



Content + Design + Usability = Because your business needs more than "design"

If content is king, why is it such a royal pain?

Anybody can write, right? So who budgets for creating content for the web? Besides, you've got all that great content from your brochures you can use. Sadly, content has become an afterthought when it comes to web design projects and that's a mistake that can cost you far more than you'll save by not including copywriting in your web design budget.

So why is content so important and what makes the web all that different? That's like asking "What difference does it make which kid you bring home from the hospital?" It matters!

Content is the whole point. If your website were a storefront, then content would be the reason customers stopped by. To put it another way, content is to your website as your product/service is to your business.

So let's say you own a hair salon. It may be true that your receptionist can cut hair, but do you want him/her to? By the same token, you or your marketing manager can write, but probably with the same precision that your receptionist cuts hair. That level of precision might be fine for an internal memo, but if you want to impress customers then you might not want to go it alone on content development anymore than you'd want your receptionist to cut hair.

There are no second chances when it comes to first impressions. The experience that customers have interacting with the content on your website is no less important than the experience they have in your store. Oftentimes, it is the first impression a potential customer will have of your business. What could be more important

to your business than the first impression you leave with a potential customer?

No one reads anymore. Most of the content on your website will be scanned, not read. Professional copywriters who specialize in creating content for the web will make your content more easily scanned.

Your content needs an engineer. The web is all about getting from point A to point B. Your content has to tell a compelling story and it has to keep the traffic moving. In the same way that the flow of traffic on the highway doesn't just happen by accident, the flow of traffic on and around your website needs to be engineered by experts in web content.

Search engines care about content. On the web, content serves two masters: people and search engines. Content optimized for the web is critical to your search engine ranking. If terms like keyword density and long tail keywords are foreign, then chances are you need to hire someone who can help create content for your website.

Everybody's in a rush. Content that is easy to find and easy to read is critical on the web. Every second online that is wasted feels like a department store line that never moves. If the store wastes your time every time, it's not long before you begin looking for a new place to shop. The same is true on the web.

But people will be wowed by my design so that's where I want to invest. It is true that design is important, but only if it supports your content. Cool designs that make your website harder to use cause the "wow" factor to wear off quickly.

LB Brumage
President, [CDUdotcom](http://CDUdotcom.com)
www.CDUdotcom.com

Notes on ... web content

Are you really saving money?

Most people create their own content because they are looking to save on cost. But if your website is hard to find, hard to use, and doesn't accurately reflect what makes you unique, then chances are that you are losing money by trying to save.

But I have all this great content

Putting your print marketing materials online is fine for the short-term, but in the long-run quality content created specifically for the web is a good investment. Traditional marketing copy is not created with search engine optimization in mind and it's written for the page, not the screen. That's like putting cartoons from the newspaper on TV. There are as many differences between the two as there are similarities.

Wouldn't it be nice if everything were the express lane?

Professional copywriters skilled in creating web content help streamline your website. Wouldn't you prefer a store that had nothing but express lanes? So would your customers. Making customers wait--on hold, in line or online--creates a negative customer service experience. Your customers want to feel that you value them and their time.

The best way to create roadblocks

When projects stall, it's like an investment with no earnings. Waiting on content is the most common reason for web design projects to fall behind schedule. Or clients rush to create content which they are ultimately not happy with. You have a day job and creating content for your website isn't it! Customers come to your website for content which makes it one of the most important investments you can make when investing in your website.

For information on how **CDUdotcom** can help you plan, create, refresh, or optimize your website, **contact us** for a free consultation.

© 2008, CDUdotcom