homedepot.com Patio Collection Updates

- It's more than just selling sofas, lounge chairs and side tables. Outdoor living is about selling relaxation
- The patio pieces offer the customer a vehicle for creating their own outdoor sanctuary, or place away from it all
- The "BEFORE" ecommerce marketing descriptions provide the necessary material for each PIP, but they lack a voice
- The "AFTER" product descriptions give voice to that human desire to slow down and take a break. Product descriptions have a "moment of relaxation" lifestyle message in the backdrop of each description





While the marketing copy presents the necessary information, it lacks "feeling," or tone in the description. For example, "each panel is individually hand woven to perfection by skilled weavers with years of experience" offers a snippet of information behind the construction, yet it doesn't explain what that means to the customer. How exactly does skilled weaving benefit the end user?



The use of the word "your" in the intro line puts the customer back into the formula, so it doesn't feel as cold and calculated as selling the set without acknowledging the customer within the formula. The word "your" lets the customer imagine what this set would look like in their backyard – and who they may invite to their next dinner party.

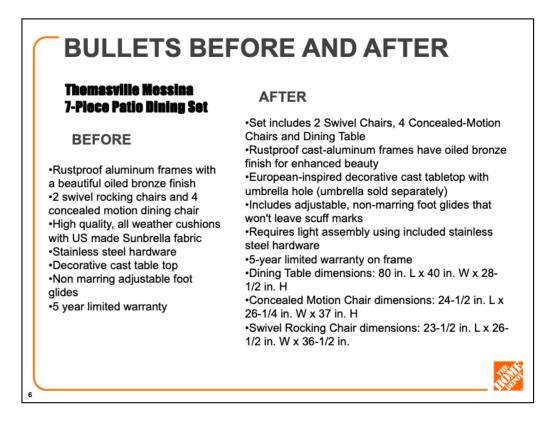


This copy does a better job of using descriptive terms, like "romantic European inspired," "rich oil bronzed finish," and "intricately designed seat backs," but again it is still talking *at* the customer, not to someone specific. It isn't until the last line that the copy finally invites the customer into the conversation.



The rewrite puts the customer back into the decision-making formula from the very first line. It also capitalizes on the strong descriptors from the original version.

The BEFORE description mentions "high-quality U.S. Sunbrella Canvas Paprika fabric," but doesn't explain what benefit the "high-quality" fabric offers. The rewrite uses the phrase "weather-resistant Sunbrella covering," to explain the cushions can be used outdoors since the cushions are weather resistant.



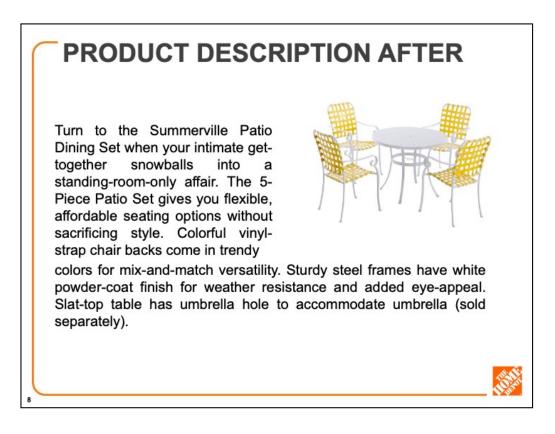
Bullets commentary:

AFTER bullets:

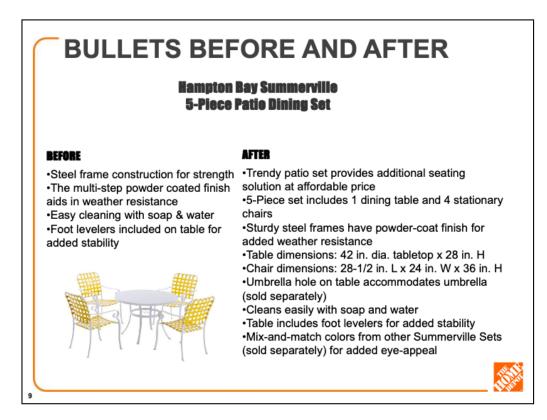
- Moved up collection content (2nd bullet in BEFORE) to first bullet in AFTER to prioritize content from big picture to details
- 2. Third bullet in AFTER adds info about umbrella hole and cross-sell with matching umbrella
- 3. Added specifics about 5-year warranty on frame (specifies what part is under warranty)
- 4. AFTER bullets spell out dimensions for each item in collection to make it easier on the customer. Otherwise, customer has to filter through specifications in box below copy. There is no consistency on handling specifications in collections with more than 2 items. E.g., sometimes vendor only imports "assembled depth, width and height" dimensions for just the largest item (like a table) rather than for each individual piece. Extra research upfront minimizes the required effort placed on the customer to interpret the dimensions listed in the specification box on the web page.



The last line, "The Summerville Collection allows for mix and match versatility without sacrificing style," is actually the theme for this patio set, thus should be used as the introduction, not a summary statement at the end of the copy.



The AFTER description uses "mix and match versatility without sacrificing style," idea from original copy, but rewords it to "gives you flexible, affordable seating options without sacrificing style." The words flexible and affordable now place this entry-level set on a good, better, best continuum. The copy also leverages the trendy color vinyl seats for mixing-and-matching opportunity (a.k.a. encourages add-on purchases with other colorful chairs).



AFTER Bullets:

1st bullet provides a benefit-driven solution for customer Spells out dimensions—making it easier on customer Adds cross-sell info for pairing with umbrella Suggestive selling in last bullet for color upgrades



The intro line presents an interesting idea, but doesn't complete the thought for the customer. It doesn't answer 'why aren't reservations needed?'

The sentence could be interpreted as:

1) Reservations are no longer required since owning the dining set gives you the privilege to eat at the table anytime, or ...

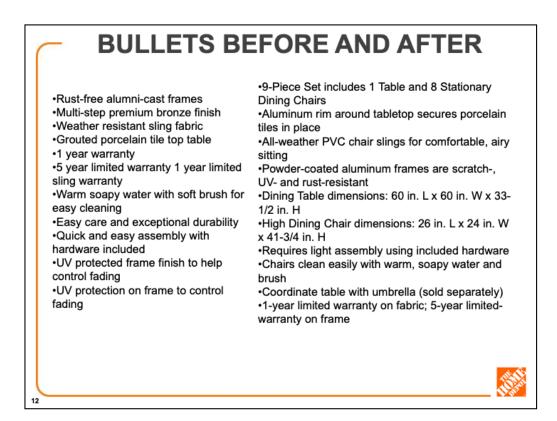
2) The table offers a worry-free construction, so you won't have to worry (have reservations) about using it outdoors

The rewrite emphasizes this second meaning since it's a benefit-driven idea



The rewrite uses the concept from the BEFORE version, yet adds the word "reliable" to explain why reservations won't be needed after purchasing this patio set. The 2nd line furthers this concept by introducing weather-resistant sling chairs to complete the worry-free furniture theme.

The BEFORE copy describes the "grouted porcelain tile top table with a captured rim." Phrase "captured rim" may be confusing to the customer, so the rewrite states, "grouted porcelain-tile tabletop is encased within an aluminum frame to secure tiles in place," to clarify the benefit of the captured rim.



AFTER bullets prioritize the info from the big picture (contents included in set) down to details in last bullet (warranty info)



Although this is only a two-sentence product description, the intro line uses 45 words to describe the set. It's a mouthful for the reader—and makes it difficult to digest the message.

PRODUCT DESCRIPTION AFTER

Add a splash of sophistication to your backyard soiree with the help of the Miramar II Patio Dining Collection. The distinguished 7-Piece Set has castaluminum frames with aged-bronze finish and lush, overstuffed cushions to create a refined dining area for family



and friends. Set includes 1 table, 4 Dining Chairs and 2 Swivel Rocker Chairs. The grandiose 84 in. L x 42 in. W table features umbrella hole that accommodates matching umbrella (sold separately). Set ships in 3 separate boxes.

AFTER description uses a simpler introduction, making it easier to read. Descriptions like "backyard soiree," "sophistication" and "grandiose" demonstrate the higher-end cost associated with this higher-end castaluminum patio set. Compared with the entry-level vinyl collection from slide 8, this item is a "best" on good, better, best product positioning, so the copy should reflect that.

Project Recap

- 11/08/12 Project initiation date. Received unedited copy for 358 total OMSIDs containing patio sets, single items and accessories
- 12/02/12 Initial web launch of 2013 patio items using vendor-fed marketing copy
- 12/17/12 Project completion date. 358 OMSIDs are rewritten, uploaded in STEP, and currently online



Take-Away

- Product copy does more than list facts. When done correctly, it creates a feeling (or tone) for the customer to identify with
- Marketing copy should make it easier for a customer to justify a purchase. The more questions addressed up front, the more likely a purchase will be made
- Conversely, if the customer has to do their own research to find missing info, the more frustrated they'll become
- Above results in abandoned shopping cart, or forces them to search for answers elsewhere (e.g. competitor website)
- If positioned correctly, the copy also manages customer expectations. Overpromising on an entry-level item has same result as under-describing a higher-end product _____

