to help grow their business. 🚀

And with consumer demand at record highs, it's no surprise that brands are flooding the market with subscription offerings...

But merchants with **unique program incentives**, **frictionless experiences**, and **churn-fighting capabilities** will stand out in a crowded space and win loyal subscribers. 💪

To help brands turn their subscription program into a market leader, Ordergroove created **The Ultimate Guide to Optimizing Your Subscription Program** , a comprehensive guide that's jam-packed with best practices and use cases.

**In the guide, you'll learn how to:**

- Maximize subscriber enrollment and retention
- Drive larger average order values
- Determine if your subscription program is optimized for success

👉 Get the optimization guide right here.

# CTA

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# Sentence CTA

1. **Think headline length: 5ish words**
2. **Think context: Newsletter**
3. **Think positioning: Visible & clear**

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte:**

Avoid too many different calls to action. The core action you're trying to get the user to take should be understandable at a glance.

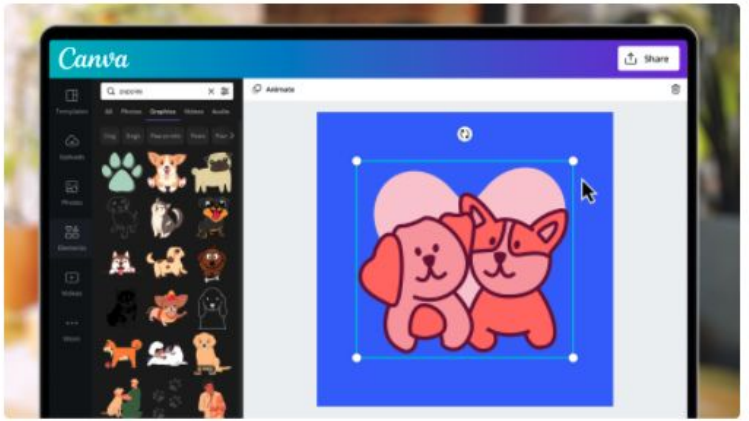
# CTA

**Button**

## How do I enter?

1. Create a puppy inspired design using Canva templates or elements
2. Share your design on Instagram or Twitter and tag **#CanvaDesignChallenge** (we can only view public accounts)
3. We'll showcase our favorite designs to the Canva community

**Design with puppies**



# CTA

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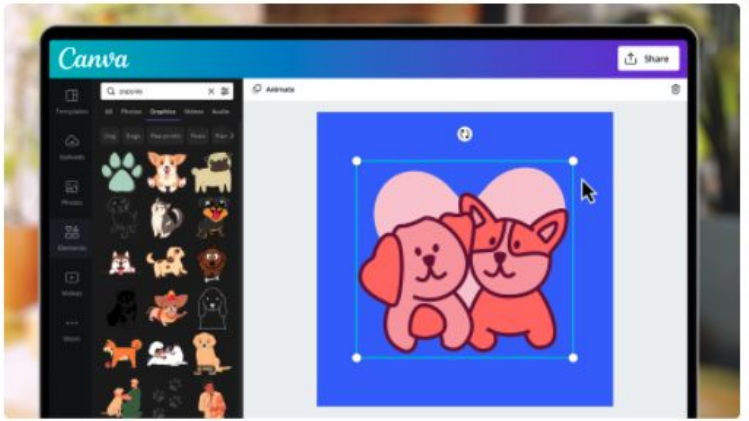


# Button CTA

1. **Think short: 2-3 words**
2. **Think context: Visual**
3. **Think positioning: Centered vs. right/left justified**

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Morales:**

Get creative! Depending on the brand, see what other CTAs you can come up besides just "Shop Now" or "Learn More". Use CTAs that are more engaging like "Take Me There" or "I Want This" that continue telling the story.

# AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

# I WANT TO _____.

AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

# I WANT TO [CTA].

AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

# I WANT TO [CLICK HERE].

AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

# I WANT TO [SHOP NOW].

AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

# I WANT TO [GET CEO-LEVEL ADVICE].

AARON ORENDORFF'S FAVORITE CTA FORMULA

# I WANT TO [STOP SENDING BAD EMAILS].

# Email Body

Hi Sarah,

While iOS 14.5 rocked ecommerce to its core in 2021 (even though, in some respects, it can be considered a gift), there is hope for navigating the rough future.

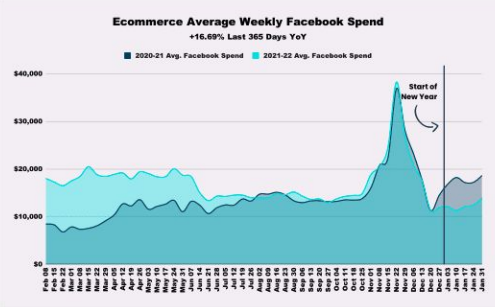
It lies in the data.

As we round out the first month of 2022, we'll cover a handful of metrics affected by iOS 14.5 in trailing 12 month YoY views. Plus, we've calculated a comparison between the three months prior to May – June 2021 (iOS 14.5's release) and the three months after.

All the numbers come from the ~250 stores tracked in Statlas, our ecommerce growth tool.

Let's dive in ...

Facebook spend is up +16.69% in the last 365 days YoY.

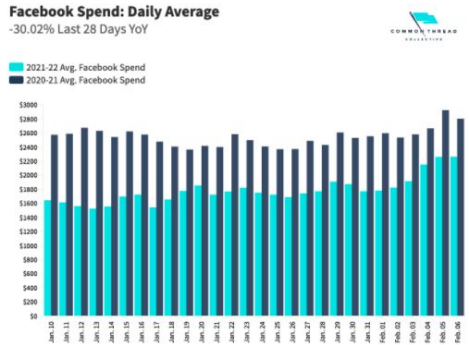



When comparing pre- vs. post-iOS 14.5, however, Facebook spend decreased overall.

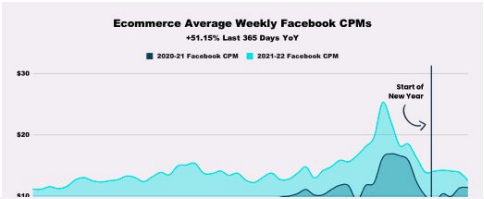
**iOS 14.5 Effect on Weekly Facebook Spend**

- Pre-iOS Spend (Feb. - Apr. 2021): $18,416
- Post-iOS Spend (July - Sept. 2021): $14,175
- Pre vs Post Spend %-change: -23.03%

The downward trend has continued into 2022, as daily average Facebook spend descended -30.02% in the last 28 days YoY.




CPMs have inflated +51.15% in the last 365 days YoY.



# Writing your email body content

# How to Approach Email Copy

**From Prof. Wood**

When you write for email, imagine you're on a store floor talking to an actual customer.

A SIMPLE TIP

# Use “you”

THE SAD TRUTH

# People skim emails.

THE SAD TRUTH

# People skim emails.

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte:**

People spend an average of 8 seconds reading an email (if we're lucky enough that they've opened it in the first place).

THE SOLUTION

# Make it scannable.

# Scannable Emails

✅ The content of every sentence is important.

✅ Write one sentence so it leads to the next; one section so it leads to the other.

✅ The way sentences are structured keeps the eye moving all the way down to your CTA.

✅ Use subheadings to break up the content.

# Parts to Consider

## Greeting

Gather the right data to address the person's first name ...

# Parts to Consider

## Scannable Sections

Use headings or dividers …

---

**History Dose**

Fancy yourself a history buff?

Even if you're not, you'll probably delight in the storytelling on History Dose, a YouTube Channel with a "passion for making cleanly edited history documentaries."

We recently discovered the channel and have been enjoying a lot of its history lessons.

Here are a few of our favorites…

- What a Medieval Duel Really Looked Like — 6 Minutes
- The Mongol Destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire — 13 Minutes
- The Terrifying Collapse of the Plains Indians — 23 Minutes

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**Short Investing Beliefs**

It's from 2019, but the lessons from Morgan Housel's *Short Investing Beliefs* article are as true today as they were a few years ago.

At the very least, these bite-sized lessons will make you rethink your current mindset around investing (and life in general).

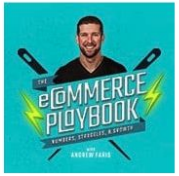
Here they are…

**Expecting crazy > expecting average**, because the important part of "reversion to the mean" is the reversion, not the mean.

# Parts to Consider

## Scannable Sections

Use headings or dividers ...




**Everybody Makes Mistakes — Even Your CEO 👀**

Andrew Faris is taking time to reflect on his experience as former CEO of 4x400, an ecommerce holding company. In the latest episode of the Ecommerce Playbook Podcast, Andrew brings in Common Thread Collective CEO Taylor Holiday to "evaluate" his past performance.

The pair also dive into the three biggest mistakes each of them have made as CEOs.

Find out how Taylor graded Andrew's tenure at 4x400 ...

Learn from Experience

**Back to Business (School)**

Ready to invest in your business, master real-world challenges, and ultimately grow your brand?

FounderU by Clearco is *the* online business school for founders by founders. Over 3 months, FounderU will host 12 educational sessions catering to next-gen consumer brands.

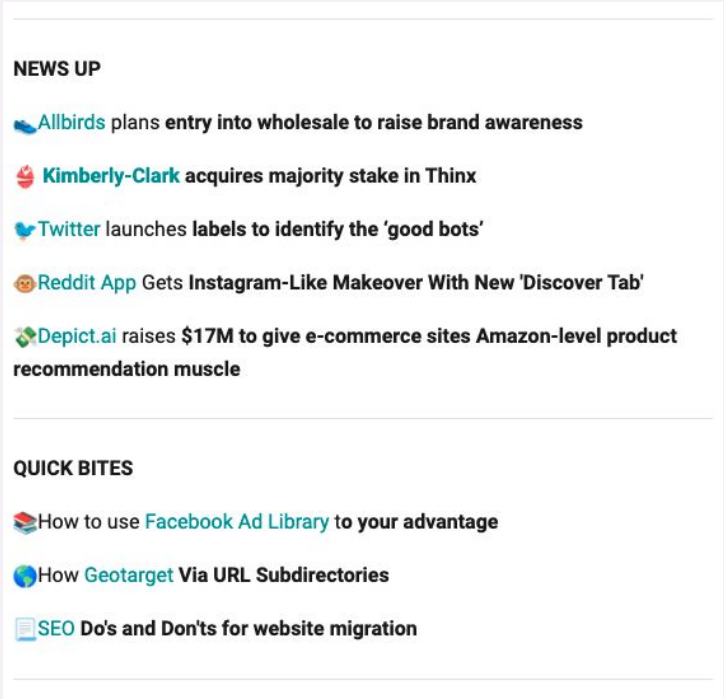
Learn directly from Taylor Holiday and other founders ...

Apply for FounderU

# Parts to Consider

## Scannable Lists

### Use emojis 😍



**NEWS UP**

👟Allbirds plans **entry into wholesale to raise brand awareness**

👙 **Kimberly-Clark acquires majority stake in Thinx**

🐦Twitter launches **labels to identify the 'good bots'**

🤖Reddit App Gets **Instagram-Like Makeover With New 'Discover Tab'**

💸Depict.ai raises **$17M to give e-commerce sites Amazon-level product recommendation muscle**

**QUICK BITES**

📚How to use Facebook Ad Library **to your advantage**

🌎How Geotarget **Via URL Subdirectories**

📃SEO **Do's and Don'ts for website migration**

# Content & Tone

## Who are you talking to?

✅ Ultimately, email is **to a real person**

✅ Give them **valuable content** that's relevant to **what they signed up for**

✅ Always link to relevant content on your site

✅ Tell a story

# Content & Tone

## How do you want to talk to them?

Consider the tone of who you're writing **from**:

✅ Your business generally? Be professional.

✅ A personality at your business? Write like they talk.

✅ A brand? Use the brand voice.

# Using Body Copy

✅ The amount of body copy depends on the type of email:

- Newsletters will have more.
- Mobile: Think “above the fold”

✅ Body copy guides the reader to the CTA

✅ Hierarchy: Highlight the main message or offer first, then everything else

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Morales:**

From the subject line to the final block in your email, tie your copy together for it to flow and take your subscriber (hopefully) all the way to the end of your email.

# Measuring Email Copy Success

IF YOU HAVE A CTA ...

# Did they click on it?

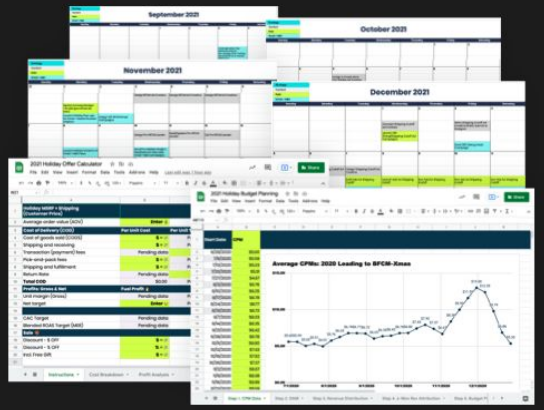
# Our highest clicked email

## (in the past year)*

*that I wrote 😇

COMMON THREAD

### Not a Listicle, An (Actually Useful) Ecommerce Calendar




Hi there,

If you haven't started planning your holiday strategy yet, we're sleigh riding right into your inbox to tell you *now is the time.*

No doubt you've heard plenty of advice about the ecommerce trends shaping this year and the holidays. Everything from buying traffic early to driving success ahead of Black Friday.

But now that it's time to plan, where do you start?

And what do these trends actually mean for ecommerce businesses?

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Inside: Your Customizable Black Friday Plan

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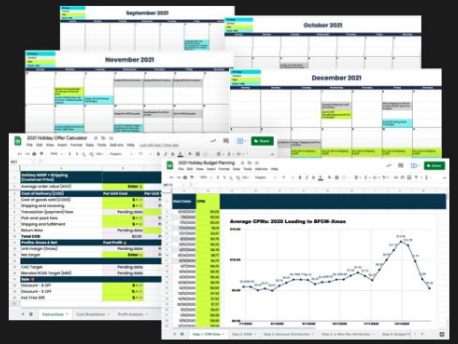


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And what do these trends actually mean for ecommerce businesses?

We're giving you what you *do* need ...

📅 A fillable calendar for *your campaigns*

💰 A budget template focused on *driving profit*

🔢 A holiday offer calculator to create a *compelling sale*

**Ready to reap the rewards of a profitable plan?**

**LEVEL UP YOUR HOLIDAY STRATEGY**

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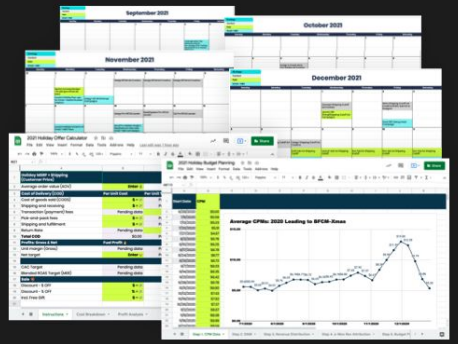


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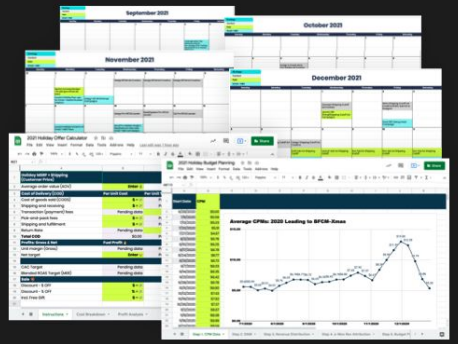


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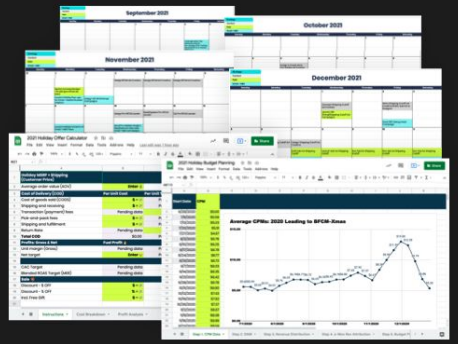


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# A Similar, Less-Good Email

COMMON THREAD

## The Data Benchmarks You Need this Black Friday, Cyber Monday

Hi there,

Not trying to startle you, but there's about one week until Black Friday.

In the midst of planning and strategizing for your holiday offer, you may be noticing some things about your accounts ...

📈CPMs are high (like, really high)

📉Conversion rates are low

📊ROAS appears unpredictable

If you're asking yourself, "Is this normal?!" you're not alone. In fact, the data we analyzed from ~230 ecommerce brands shows these trends across the board.

Each week, we're reporting eight crucial metrics and comparing daily averages for the last four weeks year-over-year (YoY).

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Subject

It's Time ⏱ for Black Friday Data Insights

COMMON THREAD

# The Data Benchmarks You Need this Black Friday, Cyber Monday

## THE DTC METRICS THAT MATTER MOST

Ecommerce data & nothing but ecommerce data

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Our latest article update (but don't click that) shows the following changes ...

- Facebook Spend: -7.07%
- Facebook CPM: +40.22%
- Facebook Revenue: -27.50%
- Facebook Conversion Rate: -14.74%
- Facebook ROAS: -22.39%
- Marketing Efficiency Rating: -1.08%
- Google CPC: +19.05%
- Google ROAS: -2.57%

Note: This latest article update only contains *half* the available data, and this is the last time we'll share it with you. Sign up for our Ecommerce Data Newsletter to continue to get weekly data drops *plus the rest of the data.*

Be prepared for Black Friday, Cyber Monday success with the insights you need ...

**BENCHMARK YOUR DATA FOR BFCM**

THE QUESTION:

# If the topics are similar, why did they perform differently?

# Why This Email Performed Worse

**A few possibilities …**

✅ Timing

- Email 1 was sent in August, way before BFCM
- Email 2 was sent in November, in the thick of it

✅ Did not use “you” or “your” in the subject line (not as conversational)

✅ Long headline with more text in the header image

# This email had multiple CTAs. Email 1 did not.

**BENCHMARK YOUR DATA FOR BFCM**

**Behind the Scenes: DTC Metrics**

In this bonus (dare we say, "emergency") episode of the Ecommerce Playbook Podcast, Andrew is joined by CTC's VP of Marketing, Aaron Orendorff, and CEO, Taylor Holiday.

Go behind-the-scenes and watch as they share, benchmark, and examine the DTC metrics that matter most ...

See the Analytics in Action

**Your Business Isn't Broken ...**

... But part of it might be.

The key to growing your business *always* comes from diagnosing your exact problems through data.

Uncovering these problems (and unearthing opportunities) is possible by stacking each part of your data into a cohesive masterpiece — like "cake."

Learn how to combine your ecommerce data into three "layers" of revenue ...

Unlock Your Next Data Opportunity

**Do You Know Your LTV + MER?**

Statlas unites all your business' data across platforms.

Even better, it gives you actionable benchmarks to track growth against similar businesses.

Get early access to the insights you need to grow your business with a free Statlas report ...

Schedule My One-On-One

Your email pal at CTC,

Sarah Bogert

# Engaging Different Types of Readers

# Who Reads An Email

## 🤩 Highly motivated

✅ Clicks through without reading the whole thing

✅ Needs a clear & concise message so they don't miss anything

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte**

# Who Reads An Email

## 🤔 Intrigued but not convinced

✅ Likely to read the content more closely

✅ Use body copy to address concerns & reduce friction

✅ Build your case for clicking that CTA

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte**

# Who Reads An Email

## 🙄 Not motivated

✅ Opens but exits without reading the whole thing

✅ OR, doesn't open in the first place

✅ Focus on capturing attention

✅ Use subject lines, headlines, etc. to keep them interested

🔥 **Hot Take from Prof. Monforte**

# Who Reads An Email

🤩 **Highly motivated**

🤔 **Intrigued but not convinced**

🙄 **Not motivated**

⬆️ Each email part is important to engage all three

# Questions?

# Thank You!