

Who and how:

Effective writing for your website

An 128% increase in readability can be achieved by utilising effective web writing rules, according to renowned web writing coach Jakob Nielsen (<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/9710a.html>), when compared to sites utilizing basic or clichéd marketing language.

Web content and design

Web-design supports your content, not carries it. This is why one of the first questions a website consultant asks is;

Who will be writing the material for your site?

Covering the vitals is essential. It is making these vitals interesting while still favouring search engines that is challenging. This is something akin to brickwork done by a first-time builder; ineffective construction coupled with a shallow understanding of how it joins together will produce a shaky structure.

More than just an in-depth discussion on how and why a business operates, site content needs to both confirm your readers' hunch they are in the right place and compel them to action, such as picking up the phone or emailing you.

Who should be writing your content?

You want copy that works hard marketing your business.

While you may be the only one who knows your business so well, the writing process itself is not to be taken lightly. Content writing can be time consuming. The art of communicating effectively in few words is often more difficult then saying it in many.

You may wish to consider a professional copywriter, who will benefit you by providing;

- Structured use of identified keywords. Communicate your message while making your content SEO friendly. Ask your developer for

recommendations on this effective tool, and ensure your writer is well informed. Alternatively Word 4 Word can organise this for you.

- Creating the right impression with the appropriate language. It is not always about 'flair'. In fact most effective writing avoids flowery imagery in favour of short snappy descriptors designed to strengthen the readers hunch they are in the right place quickly. See below for a short explanation on the **seven second rule**.
- Timely solutions. Delays affect your production schedule, potentially inflating the budget allocated to your web project, and may even postpone the launch of new content. When time is a priority always engage a trusted or recommended content writer.
- Reduction of your workload. Writing, editing and proofing can be frustrating. Contracting-out frees you up to do what you do best; running your business.
- Captivating copy on your homepage. Grab the attention of new customers, and convert these into enquiries and contacts.

Those who have tackled a few web marketing projects understand the hurdles of online copywriting, and even selecting the right person can be challenging. Doing so however will ensure the best outcomes from your investment.

Aren't writers expensive?

Many fear writers may be costly. A design associate of mine often hears something similar to, "Writing text is simple and I don't need to pay someone else to do something I can do myself".

He will ask them if they have the experience and understand the time investment; if so then sure, otherwise you may be constructing a shaky wall to your home on the web.

Return on investment is more desirable than getting the cheapest job – business 101. Many areas of online marketing are very competitive. Here it is the effectiveness of your message that will determine if you succeed. Poorly written

content full of corny clichés is unlikely to encourage many to invest their time into contacting you further.

Another important factor to consider is missed opportunities. If there is a need to extend deadlines on submissions how many missed customer enquiries could this result in? How much revenue?

When you engage a writer or proofreader aim for the one most likely to deliver what you need, rather than the cheapest quote. A one off investment taken out over the life of your site is minimal, but the returns will continue to build. Ask your web designer for recommendations; they are likely to have worked with a few before.

Your writer and you!

Your input is needed beyond simply hiring a writer. Few would leave the bricks to design their home. Word 4 Word will sit down with you to discuss your plans and vision. A writer worth his salt has a knack for researching industries outside their direct experience. After all, that IS their industry. Here is a few pointers on developing this relationship;

- Provide all the information you can, as this will be the very material your website content will be made of. Treat the person writing for you as if they knew nothing– tell them even the basic things!
- Providing draft text is a good way to add personality to your site, and may draw attention to key points your writer missed.
- Remember the first draft is a working draft – so work it! Provide some constructive criticism, and ask about anything you are not 100% sure of. It may take some serious revisioning to polish out inconsistencies, wrong assumptions or other flaws, but all you need to do is point them in the right direction.

Word for Word & the 7 second rule

Seven seconds is how long you have to communicate to your visitors they have found a site worthy of a read.

Word 4 Word provides professional writing services capable of handling your online writing needs.

People behave differently when reading online as compared to off a physical page. They will scan your content, their eyes attracted to links, numerals and their own internally generated set of keywords. With their hand on their mouse, a single 'back' click is never far away.

With these few seconds Word for Word ensures;

- your page conveys the fundamental purpose of its existence; to communicate to those who want to know about your business. Content should be easy to read, understand and **concise**. Most content should be 250-400 words or risk being deemed as too much effort to read.
- your website content is polished. Badly written, spelt or phrased content can quickly turn away an interested visitor. Let us help here, polishing your content without you agonising over it.
- you are communicating in a clear consistent voice appropriate for the market you have identified.

Need more convincing? Contact Jason for a specific idea of how Word 4 Word can help with what you have in mind.

Word 4 Word

Copywriting and communications

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