

Easy-To-Read Web Pages Will Increase Sales (Revised)

Web pages with readable text will generate more sales than fancy pages that are hard to read. Follow these design tips and not only will your web pages be easier to read, but you'll keep potential buyers at your site and position yourself to increase sales.

Keep Pages Short -- Especially Your Home Page

? Put important content at the top of your pages so it's visible on the screen. Users may not scroll through lengthy pages.

? In general, limit the length of a web page to two screens.

? Split up long pages into several pages.

Layout

? Use left aligned text rather than justified text.

? Write short paragraphs (4-5 lines).

? Indent the beginning of each paragraph in sales letters.

? Limit the width of your web pages to fit your visitors' monitors. Your visitors don't want to scroll left to right to see your content.

? Keep the look, layout, navigation, typefaces, and colors consistent on all pages.

Break up Copy

? Break up long text with white space, color, columns, lines, and graphics.

? Break up copy into easy-to-read sections

? Use subheadings and bulleted lists to highlight benefits.

Colors

? Use color sparingly. Too much color can be distracting.

? Select a background color that contrasts with the text color to make your content stand out.

? Avoid blue backgrounds when using blue links (the standard link color).

? Avoid dark backgrounds. Dark text on a light background is easy to read.

? Avoid text on multi-colored background images. Such background images will decrease the readability of your text.

? Use web-friendly colors. Colors that look bright on your monitor may appear dark on someone else's and make your message unreadable.

Typography

? Limit the use of small type, reverse type (white text on dark background), and italics.

? Avoid using UPPER CASE in your body copy.

? Limit the number of fonts in a web site to a maximum of three (preferably only two).

? Use a type size that is geared to your target audience. For instance, use larger type for older readers.

? Emphasize important words, headlines, and sentences by using color, bold, and different text sizes. But do so sparingly. Too much bold or color reduces the impact.

? Avoid underlining. Readers might think your underlined words or sentences are links.

? Use standard fonts such as Arial, Verdana, and Times New Roman. If you're using fonts your viewers don't have on their computers, their browsers will substitute those fonts and your web pages will look different on their computers than you intended them to look.

? Avoid special characters like curly quotes, curly apostrophes, n-dashes, and m-dashes. These characters may convert into bogus characters on web sites.

? Use fonts that are appropriate for your subject matter and your audience.

Images and Graphics

? Use images and graphics that support your sales message.

? Keep animation, blinking text, and scrolling text to a minimum. They distract the reader from focusing on your text.

Check Your Pages

Web pages may look different on your visitors' computers, depending on their computer, monitor, browser, and fonts. What may look great with one browser may look unprofessional with another. View your web pages with different browsers, computers, platforms (PC and Mac), screen resolutions, and settings. Statistics indicate that visitors use a wide variety of browsers and platforms.

Keep visitors, prospects, and buyers at your site with easy-to-read, interesting content. An easy-to-read, professional web site can maximize your sales. Apply these techniques now.

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