

WRITE YOUR SITE



A SIMPLE GUIDE TO WRITING
CONTENT FOR YOUR NEW SMALL
BUSINESS WEBSITE

by Sandra Kahale

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Chapter 1

The Secret of Web Writing

Even if you aren't a very good writer, you can write for the web. To do it well, you just need to know one simple, powerful truth:

Nobody Reads Online

Your web visitors aren't really reading — they're skimming and scanning.

- 2.6 seconds to decide where to click
- 15 seconds per web page
- 20 - 50% of the text

Since they're rushing, they'll stay focused on the questions that brought them to your site. Engaging them is as simple as offering up what they came for, in simple, digestible terms.

You don't have to be a great writer (whatever that means) to write your own web copy. Just give people what they want.

**Give your web
visitors what they
want.**

Make it simple.

Get it done.

Chapter 2

The 4 Core Pages of Your Site

Building a website is one of the first things many new and would-be business owners do. And it can easily be overwhelming.

Even if you're web-savvy, getting a new business online can be challenging. You may be working on a logo at the same time and setting up other key pieces of your new operation.

At this stage, it's usually best to get online fast so you can start soliciting business and generating revenue. You can easily expand or change your web site later.

For now, focus on the pages that really matter. While some pages may be "nice to have," the core pages of your site are those that move your business forward, turning visitors into customers.

This guide will show you how to write good, focused web copy for your core pages *fast*, so you can start earning. As your business evolves, so can your site.

If you already have a track record, add a Testimonials or Happy Clients page and/or sprinkle testimonials throughout your site. If you're just getting started, make sure to build opportunities to get testimonials or reviews into your business process and add them to your site when you can.



THE HOME PAGE

While not all visitors come in from here, this is your virtual storefront. Make the most of it by staying focused on your visitors and their goals.

THE ABOUT PAGE

This page might seem to be about you or your business, but it's actually about you as you relate to your target customer.

Be strategic with this page. Don't list a boring resume or company vision statement. Align what you write here with your overall goals.

THE PRODUCT & SALES PAGE(S)

These pages are home to detailed, sales-oriented information about your specific products and services, including features, benefits, and value.

Use sub-pages here if your offerings are extensive.

THE CONTACT PAGE

Often treated as an afterthought, this page is actually an important one, especially if the overall goal of your site is to have visitors get in touch with you.

Approach it thoughtfully.

Chapter 3

Write Your Site

Being able to communicate clearly – online and elsewhere – is key to attracting the kinds of customers you want and building a successful business. In fact, it's one of the pillars of small business success.

If communicating isn't something you're naturally good at it'll be one of the things you'll have to learn as you embark on the path of entrepreneurship. And if it is, you'll be well-served to focus and develop your talents in this important area.

Your web site is a great place to begin the journey. It's a key marketing communication piece. Taking the time to approach it strategically can help you build a very solid foundation for other pieces you may need as you go forward.

You don't have to be a great wordsmith to write great web copy. A great writing process, like the one the pros use will help you get the job done right.

The process you'll use in this guide is the same one I use with clients. It breaks down the task of writing web copy into 5 simple components that come together easily.

Write Your Site in 5 Simple Steps

STEP 1 - GET ORGANIZED

Clarify your audience's goals & your own messages to pave the way for smart, strategic copy.

STEP 2 - ROUGH IT OUT

Figure out what information your visitors want and need. Don't fuss with language – this step is about what you'll say, not how you'll say it.

STEP 3 - WORK YOUR WORDS

Turn your rough ideas into clear, compelling copy with templates that cover all the angles.

STEP 4 - POLISH

Step back, look at the big picture, and polish up your copy for maximum impact.

STEP 5 - PUBLISH

Plug your content into your site for a final check then go live. Celebrate. Then start driving traffic!

STEP 1 - GET ORGANIZED

The longest journey begins with a single step.

Lao Tsu

Writing your site begins with getting organized and honing in on what you need to know to move ahead.

Lay The Foundation

Get Clear

Why are you building a site? What do you want visitors to do there?

Get Real

Who will visit your site? What problem or goal do they have? Be specific.

Get Focused

What will visitors need to know to take the action(s) you want them to take?

Get Inspired

What sites are good models for yours? Why?

Define Your Value

Your Value Statement summarizes what you do, who you do it for, and why it matters.

What business are you in?

Who do you help? How do you help them?

Why do they want that? What's the result?

Now put it together into a simple Value Statement like this:

I'm in the business of office administration. I help frazzled entrepreneurs get organized so that they can focus on making money.

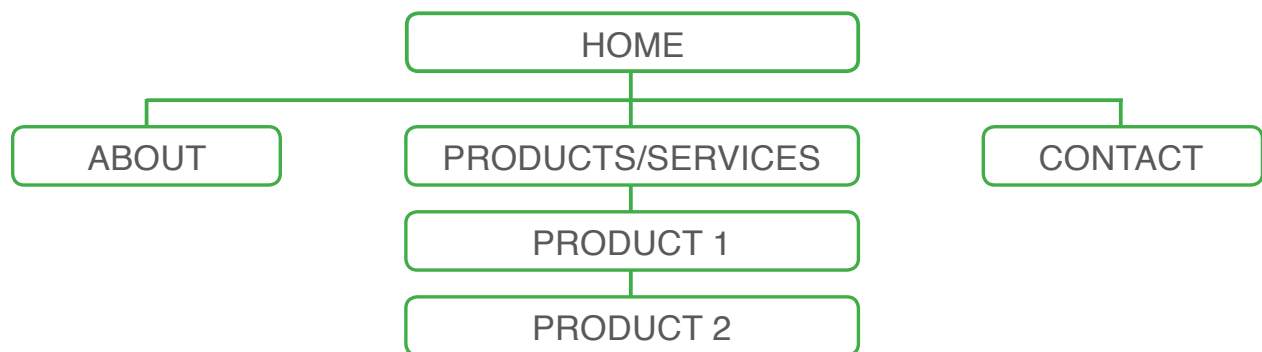
Sort Out Your Site Map

Organize the content on your site so it's easy for people to find what they want and need.

Most small business sites have a pretty basic site map.

In this diagram, the Home, About, Products/Services, and Contact are navigational pages – they'll be part of the Main Menu.

Product 1 and Product 2 are sub-pages, accessed from links or drop-down menus.

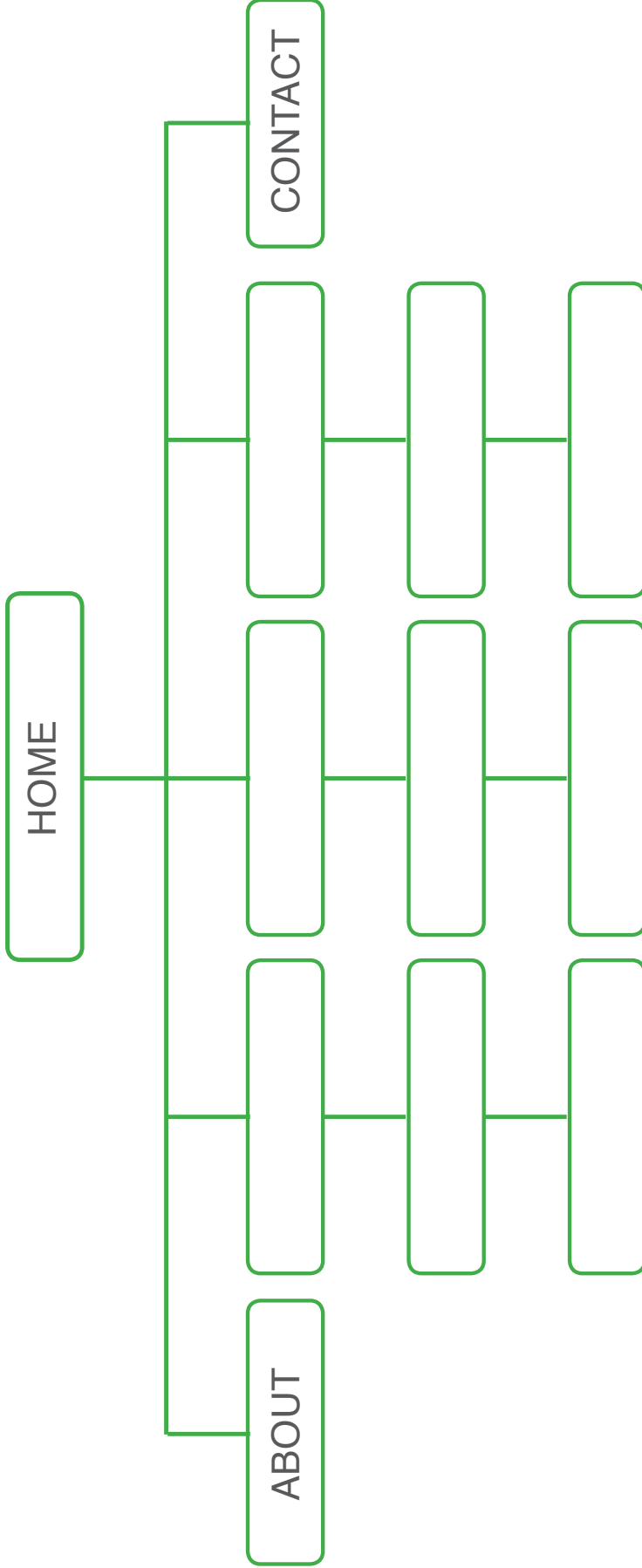


If you have more than one target market and their needs are quite different, you can use your navigational menu to direct traffic (for example, by distinguishing between Commercial Cleaning and Residential Cleaning Services).

This works best when you want to give different messages to each group.

Your Site Map

Rough out the core pages of your site here. Start with only as many pages as you need to create a credible online presence.



In addition to the 4 core pages covered in this Guide, you might also want other pages like Testimonials/Happy Clients, Blog, Location(s), Shop, Events, Photo Gallery, Newsletter, Book an Appointment, News, etc.

Refer back to your site goals to help you figure out what pages you need.

Not sure? Check competitor sites for inspiration.

STEP 2 - ROUGH IT OUT

Now that you're organized, it's time to pull together the information and ideas that will become your web copy.

This isn't about finding the perfect words – it's about finding the ideas that you want to express. So don't worry about language too much, but do note any particular phrases you may want to use as they come to you.

Think about what your online visitors need to know to become prospects and customers. Think about the stages they'll go through as they prepare to take the next step – whether that's signing up, getting in touch, or simply clicking through to the next screen.

Once you've completed the worksheets in this section, you'll have everything you need to develop powerful content that truly serves your web visitors with the information they want. At that stage, you can focus on refining your language.

**The purpose of the first
draft is not to get it right,
but to get it written.**

John Dufresne

The Home Page

In general terms, your Home page should:

- **Quickly communicate your value.** Let people know what you're about and why you're different and better than other options they might consider.
- **Reassure.** Immediately reassure visitors that they are in the right place. Do that by being specific not only about what you do, but also about who you do it for. Use their language so they can easily recognize themselves.
- **Guide visitors.** Don't overwhelm visitors with too many boxes or featured links – just highlight what you think most of them will be there to see so it's easy to find.
- **Set a tone.** Use a tone that's clear, simple and authentic. In most cases, avoid making the Home page too “sales-y.”
- **Charm ‘em.** We all like to do business with people or companies we know, like and trust. Use your Home page to start establishing that essential rapport. If they're relevant, use testimonials, industry seals or certifications.

Remember — at this stage, keep your focus on what you'll say, not how you'll say it.

Rough it Out

Who is an ideal customer for you?

What specific problem or goal do they have?
What are they thinking and feeling when they get to your site?

How does your product or service solve their problem?

Why should they choose you? What makes you different?

What matters most to your potential customers (e.g. price, credentials, chemistry, portfolio, results, etc.)? What can you tell them about that?

What should they do from here? What's their next step?
Explore, Learn More, Sign Up, Reserve, Buy Now?

Do you want visitors to stay in touch or share? How? (social media, sign-ups, etc.)

What links should appear on this page?

The About Page

Engage visitors with your story. Focus on what really defines you.

Share how and why your products or services help people just like them. Aim to leave them feeling as if they already know and like you.

Give your visitor a reason to keep reading: show them you are relatable, talk about the problems you solve, and outline how you can help them.

You can include relevant credentials and accomplishments and mention how long you've been in business (if that serves you). If you are deeply committed to a particular cause you can mention that, too.

If your credentials are a little thin or you are just getting started, use the About page to talk about how and why you got started doing what you are doing.

Don't be afraid to show personality. You want to give people a sense of who you are. But be restrained; limit yourself to just one or two personal details.

For a sole proprietorship or a small company, I recommend a photo on this page. But choose images wisely, making sure they reflect the image you want to convey.

Rough it Out

What's the top benefit you deliver for customers? What are you like to work with?

Who are you and how did you get here? Why do you do what you do?

What makes you great at what you do? What's unique or remarkable about you?

What can you tell visitors about your track record, credentials, or past success that will help build trust? (Consider using testimonials here.)

What should visitors do next?

What's the next step in their journey? E.g. Make an Appointment, Sign Up, etc.

The Product & Sales Page(s)

Sales pages are your money makers. So shake ‘em! This is no place to be modest.

Aim to strike a balance between informing buyers about your products and services and encouraging them to buy.

Be sure to cover the features, benefits, and value of your products or services.

Features: Describe the technical aspects of your product or service.

“One-on-one coaching” or “wireless battery charging.”

Benefits: Explain what features actually mean for customers.

“One-on-one business coaching gets you the attention you need.”

“Charge your phone right in your pocket, wirelessly!”

Value: How your products & services relate to customer goals or situations.

“Your business growth has flat-lined in the past 2 years because you’re too overwhelmed to keep growing. Our one-on-one sessions get you the personal attention you need to take back control.”

“Build the business of your dreams! One-on-one coaching reduces your learning curve, keeps you accountable, and stops you from wasting time and money along the way.”

“Hit the ground running! Our wireless battery charger charges your phone while it’s in your pocket – automatically – so you’re always ready for that important call or email!”

Should you list prices for services like coaching or cleaning?
There’s no hard and fast rule. Consider context, client expectations, and what your competitors do.

Rough it Out

Describe your product or service. List all relevant details.

What key results do you deliver?

What makes your product or service different?

What proof or assurances can you offer (e.g. testimonials, reviews, client logos, portfolios, guarantees, no obligation quote, refund policy, etc.)?

What action(s) do you want your visitor to take from here?
Examples: Buy Now, Order Now, Yes!, Reserve Now, etc.

The Contact Page

Don't simply leave your Contact page up to your web designer or developer, especially if the overall goal of your site is to have visitors get in touch with you.

Consider how you'll make this page friendly and approachable. And be sure that it includes all the contact information a person would need, such as:

- Your company name
- The name of a specific contact person, if possible
- Your phone number
- Your email address

If you have a location that people can come to, include the address as well as the hours of operation. A map is also a good idea; using Google maps allows people to get directions easily.

Using a contact form will curb the flood of spam you may otherwise receive through your site. But not everybody likes filling out forms. Many forms include too many (seemingly irrelevant) fields, require (needlessly) that all fields be completed, or do not link to an acknowledgment message that lets your visitor know their form has actually been sent. **Try to minimize visitor aggravation.**

Some sites include photographs of key contact people on the contact page. Use a caption under the photo to introduce the person and their role, e.g. "Susan, our Customer Service Rep, looks forward to hearing from you" or "Mark, Owner-Operator, will be happy to talk to you about your leaky basement."

Rough it Out

Why should people get in touch with you?

If you plan to use a contact form, what fields will it have?
(Don't ask for more than you need - it's annoying.)

What else will you include on this page?
(Examples: address, contact info, maps, hours of operation)

How can you nudge hesitant visitors? Consider links to your Testimonials, About, or Sales pages, or a reminder about Free Estimates or other incentives.

STEP 3 - WORK YOUR WORDS

You know what you want to say. Now you'll work on how to say it.

Don't panic. You've already done the hardest part. Now, you're just cleaning up your notes, looking for the best, most concise way to communicate ideas and information.

You'll want to work electronically here so you can edit and revise easily. It's normal to write and rewrite a page 2-3 times to produce a finished draft. From there, you might revise or edit it another 2-3 times to fully finalize it.

When it comes to language, just try to be yourself. Don't stretch to be unusually formal, cute, or clever. Avoid words you can't spell. Use simple, natural language that's clear and concise.

If you find yourself getting stuck on editing and re-editing the same passage or page, simply move on and come back to it later. Things have a funny way of sorting themselves out while your attention is elsewhere.

One day I will find the right words, and they will be simple.

Jack Kerouac

Be Brief

Remember,

Nobody Really Reads Online

As you work your words, imagine the person you are writing for. They're distracted and in a rush. To break through:

- Make your content easy to scan.
- Put your most important messages first.
- Break it up. Use short sentences.
- Use headings, sub-headings, and bullets.
- Use the language your prospects use.
- Stay on point. Keep it brief.
- Be casual. Use I, we, you.
- Choose action verbs (e.g. join, buy, find, save).
- Use links to provide more detailed information.

The templates in this section will guide you.

Feel free to play with the flow. Just be sure to cover all the relevant information.

The Home Page Worksheet

Use this page to deliver a clear, brief, powerful message that lets visitors know they're in the right place and keeps them there.

Headline

Mix any or all of: What You Do, Who You Do It For, and/or What's In It For Them.

Example: "Business Coaching for Online Entrepreneurs" or "Stop Working Hard. Start Working Smart."

Paragraph 1: The Problem and Your Solution

Show visitors you understand their problem or goal.

Describe the value of your solution. Maximum 2-3 sentences.

Example: Too busy managing your business to grow it? (Problem)

Take it to the next level, sanely, with step-by-step personal coaching. (Solution)

The Home Page Worksheet

Paragraph 2: Give Some Detail

Delve a little deeper into the problem/solution. Focus on benefits, results, and the core value you deliver.

Example: If you're running to keep up with your business, one-on-one coaching can help you take back control of your business and your life. Learn to set up processes, focus on what matters, and grow with ease.

Testimonials: Use 'em if you've got 'em!

You can feature one or two, or put a series of them in a rotator or slider.

Call to Action: What Now?

Tell visitors where to go or what to do next. Consider their journey and offer next steps that make sense.

Should visitors stay in touch or share? How? (social media, sign-ups, etc.)

What links should appear on this page? Consider the buyer's journey.

The About Page Worksheet

It's human to want to do business with people we know, like, and trust. Use this page to establish that bond with you and/or your brand.

Headline

Use What You Deliver and/or What You're Like to Work With.

Paragraph 1: Introduce Yourself

Who are you and what do you do? Why are you in the business you're in? Maximum 2-3 sentences.

The About Page Worksheet

Paragraph 2: Be Awesome

Describe what makes you great at what you do. Maximum 2 sentences.

Paragraph 3: Build Trust

Give highlights of your track record, or credentials, or past success. Use testimonials if you have them, ideally with photos.

Call to Action: What Now?

Tell visitors where to go or what to do next. Consider their journey and offer next steps that make sense.

Examples: Learn More, Contact Us, Get a Quote, Buy Now, Sign up, etc.

Should visitors stay in touch or share? How? (E.g. social media, sign-ups, etc.)

What links should appear on this page? Consider the buyer's journey.

The Sales Page Worksheet

Give your visitors a compelling reason to buy. Highlight your value. Anticipate questions and objections.

Headline

A short, powerful sentence that pre-qualifies your reader and captures their interest.
Example: "Restorative Desk Yoga for Cubicle Workers" or "Heading to the Beach? Protect Your Electronics"

Paragraph 1: What's In It for Them?

1-3 sentences describing your promise (i.e. the value and benefits of the product/service you provide) persuasively. Be brief to keep people reading.

Paragraph 2: What Is It?

1-3 sentences describing the features of the product/service you provide. This is the place for technical details. Use bullets where you can.

The Sales Page Worksheet

Paragraph 3: Once More with Feeling

In just a line or two, drive home the awesome value your product or service delivers.

Reviews & Testimonials

Include some here if you have them.

Call to Action: Seal the Deal

Tell visitors what to do next. On this page, that usually means Buy Now, Book Now, Get a No Obligation Quote, or something similar. Include prices where that makes sense.

Should visitors stay in touch or share? How? (E.g. social media, sign-ups, etc.)

What links should appear on this page? Consider the buyer's journey.

The Contact Page Worksheet

This page is a great place to show some personality and entice people to get in touch.

See great examples at <http://www.searchenginejournal.com/25-amazing-contact-us-pages/>

Headline: Give Them a Reason

Write one short, powerful sentence that outlines the value or benefits of getting in touch with you. Be clear and specific.

Examples: Book your free consultation, Find out more, Reserve your spot.

Paragraph 1: Reiterate Key Benefits

Remind visitors of the benefits and value you deliver. Be brief.

Example: "Restorative Desk Yoga for Cubicle Workers" or "Heading to the Beach? Protect your Phone from Surf and Sand with a Waterproof Case"

The Contact Page Worksheet

Paragraph 2: Provide all the Details

Include all the contact info a person would want or need, such as:

- Location (if that's relevant), possibly with a map
- The name of a specific contact person (if that's relevant)
- Phone number • Email address • Hours of operation • Other

Contact Form (Optional)

Tell people when they should expect to hear back from you (e.g. 2 days).

One More Chance: Nudge Hesitant Visitors

Help hesitant readers take the next step. Provide links to FAQs, Testimonials, or other ways to get in touch, like social media.

Example: "See what customers are saying about us!"

STEP 4 - POLISH

The hard work is done. Hurray!

Put your writing away for a while so you can return to it with fresh eyes. Go for a walk, work on something else, or ease off for a day or two. Then take an overall look to spot inconsistencies, gaps and awkward bits.

To find missing words or typos, try reading aloud. To make sure your key points can be scanned, read in front of the television.

3 Common Mistakes to Avoid

1. Being Focused on Yourself.

Engaging web writing isn't really about you. It's about your visitors and prospects and their hopes, dreams, aspirations, fears, and needs.

2. Saying Too Much.

Avoid overwhelming your visitors with too much information. Figure out what really matters to them on a buying journey. Cut or link to the rest.

3. Beating Around the Bush.

Be direct about what you do and who you do it for. Don't hedge your bets trying to cater to everyone. You can always evolve later.

Better Writing: 6 Simple Secrets

1 KEEP IT CASUAL - Casual is cool. Use contractions (I'll, you'll, we'll), maintain a relaxed tone, and choose simple, everyday words.

2 BREAK IT UP - Long sentences are exhausting for your reader. Cut them up into bite-sized chunks.

3 USE YOUR VOICE - Maintain a consistent voice throughout the site. The best way to do this is to write authentically, as you. Don't try to sound like anyone else.

4 KEEP IT CLEAN - Make bullets grammatically consistent and don't mix categories (like what to eat and what not eat) in one list.

5 STAY POSITIVE - Use positive words like "affordable" instead of negative ones like "not expensive."

6 SIMPLIFY - Keep jargon, acronyms and technical terms out of your writing unless you're absolutely certain your audience will understand.

Check Headings and Titles

As people scan your site, their eyes will naturally go to headlines, headings, and titles.

Make sure you're capturing and holding their attention. To do that, simply mix and match some or all of things web visitors tend to care about most: results, objections and time.

You can play with format and order, like this.

- Result + Objection + Time: Learn French at Home in 30 Days
- How to + Time: How to Teach Yourself French in 30 Days
- Command: Learn French While You Sleep!
- Type of Person + Result: The Lazy Person's Way to Learn French
- Time + Result: 30 Days to French Fluency

Keep examples of great headlines you come across in a swipe file that you can turn to for inspiration and guidance when necessary.

Stepping Back: Re(Vision) Checklist

Take time away from your writing to get some perspective.

A day, a night, a walk, or a weekend gives you fresh eyes and helps you see clearly whether your writing needs more work to really connect with your audience.

Start by scanning it for an overall impression.

- Reading Ease:** can the page be easily scanned and understood?
- Purpose:** is the purpose clear?
- Audience:** does it speak to the right people?
- Tone:** are the voice and tone appropriate and appealing?
- Desired Response:** is it obvious what the reader should do next?

Now look more closely at paragraphs and sentences.

- Paragraphs:** are paragraphs short and limited to one main point?
 - Order: does the order make sense from the reader's perspective?
 - Structure: is information broken down well? Could it use more headings, bullets, etc.?
- Content:** fight information overload by asking:
 - Is this necessary?
 - Is this clear?
 - Does it serve the audience?

Finally, check the details.

- Spelling:** check your spelling
- Grammar:** use simple constructions and check for errors
- Formatting:** make sure formatting is consistent throughout
- Reading Level:** verify that the reading level is appropriate

STEP 5 - PUBLISH

Lay It Out And Hit Publish

Check spelling and grammar before inserting your copy into your site; word processing software does a better job than most site builders.

Once you've checked spelling and grammar, copy your content onto your site. Lay it out nicely and see what it will look like on screen.

- Crammed? Cut it down or move it around.
- Hard to skim? Add white space & bullets.
- Straining to see the words? Try a different font or colour.
- Unclear what readers should do next? Use design elements (like boxes or white space) to highlight calls to action.

Be conscious that different screen sizes will display differently. Avoid the temptation to manipulate spacing with soft returns inside paragraphs; it will make your text look odd on other devices.

Before you go live, review carefully to make sure that cutting and pasting your content hasn't introduced any typos and that the formatting is consistent throughout.

When everything looks good, go live!

Congratulations, You Did It!

Getting your business online is a major milestone. Take the time to celebrate!

Once you're done basking in the glory, start inviting people to check out your new site.

This is just the beginning.

Plan to review and update your site as your business evolves — an inevitable (and exciting) part of business start-up.



Chapter 4

Now What? Managing Your Online Presence

Claim Your Space on Social Media

Whether you plan to use social media or not, there are lots of good reasons to claim your business name/URL on social media outlets (e.g. Facebook pages, twitter handles).

Occupy the territory, block competitors, and position yourself for better Google results later. Once you've got your accounts set up, think in terms of how you can add value, encourage people to sign up or follow you, and engage.

Keep it Fresh

Your web site should be a living part of your business, growing and changing with you and your customers.

Commit to a schedule for reviewing and updating your site as your business evolves. Once or twice a year is good, but you may need to do it more often in the early days to test marketing messages and possible offerings.

Get Attention & Drive Traffic

You've probably heard the saying "if you build it, they will come." When it comes to your web site, that's just not true. You'll need a plan to generate traffic to your site. There are lots of ways to do that. Here are just a few:

Marketing Collateral: Whatever marketing materials you have, from business cards to brochures, make sure your URL is front and centre. Add it to your email signature, too, perhaps with a reason for people to go there (e.g. Get Your Free Report).

Online Directories: Adding your site to online directories really boosts your Search Engine Optimization (SEO). Depending on the type of business you have, consider Yelp, Google Business, Yahoo Local, and others.

Blogging & Guest Blogging: Only start this if you are prepared to commit to doing it on a regular schedule. There's no need to blog weekly - what really matters is promoting your posts. The general rule is that you should spend 20% of your time writing blog posts, and 80% of your time promoting them.

Podcasting or YouTube Videos: Draw people who are interested in your topic with podcasts or video content. Keep it short and focused, and give a strong reason for them to come to your site (like a valuable free download).

Pay-Per-Click Advertising: Using Google, Facebook, or other platforms, you can run ads directing traffic to key pages on your site. Depending on your business, you might drive people to a sales page, or to an email sign-up page where you offer something valuable (a guide, an ebook, an audio or video recording) in exchange for an email address.

You pay only when somebody clicks on your ad, and you can set a daily maximum budget.

Quick Tips

Building Your Site

It's easier than ever to build your site yourself.

1. CREATE A HOSTING ACCOUNT

I use Blue Host (www.bluehost.com). GoDaddy (www.godaddy.com) is popular; there are also plenty of others to choose from.

2. CHOOSE & REGISTER A DOMAIN NAME

Choose a domain name (URL), which is the address where you'll build your site. It's best if it's the same name as your business. Buy from your hosting company to keep it simple.

3. DESIGN & BUILD

Most accounts come with free, simple site builders like Wix, Weebly, or WordPress that allow you to build your own site quickly. You usually get 5 or 6 pages for free; upgrade if you need more.

WordPress is your best bet for sophisticated sites. There are lots of plug-ins you can add to expand the functionality of your site to take payments, create online programs, and more.

Whatever platform you use, make sure it's mobile-friendly (also called "responsive") for best results.

Bare Minimum SEO

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is about making your site visible to people who are interested in your products, services, or content.

SEO can be a vast and confusing field. Approaches to SEO are constantly evolving as Google changes its search algorithms to provide more and more refined results to users.

If getting found online is a big part of your business plan, you may want to invest in learning about SEO or hiring somebody to help you optimize your site.

Whether you're ready to invest in SEO or not, it's worth knowing that the best, most enduring organic SEO strategy is simply to provide content that your customers and potential customers care about, and to use the same words to describe your business and results that they do.

Using customer language reassures people they're in the right place, engages them, and directs them easily to what they want and need.

Ultimately, the key to search-friendliness is giving people what they want, in words they recognize and understand. Some simple keyword research can help you discover what those are.

Making sure your site is mobile-friendly is also important to SEO, as is recent content. Use a responsive theme to build your site and consider blogging to keep your site fresh.

Quick & Dirty KeyWord Research

Keyword research helps you understand what language people are using online when they are searching for products or services like yours. Even just a rough idea of the words people are using can help you write more powerful, more profitable copy.

- Brainstorm a list of topics relevant to your business. Consider not only “proper” technical terms, but also terms that lay people searching for your products or services would know and use.
- Flush out those topics with keywords.
- Balance short, generic terms with longer, more specific ones (e.g. coaching vs business coaching for online entrepreneurs).
- Research related keywords. Use a tool like Google’s Keyword Planner to refine your list. Or simply plug your keywords into Google and see what suggested related searches come up.
- Check out which keywords your competitors are using. You can often do this by viewing the source code on their web. Look for the line of code that contains the words “meta” and ”keywords.”

For more, check out Hubspot’s step-by-step guide.
<http://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-do-keyword-research-ht>

Photography

The right images break up text and draw the eye, helping you communicate your message more powerfully. The wrong ones confuse and irritate.

Pick quality images that look professional and support your overall goals. Use images of people, especially showing emotion, if they're relevant. Make sure product shots are well lit. Offer multiple views & close-ups.

Where to buy Images

iStock: www.istockphoto.com

Shutterstock: www.shutterstock.com

Getty: www.gettyimages.com

Veer: <http://www.veer.com>

Free Stock Photos

The Badass List of Free Stock Photos Sites for Designers
<http://tinyurl.com/z327p68>

The Website Superhero Guide to Free Stock Photos
<http://tinyurl.com/z58kuf5>

Fizzle's Guide to 50+ Images, Fonts and Icons
<http://tinyurl.com/qb7gl4g>

Free Digital Photos
<http://www.freedigitalphotos.net/>

Notes



Writer, communications coach, trainer and facilitator, Sandra Kahale, works with entrepreneurs to plan, start, and communicate their businesses.

Her inspiring, informative workshops cover topics including business planning, online communications, networking, and small business success.

Learn more about Sandra, book a live event, and find other Small Business Guides in this series at www.onwordconsulting.com.

WRITE YOUR SITE

Starting a new business and need to get online fast?
Working with a web designer but need help with your content?
Not quite ready to work with a professional writer?

Write Your Site is a simple, step-by-step, DIY guide to writing content for your new small business web site.

Create clear, compelling web copy that turns visitors into prospects and customers. Focus on the most important pages of your site with simple instructions to guide you.

Worried that you aren't a good enough writer? Don't be. You don't have to be a great writer to write great web copy.

Write Your Site makes it simple. You can do this!

"Fantastic ideas and strategies for writing copy for our website."

"The format really helped me break it down."

"I feel like I CAN do this!"

"I feel invigorated to write my web site."

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