

# What's Your Competitive Advantage?

By Jeff Montgomery

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What's The CA?: Using Your Web Site To Highlight Your Competitive Advantage

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What sets you apart?

In a crowded marketplace, it's imperative that your potential customers know how working with you will enhance their bottom line. In other words, they need to know what sets you apart from the rest of the pack.

In marketing circles, this is called your Competitive Advantage, or CA. You may even see this referred to as your Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Either way, it's what sets you apart.

It could be that you have a special level of expertise that your competitors don't. Or, that you bring added value to your services or products for a reasonable price. It may even be that you offer a money-back guarantee (gasp!) if your customers aren't satisfied.

When your customers and potential customers visit your web site, they need to clearly see what your unique competitive advantage is. Keep in mind that things on the Internet operate differently than in the 'real world'. People don't take time, usually, to dig around for information. They're surfing, they stop at your site, and if they don't see what they want in a few seconds, they're gone.

So it's critical that your web site hold their attention and communicate your message quickly. The design of your site and the copy (or text) on your site should grab their attention and clearly lay out why there's no other choice but to do business with you.

Design Pointers:

Make the site pleasing and professional to look at from a design and graphics standpoint. Unfortunately, there are thousands of sites out there that are design nightmares. They either look amateurish, the layout is difficult, or it's difficult to navigate. Your site should make people stop and say, 'Hey, that's well done'. Visitors should then be able to move around your site easily and intuitively to find what they need.

Highlight your headlines.

In addition to the content (which we'll cover below), your headlines should be graphically different - us bolding, or use a different color. This makes them stand out, which draws a visitor's attention.

Don't make it too fancy.

Your site should look professional, but that doesn't mean you need a lot of graphics or a flashy intro page. Hook them with the visuals, then reel them in with the copy.

Copy (or Text) Pointers:

Make your text to the point. Long discourses on how wonderful your business is will simply bore people. Say what's necessary, but no more.

Don't tell them how great you are, show them how they'll benefit. That's really what visitors want to know - what's in it for me. Show them through examples, testimonials, or case studies how your services will meet their needs.

Write good headlines. Coupled with bolding or a special color, headlines are what will grab a visitor's attention. Yours should be snappy, and should quickly highlight needs and solutions.

Getting a web site tuned to perform optimally can be an involved process. When you're working with your web designer or copywriter keep these few pointers in mind and you'll soon see your business booming!

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Jeff Montgomery is the President and owner of NetBiz Design, a web design business specializing in working with small businesses, non-profits, and independent professionals. Visit our web site for a free report – '10 Things NOT To Do On Your Web Site' – [www.netbizdesign.com](http://www.netbizdesign.com) .

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