

# Does your homepage work?

By Peter Simmons

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All websites have a homepage. It is the most important page of your site. It acts as the main gateway to the entire site. Most of your prospective customers will enter through it. Its vital to get it right. You dont want them to just turn around and go away again.

Take a moment to clear your mind. Now go and look at your homepage and take a minute to evaluate it. Does it work for your prospective customers?

Most will arrive at your homepage and quickly scan through the content. If they are interested in what they read and see they'll typically decide to click on a link that takes them to another page where they'll find more information. As they make that decision they'll be asking things like:

What do they do?

Do they look professional?

Whats in it for me?

Do i have the problem they describe?

Are they talking directly to me?

How can i get it?

Alternatively, if the homepage hasnt interested them immediately then they'll leave just as quickly as they arrived, unlikely to return.

Your homepage is the gateway to your website and plays a critical part in the prospects visit. First impressions count. The success of your site depends on your homepage. Now, before we look at what a homepage should be, lets look at what it shouldnt be.

It should not be a false homepage requiring you to click a link to get to the real homepage. It shouldnt be a page that fails to direct the prospect to further action. It shouldnt contain any content that doesnt serve an immediate and clear purpose. It should never read like a dull brochure, that does nothing to motivate prospects to seek more information or buy immediately.

What a homepage should be. It should have a clear message. It should be a dynamic page that instantly conveys a sense of what you do, how you do it, who you are, how you do business, etc. It should start to describe the direct benefits that prospective customers get by buying your product or service. It should create prospect interest and make them eager to find out more. It should provide direction and clearly marked links to get them there. It should focus entirely on serving the needs of your prospective customers and removing their anxieties.

The purpose of your website is to sell your products and services to your prospects. To be effective your homepage must meet the needs of your prospects exactly and provide answers to their questions. To do this you must know what your prospects want and how they want it. If you don't already know, find out. Ask them!

Also, spend some time looking at other homepages learning what works and what doesn't. Are there features and styles that you could adopt on your site?

Once you have these answers design your entire homepage around them. Spend some time getting it right and both you and your prospects will benefit. Don't settle for second best unless you want your website to fail as a result of being ineffective.

When you've done it. Take a moment to clear your mind. Now go and look at your homepage once again and take a minute to re-evaluate it. Does it work for your prospective customers now?

Good luck!

Peter Simmons is editor of the DYNAMIQ EZINE. GET MAXIMUM RESULTS FROM YOUR WEBSITE! Increase your traffic, prospect conversions, sales, profits, referrals and more... START GETTING RESULTS RIGHT NOW with your \$129 WEBSITE EVALUATION ABSOLUTELY FREE at <http://www.dynamiq.co.uk/ezine> or email me anytime at <mailto:peter@dynamiq.co.uk>

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