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An Inside Look at Proofreading

By Donna Sweat

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by: **Donna Sweat**

This is the ideal topic for us all to think about. We do it everyday, especially those of us that use the Internet the majority of the time. Web pages, business letters, articles, news releases, documentation and most certainly, advertisements.

I have at times found myself proofreading our local newspaper..and suspect their proofreader isn't necessarily paying attention to his or her work. I have found scores of web sites with the same problem. Terrible spelling and common grammatical errors are high on the list. Of course, some of us do not pay attention to these little details, but entrepreneurs look for imperfections in a web page.

Do we all know how to proofread? Not necessarily. Looking for misspelled words is scarcely enough to polish your workmanship and neither is applying capital letters where needed.

I am touching the surface with the most common proofreading DO's. You might think a little differently the next time you do the job.

1] Always proofread when you are at your daily peak. In other words, do not try it, if you are sleepy or distracted. You will definitely miss a number of errors. Proofreading requires concentration.

2] Read the selection through and then read it aloud. Read it to a friend and have them read it to you. Read it backwards..that's what I said. You'll be amazed at the errors in spelling you will encounter.

3] Use your computer's spell checker, but do not rely on it. Often, there are times the checker will find errors but the word meaning is different, such as "there" and "their". Use a dictionary to be sure of the correct meaning of a word. 4] The thesaurus is helpful, but again the range of words are limited, a book offers a broader list. Your choice of words does make a difference when others read what you have to offer, so go ahead and be choosy.

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5] Be sure all beginning letters of a sentence are capitalized. Names of importance, within the sentence are a must to remember.

6] Look for sentence fragments, run ons and match subjects with verbs.

7] Check those simple small words, such as: of, it, in, is, for, be, and I. [I, should be a capital, regardless of where it is.]

Other important points in addition to the ones above are included below. These are not to be excluded and you may think this is a lot of unnecessary work, but isn't your piece important. You wouldn't be writing it, if it wasn't.

1] Do you have enough ideas incorporated into your selection?

2] Be sure you are not wandering away from the thesis.

3] Are you proving your point and is it interesting?

4] Is the content in order and does it flow smoothly?

5] Answer the following questions when you are proofreading.

A. Who?

B. What?

C. Where?

D. When?

E. Why?

If one of these are missing, then you need to go back and revise.

All of the above tips for proofreading are of the utmost importance even on a web page of your web site. The following tips are also helpful in the finishing touches of your site.

1] Start your inspection by checking to make sure all links work.

2] Look at the text and see if it is readable. If you can't see it, others cannot read it. The background may not be suitable.

3] Verify that all your information is up to date.

4] Is all the information in a sensible order, and delete or add information.

5] Use the scroll bar on the side to view one line at a time, either from the bottom or top. I find this very useful when reading, etc.

Proofreading has a nature of time consumption and if you do not have the time, find someone that does. It will boost your sales and your site will have a look of a professional.

I am not a professional and never claim to be, but I will proofread the following types of content, sent by email if you want a little help. I am not charging a enormous fee for the service. I have an Associate Degree in Accounting, and extensive courses in English, Business Communications, Ethics, and Public Speaking.

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Working on the Internet: Role of Proofreading and Copy editing OnLine

By Rumki Sen

When one is in a creative state, rarely can one also be in a detail state. Thus, mistakes in correct grammar, spelling and continuity of all details, may happen. Also, proofreading our own work can be very difficult, for all of us. This is because the same mental processes that went into composition are the ones we use to correct our work. Hence, so many websites are launched every year but so many of them fail to work perfectly as these sites have not been tested with a Proofreader's fresh eyes and impartial knowledge of English. Proofreading and Copyediting process involves reading the content for english grammar, spelling, story, flow and understandability. It also involves checking consistency in visual design, testing links, and ensuring accurate reading. Let us now discuss about some points for Proofreading and Editing Websites and Online Documents.

Tips for Editing Websites and Online Documents:

1) Create consistent text formatting:

Check whether the overall "look" of text on a page presents any obvious problems with various common fonts and type sizes. At this stage of the process, basic HTML skills are very valuable to the online editor in order to go into the HTML document and make minor changes directly , if required.

2) Check that colors are applied consistently throughout the work:

Watch out for arbitrary shifts in color. If link colors are specified in your HTML document, check that these colors are applied consistently throughout the work.

3) See whether links are working and going to the correct destinations:

Manually check all or most links to ensure that all links lead where they promise.

4) Ensure that text is readable:

Avoid "overabbreviation". Use only standard, easily read symbols etc

5) Check that identifying information is present and consistent

6) Correct errors in grammar and spelling:

Check for subject–verb agreement, Sentence fragments, Run–on sentences and other obvious grammatical errors. In case of checking spelling errors, read what is actually on the page, not what you think is there.

7) Check for punctuation:

Punctuation error is the most common mistake people tend to make. There are various books available on correct punctuation. If you are not confident in case of punctuation, get a book for your guidance.

8) Make sure names are spelled correctly:

The single most important mistake is the misspelling of names. Going to whatever length needed to see that names and titles are correct is important.

9) Look the content from the readers point of view:

Reading the story completely through the first time, without marking or changing anything. That's the way the reader is going to read the story, and that's the way the copy editor should read it, too.

10) Look for answers:

When editing a story for the first time, looking for answers to the following questions is important:– Is this a complete story? Does it consist of important facts? Does it give all of the necessary information to the reader? Are the quotes interesting? Any information or necessary quotations are missing? Does the writer omit information on the assumption that the reader already knows it? Does the story read smoothly? Does the information flow from one paragraph to the next? Do the quotes add to and support the previous information? Are the facts and quotes in descending order of importance?

11) Make sure the text is optimized for search engine rankings:

Check whether META tags (for description and keywords), Title tag and Image Alt tag have been used appropriately for the website content. Your text should also contain the main and related keywords/ phrases for your site. This will make the audience find your site on the Internet.

The basic processes, are much the same for online documents and print media – checking for correctness (spelling, grammar, and punctuation), consistency of capitalization and other mechanics, accuracy of information, and completeness. Creating consistent text formatting, Checking consistency in visual design, Testing for proper working of website links, Knowledge of HTML and its application (when required) are the additional responsibilities for an online editor.

Rumki Sen is the founder of Perfect Editing Solutions, (

) a professional firm

providing Proofreading and Copyediting service to websites and online documents. It corrects and edits english grammar, punctuation, spelling, links and more for mainly websites, letters, applications, CVs / resumes, advertisements, manuals, brochures, e-newsletters and e-mail messages. Whether you're a student, webmaster, or business owner, your written work will be improved immediately after you get our service. Contact Rumki Sen at

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