

Effective Web Copy

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Writing for the web consists of specific language and layout for each site. Begin with a clear understanding of your objectives. Use language that is clear and concise and you will achieve your goals.

Whether researching or purchasing, most web browsers are looking first for information. They search keywords and phrases that will allow them to find the web sites most relevant to their purpose. The key to effective web copy lies in merging the goals and objectives of the web site with that of the web visitor. There are four primary objectives for a web site.

- Educate
- Entertain
- Inform
- Persuade

What's Your Point?

If you're selling merchandise, your job is to persuade visitors to your site to purchase products and services from you. Giving them the information they need in the first 250 words allows them to quickly and easily make a decision. You must grab their attention, stress key points and lead them to your objective.

Your home page is the only opportunity you'll have to make a favorable first impression. This is where you capture or lose the visitor's interest and attention. Everything about your home page should directly and actively give the visitor information that will guide him to choose your product or service.

Build a relationship with web visitors

Copy writers know they must learn about their target audience in order to write effectively. Writing for the web is more like the "hometown store" where you know everyone and everyone knows you. Include information about yourself and your business giving visitors the information they need to build a relationship with you. Let them feel they know you and your business. Incorporate testimonials into your web copy.

Stress benefits

Each web page must be targeted to its own keywords and phrases. Each web page must stand on its own with links to supporting and explanatory pages. Choose your key points carefully and repeat these keywords and phrases throughout your web copy to lead your visitors to that final purchase. Capture their interest by stressing the benefits of your product or service.

Always begin with a "unique selling proposition". This two or three sentence statement gives your visitors a reason to continue browsing your site. It defines who you are and gives the purpose of your site. The unique selling proposition is your key to capturing the interest of the web visitor. Write web copy from the *visitor's point of view*, stressing benefits, providing information and drawing them in.

Be brief and keep it simple

Web visitors want as much information as possible in the least amount of time. Your web copy should be clear and concise, containing no unnecessary words. Adjectives and adverbs are rarely used. Visitors want to know how to achieve their goal. Top level pages should be short with an inviting headline that captures the visitor, welcomes them, and invites them to continue browsing your site.

Good web copy contains

- Nouns and verbs
- Direct action words leading toward a mutual goal
- Plenty of white space
- Segments of information with headers
- Pictures and graphic images that enhance and support the web copy
- Subtle formatting
- Fresh, frequently updated content
- Correct grammar and spelling
- Concrete words to describe your product or service
- Clear, precise directions leading the visitor toward a final purchase or more information

We have the knowledge and expertise to help you reach your Web site goals through effective copy writing. For more information call or email.

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Marianne Kelly has helped many businesses define and project their identity through various forms of marketing and promotion, including copy writing for print media, the web, and broadcast commercials. She is also an independent journalist and has had several articles receive award consideration by New England Press Association (NEPA).

Patricia Simmons is a former teacher of Mathematics and Computers. She started her entrepreneurial career as the owner of Computer Basics in Orford NH. Currently, as the manager of Web Wise Concepts, LLC, she specializes in custom Website design and has helps small businesses obtain the online image they need.