

12 words we'll see more in 2012

By [Tiffany Markman](#)

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Wait. That's a bit of a fib. Sorry. Every year, [my Biz Trends contribution](#) is a wish list of stuff I'd like to see happen in marketing, communication or writing. I'm often right. But this year I *want* to be right.



So this article is actually about '10 phrases we'll see more in 2012 and 8 phrases I hope we'll see less because they're absolutely awful.'

THE GOOD

1. Why
2. Because

People like reasons. It makes them feel safe. Using explanation in writing also helps to focus the writer's mind on the benefits, not the features, of what they're selling. And writing with 'because' at the forefront translates into better lead conversion, says the research. So I predict that in 2012 more communication will acknowledge - and answer - the audience's unasked questions (usually *Why?* Or *Why should I?*).

3. You/Your

Readers are becoming heartily sick of hearing how fabulous a company or product is, how long it's been around and how many fans or Likes it has. They're not interested in its qualities or traits. They want to know *what's ultimately in it for the consumer*.

The words "we" and "us" are offputting. So I predict that more writers will favour the words "you" and "your" in their marketing, and structure messages around ways in which the company or brand can assist the audience, not the other way round.

4. Authentic
5. Genuine
6. Real

In 2012 we'll see more references to products, services and companies being or offering things that are 'authentic'. We'll also see more transparent communication coming from real people, not from company spin doctors or strategic comms gurus.

Why? For two reasons:

1. The consumer public is growing increasingly skeptical of cheap imitations. Of rubbish that doesn't last. We're also getting syrupy about the past (à la retro swing, [old-style root beer](#), artisan bread, real parquet and vintage purses).
2. The marketplace tends to bustle more happily when the person who profits most from the apples is also the person chatting to customers about the apples. I predict fewer 'pro/'corporate' social media accounts and more humans.

7. Collaboration
8. Joint ventures
9. Shared projects

In my perfect world, where authentic and direct communication are possible, there'll be more reference to 'collaboration', 'joint ventures', 'shared projects', etc, than to 'synergies' and 'overlaps'. There'll be more real teamwork, less vague partnerships.

As an aside, I despise the word "synergy". If Synergy were a person he'd be that shady, oily guy you know (the one who once tried to sell you pyramid scheme time-share or washing powder) who regularly refers you to his mates because 'there are superb synergies between you guys' - and subtly requests 'a piece of the fat'.

10. SEO

The fact that so many people remain baffled by this acronym baffles me. (I mentioned this in [last year's Trends piece](#), predicting a hard marketing year for those unwilling to explore [SEO](#). Well, it was a hard marketing year. So I got that bit right.)

We live, work, play, socialise, information-gather and shop online, and an optimised website is everything - even if the client is selling her brand or herself. In 2012, more people, even those outside of the digital arena, will be talking about SEO - and as a result, more explanations of SEO will be necessary (I draw my clients little pictures).

THE BAD & THE UGLY

1. Tweetering

2. Twitting

3. Twittering

I am going to sound like a snobby cow when I say this (and who am I to shirk my responsibilities*?), but there are loads of people aboard the Twitter bandwagon who should have stayed on Facebook and MySpace, where it's... um... safer.

These are the folk who call it 'tweetering', 'twitting' or 'twittering', and who describe their lunch, post one-word 'replies' without hashtags - so you don't know what they're talking about - and unfollow you if you don't immediately follow back.

Now Twitter may look like a democracy, where every voice is equal. But it isn't. By and large, it's an intellectual dictatorship spearheaded by digital illuminati (of whom I'm nowhere near cutting-edge enough to be one). I'm hoping the lingo comes right.

4. DVD's (and any other plural forms that are created using the apostrophe)

5. Plural's

6. TV's

7. BMW's

Just so we're clear, apostrophes indicate that words have been shortened or contracted (cannot -> can't) or that something belongs to someone (Tiffany's article). *They aren't used to make plurals*. You can't do this: Plural's. TV's. BMW's.

In my training courses I hammer this home loudly, repeatedly and unapologetically. Luckily, because more people are guilty of this sin than I can possibly hope to reach through training, [so do many others - like The Oatmeal](#). If there's a God (and I think there is, for those who care), 2012 will yield fewer misplaced apostrophes.

8. Dear Beloved

Argh. This, and similar spambotty salutations, makes my toes itch. Do you know how hard it is to reach your toes when you're sitting at your desk, wearing shoes? God, The Oatmeal, anyone who can: Please make 2012 the year of less foreign-bride spam, fewer pleas for assistance from the secret daughters of rich African dictators and more real lottery emails - because I can't possibly win the UK lotto again.

*Some of my [early Biz columns](#) began the trend of Tiffany Hate Mail. I get love letters, but I also get vitriole and digital spit. So let's kick off 2012 with a piece that will earn me swearwords from some. Start, as it's said, as you mean to go on.

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Tiffany Markman (www.tiffanymarkman.co.za) is a highly opinionated freelance copywriter, copy editor and writing trainer who has worked for over 200 local and global clients over the last 10 years. Although her editorial mind is offended by its/it's confusion, her creative mind sometimes likes to start sentences with 'And' - if they'll flow better. Luckily, Tiffany is able to use one side of her brain at a time. She works on website and SEO copy, ads, scripts, speeches, concepts, campaigns, marketing material and other things. Reach Tiffany on tiffany@tiffanymarkman.co.za, follow [@tiffanymarkman](#) on Twitter and sign up for her newsletter.

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