

Why have you got a website?

This may seem an obvious question, but it's amazing how many people can't answer it! Those who can answer say things like, 'to send people to find out more about our company' and 'to get people to buy our products (or services)'.

This means that the visitor needs to be engaged quickly or they'll leave. We're all really impatient when we're online – watch anyone waiting for a webpage to download and see their fingers tap if it takes longer than a couple of seconds! If your visitor doesn't 'get' what you do quickly, they won't invest much time in trying to work it out.

It's important to have a professional design, but equally important that the key messages are not only big enough to attract attention, but also in the right place. We don't start reading at the top of the screen start paying attention around a third of the way down. That's where the headline needs to go.

It's no good having a stunning headline if it's in 14 point bold – it will simply disappear into the page. Big, bold and focused on the reason your visitor has come to your site. Ask them a question or indicate that there is something useful on the site that will solve their particular problem.

So not:

'We've got the lowest cost products online'

But

'Are you working to a tight budget?'

Remember the copy needs to be focused on the reader – look at the number of statements that you have that say 'We can do ...', 'We supply ...', 'We are dedicated ...'. Can you spin them around so that they say 'You can have ...', 'You'll receive ...', 'You'll experience a real dedication to ...'?

You must know what you want each page to do. If you think you're going to get them to contact you from your home page, you're probably being somewhat ambitious! When you want people to take action – tell them what to do and make it easy for them to do it – use a hyperlink to take them where you want them to go; don't expect them to scroll back to the menu.

If you get your messages right, your headlines engage the reader and your calls to action are in the right places, your website will help your business to grow.

... and finally

Visit www.lesleywriter.com and sign up for the free reports on website readability if you haven't already.

Visit www.webcopythatpeopleread.com for lots of tips and information on copywriting and marketing on and offline.

If you need help with your written communication

email us at Lesley@lesleywriter.com

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Skype: Lesleywriter with a 'I need some help' message!

Lesley Morrissey is an expert in readability and specialises in helping people to develop a website that works for their business.

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