The Persuasive Power of Words

November 18th, 2010 by Kathryn Lukaske

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As one of the newest dragons, I've been hesitant to create my first post. Ironic, since blogging is my first love. Well actually, that's not entirely true. My first love is words. I live, breathe and dream words...and if I don't respond to people immediately, it's probably because I'm distractedly composing a post in my head.

Content Rules

So you can imagine my hostility when I listened to a webinar the other day and found them discussing the importance of image-rich landing pages, versus pages heavily laden with content.

Wha--?? As a Web Content Developer, is my position in jeopardy? Can an image really have greater potential to communicate value than my amazing words?? Well, yes and no. Graphics are powerful tools...but I'm a diehard believer in balance. It's just as easy to overfill a landing page with images as it is to inundate your readers with text. And who hasn't wanted to slap the inventor of the sliding pop-up ad...where one immediately feels besieged, like they're being surrounded by a swarm of used-car salesmen. It's too much, too fast...almost like a sudden short-circuit of faulty wiring...the senses overload as the images bombard, leaving the reader with no clear destination.

Okay, so too much of anything = bad. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that. So, where's the balance? How do we effectively offset the need for a landing page rich in SEO but also keep the reader engaged and focused?

This seems to be the $100,000.00 question. I'm imagining in a perfect world, we'd all have a team of specialists who could provide us with three distinct versions of our landing page, which could then be subjected to vigorous testing by control groups and various panels of experts in everything from subject comprehension to layout design, ultimately leaving us with a clear and distinct winner. In this less than perfect world, however, I believe it's important for companies to remember who's viewing their sites and make sure you're conveying your bottom line to those visitors.

It's All About the Balance

The truth is, inundating your readers with scads of information right off the bat may not be the best approach. Streamlined seems to be more effective to the mainstream reader and yes, often images can convey a clearer message than a full paragraph of over-utilized text. I believe there's a titanic desire to oversell...but that can have the same end result as the infamous ship, with many backing out soon after they've arrived. If the page isn't memorable, where's the incentive to stay?

Somehow, we have to find that all-elusive balance between being concise and engaging and yet still manage to augment our landing pages to get the most bang for our buck. Images are powerful at conveying emotion...but no more so than carefully chosen words. Better yet would be a carefully optimized combination of both. A restructured, esthetically-pleasing, surprisingly simple design with precise, well-chosen content may be your best option. Consider getting a fresh, unbiased view of your site from an outside source for some feedback. Is your site clearly stating your message? I wouldn't make the assumption that someone outside your industry should not understand your bottom line, for they may be the very people who require your services the most.

Somewhere, between images and content, there is a happy medium...where everything exists in perfect harmony and both consumer and marketer are ultimately sated. Successfully marrying the two is a crucial goal of any prosperous business. Finding the right balance for your site may require some trial and error...but creating an effective, clear message will result in a viable increase in your company's bottom line. And that is a powerful thing.

Tags: business website content writing, content writing, internet content providers, internet copywriting, online copywriting services, website images

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7 comments on "The Persuasive Power of Words"

John L. — November 18, 2010

I like words, sometimes. I like pictures too, sometimes. Apples and oranges, I like them sometimes too....

Reply

Kathryn Lukaske — November 18, 2010

Hey John! Long time, no see. Are you hungry? You sound hungry to me. I'm hungry. Apples and oranges sound good...

Reply

Mark Gilbert — November 22, 2010

Kathryn, I like this post. I too love words. While my writings may appear verbose, they enable me to convey my thoughts and emotions so that there is little doubt on the meaning. Pictures can be powerful too, but sometimes, just sometimes, a thousand words communicate a message more efficaciously. Great reading your first post! Keep 'em coming.

Reply

kathryn — December 8, 2010

Mark,
Thank you for slanting your comment towards the awesome power of words...and subsequently, my area of expertise.

Shall I get started on that 1000 word message?

Reply

Rosalie Achzet — November 27, 2010

I thought you might like this 😊

Life's a bitch, and then you're reincarnated. 😉

Reply

Cathy Webster — January 14, 2011

Hey Kathryn. I was just stalking you a little bit this afternoon – it all started with 'liking' you on FB. I am fascinated by your Dragon. Ric Dragon company and agree 1,000 per cent with what you say here. Good luck with everything – hope you're loving your job. Any company that hires you to write their blog posts is a smart company indeed.

Reply

Kathryn Lukaske — January 14, 2011

Hey Cathy!
Thanks for the comment. And so mature of you to admit to the semi-stalking part...most ppl would never own it.
I so appreciate the kind words (I'm hoping Dragon, Ric Dragon reads it!). I AM loving my job. Now you've inspired me to finally getting around to writing post #2! (WOOHOO?)
Again...thanks so much for taking the time to comment. I really appreciate it!

Reply

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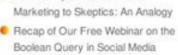
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