Seven C's of Winning Web Site Content

By Gina Furia Rubel, Esq.
President
Furia Rubel Communications, Inc.

The Internet is inundated with millions of Web sites offering billions of products and services. How do you plan to make that all-important initial experience at your site memorable? What is going to make the visitor come back for more?

As a company with a Web site, you want to stand out among your competitors, provide a valuable experience for your visitors and generate new business. By following the **Seven C's of Winning Web Site Content** rule, you can accomplish each of these goals.

The Seven C's of Winning Web Site Content are to be:

- Clean
- Clear
- Concise
- Consistent
- Creative
- Customer-centric
- Constant

So what do the seven C's mean to you in terms of your Web site content?

Keep it Clean – Your Web site should be free of clutter. Remember the old adage, "You never have a second chance to make a first impression." Just like your office and your attire, your Web site is often an indicator of your visitor's first impression of you and your business. Your Web site background should be friendly to your typical visitor, your font and text should be easy to read and your menu should be easy to find and use.

Keep it Clear – Write to your audience and make clear what your company does right from the start. Your home page should provide enough information that the visitor understands the products or services you offer and how to find more information. Each subsequent page should be written in clear language with easy-to-find links to additional information.

Keep it Concise – Keep your Web site content simple and to the point. Answer your visitor's questions: What do you do? What's in it for me? What's the benefit? What's your track record? How can I get in touch with you? If you provide services, provide

just enough information to get their attention and an easy way for them to contact you for more. If you provide products, give them all the information so they will order the product immediately (product image, concise description, price, ordering instructions, shipping information, return policy, etc.).

Keep it Consistent – Everything on your Web site should be consistent, from the look and feel of the site to the font size and type. Your Web site is your electronic brochure – print each page to see what it looks like in its entirety. It's like decorating a house; you wouldn't normally decorate a colonial farmhouse with contemporary furniture.

Keep it Creative – Be creative with everything from your use of words to your overall style. Remember that this is your uniquely individual story to tell – make it original and compelling so you can stand out among the crowd. Find creative ways to provide value-added information for your visitor such as helpful links to industry publications and advocacy groups, a glossary of industry terms or access to important and relevant news of the day.

Keep it Customer-centric – Know your audience, their needs and limitations. If your customers tend to be in the 50-plus-age market, then don't use small or fancy-type fonts. Make your site easy to read. Answer your typical customers' questions and fill their needs. Remember when designing your Web site, that you want your customers to respond in a positive manner.

Keep it Constant – Create a way to regularly keep customers coming back for more. If you are a service-based business, write articles that position you as an expert and provide a means for visitors to receive those articles. Author an electronic newsletter and send it to visitors who opt-in. If you are a product-based business, continually update your inventory and provide a way to inform existing and new customers on a regular basis. Remember, good business leads to repeat business.

By following the Seven C's of Winning Web Site Content rule, you can establish your site as both a valuable business tool and a highly recognizable and revisited hot spot on the Web. Ultimately, your site will help you generate new and repeat business by successfully communicating your message to your target audience. What do the "Seven C's" mean to you in the end? A positive return on your interactive investment, a solid groundwork laid for a successful Web site future and a Web site that you will gladly use yourself and refer to again and again.

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