

# PUNCH LINES

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**WORD PLAY PUNS  
AND  
SLOGAN IDEAS**

For you to create your advertising slogans, taglines,  
headlines, straplines, captions and copywriting

# **Punch Lines**

## **Word Play Puns and Slogan Ideas for you to create your advertising slogans, taglines, headlines, straplines, captions and copywriting**

Lynne Suzanne & Dee Tracy

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## Dedication

We dedicate this book to Trevor, a wonderful husband and father for his patience, love and support throughout our exciting and challenging venture.

## Introduction

*Punch Lines* was first published to provide a wealth of puns, slogans and caption ideas for compers, people who enter consumer competitions, to help them win cars, holidays and exciting prizes, especially when tasked with, 'I want to win a brand-new luxury car because...'

Campaigns are organised by promoters of consumer products and often include a prize competition, which helps to advertise specific products and gives entrants a chance to win tempting prizes.

Prize competitions are good for both the promoter and the consumer. When a promoter takes out a newspaper or magazine advertisement it will only appear for the life of that publication. By contrast, running a national prize competition allows the promotion to run for a longer period, with follow-up local and national press coverage when winners are announced, along with photographs of delighted shoppers receiving their prizes. Nowadays, you can find hundreds of prize

competitions to enter on the Internet, and this is still a powerful tool used by promoters and advertising agencies to promote brand products to shoppers.

It was whilst being interviewed on the Richard & Judy Show, to celebrate the launch of my *Win Your Fortune in Prizes* book, that Judy Finnegan suggested I should move into the copywriting and advertising industry. Judy's suggestion sowed the seed of an idea, which resulted in *Punch Lines*.

My co-author Dee and I researched a multitude of newspaper headlines to learn how these were constructed, and which ones made us want to read more of the story. We also studied slogans and taglines, also referred to as straplines, for many of the brand products on the market.

We realised that our own system for brainstorming and writing catchy slogan ideas for competitions could also be used to construct headlines, captions, advertising slogans and taglines, especially making use of word play and puns.

Some of the best advertisements, in our opinion, are the most memorable ones. These could be a story-telling TV advert with a great punch line, a catchy newspaper headline that makes you want to read more or a great advertising strapline.

A couple of our favourites are the Buster the Dog story featured in a John Lewis TV advert and the squeaky elephant story in the Anchor butter TV advert. Memorable slogans are Toyota's, "The car in front is a Toyota", and Heinz's "Beanz Meanz Heinz".

Although competition entry forms have disappeared from stores, in favour of magazine and online competitions, with slogan contests few and far between, the advertising industry is huge. Depending on the business, slogans and straplines range from serious to fun and memorable.

The English language has many words that sound the same but have different meanings and these give you a plethora of puns and word play.

Puns often raise a smile and are sometimes used in jokes. Here's one that always makes us smile.

A bride walks down the aisle and notices three things, the altar, a hymn board and her husband to be. Her thoughts? Aisle altar hymn.

Captions to accompany pictures can also raise a smile. I entered a caption contest which showed a golfer hitting a ball across a green. My winning caption? My doctor said I should have more greens!

Puns can make use of double entendre for more subtle meanings. It all depends on the product or theme and the target audience. Here is an example for a gardening theme.

Hoe, sow good, offering tree-mendous value at every branch

Or for a sweet shop, how about,

The only ones to chews

Whilst out and about, we noticed many humorous shop signs. Here are a few we've seen on our travels and give you great ideas on how you can create your own one-liners.

The cod-father

Million-hairs

Life of pie

Back to the Fuchsia

Wok this way

Even house names can be inspirational, such as these gems.

Dunromin

Costa packet

Wits End

You'll find *Punch Lines* is packed full of puns, word play and ideas for your slogan writing, captions, copywriting, headlines and advertising slogans.

We share with you many ways in which you can play with words, for example, adaptation. This is where you adapt food items, currency, destinations, movie or song titles, proverbs and sayings, as in,

*Thyme for a change*

Euro halfway to paradise

A GOA-geous place to visit

From here to maternity

Glowing in the wind

Eat, shrink and be merry

Once fried, never forgotten

You can also find words from which you can make another word by adding or removing a letter, as in these examples,

You changed us from flab to fab

Packed full of shelf-confidence

You will also notice throughout the hundreds of puns and word play ideas we have brainstormed, across 40 topics in this book, from animals to wines and spirits, that we love to experiment with words, sometimes changing the spelling to create a new word, as in,

Easy with their expert-ease

We even help you to make up a new word from two words, for example,

Apple-tising

Sizzl-icious

Scattered throughout *Punch Lines* are many ideas to help you create your own headlines, straplines or slogans, including the use of alliteration, where each word starts with the same letter, for example,

Brimming with bargain buys

Temporarily tasty

Peach products at plum prices

Another interesting way to play with words is to use inversion, where you take a phrase and then repeat it in reverse, for example,

Simply brilliant, brilliantly simple

Cleansing power, powerful cleanser

Whether you have a driving ambition to win a car and are motor-vated to win some of the fabulous prizes in the many magazine and Internet contests, or you are using puns and word play for copywriting, headlines or slogans, *Punch Lines* will provide you with a wealth of inspirational ideas.

A taste of what's to come.

At the start of each of the 40 topics in *Punch Lines*, we give you some ideas to help you create your own little gems.

Here are some ideas on the topic of fish and angling.

*It's of-fish-ial – now at our plaice*

Reel in lines like these,

*Our perfect plaice for salmon-enchanted evenings*

*We fell for product, hook, line and sinker*

*Discover an oppor-tuna-ty at our plaice*

*Golden oppor-tuna-ty*

Once you've written down your ideas, come back to these with fresh ideas, to see if you can improve them or adapt further.

We played with the phrase, Golden oppor-tuna-ity, to see if we could change the theme from fish to music, as the word golden suited a music contest we were devising a slogan for. We adapted this to, Golden opera-tune-ity, and waltzed off with a state-of-the-art music entertainment system.

Do experiment with your puns and word play, slogan ideas and headlines. You only have a couple of seconds to attract your reader. If you gain their interest they read on, otherwise you've lost them.

Words are the tools of your trade, especially words that make you feel or think. Try to use descriptive words that invoke feelings and emotions. Some of the best

headlines tell you the gist of the story in a few captivating words. Memorable advertisements make you feel something.

See the product – *stunningly beautiful*

Hear the product – whisper quiet

Feel the product – velvety smooth

Smell the product – *delicious aroma*

Taste the product – *tickles the taste buds*

Use the product – *soft and sensual*

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. If I say Cinderella, what images does that conjure up for you? Do you see a girl in rags slaving away at household chores, or do you see a beautiful belle of the ball dancing with her prince? Try and paint a picture with your words to tell a story.

When out and about it pays to be observant. Notice eye-catching words as you travel on aircraft, trains, coaches, taxis, even escalators. Read and study advertisements and posters. Observe and learn what makes an eye-catching headline.

Dictionaries and a thesaurus are useful tools for finding apt words and gaining inspiration for your headlines and slogans. As an example, look up the word motor and you uncover such gems as,

*Transport, run-around, tandem, vehicle, engine, car, automobile, jalopy, drive, ride, cruise*

Selecting each word in turn, look these up to give you alternatives, for example, transport gives you,

*Flow, movement, moving, traffic, carry, shipping, vehicle, conveyor, passage, haulage*

*Whilst flow gives you,*

*Movement, current, stream, drift, tide, run pour flood, gush, spring, well up*

For a motoring or weekend break theme, you could start with a phrase such as,

*I'd be transported to...*

For hair care you could try, and this one won me a weekend break in a hair care competition,

*Transported to (location) without flying anywhere*

Most word processing packages have an in-built thesaurus, and by keying in a word, such as opportunity, you can view a list of synonyms, a word that means exactly or nearly the same as another word, such as, chance, occasion, opening, break, prospect.

We use an online thesaurus with both synonyms and antonyms, a word contrasting or opposite in meaning to another, for example, hello, goodbye. How about,

Say hello to the good-buys

Should you favour rhyming slogans, a rhyming dictionary will provide a wealth of words, both commonly used and more unusual alternatives.

We are sure you'll find *Punch Lines* will give you a wealth of word play and inspirational ideas.

Lynne Suzanne & Dee Tracy

## **Play on Words**

Words are the tools of your trade. Use them wisely and they'll reap their own rewards. You may like to start by brainstorming the product or theme, listing as many words as you can think of. For example: a motoring theme may include the words, clutch, gear, tyres, boot, trunk.

Highlight those words with double meanings, as they lend themselves to word play, as in:

Clutch, gear, tyres.

String some of these words to make phrases, for example, a car and fashion theme, could have the caption,

*Check out our latest 'gear'*

Or how about,

*A 'clutch' of benefits*

A driving instructor's slogan could be,

*Are you 'motor-vated' to drive?*

*Here are a couple of ideas for fashion with a motoring theme:*

*Dress in the right gear*

*Our product has a clutch of benefits*

Some phrases can be used as standalone captions, headlines or slogans, and often the shorter ones are most memorable.

A famous Heinz baked beans advertising slogan, *Heinz Meanz Beanz*, simply used three words to include the brand name, the product and clever use of the letter Z.

It's a good idea to leave your ideas and phrases for a while and come back to them with fresh eyes. You may be able to make improvements such as deleting any unnecessary words or substitute mundane words for more apt words, for example,

*Top gear attracts a stylish clutch of benefits*

*Top gear with a stylish clutch of benefits to boot.*

## **Inspirational Ideas**

In this section, we give you hundreds of puns and word play ideas across 40 topics from Animals to Wines and Spirits. Each topic is preceded by brainstorming tips, a selection of apt words and various slogan styles, to give you inspiration for your own puns, captions, slogans, straplines, headlines and copywriting.

## ***Animals and Pets***

Pack a powerful punch with word play or alliterative phrases. Start by gaining inspiration for with a list of apt words for example, animals bear, giraffe, lion, pack, reserve.

Look out for those with double meanings that lend themselves to word play, such as,

Lion, pack, reserve, monster

*No point lion to you*

*Keep a pack in reserve*

*Monster size pack*

Experiment with words. For a new product with an animal theme, how about,

*These little gems are what gir-affter*

Should your theme be for soft drinks, you could add a splash of word play with,

*It's juice what gir-affter*

### **Inspirational Ideas:**

A paw-sitive result

A round of a-paws

Alpaca my suitcase

A-mouse-ing ourselves

All intents and porpoises

Animal wasp-ital

Animals go in chew by chew

Arriving by snail mail

As quiet as a mouse

Bark-ing up the wrong tree

Bear with a sore head

Beaver-ing around

Beetle-ing about

Bone of contention

Breeds contentment

Buzzing like a bee

Cat-a-lite television

Cat-ified with

Causing panda-monium

(The rest of the book contains more tips and hints plus around 100 puns and word play headline and slogan ideas in each of the 40 topics from animals and pets to wines and spirits.)

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