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BY CRAIG GROSSMAN

Whats Missing From Your Website?

12 Rookie Website Mistakes…

And How To Fix Them

By Craig Grossman with Fabulous Copy | www.fabulouscopy.com

Your website is your window to the world. It's where your potential customers will go to see if you're a real company, and if you can solve their issues with the products or services they need. And there's a big difference between a good and a great website!

I know, as I'm a highly trained and certified **copywriter, content creator,** and **brand strategist.** I've audited dozens of websites and viewed the good, the bad, and the ugly!

Nearly any business can put up an okay website.

The problem is that most of the owners don't know what's missing. Including what parts should be there to attract customers and make visiting their website a pleasant experience. And what keeps visitors there until they take the next steps in their buying journey.

To remedy this problem, I came up with the Top 12 Mistakes I see on websites every day.

And simple steps you can take to fix these mistakes. I know this is an extensive list, so I hope you don't get overwhelmed. If you see a handful of these mistakes on your business website, don't try to fix them all at once. Instead, just pace yourself and tackle them one...at...a...time!

1. Your Home Page is not Clear And Compelling

Your Home Page is usually where website visitors go first. So people should be able to discover what you do, how it helps them, and how to take the next step within 7 seconds of coming to your Home Page!

If any of this is not clear, they may "bounce" and find one of your competitors.

And how do you make your Home Page more compelling? I think the best way is through the use of a story. People love stories. When a writer opens up a story loop, most naturally want to read on to see what happens next.
You can invite your readers into your story by talking about the problems or issues your products or services will solve for them. They'll be way more interested in your items when they can see how your products will help them.

There are many more ways to make your Home Page clearer and more compelling to your audience. I believe the best way to do this is to incorporate the StoryBrand

7-Part Framework into your Home Page and other pages on your website. To learn some StoryBrand basics, I recommend reading the book Building A StoryBrand by Donald Miller.

As a Certified StoryBrand Guide, I can also help you create your own BrandScript, giving you excellent talking points to use on your Home and About Us pages and other marketing collateral.

Please contact me if you'd like to learn more about this.

2. No Blog Article Page

When I do website audits for clients, I've noticed many websites that don't have a Blog page. I find this very surprising!

Publishing blog articles regularly (at least once per month is recommended) is a great way to educate your audience about your company and industry. They are not meant to be sales pages –it's best to give them the information they needor answer their questions in a narrative form. However, a light CTA (Call to Action) is good to have, especially near the end of the article.

According to Compass Digital Strategies, having blog articles with helpful content can increase website visitors by 55%. They can also help bring in 67% more leads and increase backlinks to your website by 97%! (Backlinks are created by other websites when they reference your article for their audience.)

Why does adding Blog articles create such a significanteffect? It's mainly because it improves your website's SEO results, as your company can rank for more keywords than before having the Blog page.Also, you build trust and authority in your brand by showing your knowledge and expertise in these articles. As readers trust you more, they are more likely to explore your services and become customers.

3. No Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Page

Having an FAQ page is a must-do! After seeing all the benefits of having your own FAQ page, you'll wonder why your organization hasn't created one yet.

- **Your FAQ page addresses your readers' needs. Potential new clients always have questions about your products or services. Your job is to talk to your customer service folks and find out the most asked questions from searchers or new customers.** Think of your FAQ page as the central hub your customer scan visit with their questions. You can use this page to answer questions about your company and products, anticipate and answer objections, and retain customers that have issues.

- **Use your FAQ page to establish your business as a trusted expert.** By answering actual and anticipated questions, you'll increase your authority and the chances of someone wanting to buy from you.

- **A good FAQ page will boost your SEO rankings.**
  It's the perfect place to publish interesting information about your business, products, and services, and Google loves content-rich information like this. It also increases the chances of ranking for "long-tail"keywords your audience is searching for

A few quick tips for your FAQ page:

- It might be a good idea to divide the page into different sections, especially if you have a long list of questions! For example, some subheadings could be: About the Company, How to Get Started, Product/Service Questions, How To Questions, and Troubleshooting.

- Be concise and informative, but return to the benefits of working with your company where appropriate.

- Be sure to link to other pages on your website for more information.

- Format your content for easy consumption. Make it scannable with bullet points, short paragraphs, and white space between subjects

4. No Internal Links

Internal Links are links to other pages on your website. For example, a blog article that mentions one of your services could have a link to your more in-depth Services page. Or your Home page should have a link to your Schedule A Call page.

Internal links help keep visitors on your website longer. The linked pages help them better understand your business and how you can assist them.

Here are more benefits of using internal links:

- They enhance your website's overall User Experience – by making it easier to navigate and giving users the information they need.
- Increase conversions –your visitors will stay longer by linking to important pages. This increases their chances of buying from you, or taking another "next step"(like signing up for your newsletter).
- Improve your SEO results - your links create more structure and tell Google's

crawler bots where to go to index your most important pages for higher visibility. A link is like a "vote"for that page or post linked to.

- They tell Google which keywords you want to rank for – by using these keywords as your anchor text (the text in the actual blue link).

Internal links are an excellent way to create CTAs (Calls To Action), such as Get Your Free Report or Contact Us For More Information.

5. Difficult Navigation – Things Are Hard To Find

There could be nothing more frustrating than getting lost on a complicated website! If it's hard for your users to find what they need, they will give up and go to your competitor's easy-to-use website.

Navigation is all about creating the best User Experience possible for your audience. Here are some areas to focus on:

- Your Main Menu –Is it intuitive and easy to use? Do all the links go to the right places?
- Your "Search"Box –Is this easy to find? Does it work well? This is especially important for eCommerce websites. It's a good idea to test the search function out.
- Filters on Category Pages –These are for eCommerce companies to help users find just the right size, color, etc. Make sure these filters work and are easy to use.

- Contact Information –This should be easy to find using your Contact Page, chatbots, live chat, or the footer of each web page. Make sure a phone number and email address are available.
- A Clear Path to What They Want To Buy –It should be easy to navigate from your Home page to a Category page, to a Product page.
- Clear Links –to other web pages using descriptive "anchor text".
- Your Logo Link –when clicked,it should return the visitor to your Home page.

6. No Clear Next Steps or Calls To Actions

Before you even think about where you want to lead the reader next for any web page, think about this first: What moment is your user in now?

Ask yourself questions such as:

- Where are they coming from? It could be from different places such as a lead gen article, a landing page, a SERP (search engine results page), or another web page on your website.
- What were they promised before they got to the current web page? An intro discount? A free report? A product guarantee? Acknowledge this on the current page.
- What is their likely mood?
- What is their desired outcome?

Figuring out your reader's context will make it much easier to create a CTA (call to action) or a next step for the page. The worst mistake is to "dead end"the page, with no CTA there at all.

You can use other CTAs/Next Steps besides "Buy Now". Some ideas include:

- Send Me a Free Report
- Share This Article On LinkedIn (or other social media)
- Other Products You May Like
- Have a question? Contact our Customer Service Department
- Links to Other Website Content

Don't just leave them hanging! You'll always want to lead your audience to the next step on their buying journey

7. Long Paragraphs and Run-On Sentences in Your Content

These days, most people scan website content. They don't read every word unless they have an excellent reason to do so. Chances are most paragraphs longer than three sentences will not get read

I see web pages with long paragraphs more often than I expect. These usually also include sentences that run on and on with lots of "ands," "alsos,"and "buts". Here are a few tips about this issue:

- Break up all long paragraphs into shorter segments with just 2 or 3 sentences each. Or, if these paragraphs contain content with lists of items, break these lists into bullet points for easier reading.
- Use the "power of one"for your sentence structure. Keep it to just one idea per sentence.

- Create white space between sentences and paragraphs to let your content "breathe". You can also break up content with images, infographics, or charts.

Making your web page content easier to skim and read creates a better user experience for your audience. This makes them want to stay on your website longer, increasing their chances of taking the next step.

8. No Case Studies or Testimonials

Most company websites do have some testimonials, but I've seen a handful that don't. At least half of the websites I've audited do not have any case studies at all!

This observation is most surprising, as both of these marketing tools are easy to create and can reap many benefits for the organization. Having both Case Studies and Testimonials from current or past customers build trust and authority for your company and brand.

A testimonial is a short (2 or 3 sentence) favorable comment from a customer about their experience with your company or service. If you don't have these, just ask some of your best customers for some feedback. If they come back with a long answer, you can edit this down to the most pertinent benefits they've experienced.

Case Studies can range from a few paragraphs to a 2–3-page pdf with images, bullet points, and charts. Well-written case studies follow proven formulas, like **this 9-step formula from AWAI.** The main idea is to describe your customer's experience with your product in detail: from the problem they needed to solve, to the search process, to finding and using your product, to how this helped them be more successful. It's good to incorporate numbers and statistics if possible.

Suppose a potential client can empathize with your case study customer by seeing the similarities with their issues. In that case, the case study can become a powerful motivator for the new client to take action with your company.

9. Other Missing Content

Besides the missing web pages already mentioned –blog articles, case studies, and an FAQ page –chances are other content should be on your website, but it's just not there. Of course, you don't want only to fill up space…it has to be there for a reason.

There are three main reasons to add more content:

1. **To build Trust and Authority for your brand.** The more your audience sees you as an expert in your field, the more likely they will buy from you.
2. **To create better SEO search results.** Suppose there are specific keyword phrases that your competitors rank high on, but you don't. It's time to write an article or other content using those keywords that is better than what is available. If you can improve your ranking for these keywords, more visitors will find you and visit your website.

3. **For a better User Experience.** You'll want to answer any questions or explain how you solve any issues your potential clients will have. The better they get to know you and your services, the more likely they will take the next step.

Here are a few ideas for adding the right content:

- **Pillar Content Pages** are long pieces about subjects that matter greatly to your audience. For example, a common(and excellent)title is "The Ultimate Guide To...".

- **Our Process, or How We Work With You**–potential clients often need to know precisely what it will be like to work with you and the step-by-step procedures you will use. If they don't understand this well, it creates uncertainty and even a bit of fear. Thich hesitation could keep them from taking the next step.

- **How To, or Explainer content**–these are often videos. Useful for more complex or high-tech products. If customers don't know how to use your product (or how to fix it if something goes wrong), they won't use it and will not buy again

10.Your Website Doesn't Look Good on Mobile

There are mobile-only websites and mobile-responsive websites. Most websites these days are mobile-responsive. This means they look nearly the same whether you see them on a mobile phone, tablet, or desktop computer. Google also says **this is best for your SEO.**

Nevertheless, there can still be issues when viewing your website on mobile. **Here are some possible problems:**

- Messy scrolling
- Images and objects don't connect with copy
- Copy is too long and blocky
- Elements are out of place and don't look right
- Buttons are too small and hard to click

Talk to your website designer or host if you see any of these issues.

Here are some site-wide mobile recommendations:

- Check that the design is mobile-ready.
- Is the menu easy to find? Is it simple and self-explanatory?
- Calls to action are clear and easy to click.
- Keep forms simple and easy to tap into.
- Fast load times are essential.
- The search function is easy-to-find and easy to use.
- Contact info is easily accessible –phone numbers are clickable.

11. Back-End SEO –No Title Tags, Meta Descriptions, or Alt Tags (Or Poorly Written!)

Search Engine Optimization, or SEO, is about everything you can do to get the best ranking possible on a SERP (search engine results page). SEO is a big subject, and the rules seem to change almost monthly.

You want searchers to easily find your website when they have issues your company solves. Here I want to focus on what businesses often neglect: your back-end SEO items.

Here are three areas to look at:

1. Title Tags-The title tag is a brief (50-to-60 character) description of the content on the page. This becomes the title of your search engine result. It should contain your primary keyword phrase. The formula for a title tag is: Keyword(s) | Brand Name. An example is: Car Insurance for Veterans | The Zebra.

2. Meta Descriptions-The meta description is a compelling 50-to-160-character description of the content on the page. Technically, your meta description doesn't affect search engine rankings. However, a good meta description improves the chances of searchers clicking through to your page. So, it has to "sell"the page to be effective. Using your keyword phrase, or a variation on this, is best in the meta description.

Here's an example of a well-written Title Tag and Meta Description in a search result for REI:

3. Alt Tags – A brief description of the images used in your content for visually impaired people. They are typically 3 to 5 words. Again, you'll want to be descriptive without keyword stuffing. Here's an example of possible alt tags for the image below:

Poor Image Alt: bird
Better Image Alt: green parakeet
Best Image Alt: green ring-tailed parakeet eating

12. No Lead Generator

As the name implies, a lead generator creates sales leads for your products or services. This is something valuable you can give away in exchange for the reader's email address. It could be a helpful article, a newsletter, a quiz, an interview, a checklist, or even a product sample!

Here are a few ways to make them work for you:

- It should establish yourself as an authority in your field of expertise.
- It should solve your customer's problem and create a sense of reciprocity.
- It should have an intriguing title and a noticeable design, at least for the cover page.

Lead generators should be a part of your marketing funnel. First, they help you to build your email list. Then, you'll use this list to send emails about your services, turn readers into leads, and leads into clients.

So, tell me the truth…

Have you made at least a couple of these mistakes on your website?

("Oh no, my website is perfect"–Ha!)

It's okay, because as the old saying goes, you often don't know what you don't know.

If you're a DIYer and want to add the content and fix your mistakes yourself, good for you!

But I'm also here to help you.

I've had the training and experience to remedy any or all of these problems for you. Especially if you have "more important"things to do, like working with clients!

To learn more about how I can help with different projects, please visit my **List of Services Page** on my website, **www.fabulouscopy.com.** Or send me a note on my **Contact Fabulous Copy Page.**

You can have a successful website that brings your business a ton of leads and sales!

Craig Grossman owns **Fabulous Copy by Craig Grossman,** specializing in **Copywriting, Content Creation,** and **Brand Narrative Strategy.**

Most business professionals don't have the time or resources to write compelling content or copy. Craig helps them create a brand narrative that invites clients into their story by showcasing how they solve their client's issues with their services. He then uses this "brandscript" to construct the marketing collateral they need to succeed. These professionals can now focus on what's really important, like running their business!

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