WHOLE WHALE

Simple Guide to Writing for the Web

& Bonus Resources

Guidelines

Content should always be useful
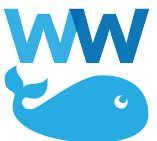- Don't stress SEO
- Write for what your users need

Don't create articles +600 words
- People scan the web
- Huffpo recommends under 800 words

Use Bullets & Lists

- No more than 7
- Remember that people scan the web
- Long lists are a bit daunting
- Of course it is up to you
- But seriously, think before you bullet
- There is really no point to this one.
- See what we mean…

Photos & Videos

- Think usability and use Alt/Titles for all images
- Videos embedded from YouTube help SEO, include brief summaries
- Beware of images that push down content below the top half of the page

Chunk your content

Use Sub-headers

It makes it easier for users to scan the page and it helps to organize your thoughts. This is especially helpful for tip guides and content that tries to explain a concept.

Use Header Tags

Use your website's CSS style for <h2> and <h3> for the headers to visually break out titles. This also helps Google index the page and judge what the relevant SEO terms are.

Don't be afraid to link to more content

Sometimes there is just more that you need to include around a subject. It is almost always better to just have a link go to another article or reference on your site that dives into the topic. This can also feed into an awesome SEO strategy.

Or else...

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Notice the difference? Your users will.

Links Connect your Content

- Linking relevant keywords to your own content is very helpful for SEO
- Linking to external reputable sources on .edu, .gov, and others will help your content
- Think about ways to link back to your content as well.

(hint: Slideshare is very good for this.)

Use **Bold** & *Italics* & <u>Underline</u> sparingly

- Text design should be *minimal.*
- It is **very** <u>easy</u> to *overdo it*.
- Bold
  - Emphasis of a point, keywords, organizing concepts
- Italics
  - titles of works, emphasis, foreign/unfamiliar words, names of official ships/trains/aircraft/space craft
- Underline
  - Titles of works

Use Relevant Keywords

- Use the language your audience understands.
- Think about the way people search for the issue based on their needs.
- Aim to use the focused keyword of the article in the sub-headers and relevant phrases to the keyword.
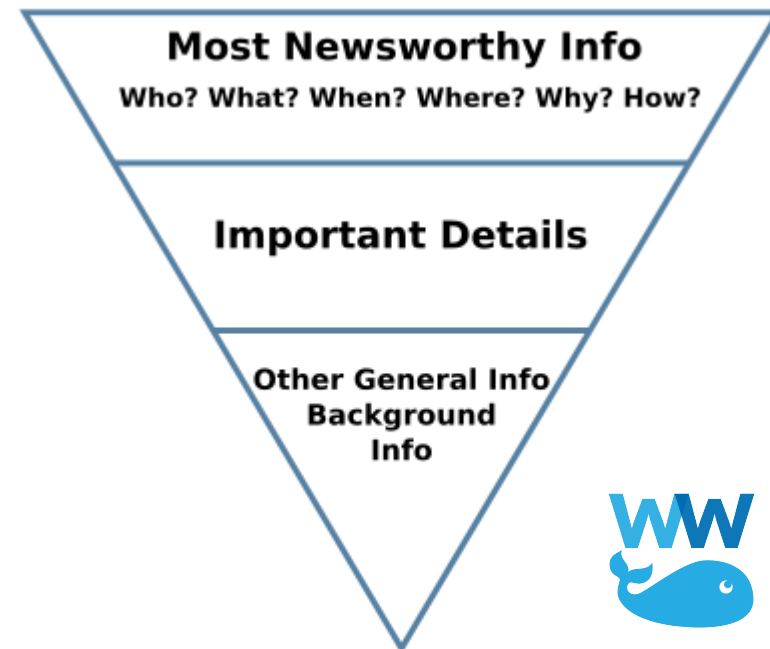- DON'T KEYWORD STUFF your content. It will actually hurt your ranking.

Inverted Pyramid

Remember most users only scan content.

- Prioritize the point in the intro
- Support with details
- Other details follow

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inverted_pyramid

Most Newsworthy Info
Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Important Details

Other General Info
Background
Info

And there is much more

Whole Whale TV on content marketing for nonprofits

SEO Tips - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RuQ3FcS1ULc

Content Marketing - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHcXcY9G5fc

Ted Resource on Using Clear Language

Indicate the direction to my humble abode. Which way is home?

http://ed.ted.com/on/OB5OlYAl

Quick Tips on Writing for the Web

Tips from the point of view of a designer.

http://webdesign.about.com/od/writing/a/aa031405.htm

Using Plain Language

Saves you money because people don't call you and makes them happier.

http://centerforplainlanguage.org/about-plain-language/benefits-of-plain-language/

there is sooo much more

Rules for Writing for the Web

Tips for tone of voice, fact checking, and formatting.

http://econsultancy.com/us/blog/6771-how-to-write-for-the-web-23-useful-rules

Consider Low Literacy

"The basic skills needed for literacy include things like recognizing words fluently, understanding the structure of sentences and how they relate to each other, drawing appropriate inferences, applying information, and solving quantitative problems."

http://contentsmagazine.com/articles/the-audience-you-didn%E2%80%99t-know-you-had/

Plain Writing Act

"The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires the federal government [executive branch] to write all new publications, forms, and publicly distributed documents in a "clear, concise, well-organized" manner."

http://www.howto.gov/web-content/requirements-and-best-practices/laws-and-regulations/plain-writing-act

Yup, still going

Concise and Scannable Writing for the Web

People **scan** things to make sure it is worth investing the time to read the article. "79 percent of our test users always scanned any new page they came across; only 16 percent read word-by-word."

http://www.nngroup.com/articles/concise-scannable-and-objective-how-to-write-for-the-web/

Whole Whale Resources

- Teach yourself SEO in 6 steps
- Tagging images for SEO
- 16 Tips for writing for the web