

WORDS OF WORTH

Spring 2008

It's the green season at last. The economy may be in low gear, but the City's gardens and parks are vibrant. Well-written marketing copy can keep your business vibrant, too, even when markets are slow.

There are practical differences between copy for print marketing material and copy for the web. This issue of Words of Worth highlights the differences.

Marketing Copy: Print vs. Web

We all know that branding and key marketing messages need to be consistent across media. While messaging for print materials and web copy should be the same, there are still significant differences in writing copy for print materials and the web. Writing for the web can take advantage of its flexible, easy-to-change nature, while brochure copy is created for a "classic" that may go unchanged for two to three years.

Writing for Brochures and Sell Sheets

Here are some things to keep in mind when you're writing for print marketing materials such as brochures and sell sheets (a.k.a. "one-pagers").

There's a fixed space for copy: Once you're used to the expandability of websites, it can be hard to keep to the fixed amount of space in a given print format. Limited space makes it extremely critical to highlight key messages and winnow out the non-essential.

The copy for a brochure or sell sheet has specific tasks: attract your target audience, help establish your credibility and send your audience to your website (or your telephone number!) for additional information.

Use an ounce of prevention to keep copy evergreen: Brochures and similar print marketing materials are usually planned for a two to three year lifespan. To keep the information in the marketing piece evergreen, consider the following points:

- Include your company's founding date, not the number of years in business
- Only include biographical information on top-level management. Other staff turn over more frequently. You don't want their bios in a brochure long after they have left.
- If you are including client names and/or testimonials, use only clients with whom you've had a good long-term relationship that you are confident will last.

Accommodate both readers and scanners: Some print readers like to start at the beginning and read through. For those people, it's important to have the text tell a logical story from beginning to end.

Many readers, however, scan marketing materials to find key phrases that are important to them and start reading at those phrases. If they like what they read, they may go back and look at other sections of the copy. For these people, headlines and/or pull-quotes (small pieces of the main text that are enlarged in boxes or margins) are essential attention-grabbers.

Writing for the Web

Practical points to consider when developing web copy include:

Change is good: Depending on your products and services, you should be updating your website at least quarterly and perhaps daily. Highlight recent news, publications or projects, as well as upcoming events.

It's fine if your text includes information that changes frequently, since it's easy to change web copy. Customer quotes and case studies can be easily updated or replaced. Review the site frequently to assure that it stays up to date.

Web copy is not linear: On the web, the user completely controls the order in which they see information. Not only can people look at pages in different orders, but they can follow links within pages from one page to another. Each page should tell its own coherent story, and at the same time, the story on each page should follow logically from the lead page in its section.

There's room to add more: Websites can expand (or contract) as your requirements change over time. Your website lets you give people access to information that won't fit in your brochure, but that customers might well want to know.

It's essential that all pages be added within a well-defined and easy to use navigational structure, so your customer never gets lost. Don't make the site too many levels deep.

Everyone is a scanner on the web: Web copy should be optimized for people who scan pages, because that's what most website users do. Paragraphs and sentences need to be shorter than in print materials. Headlines help serve as a stopping place for wandering eyes, as well as a guide to help readers find what they want.

News Bytes

Recently we've been helping the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce develop a "Green Chamber" section for its website. The idea is to bring practical information to small-to mid-sized companies looking to make their businesses greener. We'll let you know when the sub-site goes live.

Projects recently completed by Jussim Communications include:

- Website copy for a leisure education consultant
- Web navigation and copy and a service-specific brochure for a management consulting company
- A white paper for an email marketing company
- Brochure copy for a specialty recruiting firm

To see samples of our work, visit our [Portfolio](#).

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About Jussim Communications

Jussim Communications tells compelling stories for our clients. We create powerful copy, rooted in solid positioning of services, products or ideas. Our writing reaches the audience on many levels, including the emotional level where decisions are made. Our background in consulting, marketing and operations lets us quickly grasp each client's business and market. We develop:

- Dynamic marketing communications and web copy
- Newsletters and articles that educate your market and build name recognition
- White papers that establish your expertise and creativity
- Effective advocacy materials and grant reports

We would love to help tell your story. Call us at 718-788-3937 for a free initial consultation.

Learn More

To read more about Jussim Communications perspectives on marketing your business, organization, product, service and ideas, see the [News and Articles](#) page of our website.

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