

Website Writing – 10 Tips

Research has shown that most website readers scan web pages rather than reading them word for word. Therefore, when writing a website, it is essential to hook your reader as soon as they land on the page, and once you have hooked them, you need to keep them reading. Here are a few tips to bear in mind when writing websites:

- 1) Draw the reader in by using an opening line, or strap line that sums up what the company or website is about, then write in an inverted pyramid style i.e. presenting the most important information first, in short form, and expanding on it later. Use direct language i.e. a 'me to you' format and use the active voice rather than the passive e.g. 'we sell cars', not, 'cars are sold by us'.
- 2) Always bear ease of navigation in mind. This involves the use of hyperlinks to enable the reader to link to other pages of the website for further information, and easily return to the original page, if necessary.
- 3) Use of keywords - these are the words that internet surfers enter into search engines. You should use appropriate keywords for your website, at an appropriate density. About 5 keywords per page are sufficient, and about 3 to 4% density for each keyword is ideal. This means that for a 300 word page, you would use a particular keyword between 9 and 12 times.
- 4) Good use of white space makes websites easier to read. This can be achieved by using small paragraphs of no more than 50 words each, and using bullets. Paragraphs should have one idea each so that each paragraph can be read in isolation.
- 5) Keep your writing concise, by cutting out any excess words. Pages should contain about 300-500 words and should fit within the screen. Readers are less likely to scroll down to read words that are off the screen or 'below the fold'. If pages are longer than 500 words, divide them up by linking to other pages, or give each paragraph a heading & put the headings as links (or 'anchors') at the top of the page.
- 6) Keep the copy simple, by writing sentences that are easy to read, with no ambiguity and no complex words.
- 7) Use headings and sub-headings so readers always know what a particular page or paragraph is about as search engines could direct them to any page on the website, and not necessarily the home page first.
- 8) Always be accurate in spelling, grammar, and the presentation of factual information – use reliable sources.
- 9) Don't forget the call to action – if you want the customer to get in touch, put all contact information on each page of the website.
- 10) Keep refreshing the content to keep readers coming back for more. This can be achieved with the use of news items, blogs, and interesting facts relevant to your industry.

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If you stick to these few basic rules, you'll soon be writing websites that will attract customers and keep them coming back.

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