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**Make Your Website Sell**

**By Chris Mole**

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Thousands of new websites are springing up every week. The owners of these sites are full of optimism that their venture into e-commerce will transform their business by bringing in new customers and boosting their sales.

But the reality is that most websites fail abysmally as sales tools. Why? Because the owners of these sites have spent a lot of money creating fancy graphics but have paid little attention to the words on the site. And it's the words on websites that sell. Your fancy graphics might entertain your potential customers but they won't make the sale.

Take a look at many of the websites out there in cyberspace. They are full of spelling mistakes, poor grammar and cumbersome text that makes you want to do only one thing ... click your mouse button and move to something else.

Small and medium businesses are particularly guilty of this. The words appear to be an after-thought, hurriedly cobbled together to fill the space between the images.

One of America's e-commerce gurus, Ken Evoy, believes 90 percent of websites are failing to "get the order" from potential customers browsing the web, because they are badly written, or written in the wrong style.

"Remember, people use the Net to find information. And information is contained in words, not graphics," Evoy says.

"Let's face it, there's some pretty cool stuff on the web, and it's fun to play with. But don't be tempted. Your sales site can't be self-indulgent. You have to think customer every step of the way. Customers want information.

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"Compelling text is 1000 percent more important than fancy design. After all, if a fancy page has no substance, it delivers no value."

Web selling also has two important features to consider. First, the customer sought you out. This is a big positive. Second, there are thousands of other companies on the web competing for your customer's business. And since you are a `virtual vendor', the customer can click you away in a second ... without even feeling bad about it. This is a huge negative.

When you think about selling on the web, keep these two points clearly in mind. You have a potential customer browsing your site, finger poised over their mouse. One click and they're gone.

So what should an effective website look like? First, keep it simple. It may be nice to have moving images to greet the customer when they enter the site, but make sure it doesn't take too long to load. Otherwise the customer will get impatient and ... click ... they're gone.

All your site really needs is to be clean, simple and well-structured. It doesn't have to be fancy. It doesn't have to be complicated. And it doesn't have to be expensive.

That's not to say your site shouldn't look professional. It's your store front – a reflection of your business and the quality of your product - so it has to convey the image you want to present to the world. But a clean, simple site can do that. Some of world's biggest "e-tailers" like Amazon.com, and Barnes and Noble, have very simple logos.

So let's get back to the key to a successful website - the words. If you want to write the copy yourself, think carefully about the purpose of the text. You are writing sales copy. And the secret of all successful sales copy is to think like your customer.

To quote Ken Evoy again: "Web selling is about selling one customer at a time ... one-to-one selling ... you and the customer talking together about their needs and wants."

Most people make the mistake of writing their websites for themselves. They tell how wonderful their company is, how long it's been in business and technical details about the products they offer. But the customer doesn't want to know about you and your company. The customer is interested in one thing ... "what's in it for me?"

So focus on the benefits of your product or service. After every sentence you write, see yourself as your customer and ask the question: "so what?".

For example, let's imagine you are selling a new email filter that keeps spam out of people's mailboxes. Don't bore your potential customer with the technical details. Focus on the benefits of having such a filter. For example, you might say something like: "Do you waste valuable time dealing with junk email every day? Ban-It Mail Filter is the answer to your problem. Ban-it is the most effective filter available to keep spam out of your mailbox and put back more time into your day."

You are selling benefits - not features. Even experienced copywriters sometimes get the two mixed up.

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You need to have a clear picture in your mind of the customer you are writing for. Write as if you were sitting in a chair opposite them and talking face to face. And tell them what your product or service can do for them.

That in a nutshell is the secret of writing copy for the Web.

If you can do this, the potential of web selling is enormous. It outranks Gutenberg's printing press, Marconi's wireless and Bell's telephone all rolled together.

So don't waste the fantastic opportunity presented by cyber–marketing. Make sure your website copy is doing the job you want it to. If you don't feel competent to write it yourself, hire a professional copywriter. The investment will repay itself many times over.

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Chris Mole is a freelance writer/editor based in Ashburton. His company, Plain Words, specialises in writing and editing for print and web media. Chris has more than 20 years' experience writing for newspapers, magazines, radio and electronic media and as an editor of books and magazines, in New Zealand and the UK. Visit the author's website at [www.plainwords.co.nz](http://www.plainwords.co.nz)

### **How to Sell your Website**

#### **By Matt Dobinson**

There are hundreds and thousands of websites on the internet today being bought and sold and there are many places you can sell your website such as ebay and website brokers. Though this article we will explore each of these possibilities in greater details.

Ebay – Selling a website on ebay can perfect for some and completely useless for others. As most people know ebay, it gets millions of hits every minute from people looking for everything from hair nets to race cars. For starters this is a great way to get word out that your website is for sale. It has lots of people viewing your ads but keep in mind your competition is feirce as so many people post sites for sale on ebay. To sell your website on ebay it has to stand out from the rest.

Forums – Forums tend to be a great place to sell websites. They tend to ask alot more questions about statistics and revenue than most other places but if you have a quality site you can sometimes get alot more for it buy selling your website in forums. Good forums for this include

,

and

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Website Brokers – Website brokers normally go out and try to get you the best possible price for your website. They tend to have contacts in the industry and will get into contact with people you can't or don't even know exist. They generally charge a fee of around 10%–15%. There are a few websites around where you can post your website up to brokers – kind of like a cross between ebay and a brokers firm.

Sell to your visitors – A commonly used technique to get a good profit from the sale of your website is to post a 'site for sale' link or image on the frontpage of the site for sale. This targets the audience to people interested in the topic of the site. But be warned not all of these people are or want to be webmasters.

Personal Contact – If you have a low budget, selling your website through your personal contact can be very rewarding. This takes everyone else out of the equation and you pay no broker fees or ad fees. If you plan on selling your website this way make sure you know enough people who would be interested in the site.

### Website Checklist

Before you get to putting up website for sale ads and hiring a site broker, there are a few things you will need. Firstly, find out in detail your statistics. This including unique visitors per day or month, bandwidth used per month and current and past revenue for the website. Most people who are in the industry will ask for the pagerank of the website too. You can find out your page rank by downloading the google toolbar and re-visiting your website. A pagerank is considered by most webmasters as being a large factor.

Matt Dobinson is the owner of

– A website dedicated to buying and selling websites

online for the best possible price.. He also runs

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How to Sell your Website

Picking Out The Best Web Design For Your Website

Earning With Affiliate Program

The 10 Myths of Successful Selling

CHOOSING PRODUCTS FOR YOUR WEBSITE

My Online Friends – Dating Website Script

Ultimate Web Shield

WebSite TollBooth – Analyze Your Web Traffic like Never Before!

Script Jungle – You'll Get 10 Great Scripts With Resell Rights!  
AX Gold's Website Guardian



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