

 Solo Build It!

# Make Your Content PREsell!

How To Build Your “Brand of One”  
And Build Income Through Content

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The world seems to think that  
“Technology Rules”  
or  
“Image Sells.”

Wrong.

“Words are, of course,  
the most powerful drug used by mankind.”  
Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

This book is dedicated to  
those who realize the power of words  
and who want to learn how to use them.

Communicate.

PREsell.

The world will be yours.

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## Preamble

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Building a business is all about building relationships. Understand this simple but critical concept and the rest of this book will fall smoothly into place.

Let's set the scene. We'll begin offline...

- Your local baker. Impeccable shop. You could eat off the floor. Friendly smile. Every now and then, he throws in a couple of free pastries into your purchase. "Something for the kids. Lightly sweetened with honey so no sugar highs before bedtime!" Big smile and a "have a great day" as you leave.
- Your hairdresser. Big friendly hello. She asks all the right questions about your family, your job... and avoids the wrong ones. Shares all the latest gossip as she weaves her magic on your hair. And an enthusiastic "see you next month" goodbye.
- Hotel managers. Well, I won't even go there. The best know your name when you walk in, have every preference set beforehand. Our family's favorite even asks if we'll be ordering in from Carnegie's Deli on our first night's stay in New York.

In "the real world," business people build relationships with you, the customer. Now get ready for a "radical" concept that very few online small-business people understand...

**PREselling is the *online* version of relationship-building.**

PREselling warms up and builds trust and respect...



... far more than any online BBB logo ever could.

There's nothing wrong with displaying the BBB graphic to enhance trust. But nothing gives hesitant surfers and prospective customers a sense of trust, appreciation and loyalty the way that effective PREselling does.



**Here are two examples of the power of PREselling...**

Fiona McCardle and Jim Andrew have created a site, [rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com](http://rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com), which is every bit as warm, golden and inviting as Tuscany itself. They no longer work in the old-world textile industry, dependent on others in cold, cloudy Scotland. They now live the new-world Internet life, one that they own, in sunny Tuscany, Italy.

That is the power of PREselling. Read their story here...

<http://www.case-studies.sitesell.com/#LEADGEN>

Patty (Sassy) Knutson knew nothing about the online world except for checking emails and doing Google searches when she started. Sassy did know a lot about vegan nutrition, though.

This proud Solo Build It! user (“SBler”) now has a growing coaching business and multiple secondary income streams, including her own e-books, filled with various vegan cooking tips and techniques, and a weight-loss e-course.

Sassy even surprised herself. “I can’t express how fantastic it feels to have the desire to reach out to help people and they come knocking at my virtual door! It is surely the easiest way to build a coaching business.”

Read Sassy’s full story here...

<http://www.case-studies.sitesell.com/#SERVICES>

That is also PREselling. Why does it work?

Just like the offline baker, hairdresser and hotel manager, people want to do business with you. Why? Because they like you. Why do they like you? Because you took the time to build a relationship.

Can it be faked? No. People see through fakes, just like in the real world. But it can be learned.

And that brings me to your question... “How?... How can I write like that?”

The answer already lies within you. *Make Your Content PREsell!* and I will help to unlock it.

Let’s get started...

## 1. “I.Can’t.Write.Like.That”.

Oh yes you can. You can write to PREsell.

Or I wouldn’t bother writing this book.

All day long, you already PREsell. You do it in your personal relationships. You do it in your business. You do it every day, in every way.

Yet, somehow, when you sit down in front of a keyboard...



... it’s as if a great big STOP sign shuts you write down (get it, “write down”?). OK, no more puns. After all, I’m trying to build a relationship with you!

You usually have an opinion (right or wrong!) on everything and anything. But the moment a keyboard lies under your nose, you don’t have a clue what to say. It’s as if someone has shut down your brain. And the truth is... someone has.

Your teachers. Starting from grade school until your PhD, you learned to write to impress your teachers/professors. The denser the language you use, and the longer the words, the sentences or the paragraphs, the more intelligent you must be, right?

You know that PhD stands for “Piled higher and Deeper,” right?

This book is going to undo that damage. The first step is easy. Forget everything you learned in school about writing.

The second step requires a bit of habit-forming practice. Write friendly, the way you talk (well, almost).

Write short, sharp, active sentences. Your sentences should not be written in the longer, too formal, passive voice... like this one was! Let me rephrase that sentence into a more active version...

“Do not write in the longer, too formal, passive voice.”

And better still...

“Write short, sharp, active sentences.”

Yes, that’s how I started the above paragraph. And that brings me to another point: only repeat something if it’s really important. And this is really important!

A quick tip...

Watch for the passive “be” word in your sentences (“be written,” for example). When you find one, rework the sentence using the active voice.

If you happen to know some grammar and spelling, great! If not, we’re going to take care of that, too. The mechanics are the easy part.

It’s all easy, once I’ve *unlearned ya*. (Hey, I didn’t say that you can’t have fun with the language, too!)

Good PREselling is a bit like good art...

Visitors know great content when they read it.



Winning, PREselling content “works” at several levels...

- 1) It has that “been there, done that” voice and flair.
- 2) It has specific knowledge that comes from real experience.
- 3) It supports a depth of useful information – good reference material plays an important part.
- 4) It’s positioned in a way that’s uniquely yours.

Furthermore, it’s consistent, from web page to page, from newsletter issue to issue, from Facebook post to post, from Twitter tweet to tweet, from week to month to year.

And finally, it’s for the visitor (or customer), absolutely. If you write to please just yourself, you have a hobby. Nice creative outlet, but it’s not likely to pay much.

As you already know, PREselling is a key step in Solo Build It!’s **Content ➔ Traffic ➔ PREsell ➔ Monetize** process.

Good writing is the key to good PREselling.

The key to **C ➔ T ➔ P ➔ M** success is weaving your personal experience into some researched background information (more or less depending on the subject) on your web pages and in your newsletters. Add your expertise to your off-site content as well (ex., blog entries on reputable, related blogs, Facebook comments, related forum discussions, etc.).

This is the best way to credentialize yourself as an authority in your field and to inspire trust at the same time. Do this with original style and really set yourself above the crowd.

It doesn’t matter where you are in the **C ➔ T ➔ P ➔ M** process...

- brainstorming your site’s theme

- reviewing your list of profitable topics
- building an optimized Keyword-Focused Content Page
- deciding which monetization models “fit” best
- creating the first issue of your newsletter
- making your site interactive and viral
- joining AdSense, selling your e-book, earning affiliate income, etc.
- setting up social marketing avenues (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, etc.)
- making your site responsive or mobile-friendly.

No matter where you are... **C ➔ T ➔ P ➔ M** gives you the jump on your competition. The process works!

**C ➔ T ➔ P** is the engine that drives your own free, PREsold, ready-to-monetize traffic. Once you have that warm, PREsold traffic, monetizing is easy. You just collect the cash.



Everyone loves monetizing, of course. First, though, let’s get down to brass tacks. What is profitable PREselling really all about?

It boils down to getting “The Big 2” right...

- **BIG #1:** Present a clean, intuitive, professional-looking website design.
- **BIG #2:** Use your words to OVERdeliver what Web searchers seek... specific information. Communicate effectively and in a voice that’s uniquely yours.

A clear, credible, and confidence-inspiring website will effectively PREsell your products, your recommendations, and/or your services (depending upon your choice of monetization models). And warm, willing-to-buy (i.e., PREsold) visitors convert more easily into customers.

Let’s begin with BIG #1. It’s the simplest to address (yet somehow, it seems to interest everyone the most)...

## 1.1 BIG #1: Website Design

Present a clean, intuitive, professional-looking site design.

The instant your visitor arrives on your website, she will (consciously or unconsciously) form an immediate opinion. A good first impression is critical. Your design can either put your prospective customer at ease, or telegraph a lack of professionalism. Obviously, you want to engage every visitor, and put everyone into a receptive mindset, immediately.

What if you have “zero design skills?” No problem...

Design templates make it easy and remove the guesswork. Straightforward, clean design. If you somehow feel a deep-seated need to create your own sensational design, remember the golden design rule...

K-I-S-S! (Keep It Simple, S\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ !) If you have superb graphic and HTML ability, go ahead. But even then...

Clean. No bells and whistles. The Internet is an information medium, and providing a clean design, along with good content, remains as important now as it was in 1998.

Taking your site design out to the cutting edge is simply not necessary, in most situations. For example, Flash is often misused, the way animated graphics were a few years back.

No graphics skills or inclinations? Just use a predesigned template. Solo Build It! provides free top-notch, customizable templates. Simply pick one of the many in the Site Designer Gallery.

And if you have design experience, Solo Build It! can take everything you upload into it. The Upload Your Own HTML module interacts seamlessly with the rest of SBI!'s functionality. You get total design flexibility without sacrificing SBI!'s traffic-building and monetizing results!

Your site's design goes deeper than just its graphics and layout...

The appearance of your words is important. For example, here are some killers...

- filed with typos
- difficult to read or follow (ex., *odd fonts*, a kazillion links)
- **BOLD ALL CAPS FONTS ALL OVER THE PLACE**
- **too many colors** – red is, more and more, the sign of an amateur. Save colors for very special circumstances.

That's the design part. The layout (easy to use navigation, and lots of white space) is just as important as the design itself. Together, they create a great user experience.

A user-unfriendly website, with confusing and difficult navigation, is deadly. You may have the single most glorious-looking site in the world. But if you have a 14-tiered site with one of those hierarchical JavaScript-driven navigation menus that folks can't figure out, you're going to lose business.

Since this book is about writing to PREsell, let's summarize usability here and move on...

K-I-S-S. Same advice as for the design.

### **Bottom line advice...**

K-I-S-S. You'll do just fine.

### **A final note on "BIG #1"...**

Please do not memorize all the above as "things not to do." Instead, simply use some common sense.

Step back, every now and then, and ask yourself...

"Is this a site design that my audience will like and use?" Of course...

It will take a totally different approach to please teen game lovers vs. quantum physicists. But no matter who your target audience is...

The value of good content sinks if its presentation and usability are poor.

You may be more knowledgeable or have more expertise in your field than any of your competitors. But if you can't communicate this message in a credible setting, or if your visitors get lost, it won't do you any good. Your visitors won't stay around long enough to see your strengths.

Of course, a solid design will not complete your sale – heck, it doesn't even complete the PREselling. The design merely starts it. You'll never earn commissions or generate sales on the strength of your design alone.

But a bad design can kill your business, no matter how well you do everything else.

A solid design sets the groundwork, the subconscious mood to receive your message. Your visitors are ready for you to "deliver the words." They're happy, too, as they move about your site easily, always securely aware of their location. So, they're more than ready... they are anxious and open to receive your message.

Then, and only then, good content completes PREselling and leads to monetization.

### **Bottom line?**

Only good content can complete the job.

It's time now to move to BIG #2.

BIG #1 is indeed part of PREselling. Solo Build It! tools, and your common sense, easily make BIG #1 a “done deal.”

What you want and need to know is how to do the next part, which brings us to...

## 1.2 BIG #2: The Words

Use your words to OVERdeliver what Web searchers seek... specific information. Communicate effectively and in a voice that’s uniquely yours. Let me say it another way...

Convey your message to your visitor in a clear, concise, and confidence-inspiring manner. **Write in a style (i.e., voice) that’s unique and personable.**

Individuality works wonders on the Internet. It quickly differentiates you from the bland, characterless, and uninspiring (which just happens to be the vast majority). And I’m not just talking about style.

A special approach or twist can provide uniqueness to what would otherwise be a generic or a “me too” kind of theme. One way or another a unique edge sets you apart from competitors.

And your “between-the-lines” tone of voice is so important. Many online businesses, big and small, make the mistake of speaking **at** their visitor instead of talking **to** their visitor. Since the Internet is an informal medium, speak to your visitor as a **friend**. This will help you to connect and develop a bond.

Obviously, use common sense here. If your audience expects material to be delivered in a clinical, dry manner, cater to their needs. (I would not be too flippant with the embalming market.) Differentiate yourself with “appropriate flair”!



OK, we’re just about done...

- 1) Provide a confidence-boosting, solid site design. Check out Google to reassure yourself that your website doesn’t have to look like it belongs in the Louvre. “Solid and simple” wins the day.
- 2) Deliver words that OVERdeliver, in your own voice, with credible, trust-inspiring knowledge, and a unique twist.

That’s it. I hope you found *Make Your Content PREsell!* helpful. What’s that you say?

“**How** can I write like that?”

Oh, right. OK, I’m not done after all. I did promise to answer that question...

## 2. Words Rule

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In the kingdom of C → T → P → M, *content* is king.

Everything flows from content.

Google “gets” that, perhaps better than any other company in the world. And their AdSense program allows them (and you as the owner of a content site) to monetize that fact.

Anyone who “gets” the Internet gets that. Lucky for you, most small businesses (large ones, too) do not “get it.” They prefer to believe the “get your site (or store) up in 15 minutes” pitch.

It’s shameless. However, this reality works to your advantage because most small businesses either can’t be bothered or don’t understand the importance of creating real content.

Most online stores, for example, think that product descriptions = content.  
Wrong. Fatally wrong.

Any type of online business will soar by following the Solo Build It! process...

Content → Traffic → PREsell → Monetize



Online, people search for information, for solutions. They’re not looking for you. They usually don’t know exactly who or what can provide what they seek. So they rely on search engines, such as Google or Bing, and/or social online recommendations and reviews from friends and family (ex., Facebook comments) to source possibilities that are worth the effort to visit.

Give them what they want by converting your knowledge into high quality, in-demand Content that OVERdelivers what’s being sought. Stand out from the crowd by using your own “been there, done that” voice and flair.



That Content delivers free, targeted, interested Traffic (i.e., potential customers) from around the world via search engines, mobile surfing, social referrals (ex., Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, etc.) and off-site votes of approval, such as inbound links from related quality websites and social signals (ex., “likes,” tweets, sharing, comments, etc.).

For example, without relevant, quality, original content on your site, it’s difficult to...

- Generate off-site social signals for the search engines to gather and evaluate for top ranking purposes on their SERPs (“search engine results pages”). And...
- Build “street-cred” relationships with those in your niche who matter. And...
- Convert mobile visitors into followers, subscribers, and purchasers.

It's this mix of several elements that gets your website's pages included in the Top 10-20 results on the SERPs.

What happens next? Your interesting, attractive search engine listings get the click from your visitors.

The search engines will continue to be the number one source of traffic for most websites for a long time. Despite what you might read elsewhere, search is not falling in absolute terms, only as a percentage of overall Internet usage.

In other words...

Social adds to "time spent on the Internet" at the cost of other activities, including offline socializing. Folks, however, still search via Google or Bing when they want to know about something.

**So social does not come at the cost of search.** And mobile (i.e., smartphones) adds even more to "time spent on Internet" and adds to the grand total number of searches.

**Mobile is a whole new traffic source, not a replacement** for the "old-fashioned" way of searching.



Develop trust and confidence ("PREsell") by OVERdelivering original, high-value information to these motivated pre-customers.

In short, build and nurture relationships.

Write content that has your potential customers'/clients' best interests at heart. Meet their needs. Fulfill their wishes. Provide a solution. **PREsell.**

Relevant, high-value Content deepens relationships, creates an "open-to-buy" mindset, and smoothly introduces your visitors to your Monetization offers.



Monetize your warm, willing-to-buy visitors in various ways. Recommend visitors to your income-generating source **after** they come to respect and like you. The key is to develop great content that leads to the next click... the one that monetizes.

**Valuable Content = Credible Recommendation = Turned ON customer = High Conversion Rate ("CR").**

In other words, do not push your visitors to the click. Instead, make them want to click through. It makes all the difference if your visitors feel that it's their idea to deliver your Most Wanted Response ("MWR").

Sell hard goods, e-goods, your personal or professional services... or all three. Or become a “pure infopreneur” and earn an income without selling your own product/service at all, through Google’s AdSense program, affiliate fees, finder’s fees and other techniques.

Visitors convert to customers and generate income via monetization models that “fit” with your niche. But remember...

Content rules in the kingdom of **C → T → P → M**.

We have a few more basics to review. Make sure that you thoroughly understand them before proceeding. Your success rests upon this comprehension.

After laying this foundation, we’ll now pick up the pace...

## 2.1 The #1 PREselling Reality

People use the Internet as a searching tool. They search for credible high-value information. They search for solutions to fulfill a wish, or fix a troublesome problem or answer a question. Searchers, for the most part, do not know who or what provides this. They just know that they want to find a trustworthy someone who can make it happen.

That’s the winning advantage of a content-rich site. It clearly demonstrates to your visitors that you understand their search for quality solutions and that you aim to provide exactly that. A content-rich site builds trust and credibility. In your visitors’ eyes, you are a knowledgeable expert who cares!

Now consider the alternative. What must a site do if it’s without top-notch content, free organic traffic from the search engines, social referrals and growing numbers of mobile searchers?...

Advertise. Spend money and more money.

Advertising might be a good supplement for sites that have a solid base of free **C → T → P → M** traffic. On its own though, it has so many disadvantages. It only makes sense for those who sell highly profitable goods or services. Unless you have an extremely high ROI (“Return On Investment”), you simply won’t generate enough return from advertising to make money.

### Here are the disadvantages...

- 1) You still have zero credibility. Who buys from an unknown entity? Your conversion rate soars when you PREsell.
- 2) The relationship is purely commercial. The visitor who clicks on an ad is going to be pitched... and she knows it.
- 3) The traffic stops the second you stop paying. Not much of a foundation to build a business upon.

What happens when a visitor arrives at a site that's really just one big store, or a single-product sales site? Put yourself in that visitor's shoes for a moment. She does not see inspiring, relevant, editorial content. She sees a sales effort.

But she was searching for content!

Selling is trying to get the sale. But your **C → T → P → M** site first satisfies your visitors' needs, and then leads them to your Most Wanted Response. It's only at that point that "selling" enters the picture.

Most people resist sales efforts. So if your content is heavily pitching something, visitors will resist you rather than embrace you. There may also be feelings of frustration and annoyance because they didn't find what they sought. They wanted information, not a sales pitch!

Simply stated, "put up a site and sell" (the approach of 99% of small business sites on the Internet) is a doomed approach.

Despite that, some of the well-known Web hosts/platforms promote exactly this process. They rely on their brand to sell, while disguising a failed approach with convincing copy. (Some hosts even upsell disconnected, added-cost tools and services – a rather ruthless exercise in dollar extraction.)

PREselling, on the other hand, warms up your visitor with high-value information that fosters trust and builds credibility. Your information fulfills a wish and/or provides a much sought-after solution for the visitor. As a result of this positive/beneficial experience, the visitor begins to like and respect you.

Great content encourages your visitor to think about you as a "friend" making a recommendation rather than a stranger making a sales pitch. And if you create a truly info-rich site, you'll become a trusted expert sharing a wealth of knowledge.

Effective PREselling creates an open-to-buy frame of mind in your visitor and gets the click through to your income-generating source. It's this "openness" to find out more about you and your business that produces higher conversion rates and generates more income for you.

The key is to reinforce your credibility to your visitor/potential customer every step of the way. To accomplish this, get inside your visitors' heads and think about how they will react to your PREselling efforts.

Whatever you do, consider the impact on your visitors...

If it does not make them more "open to buy," don't do it. The needs of your target group must be your #1 priority, the reason behind every action you take. So keep your visitors in constant focus.



What's the bottom line? I call it "The #1 PREselling Reality"...

Your CR will literally vary from 1% to 10%, purely because of...

- 1) HOW YOU REACH your visitor, and
- 2) WHAT YOU SAY to her, and
- 3) HOW YOU REFER her to your income-generating source.

A positive mindset turns into a “purchase” mindset with amazing regularity. A negative one is nearly impossible to overcome. Your success with anything you do in the world of e-business flows from it.

Of course, it goes without saying that you have to know your customer. What the heck, I’ll say it anyway...

## 2.2 Before You Write Your First Word... Know Your Customer

Unfortunately, most people give this no more than a passing thought. But *you* won’t make that mistake, right?

- Build a customer thumbnail profile (known by some as a customer “persona”). This is an excellent way to focus your PREselling efforts. Know your customer’s needs and you will have a firm picture of your audience of “one” (invaluable for creating that one-to-one voice). As a result, you will know...
- what kind of content your customer wants
- how to say whatever you say
- how and what to monetize and what benefits to stress in your sales copy.

**Benefits, not features, connect with emotions.** Most people rely on emotion rather than logic when they are buying. The “feeling” has to be right before they will exchange their hard-earned money for your solutions.

A good way to create a thumbnail profile? Ask yourself questions. Is your “ideal customer”...

- young, middle-aged, or senior?
- predominantly male or female?
- married or single, kids or no kids?
- financially secure or budget-minded?
- etc.

Continue to pepper yourself with more questions...

What excites or interests him or her in terms of leisure activities? What are his or her most pressing concerns? How much disposable time and income, does s/he have? And so on.

Flesh out your profile by creating a master list of topics that might interest your ideal customer.

People who are interested in your theme/topic are using these keywords at the search engines. Consider, as well, what your own life experience has taught you. **First-hand information is invaluable.**

Let's suppose you are a home inspector. Your prospective client is...

- female (makes the buying decision)
- 20-30 years old (if you're focusing on the first-time home buyer)
- a low to mid-level income earner
- careful (otherwise, she wouldn't be researching this online).

In addition, she recognizes the importance of an intact foundation or a roof that does not leak. She's likely not aware of the dangers posed by dry rot, mold, asbestos insulation, termite infestation, or other hidden concerns.

Her husband may be a bit savvier about construction (or pretends to be!), but you want to build the relationship with the wife here. She calls the shots.

Do you see how an entire plan starts to form? The content? The way you'll position it? Your voice or writing style? It all comes together because you have a firm vision in your brain of your PREselling target... the "who."

### **One more different but related example for good measure...**

This time your website is going to be about the process of buying that first home. Same basic visitor thumbnail, except this time the topics are shaping up differently. She wants to...

- learn the fundamentals of home purchasing so that she can feel comfortable and confident about the biggest investment of her life
- receive tips on how to select a competent agent or broker
- meet a trustworthy real estate agent who has only her best interests at heart
- fully understand financing options, resources for mortgage rates, and solutions for paying down her mortgage as soon as possible
- know how to deal with her bank professional – in order to squeeze out the best rate possible

- be aware of other critical unknown elements of home purchasing (ex., a home inspection). (Hmm... do I detect the beginning of an online empire here? This topic would link to your home inspection site!)



The bottom line in all cases is this...

When you have a clear, detailed picture of your target visitor in mind, your content will be more credible, no matter how well you know and love your material.

Are you still unsure about your “ideal customer”?

Use the Internet to find out more about your future visitors’ demographics. How? By looking at the demographics for competitor sites.

Let’s look at our home inspector example again. If this is your area of expertise, you most likely know already who your competitors are. If not, do a quick search on Google for “home inspector” and look at the first 10 results.

Research the popularity of those sites. You could use a tool like Quantcast and click on the “Demographics” heading. You’ll see how the site’s visitors are categorized by gender, age, ethnicity, kids, income and education. (Be aware that this data is often estimated.)

Then repeat a similar search over at alexa.com. On the Alexa results page, click on the tab “Audience.” It also gives estimates for related sites.

As you write, always remember that your content must serve two masters... human visitors and the search engines. What’s the best way to accomplish this?

1) Keep it real.

2) Add value (for the user experience *and* for the Internet as a whole).

3) Raise your website reputation.

Sleep easier at night knowing that you’re working with the search engines, not against them!

While you have two masters to please, *Make Your Content PREsell!* focuses on the human one.

So always keep the thumbnail of that person in front of you, and I do mean directly in front of you. Pretend she’s there, right in the monitor, as you create your content.

Picture how she responds to your information. Adjust it if she grimaces. This is how to create content that addresses needs/wishes and OVERdelivers on expectations. Really let the content juices flow.

This is my cue to bring our attention back to a closer examination of the “The Big 2” of PREselling, beginning with BIG #1, site design...

### 2.3 Content Begins With Design

Earlier, we briefly outlined the “big picture” of why site design is an important part of the content. In this sub-chapter, we’ll zoom in for a closer examination.

Unfortunately, many webmasters think design is content. So many businesses spend so much money on design, but then ignore the words.

Take this advice to heart...

**Bad design will ruin you. Good design sets the stage for your words. Period.**

What would you think if you met a person who greeted you in a caveman outfit, with a club in his hand? He might be the nicest, smartest, most generous person in the world. But, due to his choices in dress (and accessorizing!), you won’t stick around long enough to find out, will you?

Websites are like that. Your design sets up your visitor’s first impression, an all-important judgment call. Clean, simple, and intuitive designs, ones that are appropriate for your specific type of customer, make a positive impression on your visitors. Cluttered, garish websites accomplish the opposite.

Do you find this difficult to believe? Visit a few of the most popular sites on the Web. They can afford the highest-priced graphic designers to creatively spruce up their web pages. But they seem to like simplicity.

What does that tell you? Blinking kabobbies, bandwidth-hogging graphics or Flash do not PREsell visitors (i.e., create an open-to-buy attitude). Yet another site – showing photos of 30-something business types, in \$2,000 Armani suits, shaking hands – inspires boredom, not confidence.

Simplicity rules for online businesses.

There’s absolutely nothing wrong with creativity, of course. Google has fun with their logo throughout the year. It’s become cultish to collect their logo images!

Get the basic design right and you’re off to a great start!

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. Creativity, especially if it’s “way out there,” is simply not necessary. In fact, it will likely lose you a certain percent of visitors.

Use special effects sparingly. Just because you have plenty of opportunities for personal expression, don't go overboard as you indulge your creative side.

### Other recommendations? Avoid...

- banners
- animated "ticker" tapes or flags
- Web rings
- awards buttons, and buttons of any sort (except "call to action" buttons)
- multiple color schemes.

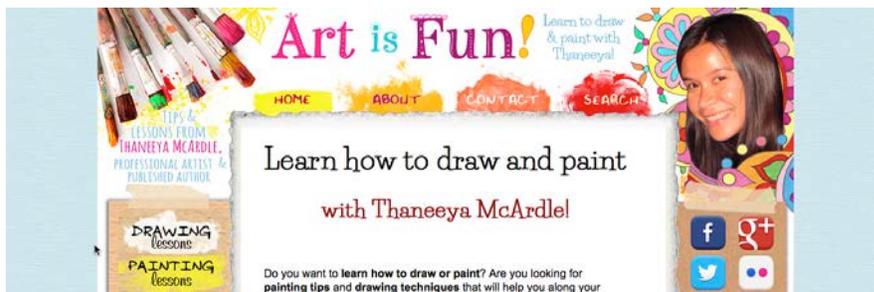
Stick with simplicity and class. It's the safest, most profitable way to design!

Want some examples? The following sample sites show a range of Solo Build It! sites.

Modest, professional, consistent with the theme, they illustrate the power of clean, simple design. Study each one. Note how the site design does its job... inspiring trust and credibility, pulling visitors into the words. We'll begin with...

### Art is fun!

<http://www.art-is-fun.com>



Simple, fun... a lively design!

Many of the sample websites in this book display Google AdSense ads. How do they work? Whenever one of your visitors clicks on an ad, you earn money from Google. They pay you a percentage of their advertising income.

Solo Build It! sites are accepted as Google partners at a staggering rate. Once you're in the AdSense program, ads are easy to integrate on your site. Just copy-and-paste a few lines of code.

Next...

## Sonoma Health Products

<http://www.sonomahealth.com>



An excellent case study...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/index.html#SONOMA>

This practical businessman merely took an “off-the-rack” template when he first started, added his site’s name, and went into business. His focus was on meeting the needs of his customers. He now owns a million-dollar-plus company.

Next...

## Wildlife Pictures Online

<http://www.wildlife-pictures-online.com>



Gorgeous, elegantly simple. Totally customized, the design accomplishes the exotic ambience necessary. However, it’s the words that make this a site that visitors love.

And speaking of looking good, here’s another one...

## Brainy Weight Loss

<http://www.brainyweightloss.com>

HOME BEST DIET PILLS NATURAL SUPPLEMENTS FREE REPORT TOP PROGRAMS BLOG

# Brainy Weight Loss

HOW TO SLIM DOWN INTELLIGENTLY TO YOUR SEXIEST WEIGHT

→ START HERE → CAN'T LOSE? → NUTRITION → WORKOUTS → MIND HACKS → QUICK SOLUTIONS

## Fast Healthy Weight Loss Secrets to Escape from Fad Diets, Counting Calories & Hardcore Exercising

*Think that fast healthy weight loss is impossible? Well, it's actually NOT - when you have the right information and a customized plan to keep you on track.*

Are you...

- spending most of your waking time sitting at your desk or behind the wheel?
- fed up with yo-yo dieting, calorie counting, ridiculous fads and costly slimming gimmicks?
- eager to lose weight quickly and for good with a healthy weight loss plan, practical tools and a flexible daily routine?

Then, you are at the right place to find the answer to fast healthy weight loss and to finally get (and keep) the weight off with the [best weight loss system](#) for YOU.

Get your **FREE Special Report** and quick weight loss tips!

Your Name:

Your Email:

No spam. Your email is safe with me. You can unsubscribe at any time.

**...lack of a safe, proven system keeping those extra pounds on your body month after month?**

**Get Your Sexy Back!**  
*No, It's NEVER Too Late!*

Notice the pattern by now? Simple. Elegant. Right for the site and right for the customer. You don't have to "be good" to "look good." No sweaty workouts required! SBI's Site Designer tools simply get the job done.

### What's the #1 take-home lesson for site design?

A clean, simple, professional interface wins every time. Naturally, adjust for the particularities of your audience. Beyond the design, add straightforward, simple navigation and usability.

Take-home lesson?

Both the design and the usability are completely within your power. Get them right, which is indeed simple and doable, and you will have mastered the first part of content.

A few more details about BIG #1 before we move on to BIG #2...

### 2.3.1 Web Page Layout

What's the difference between a site design and a layout?

Site design describes the overall appearance of your web pages – the logo, graphics, font choices, the entire package. Layout is how and where you place text and images. It also contributes to a site's overall design, or look.

As you construct your pages, keep in mind that reading is done much differently online. People tend to scan text, so it's important to keep paragraphs short, and use plenty of white space.

Once again, simple and clean rule the day. Use only as many images as needed, and keep them as optimized as possible.

This is especially important if a large portion of your target audience uses smartphones. Data plans for phones are very expensive compared to broadband, so users don't want to waste a lot of their money viewing gratuitous images that add nothing to their experience.

It's also a very big concern if your site targets lower socio-economic or rural customers, or those in developing nations.

This business gets it right ...

## Alderleaf Wilderness College

<http://www.wildernesscollege.com>

**ALDERLEAF**  
Wilderness College

Home  
About Us  
Courses  
Register  
Questions  
eNews  
Articles  
Blog  
Store  
Search  
Contact Us

**Nature Skills Courses - Wilderness Survival School**

(360) 793-8709

**Request Information:**  
Receive a free copy of our brochure and Wilderness Certification Program Catalog:

Email: \*   
First Name: \*   
Last Name:   
Phone:

Join eNews:  Get Catalog:

Request Tour:

Created with Caspio

We respect your privacy and never sell, trade, or

Welcome to Alderleaf Wilderness College, wilderness survival school, permaculture training and outdoor education center. Alderleaf offers courses on wilderness survival, wild edible & medicinal plants, permaculture, wildlife tracking, and outdoor education in the Pacific Northwest. Led by a staff of skilled instructors, our nature and survival courses provide you with valuable skills...[\(read more\)](#)

**Featured Courses:**

**The Alderleaf Wilderness Certification Program**  
Our most comprehensive wilderness course. In-depth training in nature, sustainability, wilderness survival skills, and more.  
[\(learn more\)](#) *Accepting applications*

**Weekend Wilderness Survival Course**

### 2.3.2 Font Style and Color

In the offline world, "Times New Roman" is the font style of choice. It works well in print, but not online. Sans Serif fonts, such as Arial, Verdana and Helvetica, are best for easy online scanning. See how this site uses non-serif for both headings and text...

## Free-Online-Calculator-Use.com

<http://www.free-online-calculator-use.com>

HOME WHAT'S NEW ABOUT ME CONTACT

# Free-Online-Calculator-Use

You provide the numbers ... I provide the "Aha!" moments .com

AdChoices >

- ▶ Math Calculator
- ▶ Calculator Free
- ▶ Age Calculator

157 Free Online Financial Calculators

- Auto Calculators<sup>14</sup>
- Budgeting Tools<sup>12</sup>
- Business Calculators<sup>7</sup>
- College Financial Planning Tools<sup>3</sup>
- Credit Card Calculators<sup>12</sup>
- Debt Calculators<sup>10</sup>
- Home Mortgage Calculators<sup>19</sup>
- Income, Salary, Wage, Payroll Calculators<sup>18</sup>
- Loan, Payment

Google™ Custom Search

763 237  
Like +1

### Fast, Free, Eye-Opening Answers ... From A Friend Who's Got Your Back

Don't you wish all sales presentations included a list of drawbacks, hidden costs, and less costly alternatives, so you could **make wise financial decisions instantly**?

Sorry, but since marketing experts are only interested in selling as much of their own products and services as they can legally get away with, I'm afraid their sales presentations will never give you anything more than **exaggerated benefits** to base your decisions on.

#### So Where Does That Leave You?

It leaves you to make your buying, spending, and investing decisions based on exaggerated benefits with little or no knowledge of the untold hidden costs, drawbacks, and less costly alternatives.

Follow me on any of the social media sites below and be among the first to get a sneak peek at the **newest and coolest calculators** that are being added or updated each week.

f Like g+1

Monthly What's New Email Update!

Who knows if I will show up in your next search. This will

What about font colors?

Explore any Fortune 500 site. You will not see text in any color but black. The occasional exception might be the heading tag, which could vary in color slightly (such as the sub-headline in the example above). Otherwise, the only other reason for varying color would be for branding purposes – the name of the product is red, for example.

Black text on a white or off-white background is the order of the day. There's a very good reason why this is so... it's easiest to read. Why make it difficult?

Multiple font colors are jarring, and they telegraph "inexperience" to your visitor.

Deliver the goods in a professional, business-like fashion. Save "cutesy" for personal sites where the emphasis is on fun rather than profits.

Instead of varying font colors, you have a number of options at your disposal. You can use the following to emphasize certain words or phrases...

- **Bold tag** (<strong>this text will appear bold</strong>) – use sparingly as too much bold can be distracting and nothing stands out.

This remains a fault of mine. It's hard for me not to emphasize what I consider to be important. I'm embarrassed to send you to earlier versions of our site, but it's all for a good cause (i.e., you don't have to take years to learn this lesson!)....

[http://web.archive.org/web/\\*/sitesell.com](http://web.archive.org/web/*/sitesell.com)

- *Italics tag* (<em>this text will appear in italics</em>) – once again, use sparingly. Italics are more difficult to read on a monitor than on a printed page. But italics are not as “obtrusive” as bold.
- ***Italics tag and bold tag combo*** (<strong><em>this text will appear in bold AND italics!</em></strong>) – the same advice outlined above applies to the combo.

The lesson is my “broken record”... K-I-S-S. Do not overplay with font styles and colors. The result hurts receptiveness.

Mish-mashing the fonts...

- alienates your visitor by “hurting” her eyes
- telegraphs your inexperience
- makes your pages difficult to read
- distracts you from the things that really matter to the success of your business (i.e., the content itself).

Keep your focus and efforts on building more and more content, while keeping its delivery simple. Your business depends on it.

### 2.3.3 Web Page Background

Colored or tiled backgrounds are rarely seen on business sites (even then, they are subtle). Generally, a colorful or busy background indicates a novice webmaster. However, certain business themes are the exception (i.e., games for kids and parents, birthday party ideas, a new puppy resource center, etc.).

A background image must...

- compliment your site’s theme
- “fit” with your visitors’ expectations and add to their experience
- increase your credibility as a professional, viable business.

On the other hand, it should not...

- hinder your visitor’s ability to read your text and receive your message
- give the impression that you’re an inexperienced webmaster.

Should you even use a background on your website?

Your content theme determines the answer. If you have a light and fun theme, then experiment a bit and follow the above guidelines. And a discreet background adds a nice touch without compromising the integrity of a site.

For example...

## Giving Birth Naturally

<http://www.givingbirthnaturally.com>



Key point? If you're unsure, stick with the white background. You can't go wrong!

### 2.3.4 The Typo Gremlins

It's exciting to see each new web page take shape as you build your site full of information-packed content pages. You know and love your theme, so "what" to write is easy. Getting it perfect takes time and effort and lots of rewriting to get it just right (as we will see soon, I promise).

As a result, you may become too close to your material to really see it anymore. That's exactly the type of situation those pesky typo gremlins love. It means that they can comfortably hang out on your pages, undetected.

And that's not good for your credibility as a small-business owner. Remember the importance of a positive first impression! Visitors who see typo after typo on a website wonder if the business operation is run just as carelessly.

So, take time to review the pages on your site carefully. Your text editor's spell-checker is just "the first pass." Watch for out-of-context typos that your spell-checker won't necessarily flag (for example, "sole" and "soul"). Then ask a member of your family or a friend to double-check your work. Fresh eyes at this point are very helpful to catch anything you might have missed.

You put time and effort into creating high-value, engaging content. Do not blow it on something as simple and avoidable as typos. Chase those gremlins away, even if you need help to do it.



OK, that covers BIG #1: Site Design. We won't be touching on that any further in this book. By now, you realize the importance of setting the stage. And you also know that "getting design right" is totally doable. There simply is no excuse to miss this. Even with zero design skills, you should be able to achieve good results.

Let's now zoom in on the second of "The Big 2" ...

## 2.4 The PREsell Is in the Words

So, why are "the words" so important, again? Oh yes...

Online income generation depends upon converting targeted visitors into customers. Your words, and how you put them together on a web page, play a powerful role in achieving this outcome.

If you alienate your visitors because of poor communication, you waste your traffic-building efforts. You won't get your Most Wanted Response (i.e., a sale, or an affiliate commission, or a fee, or a contract, or a click on an AdSense ad, etc.).

It's so obvious, and yet so many webmasters put more emphasis on the mechanics and graphics of building a page, rather than on its content. They devote huge amounts of time towards keyword research, page optimization, linking strategies, etc.

Then they breeze through content development. Big mistake.

Most webmasters just don't get or understand the importance of what the words actually say to the human beings who visit. That's bad for them. But this, too, is good for you. I love weak competition, don't you? (This is not a game. You're here to earn real money, so take every edge you can get.)

In order for you to PREsell your audience, your content must be original and high quality, all the way.

Once the vehicle (the site design) for your content is solidly professional, **words** will drive your passengers the rest of the way to your Most Wanted Response for your monetization models.



How do you know if your content is PREselling?

The best way is to ask some friends to evaluate your site. It's difficult to be objective about your own writing skills.

No one likes to admit weaknesses, but this is business. You need to know. Don't let your ego get in the way of making your website profitable. Ask several friends (friends whom you can trust to tell you the truth, no matter how ugly it may be!) to review a couple of your web pages. Listen carefully to their responses and adjust your content accordingly.

Seriously, unless you have unlimited financial resources and can afford to hire a professional copywriter, this is the way to go. It also makes the most sense. **You** are the ideal person to write the content for your website.

Even a professional copywriter cannot bring the same sort of unbridled enthusiasm to a topic that you know and love. On top of that, a personal style can make a faster and stronger connection with visitors.

People expect an aloof and detached writing style from a corporate giant, but not from small business owners. They want to feel that they "know" you, that you're going that extra mile for them.

Creating your own content may seem like a daunting task to you. In fact, it's every bit as doable as getting the design right. And that's what the rest of this book will show you how to do.

The basic elements of good writing are easy to grasp and implement. The only tools you need are your brain, your favorite word processing program, and a dictionary and thesaurus as bookends.

Good non-fiction writing can be done by anyone. This book could never show you how to write like Hemingway. You are either born with that kind of talent, or you're not. But every last one of us can deliver good non-fiction *with personality*.

You just need to forget everything you (mis-)learned about writing. Stop using complex language to impress, as we were taught to do. It seems the higher the level of education, the worse it gets!

Write to communicate, not to impress.

What happens when you write in a complicated manner to impress your reader (i.e., as if you were trying to impress your college professor)? A large percentage of your audience will not understand you. Some will leave due to frustration and urgency. Others will perceive you as being an arrogant show-off and they will mentally cross off your business.

I could have said that others will perceive you as arrogant or pedantic or both. Sure, but why make some readers look up "pedantic?" Heck they might have thought I was pedantic after looking up the term.

So keep your writing presentation uncomplicated and direct. Yes, if you're targeting engineers, medical professionals, or an audience that expects a more complex style, scale your language up. But still keep it simple in relation to the level of reader. For most people, though...

Recognize that they read most comfortably at a Grade 7 level (i.e., twelve to thirteen year olds). Match your writing to that benchmark.

Please take that Grade 7 level as a starting point. Too many people who try to “keep it simple and direct” don’t adjust for their audience. So let me emphasize...

If your target audience is composed of high-IQ, left-brained individuals, you’ll insult them terribly. Are you targeting sophisticated, high-net-worth people? Scale your language up to the world of the rich.

Match the level of your language to your audience. Don’t talk down to them. But don’t talk above them either.

The Web is a fast place. Everyone is in a hurry. So communicate your message as quickly and as efficiently as possible, out of respect for your visitor’s time. Use...

- headlines and sub-headlines to pull the reader through, and to divide the page (both visually and conceptually)
- short, snappy, active words
- single lines of text for emphasis
- to-the-point sentences
- short paragraphs of 2-3 sentences (4 sentences, max!)
- lists and bullet points.

**Are you ready for a few more writing tips?...**

- 1) Use the inverted pyramid style of presentation to give an overview or summary right off the bat, clearly communicating the direction of your discussion. A visitor landing on your site immediately knows what to expect and how to quickly access the content that interests her the most.
- 2) Get into the headspace of your visitor, talk in his language, and show that you empathize with his concerns/wishes.
- 3) Write with a friendly, upbeat tone, letting your visitor know that you share a passion and interest in the same subject area.
- 4) Remove all extraneous material (i.e., cut to the chase) – why waste time?

- 5) Develop one idea per paragraph. This makes it easier for you to stay **on** topic and build a smooth flow from one paragraph to the next. No confusion for the visitor!

By the way, improvement comes quickly as you practice, practice, and practice! By writing, reviewing, polishing, and then pushing it some more, you get better.

What's the critical point of this chapter?

**How you say something is just as important as what you say.**

A bit later, I'm going to show you "how to say" what you say! First, though, here's the #1 **must** for your content...

## 2.5 OVERdeliver

These days, your content cannot merely be "good." It must be great!

Yes, you can get by with "OK material." But excellent content differentiates you from competitors. Blend in a clear, unique voice, and some original relevant information that could only come from experience. Position all this from a unique perspective and I'll see you in the Top 0.5% Circle!

Fortunately, it's easy to OVERdeliver on your visitors' expectations when your business theme reflects your interest and passion.

Believe it or not, plain, unbridled enthusiasm or passion is the best PREseller you have. When visitors know you share their passion, there's an instant bond. They approach your solutions with less caution and distrust.

Valuable content credentializes your business, establishing you as the expert in your field. There's no better way for a small business to build a brand.

Credibility is what separates the online haves from the online have-nots. If your visitors don't trust you, they won't buy from you, or hire you, or click-through to your merchant recommendations.

Fortunately for you, most online small businesses concern themselves with only one thing – making the sale. And that's where they go terribly wrong. Unless there's big-brand recognition, people don't buy. Appearances can be deceiving. What about that shiny flashy web store that cost thousands of dollars? The lights are out. You just can't see that.

So how do you write great content? **Combine knowledge with passion.** This powerful combo connects you with your visitors.

OVERdeliver great content. Know ...

- your business theme inside and out

- the needs of your customers
- the benefits of your solutions.

*Make Your Content PREsell!* assumes that you're knowledgeable about your site's theme and related topics. If that's not the case, either acquire the necessary knowledge base or start a new online business, one about something you love and know.

Why? You can't fake good PREselling. Today's searchers are just too discerning. You do not have to be the only site in your field but you do have to OVERdeliver.

Combine OVERdelivery with other PREselling techniques (ex., "voice and positioning") and you simply must win on the Web.

"But," you interject, "how do you convince a visitor that your solutions, products, services, and/or recommendations are superior, that they have merit? How do you convince a visitor to deliver your Most Wanted Response?"

Good question... so how do you sell?

## 2.6 PREselling Leads to Selling...

We call it PREselling because it comes before the sales effort. If it came after the sale, we'd call it POST-selling. (It's also a good practice to keep in mind in order to address "buyer's remorse," but that's another book!).

So this means that you need to fully understand the difference between "selling" and "PREselling."

PREselling "warms up" your visitors and develops "open-to-buy" mindsets. **You are not a major brand.** So most people won't buy or follow your recommendations simply on your say-so.

Selling is selling. You make your case for your product/service/monetization model through sales copy (i.e., the presentation of benefits rather than features), culminating with the copywriter's well-known closing... **the call to action.**

How do most small businesses start online? With sales copy. With a store. With shopping carts everywhere.

But the horse of **C** → **T** → **P** is nowhere on the horizon. Talk about putting the "cart before the horse." Fatal...

- Selling does **not** build trust. Most people are inherently suspicious of a sales pitch made by a stranger.

- Selling does **not** drive traffic. Search engines find little value in pure sales copy. And good sales copy is near-impossible to optimize for the engines in any event. As a result, sales copy draws near-zero free, targeted traffic from the engines.
- Selling does **not** build a relationship. Selling doesn't operate on the same "give and then take" principle that makes PREselling so effective. You are "just another pitch" to your visitors, if you even get any searchers clicking on links to your site in the search results.

When your focus is on the customer (where it should be), PREselling just naturally comes before selling. It's the same way A comes before B in the alphabet. It just does.

Suppose, for example, your target group is first-time home buyers. Along with lots of free, valuable information on your website, you also sell a comprehensive e-book that contains exclusive golden nuggets. Your content pages PREsell, warming them up to your business. They convince your visitor of your expertise.

You build your "**Brand of One.**"

Your content pages PREsell and lead gently, with the occasional contextual text link, to the sales page for your e-book.

On this page, your goal is to sell your book, to close the deal. There's no need for more PREselling. Your credibility is solid, and you already have a strong rapport with your prospective customer.

She's presold and receptive to your sales effort. It's time to "get the sale." Of course, the precise tone and language must be appropriate (even now, you may weave yet more content into the sales copy), or you could still blow it.

First, PREsell. Then sell.

Your conversion rate soars when you PREsell, regardless of how and what you're monetizing.

OK, let's wrap up the basics with a metaphor. It will tie everything together for you. We'll be accelerating quickly after that, so get ready...

## 2.7 Anguilla as a Metaphor

Anguilla, an island in the Caribbean, has also become a metaphor. Let me explain....

A young woman started an Solo Build It! website part-time when she was only 14 years old. It's a site that's all about her favorite vacation spot...



<http://www.anguilla-beaches.com>

Bottom line results?

Today she earns substantial income per month through a variety of monetization models. For example...

- sponsored ads (see the right column of her site)
- the Anguilla Card (a classy discount card)
- villa rental commissions (from the real estate agent she recommends)
- finder-referral fees from other local businesses (ex., boat tours, rental cars)
- sales of her own creations, such as the Anguilla Card, and other products.

It's a great diversified business for a young woman (and recent university graduate).

This young woman happens to be my daughter, Nori. She does about 95% of the content, with me along to push her to brush and polish it. *Make Your Content PREsell!* comes from my early one-to-one sessions with Nori when she was in her teens.

There's no reason why you can't have ten times the success she does. Part of growing from teen to adult is the acquisition of discipline, focus, and determination. I'm proud of all that she has accomplished.

But for you, as an adult business person, whether aspiring to start a new business or enhance an existing offline one, I say this with all due respect... I expect more out of you.

Please note: I'll mention Nori's site from time to time, but not to promote [anguilla-beaches.com](http://www.anguilla-beaches.com), of course. (There's no particular reason why this topic should interest you.) And I'll also use other sites for certain points.

When I talk about [anguilla-beaches.com](http://www.anguilla-beaches.com), I can take you through the exact, first-person rationale. So I'll tend to use it when that viewpoint is necessary.

When Nori started there were already several huge, well-established sites on Anguilla. They're still there. However, there's always room for "one more site" in any area, if it's well done.

Even when she's too busy to give her business a second of her time (due to exams, family vacation, an internship, etc.), Nori's business rolls merrily along "without" her. The momentum and sustainability are tremendous. **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M** builds and **builds**.

There's no limit to how big she could grow this, or in which possible directions it could go.



So how is Anguilla a metaphor?

**Each body of knowledge is “an island.”**

For example, Elad Shippony masters the Island of children's birthday parties at [coolest-kid-birthday-parties.com](http://coolest-kid-birthday-parties.com).

Everyone knows something about something, if you look hard enough.

The owner of [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com) followed **C → T → P → M** to a tee. Now, she's a mini-celebrity in Anguilla. Restaurant owners refuse payment. Her favorite clothing store gives her clothes! She was interviewed by a big local TV talk show. Tourists point at her.

Now here comes the good part, and how it applies to everyone, including you. Visit our case studies...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com>

Each one of these small business people, each in widely and wildly varying types of businesses, are celebrities on their little islands of knowledge.

And this is what you will do, too. You'll build your... “Brand of One.”

Remember, *you* have no brand. Amazon has a brand. Google has a brand. You must build one. And there is only one way to build your Brand of One...

**C → T → P → M**

*That is what builds the core for a long-term, ever-growing business with sustainable profits and true equity.*

All set? We've covered the basics. Now that I know that everyone is working off the same knowledge base, put on your running shoes!

## 3. The 1-2-3 “Forget Grade 3” Mechanics of Writing to PREsell

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So what’s the bottom-bottom-bottom line on PREselling?

Oh, about the same as life itself was as a fourteen year old in Grade 9... make people like you.

People want to do business with people they like and trust and find credible.

From here on, we’ll be focusing purely on the words and how to write those words to PREsell. Don’t forget #1 of The Big 2, of course, but people have more trouble with words than design!

By the time you finish this book, you will *not* be one of those people. Let’s start pounding that keyboard.

### 3.1 Unfreeze... Thaw... Right Now

The education process ruins the all-important teaching of “writing.” Writing is so easy, but our school experience (past and present) makes it so hard. Why? Teachers, for the most part, lose sight of the one (and only) goal of good writing...

*To communicate. To build relationships.*

The goal is not to write the next “Old Man and the Sea.”

You do not have to be an egg-head to write nonfiction well.

What does “nonfiction” mean? It means “real” – it does not take superb imagination, or incredible creativity. You already know this stuff.

All day long, you already PREsell. You do it in your personal relationships. You do it in your business. You know how to communicate verbally – you talk with your spouse, friends, children, boss, colleagues, customers, suppliers, etc.

And all day long, you PREsell yourself. You build your personal “offline brand of one.” Building a “Brand of One” is just as easy to do online. It does take a bit of preparation, though.

So relax. Unfreeze. Thaw. You can do this. Here’s how...

### 3.2 From “First Thought”... to VPP... to Monetization

Writing to PREsell starts from the earliest moments... from your first thought about a possible site... to brainstorming and researching profitable topics... to developing your best site concept... to planning monetization options... to refining and registering your domain name.

Think about how you're going to write to PREsell for that site. As an example, I'll take you through my daughter's site and the exact thought processes we used to develop its Valuable PREselling Proposition ("VPP").

Your VPP explains, in very few words, the specific and high-value themed information your site delivers and your unique positioning for this delivery (i.e., your angle of approach).

Ready to begin? Here are the kinds of thought processes to follow as you work through these early steps...

Our family spent the whole month of August 2002 on the Caribbean island of Anguilla. It was our second trip. We loved the people, the beaches, the food and the "atmosphere." Nori could have very happily lived there (she also loves cities, tough choice!).

So she came to me, while we were still there, and asked, "Could I use your software to do a site about Anguilla?"

Great idea! She loves Anguilla. She already knew a lot about it. A bit young (14 years old at the time), but we had been working together on her writing skills for 2 years. This would be a great chance for me to stay closer as she grew older, and to hone those skills. (OK, enough about my ulterior motives!)

There was one site, "news.ai," that stood out. It was superb. Simple in design, it was everything a great SBI! site should be. Knowledgeable. Acceptably written. Passionate. The design was very plain, barely acceptable. But it was good enough to get you into the content, which was the main goal of the design.

A few other sites were very well done, clearly high-end professional (private and government sites). They were "selling" Anguilla.

The Internet, even then, did not need another general site about Anguilla. Today, they continue to spring up. Ho hum! This "niche" is already too popular to just create another site about Anguilla.

First, we used SBI!'s Brainstorm It! tool to brainstorm keywords about "Anguilla." Then we did some sub-brainstorms. These "sub-storms" may point out lucrative sub-niches to you (for example, the too-general "cholesterol.com" domain name becomes "cholesterolandyourheart.com").

But this did not occur for Anguilla. It was already the right size of a niche, not too big or too narrow. (You may need to do both types of brainstorming before you find a niche that's "just right.")

**All it needed was the right positioning of the theme.**

Whatever you call it, the key is to position your theme in a way that connects with your audience.

Nori had a "natural positioning"... a site written by a 14 year old, filled with family adventures. Rather than being encyclopedic, this site would contain only our adventures and favorite spots.

Hers would be the charming, youthful voice of experience. Her “dad” (i.e., Ken) would add the credibility that a 14 year old might lack. In other words, this site would have both age plus beauty. (Ouch!)

We would develop a list of favorites in Anguilla (already well advanced, even before she had the idea for a site!). And we could easily identify potential monetization sources (i.e., a favorite real estate agent, a boat operator for local referrer income).

And then Google AdSense came along! Wow! Free money! (But I’m getting ahead of myself.)

What about her “unique voice”? Nori already had a charming, direct writing style. We would hone that style. It would be a teenager talking respectfully to older visitors – friendly, and self-assured but not arrogant. There would also be enough mentions of “dad” to hang it altogether, and importantly, give young Nori credibility.

Luckily, we had just bought our first digital camera. So we decided that we would take tons and tons of photos.

Any visual topic will drive some decent traffic through image search at the engines and now via Pinterest. I consider images to be part of content for that reason.

A good picture is indeed worth a thousand words. It adds to that “been there, photo’d that” voice of experience. It adds spice to the site. And, if you optimize the images (by adding an alt attribute), they will please your “spider audience” too, bringing you more traffic.

And don’t forget about Pinterest’s traffic-generating power...

With Solo Build It! it’s easy to add “Pin It!” buttons on your website.

So we had the unique positioning. It was uniquely hers. We nailed down the “been there, done that” voice and flair. I showed Nori how to research and add information to our own specific experiences, for added depth, when needed. And we had identified enough monetization models to know that this was a viable business.

There was only one thing left to do and that was to pick a domain name. Like all content, your domain name has two audiences. “Anguilla” was our ultimate general keyword so it was a good idea to have it in there.

Some folks get mixed up. They think they have to win a Top 10 search ranking for their toughest keyword, the site’s central theme keyword. In fact, it’s the reverse.

The last word to start scoring in the Top 10 is the hardest, most competitive of all keywords, which is usually the site concept keyword. For the longest time, you couldn't find Nori's site in the Top 500 for "Anguilla." Then it started to appear in the Top 100.

Now it's usually pretty close to the Top 5 (out of millions and a lot of professional competition), while ranking a Top 10 for many of her other keywords. As her site grows, as its reputation increases, as more links come in from other sites about Anguilla, she keeps doing better and better on the engines.

It's a process. The hardest words take the longest. But the build is oh-so-sweet, stable and long-term.

These "unique searches" are an important aspect of long-tail marketing. You need to understand this concept in order to understand the future of small business, how you fit in, and how to capitalize upon it.

Back to picking the domain name...

The engines may look at the domain name when determining relevance (wouldn't you?). So "Anguilla" was in the domain name. The rest of the domain name was left open for humans and marketing/branding purposes (positioning).

Anguilla is most famous for its beaches, one of which is acknowledged as the best in the Caribbean. So [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com) gave us a great way to deliver the VPP on the home page.

And there you have it... from the first thought of "hey Dad, what if" to the home page's VPP and potential monetization models. Think carefully about these before you write your first PREselling words.

### **And here's the important part...**

Yes, Nori did no doubt benefit from "Ken being her Dad" in this area of writing to PREsell. And now you can benefit, too. All of my PREselling, one-to-one help for Nori is in this book.

*Make Your Content PREsell!* covers the only online activity that software can't handle. Writing to PREsell needs a biological tool, your brain, and the advice in this book. You have what you need to write effectively.

A quick "P.S." about Nori's easy, natural positioning...

What if Nori didn't have her teenager-and-family adventure positioning? There's always a new way to position a theme...

- [romanticanguilla.com](http://romanticanguilla.com)
- [anguillahikes.com](http://anguillahikes.com)
- [highendanguilla.com](http://highendanguilla.com)

By now you should be able to see the positioning that each would have.

Once you have it, the “voice” of your PREselling copy falls into place.

For example, the voice of a 25 year old woman writing about romance and honeymoons ([romanticanguilla.com](http://romanticanguilla.com)) will be very different from the voice of the 50 year old woman writing for high-net-worth individuals ([highendanguilla.com](http://highendanguilla.com)).

Many of the keywords will even be the same, but the content that wraps around those keywords will vary greatly.

Note: All these sites are about Anguilla as far as the engines are concerned. The difference is in the voice and the positioning. As time goes on, the engines will get smarter and smarter. The smarter they get, the better your SBI! site will do.

Why? No tricks. You’re adding value to the Internet.

### 3.3 So... What’s Your Positioning?

Want to do a site on New York City? Take a number... the line forms on the left.

It’s one of the great cities of the world, and also great subject matter for a website. But you have to find a way to position it. Pick an area, perhaps the East Village. Or focus on “[greatbuildingsnewyork.com](http://greatbuildingsnewyork.com),” or “[romanticspotsnewyork.com](http://romanticspotsnewyork.com),” or “[magicpicnicspotsnewyork.com](http://magicpicnicspotsnewyork.com).”

Get the idea? **Position it.** Pick an “island within the island” of New York... geographic, culinary, activities, whatever. It’s a matter of slicing New York in a way that excites you, that you know, and that can generate money.

The positioning affects what kind of visitors you’ll attract and retain as PREsold, monetizing clients. So think your business plan all the way through, starting right from your first thought.

Speaking of romance in New York...

## Excellent Romantic Vacations

<http://www.excellent-romantic-vacations.com>



What do you notice? Yes, this SBler is positioning “romance.” It’s fascinating positioning. “Romance” is obviously too big a topic to master. So narrow it down to the fun, interesting niche of romantic vacations around the world.

### 3.4 So... What’s Your Voice? You *Do* Have a Personality, Right?

A unique voice doesn’t require you to be a master wordsmith. It simply means that you write in a way that differentiates you from other small businesses in a similar business or niche.

A unique voice doesn’t have to be elaborate or super-creative. It just needs to provide that simple twist that gets the attention of your visitors and puts you way out in front of the “same-old, same-old” pack.

Your personal stamp could be a unique...

- character, personality, or friendly tone
- style
- perspective or situation, either business or personal
- combination of the above elements.

To some degree, the nature of your voice follows your site’s positioning. Let’s say that your site is “workathometipsformoms.com”...

Your voice should sound as if you’re having a friendly phone chat with a good friend. On the other hand, “jock talk” would work for a sports site, depending on the exact positioning.

### Important point...

Your voice must be genuine and “all you.” Combine this with your passion and knowledge of your theme. Do that and your web pages will almost seem to write the content all by themselves. Your site becomes an extension of yourself!

Note that word “almost” (we’re getting to the exact “how to”). So far, though, writing to PREsell sure is a lot more doable, right?

Remember that people don’t expect a personality from faceless corporations. But you’re not Microsoft. Surpass your visitors’ expectations. **Connect on a personal level.** Be the voice of a trusted friend, not a bunch of words floating around in cyberspace.

Think about your own experiences in the offline world, for a moment. Let’s say that you’re looking for a mechanic. Would you want to be treated like just another number? Or would you rather be addressed by your name, and be offered a cup of fresh coffee when you arrive for your scheduled tune-up?

People do business with big business because of brand. In general, however, they do business with people they know and like. Effective PREselling makes that happen. Many are even willing to pay a little more for that comfort level.

Positioning... quality content that OVERdelivers... all with a unique voice. That’s what get results.

For example, let’s look at a message from a visitor to [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com) in those early years. Don VanSlochem, a high-powered executive at a major financial company (at the time of writing this), visited Caribbean off-shore islands for work every now and then.

Don was so enthralled with the Anguilla that Nori portrayed that he contacted Nori’s recommended realtor to arrange a villa rental. (Another commission for Nori!)

Quickly review his comments. Then read them again carefully. There’s a world of information in there from this very insightful man. Note how Nori’s passion for Anguilla had a major impact on a sophisticated world traveler. Ask yourself whether he would have come to the same conclusion by reviewing yet another expensive, professional-agency Caribbean site.

Hello Nori,

I have thoroughly enjoyed viewing your site and your most capturing way of communicating the interest and beauty of Anguilla. I am a frequent visitor to many Caribbean islands, but have never gone to Anguilla because it is a little difficult to get there, and other islands have direct service from US gateways. However, your writings about Anguilla have now made it a must for an April 2004 visit.

I must tell you however, Nori, and/or other people who were involved in structuring Anguilla-beaches.com, and composing the information on the site, have a true gift. Not only from the technical aspect, but most impressively from a presentation and communications perspective.

I am an extensive user of the web and find myself navigating many sites to source information. Anguilla-beaches.com is without a doubt the best piece of work of this kind I have ever come across. The organization and approach to telling the story of Anguilla is so well done the essence of one taking a vacation becomes intuitive after one exploration your site. If you and Nori don't work for the Anguilla Chamber of Commerce - you should - and perhaps they could compensate you with a complimentary Villa for life!

I will be trying to arrange a villa through Jackie for the week of April 15 through the 21st. And I am also interested in real estate there, it seems well-priced. I wanted to stay longer, but between school schedules and flight arrangements for 5 people that seems to be the most time we can stay for this trip. My wife's clear priority will be lodging with close proximity to or staying on a very nice beach. I will also need to further investigate the feasibility/need of renting a car while we are there.

Again, thank you for allowing the world to have access to Anguilla-beaches.com. By that I truly do mean the world because I live/work in Tokyo most of every month, and now I will be emailing my wife Peggy who will explore Anguilla-beaches.com, and assist in planning our April vacation. The writings, pictures, personal feel, and passion for Anguilla, bring a new refreshing dimension to the world of expression and communication. Perhaps I am so excited by this website because I see way too many executive level PowerPoint presentations where there is no clear message, and certainly no passion.

Don VanSlochem

What wonderful encouragement for Nori. She was floating for a week!

There are a couple of monetization ideas in that letter, too. But the key points have to do with PREselling.

I asked Don for permission to use his comments for this book. He replied...

Hello Ken,

Indeed you can use all or any part of my correspondence as a testimonial. And if Nori ever needs my comments as a college reference, I would be pleased to be more articulate about the free community service, value and "charismatic draw" of Anguilla-beaches.com.

I am pleasantly surprised, but not shocked that you and Nori are involved in the website-building business. The work on AB.com is just too good for the "run of the mill" webmaster. Perhaps "almost anyone" could do this with the tools as your SiteSell information suggests, but the keen sense of packaging and presenting the information is an art form.

Nori has that gift, and I am sure your support and driving the key message to TELL THE STORY makes the shining difference in AB.com vs other similar sites. Of course the technology that incorporates all the cool things that the site allows you to do is a big part of putting the "whole package" together.

As I said before, rarely do I come across a web site where every thing seems to work the way it is supposed to. On Anguilla-beaches.com I have yet to find a bug or "endless loop" as I continue to navigate the site. Additionally, the response time seems very good as I shuttle between prompts, links, etc.

After having our children it has been hard to get back to the Caribbean, but I am now anxiously looking forward to our adventure to Anguilla. Anguilla-beaches.com, and especially Nori's passion and presentation of Anguilla information, is largely responsible for rekindling my interest to get to this island. If we love Anguilla (I am certain I will), it could be a difficult decision to decide on our vacation plans for end of August.

We have gone to Martha's Vineyard for the last 4 years, but I could easily see me wanting to reserve a villa in Anguilla for this period. Life is Good!!

Best Regards,

Don

I can't stress how many times you should read that letter. This book is contained in those two letters!

But for the purposes of this particular chapter and for the book itself two passages stand out...

#1...

I must tell you however, Nori, and/or other people who were involved in structuring Anguilla-beaches.com, and composing the information on the site, have a true gift. Not only from the technical aspect, but most impressively from a presentation and communications perspective.

#2...

I am pleasantly surprised, but not shocked that you and Nori are involved in the Web site building business. The work on AB.com is just too good for the "run of the mill" webmaster. Perhaps "almost anyone" could do this with the tools as your SiteSell information suggests, but the keen sense of packaging and presenting the information is an art form.

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I do believe, of course, that there are “gifts.” The ability to write like Hemingway is a gift. I could not teach that to you in a million years. Tom Clancy sold insurance before he discovered his gift.

However, Nori’s approach was not rocket science. She benefited from dad/Ken’s help with matters that we cover in this book – organization, forethought, voice, positioning, research, and “how to write.”

These are all acquirable skills.

If you’re still stuck in “secrets of the month” or the latest-greatest tool that will unlock the riches of the Web... STOP! There’s an entire industry that exists merely to get your money.

Are you repeatedly getting sucked in by an amazing story and sales copy (and can’t boil that story down to “just another get-rich-quick twist”)?

Please read *Why People Fail*....

<http://www.sitesell.com/why-people-fail.pdf>

It will give you perspective. No, I’m not calling you a failure if a ridiculous fad sweeping the Internet catches you off-guard. *Why People Fail* will give you some perspective, insights and self-defense psychology.

To paraphrase an old saying...

“Yes, Virginia. There are people who are simply out to get your money.”

I don’t think I could add anything more to drive the point home better than Don’s letters (above). So let’s look at some other examples.

Speak to your audience instead of at them, as this SBler exemplifies...

### **The Ultimate Quit Smoking Guide**

<http://www.quitguide.com/nicotine-withdrawal.html>

## Nicotine withdrawal

### What makes you crave a smoke?

Why do you get nicotine withdrawal symptoms when you quit smoking... and how to deal with them and *get that dragon off your back?*



"If you're going through hell, keep going." Winston Churchill.

So you've got a little war going on there? Rest assured it will never be as hellish as Churchill's reference to World War II.

Talking of war, there's a saying: *"It's not who's RIGHT, but who's LEFT that wins."* Very funny, but look at it this way: You've got one side, your body, declaring that it is right, it wants nicotine right now!

And by the way, chemically it is right!

When you read this text, don't you feel like the owner is speaking directly to you? One more point...

How far can you go in the name of uniqueness? It's your judgment call, but always factor in how your target group will react.

Here's another example of a strong writing style...

### Fido Savvy

<http://www.fidosavvy.com>

Congratulations - you're a brand new puppy parent, and it's hard to beat the excitement of those first few days. Life is suddenly a lot more fun.

Puppy kisses, puppy breath, chubby little legs and eyes that melt your heart - but it's not all sunshine and belly rubs.

There's a whole lot of puppy care stuff you need to learn in order to help your pup grow up into a happy, healthy and confident *dog*....

Review these sites. You'll find yourself relaxing. They communicate and connect. Don't feel that you must be an amazing "auteur" (French word for "author") to succeed.

A unique voice requires nothing more than a one-to-one style and the appropriate tone. Show your visitors that you share their passion and interest, and you're off to the races.

The following two examples demonstrate this point...

### Recover From Grief

<http://www.recover-from-grief.com>

### **Hope for the future...**

I think it may help you to know that grief is a process, a long journey of acceptance and healing. And you can get through it, and come back in time to a happy and productive life. I know it is hard for you to believe right now, but you must hold onto hope, and keep in the back of your mind that things will eventually get better.

You are not alone in this. You probably feel quite overwhelmed and bewildered right now, sort of like you were picked up and placed on a different planet! This grief thing is a surreal new world of uncharted territory for you, and no one gave you a roadmap, did they?



It's obvious that this person is doing something because she loves it (and not simply for monetary reasons). She is credible. Her visitors will like her. That is the basis of PREselling.

Writing with a unique voice does more than merely bring you closer to your visitor, and your visitor closer to you. It distinguishes your business from the bland, characterless mix that clutters the Web.

Maximize the potential of your business by being you!

OK, time to get down to the "brass tacks" of "how to"...

### **3.5 OUTline Before ONline**

You have tons of great information to share. But if it's presented poorly, no one will read it or appreciate its value. Solution?

Develop a framework or outline. An outline keeps you smoothly on track, so that your visitor will be too! Outline at two levels...

#### **LEVEL 1) For the entire site...**

The 3-tier structure is ideal. Your home page links to 7-15 second tier pages, each of which links to Tier 3 pages. Clean, simple site architecture is key for both humans and spiders.

#### **LEVEL 2) For each page...**

Construct each page with the same basic components. Before you start writing your web pages, we'll do a practice outline of a content page together, step by step.

Let's go back to our home inspection theme from an earlier example and create a page related to it, using this outline...

### **a) Document Name**

Insert the name of the document...

```
homeinspectors.html
```

### **b) Goal**

Highlight the goal or purpose of the information you're presenting, in a sentence or two...

```
Buying a home is the biggest purchase you'll ever make. Protect your hard-earned cash with a home inspection before you sign on the dotted line.
```

### **c) Main Headline and Opening Paragraph**

Your main headline is the first thing your visitor sees when visiting any page on your site. As a result, each headline must do two things well...

*i) Flag visitors in a concise and appealing way...*

```
"10 Ways a House Inspector Can Eliminate Uncertainty and Save You Money!"
```

It's a great big Web out there. Your visitor's time is at a premium. Don't make her guess what your article is about. It's far easier to hit the Back button, returning to the SERP.

*ii) Pull the visitor into your article.*

The heading example above is more effective than just writing...

```
"Hiring a Home Inspector"
```

Why? A good headline reaches an all-important emotional connection that pulls the reader into the content.

A strong heading not only makes a visitor feel that she must read your article, it also makes her feel that she would lose out by not reading it. Nobody likes to be left forlornly standing on the sidelines (known these days as FOMO – fear of missing out).

Follow your eye-catching headline with a brief paragraph that presents your conclusion first (i.e., the "inverted pyramid" style)...

After weeks of searching and viewing houses and neighborhoods, you finally discovered the perfect house that has everything you want. You can hardly wait to sign the papers and start living the dream. But now is the time for patience. Do not rush.

Finish the most important part of your research first... Get a home inspection. A cracked foundation, dry rot, or a leaking roof is not the kind of surprise you want after you take ownership of the house.

A home inspector can ensure your peace of mind and save you thousands, even tens of thousands of dollars. It's one of the smartest investments you will ever make!

#### **d) Body**

People read differently online – they scan text, briefly skimming material for the most relevant points. Divide the body of your discussion into small paragraphs, one point per paragraph. Use sub-headings to pull your visitors down into your content and allow them to quickly grasp what you're presenting.

Sub-headings make it easy for individuals to **zoom in on the most relevant parts** for them. Shape the body of your presentation in this manner...

- i) Sub-heading and Point #1
- ii) Sub-heading and Point #2
- iii) Sub-heading and Point #3

And so on. For example...

Point #1 - Common concerns

Point #2 - What you can't see, can hurt you!

Point #3 - Checklist for home evaluation

Add notes under each sub-heading, as ideas occur to you. There's no need for brilliant composition. Just get your ideas organized and down "on paper" before you forget them...

You'll polish and tie it all together later.

#### **e) Conclusion**

Cleanly summarize your presentation. Depending upon your monetization model, now is an appropriate moment to insert an in-context product or service recommendation (your own, or one that you represent) and a link...

Mary Smith's "21 Tips for the New Home Buyer" will help you make a wise investment. She covers all the must-know details, including how to hire a credible home inspector. You, as a first-time home buyer, will not go wrong with Mary's book - it's filled with valuable information guaranteed to make your home purchase smooth and headache-free. I heartily endorse it.

While the conclusion for a web page is a natural place for a monetization opportunity, anytime is the right time... as long as it "fits and flows."



OK, we have the bones of your outline done. It's time to put some flesh on the body. A solid content web page has at least 400 words (we recommend 500-600 as a minimum).

Review your entire outline. Do the headline, opening and conclusion still fit the body copy? You'll be surprised how often the body takes on a life of its own. You may need to adjust one or more components to keep everything in sync.

Now build out those notes, ideas and random thoughts that you jotted under each sub-heading. You're going for "real content" now.

First draft done? Congratulations. We're getting closer.

**Review your content as carefully and as objectively as possible...**

- Does it hang together?
- Will your reader clearly understand your information?
- Do you feel the presentation pulls the reader in and keeps her reading?

If you're not happy with the content, make it better. Repeat this review-improve-review-improve cycle until you're satisfied.

**Now you're ready for the acid test...**

Read your content out loud... slowly... to hear how it feels coming off your tongue. You will be amazed at how many grammatical errors and clunky sentences slip under the eye, but fail to make it past the tongue.

If it doesn't sound right coming out of your mouth, you can be sure it doesn't belong on your website. Make your corrections. Then repeat the process. Repeat speak-correct-speak-correct until you're satisfied.

*I guarantee you that if you do this you will have quality content.*

Ready for the truly final test?

Read the page aloud to your spouse, friends, etc. Note your own reactions to reading it to a third party, as well as theirs.

Fix anything that embarrasses you to read. If it doesn't ring true or golden here, it won't in your reader's eyes either. If your "listener" raises doubts about something that was bothering you but you were going to let slide, don't let it slide anymore.

I can't stress this point enough... Always read new content aloud before posting it to your website.

Each one of us has a varying degree of natural writing ability. But we all know what good sentences sound like. You will know it's good (or bad) when you hear it. Clunky or unwieldy sentences won't escape your sensitive ear.

What do you do when you run out of listeners? Use a tape recorder. Listen to your own words. Be your own listener!



One final step...

Put some distance between you and your content before it goes live on the Web. When you're too close to a topic, it's hard to be objective.

### **Have you hit the right balance?**

Too much material will paralyze your visitor, and prevent her from proceeding through your site. Too little, of course, won't effectively answer her questions or address her needs, leaving her to hit that dreaded Back button, back to the search engines.

### **Do you like your page?**

I mean really like it? Are you proud of it? Does it effectively address the needs of your visitors and provide the information they're seeking?

Great! But do not put it up on the Web yet. Instead, put your writing aside for a minimum of 24 hours. Do something different. Give yourself some breathing space before you come back to it.

Then do your final-final-final review. Read your new page one last time. Ask yourself the above questions. Notice "clunkers" that escaped the last review.

I guarantee that you'll polish it some more. Once you're done, ask yourself the above two questions again. If your answer is "yes" both times, you're ready for prime time!

The OUTline is done. Now it's time to put it ONLINE.

This sub-chapter covered the “big picture” of putting a page together. Now let’s cover the ABCs of writing that content...

### 3.6 The ABCs of Simple, Solid Writing

You just hung up the phone. Talked for an hour. Covered all kinds of ground. Now you sit down to create a web page and you’re...

Tongue-tied. Stuck for words. Brain-frozen.

There’s only one way to thaw out brain-freeze, and that’s to knock everything you’ve ever learned about writing out of your head.

We’re going to replace all that you have ever “mis”-learned with some very simple guidelines. All you have to do is turn them into habits. It really is as simple as that.

But you have to take the first step and do it. OK, ready?

Here’s my no-magic formula for great PREselling writing... ABC. Let’s start with A...

#### 3.6.1 A = Activate It!

OK, you know your topic for this content page, right? Just start “blabbing.” Seriously, just start talking...

- 1) Picture your customer (remember that thumbnail profile) inside your monitor.
- 2) You are “talking” **to** her (not at her), and you are not “writing.” More importantly, you are not writing “War and Peace.”

Get into the headspace of your visitor. Talk in her language – empathize with her concerns/wishes. Show that you share the same passions and interests.

Now, we get to the tough part. Some writers get “writer’s block.” Procrastinators do what they do best... put it off. But most of us just flat-out freeze, intimidated by the very thought of writing.

Suddenly, while we can all talk up a storm, we can’t type the first sentence. If that’s you, stop worrying about making a “perfect first sentence.” Heck, don’t even worry about making it decent. Just make it!

Activate! And by that, I mean...

- 3) Just start typing. You know (roughly) what you want to cover. So just start “blabbing.” As Sean Connery said to his young writing apprentice in *Finding Forrester*, “Pound those keys, dawg.” (See this movie just for the inspiration in that line.)

Pound friendly, though. Write with a friendly, upbeat tone.

What do I mean by “friendly?” Well, it depends on your particular circumstances. Here are just some of the synonyms for the word “friendly” (from reference.com)...

“affable, affectionate, amiable, amicable, attached, attentive, auspicious, beneficial, benevolent, benign, buddy-buddy, chummy, civil, close, clubby, comradely, conciliatory, confiding, convivial, cordial, faithful, familiar, favorable, fond, fraternal, genial, good, helpful, intimate, kind, kindly, loving, loyal, neighborly, outgoing, peaceable, peaceful, propitious, receptive, sociable, solicitous, sympathetic, tender, thick, welcoming, well-disposed”...

Read them carefully. Each has a different nuance. Choose the one that fits your audience, theme and intent best.

Just start typing the way you’d talk to that person inside your monitor. Well, almost – you’ll clean it up later, but that’s not important right now.

Speaking of “blabbing” ... if your keys are still frozen solid, literally start blabbing into a tape recorder. Yes, dictate to yourself! Just talk away. Some good thoughts and ideas will start to flow. Then play it back to yourself and start typing. One way or another, once the flow starts, you’ll be on your way.

4) Keep right-brain typing – let it flow. Ideas will come to you. The page, the content may often take a new direction. That’s OK. **Do not censor your T ➔ T ➔ T (The Triple T = Think ➔ Talk ➔ Type) process.** Just pound those keys.

5) Don’t let good ideas get away. Have a new idea that doesn’t quite fit your current topic? Open a new page in your text editor and save it there, until you can use it. You may have a topic for your next web page!

Do this! Some of my best ideas for future topics have come this way. If I didn’t save them, I’d forget them.

6) Support your personal knowledge with reference material. Your experience-based knowledge makes you “real.” Support it with useful, factual, researched information **in your own words**. No copying, or even paraphrasing, from other sources or you will be penalized for duplicate content.

### Take-home lesson?

The key to **C ➔ T ➔ P ➔ M** success is weaving your personal experience into researched background information. Naturally, the “personal-to-researched” ratio will vary, depending on each topic.

But always blend the two sources in an original way that is uniquely “YOU.”

As you do this, I hope that, by now, two points are constantly and subconsciously working deep in your brain...

1) You're developing that "been there, done that" voice and flair. It won't come all at once. You'll polish and sharpen your voice as you advance, as you get better and grow over the months. But make your writing "YOU," from DAY 1.

**Improve from there by writing, writing, and writing some more.**

2) You're constantly positioning your content in the unique way you determined earlier.

### 3.6.2 B = Brush It!

All done? Before you "bless" a web page as done, follow this tried-and-true brushing strategy...

Read it aloud. Reorganize it. Add. Delete.

Improve the flow.

Look for obvious ways to "say it better."

Are you pretty happy with it? Good. Go away. Start another page. Leave this one for a day, at least. When you come back to it, fresh eyes will make it easier to polish it to a fine sheen.

You'll see material that you no longer think is so brilliant. Edit your page so that your writing meets these simple criteria...

- 1) Is your "voice" there? If not, blend it in now. Friendly, upbeat, irreverent – whatever your "voice" is, carry it throughout your site. While doing that...
- 2) Fit this page into your site's special positioning/approach/twist. Every page must hang together and fit into the positioning of your entire site. Your site's unique twist turns the mundane "me too" into the "unique must-read."
- 3) Use the inverted pyramid style of presentation. Give an overview or summary right off the bat, clearly communicating the direction of your discussion. A visitor landing on your site immediately knows what to expect and how to quickly access the content that interests her the most.
- 4) Write to communicate, not to impress how smart you are (knowledgeable, yes; arrogant, no). The content, tone and design must, of course, impress the heck out of your reader, but must not look like they're trying to do that.
- 5) Use short, snappy, active words. This naturally leads into the next point...

- 6) Write short, sharp, simple, active sentences. These sentences become the base for the next “must-do”...
- 7) Develop short, sharp, snappy paragraphs (2-3 sentences, 4 max). No 18-line paragraphs. They’re brutal on reader motivation. Break them up. And focus on one idea per paragraph.
- 8) Cut-cut-cut to the bone. Remove all extraneous material.
- 9) Break up a list into bulleted or numbered items. Stay away from long paragraphs with comma-separated (or even worse, the semi-colon) items.
- 10) Further break up the page with sub-headings at just the right moment(s). Keep your reader moving through the page.
- 11) Speak “to” and not “at” your reader.
- 12) Write in a style (i.e., voice) that’s unique and personable. Differentiate yourself from the bland, characterless, and uninspiring.
- 13) Do not “broadcast-speak.” Eliminate all sentences that contain phrases like “for those of you” and “all of you.” You would never say that if you truly were writing for that single “thumbnail profile” person inside your monitor. (These will all die when you do the “read aloud” test.).
- 14) K-I-S-S. You’re not writing to impress. You’re writing to communicate. You’re writing to PREsell.

At this point, it’s already “good enough.” All it needs is the “Clean it!” (“C” in the ABC). But first, if you’re like me, “good enough” is not “good enough.” Separate yourself from the crowd.

### **So push it again...**

Say it better again. Supplement with research material.

Add a personal experience. Combine knowledge with passion. This powerful combo connects you with your visitors.

Then brush it some more. Polish and brush. Brush and polish.

It may seem like a lot of work, but remember that once you put your page up, it earns you money forever. It’s more than worth the effort.

Naturally, that page’s specific keyword was always on your mind as you were writing. At this point, review the page once, looking for ways to work the keyword in here and there.

OK, done? Wow! Pulitzer prize material! It's ready for cleaning...

### 3.6.3 C = Clean It!

Spelling and grammar are both so simple. And yet once again, the educational system has let us down. Luckily, I can boil down what you really need to know, starting with these 10 common grammar, punctuation and word use boo-boos.

Get them right from now on and you'll be on your way to making a better impression (simplified and summarized from *Sean Nelson's Talk Good* article)...

- 1) It's vs. Its: "It's" means "it is" (as in, "It is cold."), and sometimes "it has" (as in, "It has come to this."). "Its" refers to "belonging to it" (as in, "The bear wiped its paw on the rabbit.").
- 2) Apostrophes: Apostrophes never make a word plural, they usually make it possessive (i.e., "Fred's" = belonging to Fred; "Fred's" = a roomful of dudes named Fred).
- 3) He does that well vs. Trump's hair looks good: Actually, I simplified this one. The word "well" is an adverb, meaning that it describes a verb (as in, "You throw, run, or hit well."). But your mom is a good person because the word "good" is an adjective, meaning that it describes nouns.
- 4) Literally: Don't use "literally" unless you are describing an action that really is happening.
- 5) Me and I: "That's between my girlfriend and me" is correct. Here's a simple trick. Before you speak, remove the other party from the sentence. Would you say, "That's between I"? It works the other way around as well – "My dad and me went to the game" is wrong because you don't say... "Me went to the game."
- 6) I and Myself/Me and Myself: "Doug and I went to the ball game" is correct. Let's repeat the simple trick above: Would you say "Myself went to the ball game"? If not, use I. The same holds for Me/Myself. "Please send the book to me" is correct. If you were doing the action, "myself" would be correct – "I sent the book to myself."
- 7) You're vs. Your: A biggie! "You're" means "you are" (ex., "You are sexy."). "Your" means "belonging to you" (ex., "Your friend is sexy."). If you write "your welcome," you're wrong.
- 8) They're, There, Their: "They're" means "they are" (as in, "They are old enough to know how to spell."). "There" represents a place (as in "Over there."). It's also used in the expressions "There, there." and "There you go."). "Their" means "belonging to them" (ex., "Their grammar is an embarrassment.").
- 9) Who and Whom: The code is "who = he/she" and "whom = him/her." The answer to the question provides the telltale clue. So, with "Who is that?" "He" is that. "With whom did you go to the show?" I went to the show with her.

10) Split Infinitives: The splitting of infinitives with adverbs (as in, “to boldly go” or “to not do it”) is acceptable, sometimes preferable. So don’t sweat this one.

11) Prepositions at the end of a sentence: Technically, you’re not supposed to end a sentence with a preposition. However, in general, the people who really care about this rule are too uptight to recognize that a sentence like “What did you come up with?” is always better than “Up with what did you come?”

Sean Nelson wrote the primer above. As grammarians go, he’s a pretty “user-friendly” chap. Still, I simplified and removed some of the stodginess.

Believe me, grammar freaks get very uppity and self-righteous. So don’t feel too badly if someone slams you for getting some arcane rule wrong (think of it as giving that person a little pleasure, albeit at your expense).



Next, let’s go up one level of “stodginess” for a few “plain English” rules (this time from the University of West Florida)...

You’ll have to think about these ones (so much for “plain English!”), since each rule intentionally violates itself to deliver its message...

- 1) Try to not split an infinitive [which we just discussed, in #10 above].
- 2) Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
- 3) Each pronoun must agree with their antecedent.
- 4) Don’t use commas, that aren’t necessary.
- 5) Its important to use apostrophe’s correctly.
- 6) Do not use no double negatives.
- 7) About sentence fragments.
- 8) When dangling, don’t use participles.
- 9) Use a modifier only to describe what is intended.
- 10) Be real careful about using adjectives and adverbs correct.



Two more simple rules that are broken frequently...

- I before E except after C (“receive”) or when sounded like A as in “weigh” or I as in “height.”

- Principal is a pal (or money). Principle is a rule.

And if you really want to clean up your grammar, I highly recommend *Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation*, by Lynne Truss.

This book is a fun way to brush up. A panda eats shoots and leaves. We all know that. But if he eats, shoots, and leaves that means he went into a restaurant, had a good meal, fired his gun in the air, and ran out before the police came.

Good grammar and punctuation prevent misunderstandings like that!



Finally, here's my own grammar and punctuation rules...

- 1) I like to help the eye along as it reads (doubly important on-screen, a more difficult task). So I'm a big fan of the ellipsis, leading the eye within a sentence, or from one paragraph to the next...  
  
... like this. (In this case, it really was gratuitous!)
- 2) Don't be afraid to customize (i.e., break the rules) a little. Use dashes instead of brackets. They can make a sentence feel lighter. But if you break the rules, do it for a reason. And make sure it works.
- 3) I like to tuck thoughts that are slightly off-topic into sidebars. That way, the reader does not lose the main train of thought. I far prefer one sidebar to 2 paragraphs of text in parentheses.
- 4) Use a comma when a sentence needs a brief pause, like this, so you can continue in the same vein.
- 5) New thoughts require a period and a new sentence, not a comma, too many people write run-on sentences like this one (there should be a period after "comma").
- 6) Complete changes in thought direction require a new paragraph.
- 7) Break sentences that start with "if" into a question and answer (or two other kinds of sentences) whenever you can. In general, try to break two-part sentences (i.e., those that start with if, when, while, etc.) into two sharp shorties.
- 8) It was covered above, but let's say it anyway. Make sure the subject and verb agree with each other. "They was" just does not cut it. Be careful with this type of sentence – A and B and maybe even C is going down to the pond. Nope. Three people *are* going to the pond.

9) Use an active voice. The passive is so weak and pompous. Instead of writing “a good score was achieved by the team” change it to “the team scored a season high.” In this case, it’s not only active, but it’s stated with more flair.

10) And my most important rule... read it out loud. Does it sound OK? That rule will stand you in good stead 99% of the time. The other 1% of the time won’t be noticed.

Don’t worry about any other rules of style. You’ll build upon this foundation until you have your own style and voice.

Oh, one last “rule”...

**Do not take it too seriously.** Get it right, yes. Communicate, of course. But I’ll bet that you didn’t notice how I started this section...

Finally, here’s my own special grammar and punctuation rules...

(It should be “here are.”)

Unless you’re writing for grammarians or other super-picky types, no one notices the really small stuff. Why? They scan when they read online. So get it right, but don’t drive yourself crazy. And ensure that the way you write doesn’t confuse your visitors.

You’ll earn a lot more money by creating more and more content that OVERdelivers, than by sweating the dangling participle.



Done? Great! You’re ready to turn it into a web page and upload it.

Do a final-final check for typos, step by step...

- 1) Spell-check with your text editor. Grammar checking is a good idea, too.
- 2) Proofread it for the kind of “peak” vs. “peek” context typos that only a human can pick up.
- 3) Ask a third party to proof it. Why? Because *buy now, your to clothes* to it.

Phew! Bless your page as being done, upload it and keep on “keeping on”!

### 3.7 Get It Right... And the “Traffic Snowball” Takes Care of Itself

Combine quality, relevant material, with the right positioning, and with a voice that grabs loyalty and friends. What do you get? A winner. And not just with the humans.

We won’t cover the step-by-step way to please search engines. But this “writing to PREsell” process will get each page fairly close for its specific keyword.

And when you get PREselling right, guess what? Sites link to you. Forums discuss you. Search engines pick up on all that. You start to become recognized as an authority. The rankings of your content pages on the search engine results pages start to climb. And that means...

More people find you, increasing the number of people who like your site and style. More links. More social signals.

Meanwhile, you keep creating more content. The engines spider that, and see an ever-growing site. More links. Social signals increase. Higher traffic again.

It's a snowball rolling downhill, ever bigger, ever faster.

I'd advise letting go of the steering wheel on that snowball and just enjoy watching the ride. With **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M**, there's no need to ride and over-steer.

You're on your way.

This means it's time for your advanced degree in PREselling...

## 4. Your PREselling Masters Degree

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OK...

We're publishing...

We're inspired...

We're loving it....

We're up and running. Ready?...

Hyper-speed time.

### 4.1 The Pivotal Home Page

Your home page is your site's most important page. The reasons for this prestige are not complicated...

It introduces your voice. You will never be so closely scrutinized than on the home page. Make your visitor like the way you talk.

Do this correctly, and you're 50% of the way to getting that next click.

The other 50%?...

Your home page also establishes your Valuable PREselling Proposition ("VPP"). Your visitors immediately understand what your site is all about.

Having a visitor like your voice and your VPP means that you're 100% of the way to getting that critical "next click."

That next click says, "I like you and I want more."

Your home page will be your most visited page. It will become the most common page to start a visit.

It will also become the most common page to end a visit. No matter how well you write, visitors do leave. Your goal is to reduce that statistic and keep them on your site for as many pages as possible. PREselling does that.

Equate your home page to the front door of a house. Your voice and your VPP will determine what your visitor does with that door...

"Hey, I'm in. Show me around."

-OR-

“Don’t get up. I’ll show myself out.”

Stay? Go?...

Confidence? Warm and fuzzies? Or derision and laughter?

OK, I may overstate things just a bit, but it’s to prove a point.

*It all happens on the home page.*

Do labor over your home page. Revisit it every month or two, with fresh eyes. Can you say it better, shorter, crisper?

Consider the home page a constant work-in-evolution. It’s never “perfect.” But strive for it.

What’s the difference between a VPP and a USP (“Unique Selling Proposition”)?

A USP explains your product’s most powerful benefit, in combination with a strong, unique feature of your business. It answers the question...

“Why should potential customers buy from or hire you?” It belongs on a sales page (i.e., at the monetization stage), not on your home page.

Your Valuable PREselling Proposition becomes clear as you refine your Site Concept (through the early steps of CTPM). You must be 100% confident and delighted with your VPP before you register your domain name.



Let’s analyze some SBler sites that are good role models. They work because they’re not the “same old, same old” professional, passionless words. They nail V&VPP (“Voice and VPP”) down tight, right on that all-important front door.

Dragging it out is mouse-clicking fatal – your visitors’ trigger fingers are itchiest in the first minute of a visit.

What do you think about the following home page?

## Make Dinner Easy

<http://www.madedinnereasy.com>

### Let me help you get dinner on the table!

I'm the mom of four busy kids and I love to cook. Each week I share [five free simple weekly dinner menus](#), [quick-easy dinner recipes](#), and [an organized free printable grocery list](#). If you never know what to make for dinner, these weekly ideas may be the answer to making easy homemade meals.

Each weekly dinner menu includes family friendly dinner recipes that are quick and easy to make. I try to include fresh fruits and vegetables and a minimum of processed ingredients.

I also try to incorporate recipes into my menus that fit with seasonal, holiday, or religious observations. If you want to browse around this site, you will find over 300 family friendly recipes, cooking tips, and product recommendations.



Let your visitors know exactly what to expect, right up front. Sure, you may lose the person who's not interested. But you would lose her anyway by being too vague or too all-inclusive. The key to this approach is that you keep the person who wants what you deliver.

There are no hard and fast rules, so do whatever works for your business. For example...

## Rent a Villa in Tuscany

<http://www.rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com>

**Tuscany** - Enjoy a wonderful, relaxing holiday of a lifetime in the most beautiful region of Italy.

Choose from the wide selection of properties we have available to suit all tastes and budgets -

- Lovingly restored villas or rustic, stone farmhouses set amongst the breathtaking countryside for those who long to leave the stresses and strains of city life far behind.
- Luxury seaside villas in chic coastal resorts for those who'd prefer to rub shoulders with the International jet set after a hard day's sunbathing.
- City centre apartments in Tuscany's art cities for those who fancy a spot of culture or even designer shopping!

These owners take charge right away. They introduce the monetization aspect up front. But they quickly back that up by establishing their credibility.

A friendly voice is already detectable. These are friends in a foreign country. Talk about warm fuzzies! Anyone interested in Tuscany will keep reading. Then comes that all-important "next click." Your visitor just walked through the front door and will be staying awhile.

Here are a few more "home page examples" to review...

Each one is simple and to the point – just a short, friendly and concise overview of the site’s purpose. Decide for yourself, and think about “voice.” It’s not easy to achieve, but it can be done. Could this small business do a better job with that?

## Vegan Coach

<http://www.vegancoach.com>

### Learn The Secrets To Homestyle Whole Foods Vegan Cooking

By Patty Knutson

Welcome to VeganCoach.com. So happy you're here. :-)

Let's cut to the chase because I know you're probably in a hurry.

What will you find here at Vegan Coach?

In a nutshell...

- Easy natural vegan cooking techniques for working with whole foods;
- Recipe-free cooking tips that work even on your busiest days;
- General nutrition suggestions based on the latest research;
- Helpful weight loss advice;
- Tasty vegan recipes;
- ...and more.

**Our cooking website is perfect for both new and long-term Vegans.**

How does it credentialize itself? What is its VPP?

Sorry, I’m not giving any answers (not even in the “back of the book”). There are lessons to be learned. You now know enough to move ahead on your own.

Do not panic. A catchy phrase may not occur to you on your first draft. Maybe not even in the first few months.

But your mind works on this in the background. That’s why you should revisit your home page periodically. Even if it never comes to you, it’s not the end of the world. But I’ll bet that if you revisit your home page monthly and spend a solid hour working on how to improve it... good things will happen!

### **K-I-S-S!**

There’s nothing complex, overdone, or pretentious about the sites of our role models. They all get their message across effectively...

- *“Here’s our VPP.”*
- *“Here’s what you can expect.”*

All said in a visitor-specific voice.

Period. Save the detailed discussions for your content pages (the next two tiers of your site).

At the home page level, your visitor needs a quick and very concise overview of your site. What's your most important goal?

Get her to like you. Stimulate interest and curiosity, even excitement. Cause her to want more information. In other words, get that all-important "next click" through the front door and into your site's deeper tiers.

As your skills improve, you can relax these rules and become a bit more creative.

For example, Great Murder Mystery Games (<http://www.great-murder-mystery-games.com>) could start with a murder! Not an actual one – it turns out to be the start of a game.

This is one-level-up PREsell-writing, and you can do it.

But walk before you run. Start with the tried and true. Review more sites at...

<http://results.sitesell.com>

Push your copy, but always begin with what you can handle. The sites from above present a Voice and VPP approach that you can definitely do.

Master these fundamentals first.

Then think about pushing it to the next level. You have to "obey the rules" to understand them completely. And you must understand them to know when it's OK to bend and stretch them, or even break them.



What's the one thing you didn't see on the home pages of our role models?

No sales pitch or an immediate recommendation. This is an automatic turn-off for your visitor. It's easy to figure out what happens next...

Did you hear the sound of that click of the Back button?

Use your home page to nurture trust and let your visitors know that you can help them. These people are interested in what you have to offer, or they wouldn't be on your website. So relax – a sales pitch now is fatal.

Instead, cater to their needs first by providing the information they're seeking. They'll follow your recommendations later on.

Give and then take.

Well done! Your visitor likes your V&VPP and wants more information... Click!

## 4.2 Content Pages That OVERdeliver!

“What do I write about?”

Ah, that’s easy to answer now. Your brainstorming sessions laid out a blueprint for the three tiers of your site. Each page focuses on one profitable keyword, developed during brainstorming.

Your Keyword-Focused Content Pages must OVERdeliver high quality information about a topic (“keyword”) that’s related to your site’s theme. This is what your visitor requires and expects.

Present this information in the most effective way possible. Remember those guidelines we discussed earlier? Start applying them now...

- snappy customer-oriented words
- sub-headings for emphasis
- short sentences
- small chunks of information (2-3 sentence paragraphs, 4 max!)
- lists and bullet/numbered points
- inverted pyramid style (i.e., present your conclusion first)
- one idea per paragraph
- no extraneous material.

Your content page has two key jobs after Content brings Traffic (**C** ➔ **T**)...

- 1) PREsell – build credibility and trust through the OVERdelivery of great, free content
- 2) Monetize – lead into gentle, in-context introductions to your product, service, or merchant recommendation.

Yup, the other two jobs are **P** ➔ **M**!

You could say that the Tier 2 and Tier 3 pages are rather important!

Please don’t think that one page has to complete the entire **C** ➔ **T** ➔ **P** ➔ **M** process and monetize for you immediately. No, it’s a collective process, the result of all your pages working together over time.

Focus each content page on just one topic (i.e., one specific keyword related to your theme). This keeps your writing tight, your reader focused, your offers relevant... and the spiders happy, too!

**Always stay on topic.** You'll be tempted to drift off topic – don't. If you do drift, your visitors will suddenly have material that has no appeal to them. As a result, they lose interest, and you lose them.

So what should you do if a strong second topic emerges as you write a page?

Make it the topic of a new content page. That keeps you and your visitor focused, and it gives you a second opportunity to build traffic via the engines.

Create content pages that only address the needs of your target group. **Visitors interpret this as a sign of integrity.** Your site doesn't exist to simply wring dollars from them. You're giving before taking.

These types of pages effectively PREsell you – your credibility, your expertise, your willingness to help with no strings attached!



Want to see more examples of pages that deliver great content, and build trust and credibility?

The best way to learn is to tie the “theory” to actual practice that works. Your wish is my command...

## Simply Canning

<http://www.simplycanning.com/pickle-recipes.html>

### Pickle Recipes

Pickle recipes are for just about anything!

Of course there are the usual [dill pickles](#).

How about [pickled carrots](#)?

Pickled Peppers? [Hot](#) or [mild](#)?

Have you ever had [dilly beans](#)? MMMmm

[Pickled green tomatoes](#), preserve the unripened fruits that would end up frozen in the fall.

Chop some of those veggies and combine to make [sweet pickle relish](#).

Do you have chickens? If so I'll bet you get a glut of eggs every spring! Try a [pickled eggs recipe](#)! And check out my egg boiling issues here. :0)

Here is a great [pickling tip](#) from one of SimplyCanning's readers



What else does the example above have? It's easy to see that the owner...

- knows her theme and topic inside and out
- understands that relevant, high-value information is what visitors are seeking!

Writing good content is a straightforward process. There's nothing magical, mystical or complicated about it. Your visitors are searching for quality information. OVERdeliver it to them.

Practice writing. It develops your skills and your voice. It's perfectly professional to present your material very simply and concisely. By working on it, your writing voice will become stronger.

As you get more comfortable, become more creative. Develop new ways to phrase, and have some fun with your writing. Once you really start to enjoy it, you can't help getting better and better. Practice makes perfect!

Keep PREselling to your best visitors. Here's how...

### 4.3 Site-Blogging

A "blog" is, at its simplest, merely a journal of entries that one makes on a web page. Each entry has a "permalink" to a dedicated web page. The most recent entries are sorted to the top, meaning that web pages are sorted chronologically rather than topically.

Blogging is the perfect medium for communicators and thinkers who have something to say on a frequent basis.

Most small business people don't have the time, the inclination or the subject matter.

However, the mass market is subscribing to blogs. So what do you do?

Site-blog. All you have to do is click to set it up. There's no new content to create since Solo Build It! will automatically reformat your newly published content into a brief blog post with a link to the new page.

It turns your RSS feed (the distribution channel) into a perfectly formatted and visible web page. That gets the attention of both your human and spider visitors.

And here's the fun part. Each time you publish or modify a page, that page is distributed via RSS to the world.

Visitors subscribe to your site, the way they subscribe to your newsletter! It's the best of both worlds. Publishing a site-blog is a fantastic, non-intrusive way to maintain contact with your visitors.

Your site-blog lets them know "something's new." Since they like your material, they click to re-visit your site. Bingo! Re-start **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M**.

Great PREselling is not restricted to web page content. Why should you just “sit there” and wait to be found?

#### **4.4 Newsletters – The Repeated PREsell**

A quality, regularly scheduled newsletter puts you in front of your very best visitors... those who like you enough to give you their email addresses. They want to hear from you again!

A newsletter repeats your PREsell, enhances your credibility, and encourages repeat visits to your site. In a nutshell, it keeps your business front and center in the minds of your subscribers.

Subscribers are highly qualified, prospective customers. They share the same passion as you do. The double opt-in subscription process confirms that interest. They’re also telling you that they like what you’re presenting on your site and want to get more of it.

##### **Want more reasons to publish a newsletter?**

A newsletter builds a sense of relationship. When subscribers hear from you at regular intervals, you become more like a trusted friend, and less like some faceless medium on the Internet. A bond takes root and grows.

A newsletter reinforces “Voice and VPP” and reinforces your “Brand of One” and your PREselling message.

A newsletter generates profits. It takes a prospective new customer anywhere between 7 and 13 exposures to your message before they’ll act upon it. Your newsletter keeps you on their radar screens, exposure after exposure, deepening your credibility and leading to additional sales.

PREselling in your newsletter and PREselling in your web page are not that different – all the rules outlined earlier still apply. However, because your audience knows, respects, and trusts you, it’s not a problem to make your recommendations or product/service offerings slightly more forthright.

“Forthright” doesn’t mean pushy, though. Let your audience decide whether or not your solution addresses their needs. It boils down to this...

Every single page of your website has the potential to be your visitor’s first (and last!) experience with your business. Visitors arrive via different entry points, from all walks of life, from all points of the globe. So give, then take.

Work monetization models into your content, in-context, gently. Your site is not a sales pitch from an unknown entity.

In your newsletter, you can make your recommendations a bit more direct. Your subscribers already know you from your site... heck, they like you! They value your advice because they feel you have their best interests at heart.

As long as the quality of your newsletter is consistent with the quality of your site, and you have a customer-first focus, **C** → **T** → **P** → **M** flows seamlessly from website to newsletter and back to your site.

Is a newsletter a lot of work? Publishing one can be as easy as updating folks monthly about new pages on your site. After all, folks have more to do than calendar your site for regular repeat visits.

So use your newsletter to jog their memory. Pique your subscribers' curiosity with short teasers about the new content on your site. Keep them coming back for another look!

## 4.5 Interactive PReselling With Content 2.0

You're all set to "talk" to your visitors, via your home page, your content pages, your site-blog and your newsletter. Now it's time for the second half of the success equation... let your visitors talk, too.

Here's why...

- Two-way communication builds much stronger relationship than one-way broadcasting.
- Listening to your visitors will help you understand their needs, concerns and wishes.
- The better you understand your visitors, the easier it will be to create the content, products or services they really want.
- An engaged, excited visitor is more likely to convert than a passive reader.

Content 2.0 (C2) has the potential to be an excitement virus that "infects" visitors to your site. There's more to it, though, than merely putting up a few forms on existing web pages. C2, by itself, is not going to create the excitement. You have to light the fuse and stoke the fire to get it going!

Our PReselling mantra – give before you take – applies to C2 as well. Create high quality, valuable content on your site first, and lots of it. Visitors will then want to contribute to your site.

Community participation deepens your relationship with your visitors, both actively by those who contribute by adding pages and commenting, and passively by those who see so many others participating, increasing your credibility, your "authority."

SBlers use C2 to gather testimonials for goods or services they sell, to offer a place to share gripes and pet peeves, to hold contests, to have people provide book reviews, to invite questions (a great way to understand their needs/wants), and the list goes on.

Visitor contributions become content pages on your website, and as an extra benefit, other people can comment on them!

Once you start with Content 2.0, it's easy to think of other engaging relationship-building strategies. For an overview of how it works and its many benefits, watch the C2 Video Introduction...

<http://sbi.me/XvXcGz>



One strategy that works especially well for PREselling purposes is to invite questions. No matter what topic your niche is about, users will have questions to which they can't find the answers on your site.

Normally they would contact you via your "Contact Us" form and you would reply to them. Rather than replying to each question one by one, invite your readers to submit their questions via a Content 2.0 form. Their questions then turn into permanent pages on your site, along with your answers (via the commenting feature).

It's a win-win situation... your readers get their question answered and you provide valuable content for all future visitors who have the same question too. In addition, other users can comment on the question as well. You might not even have to answer every question yourself!

Let's continue with more relationship-building...

## 5. Create Social Signals

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It's easy to become overwhelmed as an online solopreneur when you think about using social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, etc.) to market your website and business. Let's break through the noise...

Social media is simply one more way for people to discover your business and tell their friends about it (ex., via "like" or +1 buttons, sharing, Facebook comments, etc.). These actions in turn generate social signals for the search engines.

The better your fans or followers feel they know you, the more likely they are to follow your product recommendations or buy physical products, e-products or services from you. Social media can add a personal dimension to your professional recommendations, so your readers feel more like they're following advice from a friend rather than a stranger.

It's all about relationship-building!

Social media, though, is fast-paced and time-consuming. Few people have the time to cover all the potential networks, and the return on (time) investment is questionable.

How do you decide then which social media marketing channels you will use to PREsell your business?

### 5.1 Prioritize Your Social Efforts

Let's look at the key factors that will influence your decision...

#### **Your Time Availability**

Are you creating your business part-time while holding a full-time job? If you're already finding it difficult to invest the time required to build your business, social media might be more of a distraction than a tool to propel your business forward.

Or do you have enough time to build your site and implement a social media strategy in your downtime? For instance, send a Twitter tweet while you wait in line at the bank.

#### **Your Type of Business**

Some businesses are more likely to benefit from social media marketing than others. For example, if you sell a service, a high-profit product or run a local business, think seriously about setting up a Facebook Page (consider it a must, if you own a local business – your prospective customers are already there!).

## **Your Personal Interests and Inclinations**

Work isn't really work if you enjoy doing it. For example, are you hooked on Pinterest, a photo-sharing platform? You might as well profit from your "obsession" and use it to promote your business.

While sending out a few tweets a day on Twitter or updating a Facebook Page or pinning some photos might be fun for some solopreneurs, it can be just another chore on the "to-do list" for others. Which camp do you fall into?

If you're in the social camp, monitor your time closely and don't be distracted from your business-building work. You may schedule an hour to work on a page for your site, but then find that a "quick check" of your favorite social media networks has suddenly turned into a lost hour. And that means no headway on your long-term business needs.

Make sure to put first things first.

If you decide to integrate social media marketing into your business plan, narrow your focus to what's personally manageable and also fits your business. It's all about prioritizing your efforts. (After all, there are only 24 hours in a day!)

Let's cover the 5 main social marketing options for your business...

### **5.1.1 Facebook**

Facebook is the largest social networking site on the Internet. Move beyond a personal profile and create a Facebook Page for your business, too.

SiteSell's Facebook Page is here...

<https://www.facebook.com/solobuildit>

Facebook users who like your business become your "fans." They can post on your timeline, upload photos or videos, learn about special events or promotions, etc.

A Facebook page is an exciting, uncomplicated way to interact and develop a relationship with like-minded people who share the same passion and interest as you do. They, in turn, get to see your "social" side, the person behind the Facebook page. At some point, they may want to link their website to yours (if applicable).

You can also find ideas for new content for your website. What questions are your fans asking? What topics do they like to discuss? What's trending in your niche?

Use Facebook to PREsell your “Brand of One” by posting valuable content related to your niche and reinforcing your expertise. Friends and friends of friends who like what they see on your Facebook page will check out your website. And as search results use Facebook’s social graph data more frequently, organic search climbs accordingly.

The power of Facebook resides in the relationships you build with other members, not in “selling” but “PREselling” your Brand of One.

Yes, the **C → T → P → M** process applies even on Facebook!

### **One caveat...**

You can easily spend a lot of time on Facebook and create a lot of content for it, which the folks over at Facebook will appreciate, because it adds value to their business. However, you want to **create value for your business, not theirs**, so focus on how to use Facebook for the maximum benefit of your business.

How do you encourage active, engaging conversations? Follow the advice in this SiteSell Facebook article...

<http://sbi.me/types-of-FB-posts>

## **5.1.2 Twitter**

What is Twitter? Their welcome message says it all... “Find out what’s happening, right now, with the people and organizations you care about.”

What’s going on at SiteSell?

<https://www.twitter.com/solobuildit>

The best way to picture the “twitter-sphere” is to imagine a bunch of people conversing around a water cooler, except in this case, you have a limit of 140 characters, including spaces!

How do you make Twitter work for your business? Start with this advice...

- keep it real. Create great posts that get retweets
- build up followers (which count as inbound links). Find people interested in your niche and “follow” them. Your potential customers do the same for your business and become your followers
- contact influential people in your niche, who will spread the word and increase your credibility as an expert in your area

- maximize your relevant follower/followed ratio. Ideally try to achieve a higher # of followers and a lower # followed.



The rules of “niche-tweeting” are simple...

- 1) Contribute relevant or interesting observations. Remember that your newest followers read your most recent posts. Make them great. Ask yourself if what you’re writing adds value to the people on your feed.
- 2) Skip the self-promotion – “it’s just not about you.” It’s about sharing common interests with like-minded individuals.
- 3) Stay disciplined about what sites, blogs, etc. you recommend.
- 4) Build upon your individual tweets about a certain topic so that, bit by bit, the reader gets a better understanding of your perspective/ideas... you!

Niche-tweeting can be a nice adjunct to your business if you have the time and interest to do it. It can be fun to establish contact with those in your field. And unexpected big benefits can result – media coverage, joint ventures, etc.

The biggest caveat is: don’t get sucked into a huge time waste, 140 characters at a time.

### **5.1.3 YouTube**

YouTube, owned by Google, is the most popular online video community.

Inexpensive and easy-to-handle digital cameras, video cameras, and even mobile phones allow everyone to become a video producer. This opens up tremendous opportunities to reach your audience in an engaging, memorable way. If a photo is worth a thousand words, a video doubles/triples that number!

To get the most out of YouTube...

- 1) Be creative. Use a variety of funny, unique or interesting ways to show your brand. Set your business apart from the crowd.
- 2) Limit promotional talk. Focus on showing the various use cases for your product or service. Show, don’t just tell, your audience how to get the most out of your products.
- 3) Keep videos short. Break up longer ones into a series, and number the series in the title for easy discovery.
- 4) Create playlists around common themes and ideas.

5) Encourage your audience to submit ideas and content for future videos.

Remember our home inspector example in an earlier section? That site owner could create a series of videos about finding a reliable home inspector, negotiating a good price, understanding the service plan, etc. Each video would either link to a relevant page on his site or go to a sales page, where the owner either promotes his services or his own e-book.

Be sure to create a “channel” where you house all your videos on YouTube, as SiteSell YouTube demonstrates...

<https://www.youtube.com/solobuildit>

Once users subscribe to your channel, they’ll be alerted about every new video you upload. Because it’s so easy to share videos via websites, blogs, Facebook, Twitter and other social networks, the viral effect of your PREselling videos can be huge.

### **5.1.4 Pinterest**

Pinterest says it’s “connecting people all over the world based on shared tastes and interests.” The connection seems to be working well as this social platform’s popularity increases daily.

Pinterest lets you pin photos that you find on the Web (and on your own site, in moderation) to boards that you create. Nori created an account for [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com)...

<https://www.pinterest.com/anguillabeaches/>

You can repin photos that others have pinned, like and comment on pinned photos, and follow other pinners. It’s sort of a Twitter/Facebook mashup, but focusing on photos (and videos).

For example, a woman planning her wedding scours the Web, and Pinterest itself, looking for photos of dresses, wedding cakes, shoes, honeymoon locations, dinner menus, and everything else related to her wedding. If your site has photos that fit in any of those categories, those pix could end up on one or more of her boards (she’ll likely have one board for dresses, another for shoes, another for hairstyles, etc.).

Other women looking for related photos will find yours, because the first woman pinned them and added them to the Pinterest database. If those women pin them, you have more links to your site’s pages and access to more people who might pin your images.

As you can see, Pinterest extends your brand.

#### **Let’s go back to Nori’s example...**

She creates a collation of the best images of Anguilla on the Web. The combination of finding the most special shots and adding unique commentary builds a unique, value-added resource about Anguilla.

Wherever real people (who are interested in Anguilla) go, they'll find her. It extends her reach to folks interested in the wider niche, the Caribbean, exposing Anguilla to people who don't know Anguilla.

Pinterest can help you achieve a higher level of "targeted discovery." It's worth exploring for that reason.

### **5.1.5 LinkedIn**

LinkedIn is a social "business to business" network. Use it to connect with people in your niche, people who might...

- write about your business
- recommend your business
- share knowledge with you
- become a site sponsor
- promote your product or service as an affiliate
- even purchase your product or service if you supply what they want.

From a PREselling perspective, focus on these two features...

#### **1) LinkedIn Groups**

Join groups related to your niche. Search their group directory by either category or keyword or a combination of both.

Group discussions are very much a networking exercise, not a link-building one. If you don't add value to the conversation, you will do your reputation more harm than good.

For example, if your site is about retirement, you could ask, "What are your top 3 strategies for being able to retire before your 50<sup>th</sup> birthday?" Share your own thoughts on this, along with a link to a relevant page on your website, in the comments box.

#### **2) LinkedIn Answers**

Showcase your knowledge and interests by answering questions from other LinkedIn members. These answers become part of your profile and demonstrate your expertise.

Each time your answer is chosen as the best one by the questioner, you earn an "expertise" point. The more points of expertise you gain, the higher you appear on the featured list of experts.

LinkedIn offers various user guides to help you make the most of your membership. How much time you put in to LinkedIn depends on what you hope to get out of it.

And that brings us to...

## 5.2 Passive vs. Active Social Marketing

Let's wrap up this social section with this summary...

Passive social signals are your highest priority when starting your social marketing efforts. For the most part, this low, one-time work results in the long-term accumulation of social signals for the search engines. For example...

- Add Google +1 buttons and Facebook "Like" buttons to your pages. (Solo Build It! simplifies the process to a click of a button.)
- Enable Facebook comments. This takes a little moderating, but it does turn your site into an interactive one that creates content (which Google indexes) and social signals on your site.
- Insert a "sharing bar" on your site.
- Use photos liberally and add a Pin It button under the best one or two on each page.

These are all "set it and forget it" functions (with the exception of Facebook comments, which are easy to moderate in a few minutes per day).

### **OK, now it's over to active social marketing...**

How do you do it?

- Create a Facebook business page. Find 10-15 minutes per day to make two posts a day. Link to it from your website.
- Grow your Facebook page by engaging with fans.
- If Twitter and Pinterest make sense for your site, start accounts with them. Then add Twitter Follow and Pinterest Follow buttons to your site.
- Finally, if LinkedIn makes sense for you (ex., you're selling your services, especially to businesses), get involved there, too!

Active social is more time-consuming than passive, but even doing just Facebook yields dividends. Two posts every day aren't that much time (and would be about the minimum). However, don't spend so much time on active social marketing that your site suffers.



What are the key guidelines?

- Maximize “passive” signals, including Facebook comments.
- Choose at least one active social marketing activity. Pick carefully.
- Remember that you make your money on *your* site, not on social media sites.

Great progress. What’s the next place to focus your attention?

## 6. How Many Exposures Does It Take to Get to “M”?

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The process is **C** → **T** → **P** → **M** – but how long does it take to get to **M**?

That depends on what and how you’re monetizing...

Selling a type of investment software for \$1,000 will take at least 10 visits, up to 20-30 visits over a period of a year, before you convert someone into a customer! It’s also going to take at least a few issues of your newsletter. Confidence has to be pretty high for a customer to pay that kind of money. And that’s one more reason to diversify your monetization models.

Never lose sight of a basic fact of e-life... Your visitors will all, each and every one of them, leave your site sooner or later.

The bottom line answer to the “How Many Exposures Does It Take to Get to **M**?” question is the same as it is for another question — how long does a piece of string need to be? And the answer is: as many (as long) as it takes.

Diversifying monetization models is like having several pieces of string, each a different length, each appropriate for a certain job.

### 6.1 Integrate Your Offers... Without Spoiling the PREsell!

Alright, your content development is under control. It’s well-written, nicely formatted, and inspires confidence. Your visitors love your site. Congratulations are in order!

Only one step left to master... **M**... where the money is! Let’s not lose track of that, ultimately...

This is why you’re here. Yes, it’s a joy to build a **C** → **T** → **P** → **M** site. You attract like-minded people to you. You PREsell. Everyone is having a great time, including you.

But it’s still a business. And you’re here to do business. No need to hide that. It’s great when customers love the folks they do business with.

Just don’t forget to get around to Monetization, the big **M**... or all you have is a hobby. So the final skill-testing question is...

How do you integrate your monetization options into your content pages without compromising hard-earned trust and credibility? You want to convert visitors into income, without making them feel like it’s your primary objective.

It’s an interesting challenge, at first glance. But, at second glance, how is this any different from offline business? Build relationships... PREselling is like the famous “business lunch”... the baker, hairdresser, and hotel at the beginning of this book.

*No difference.*

Just be straightforward and natural about blending the PREsell and Monetization. It goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway!)

There's no point in working hard to deliver high-value content in a unique voice, and then blow it all with a bad, "just-for-the-money" recommendation. Instead...

- 1) Be honest. People like to hear genuine recommendations about high-quality products and solutions that make their lives easier. Your quality content reinforces authenticity.
- 2) Selling your own products or services? Relax. This is going to be fun. People know and like you. Simply tell and show them what you have to offer. You'll be amazed at the response.
- 3) Know the products you represent or sell. This is the most obvious, and most important, rule. It's only when you're truly familiar with a product or service that you can clearly match it to your visitors' needs and speak authoritatively about it.
- 4) Share your experience. Do you use the products you represent or sell on a regular basis?
- 5) Make your monetization offerings/recommendations in context... within the natural flow of your content.
- 6) Don't be pushy. Tell your visitors what you recommend or sell, and why. If they need it, they'll pursue it. If they don't, there's nothing you can say to change that. Whatever you do, don't turn your site into a "hard pitch" site. You'll close down the "open to buy" attitude that you have spent so much time and energy to foster.
- 7) Diversify. For those visitors who are not interested in a certain offer, introduce them to something else rather than lose them immediately.
- 8) Briefly outline any weaknesses of the product or service, or why it would not be appropriate for some people. It's not easy to speak negatively about your offerings, but let's face it ... no product is perfect, nor is it for everybody. Your visitor is well aware of this fundamental truth.

By providing some sort of analysis, you...

- 1) Save your visitors time and energy. Their investigation work is already done. You earn their gratitude and respect.
- 2) Demonstrate your complete knowledge of and objectivity about the product/service.
- 3) Add credibility to all other recommendations, as you have clearly demonstrated your #1 priority is the customer.

And a final special recommendation (further to the topic of selling your own products, touched on above)...

Don't be afraid to create special sales pages for your own special products and services.

If a product is worthy of special attention, dedicate a special sales page. If you offer a service, that is always worth its own sales page. The goal of this special page is simple... sell with class.

Writing sales copy is beyond the scope of this book. However, *Make Your Words Sell!* covers everything. It is the perfect "selling bookend" to this book...

<http://mhq.sitesell.com/myws.pdf>



What's the biggest monetization mistake that newbies make?

They are so desperate to monetize their traffic that they end up hitting their visitors over the head with their offers. Nothing is more distasteful than an aggressively hyped pitch. Your visitors recoil, regardless of its quality and your best intentions. Why?

Because they feel "pitched!" It's all bad...

You damage your credibility, severely compromise your ability to PREsell, and your visitor is likely to leave your site quickly, bad taste in her mouth, and unsubscribe from the next issue of your newsletter.

The best way to approach the move from PREselling to selling boils down to one word... Relax.

Stay the course. What does that mean? Stay customer-focused. Don't switch to "you-focused" at the last second.

Yes, you want your business to be profitable. Take it easy. Introduce or recommend within the natural flow of your content (i.e., an in-context reference). Do so in a natural manner that does not trigger your visitor's bad-taste radar.

Try this... take a step back and pretend that you don't care whether your visitor heeds your recommendation or not. There will always be something else you can introduce, right? Without that "gotta make a sale" mentality shining through, you will be pleasantly surprised at how your copy flows... and how your visitors respond.

A change in perspective works wonders. Look after your visitors' interests first and foremost. Great and profitable things will happen. Your recommendations have an entirely different feel. Your visitors feel confident about them.

Ignore this advice at your peril. You can attract traffic. You can PREsell. And you can monetize. But if you alienate your visitors at that very last step, you'll blow the entire **C → T → P → M** process, right when it counts the most.



The now-retired Web guru Ralph Wilson was a master of impartial PREselling.

In his book reviews, 9 times out of 10, you would find a “but” in the review. As in... “This was a great book, but... etc.”

The “but” is where Ralph would enter his own comments, generally on how the publication might be improved, or where it may be lacking. Yes, Ralph would lose a few commissions by detailing some of a book's weaker points. But he would end up sending more appropriate, highly targeted customers who don't mind the warts. That is what you call PREsold!

These folks were much more likely to buy, so Ralph invariably delivered high conversion rates... and happy customers.

What about the potential sales that he lost?

They remained satisfied pre-customers. They likely earned Ralph a commission on some other product some other time. Ralph's unwavering dedication to the best interests of his visitors meant that they would return and, following Ralph's advice, find the right product for their needs.

Zero in on the best interests of your visitors. Integrate your offers smoothly and naturally into your high-quality, customer-first content and guarantee the long-term success of your business.

Before we wrap up your graduate studies in PREselling, listen to the advice of some SBlers who share some very helpful insights. I'm turning the book over to them in the next chapter, so their “voice of experience” can tell you how it's done in their own words.

## 7. Words of Wisdom From SBiers

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Nothing succeeds like success. I asked a few of our successful SBiers to share their personal experiences and tips on how to write well and PREsell effectively.

It's not surprising that successful SBiers all follow the same "rules" of effective PREselling...

- know your stuff
- be passionate about your topic
- put your customers' needs first
- present your material cleanly, using a unique voice
- practice, practice, practice – it's the best way to improve.

Give this chapter a quick read. Then come back. Do a second (even a third!), more careful read-through. It's that important. These SBiers are wonderful mentors. Absorb and apply their wise words... and you too can join the winner's circle!

Let's get the mentoring ball rolling with Greg...

### 7.1 Greg on Romancing

#### Greg Mattson

<http://www.excellent-romantic-vacations.com>

Basically, I approach writing content as if I was talking to a friend, or someone asking me for some advice or directions. I try to be straightforward and easy to follow. It's best not to "try to sell" - just let your own natural enthusiasm come along with the sentences. The rest will take care of itself.

I read a lot of travel guides and travel writing, so my style is probably a mix of what impresses me in that field. I make it a point to notice as I read: What makes this memorable, or easily understood? How would I describe my own experience this way?

It's good to try anticipating what a visitor to your site or particular page would ask you about your subject or keyword. Like anything, some of my pages are better than others. I'm learning what works, and how to spot strong areas that attract greater attention.

And, I can't take all the credit - my wife Maureen is a great second opinion and proofreader. I usually run everything by her before it goes online.

As Greg's comments demonstrate, unbridled enthusiasm and passion are your best PREsellers. The passion oozing from your content will put your visitors at ease. It encourages them to act upon your recommendations, secure in the knowledge that you know your material, and have their best interests at heart.

Greg is one smart guy. He gets his wife to proofread everything. They know the importance of a second set of eyes to ward off those typo gremlins!

## 7.2 Don't Forget to Thank Jim & Fiona for This...

### Jim Andrew & Fiona McCardle

<http://www.rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com>

How to do proper joined-up writing? Haven't the faintest. Just kind of write down the first thing that comes into my head usually! I do have a few wee tricks up my sleeve...

- 1) Keep a notebook with you all the time. Jot down anything which seems interesting - could be ideas for newsletter articles, words or phrases you see or hear. Anything, you don't know what to do with it at the time.
- 2) Know your readers. Young, cool, techie, older, experts on a particular subject, total beginners, etc. This will influence the style of writing (how much jargon, how serious or jokey, etc.)

I have a particular problem with this one! People who want to rent luxury villas in Tuscany don't always understand my Scottish schoolboy humour (I sometimes have to self censor some newsletters. Even though they keep me amused, no one else has the faintest idea what I'm on about.) On the other hand, text that is too American over-the-top sales pitch doesn't go down well in the UK.

- 3) Study why you like certain writers. I don't mean copy what they write, but they may have a particular way of seeing the world that might fit your readers. Newspaper magazines have some great writers, who are able to write 1000 words on anything and can describe events or situations in really clever ways. Again check out lots and take notes.

For example, I love the travel writer Bill Bryson. He has a quirky way of looking at the world. In one of his books, he described a restaurant where "they serve steaks the size of hot water bags" and a gallery that "had a queue coiling round it like an abandoned garden hose." Great!

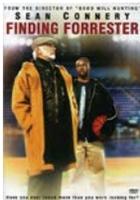
- 4) Paint pictures in words. Describe how you feel. Compare a situation to another, etc. A list of facts can be a bit boring (except if it's meant to be only a list of facts). Of course, it depends on your readers, but if you can make them feel what it's like to be in a certain place or do a certain thing, you are half way there. Also describing how a particular product can help/change someone's life is always better than describing only what it does (advantages, not technical spec).

- 5) Know your MWR (most wanted response). Write to get it. For example, don't complain about the heat or the cold if you want people to come on holiday. Describe what fun it is. Describe what great things you can do in the great weather (there is no such thing as bad weather, only different types of good weather).
- 6) Give clear instructions. If people can get confused, they will.
- 7) It's easier to write if you are sincere... if you actually like what you are doing. If you've been there, done that and bought the t-shirt, it's easier to describe it to others. So, a bit of passion, enthusiasm and first-hand experience all help.
- 8) Re-read, and spell-check everything. There's nothing worse than badly written text. If your first language isn't English, get the text checked or translated properly.
- 9) Don't wait for inspiration. Write often, even when you don't feel particularly inspired. You can go back and tweak it later. It's a bit like humour. If you try to analyze it, it isn't funny.

Jim makes a number of good points – all are worth a second, third, and fourth read. These two are especially note-worthy...

- 1) Study why you like certain authors. Increase your awareness level. Reflect upon what you read. Is it inspiring or depressing or silly or engaging or creative, etc.? There is no need for hours of deep thought, but do make a mental note about what you like or don't like.
- 2) Don't wait for inspiration. Trust me on this one. Without some perspiration, there is no inspiration. Often, if you wait for inspiration (especially if you are juggling a full-time job and an online business), it will be a long time before you get anything done.

Which brings me back to...



"Pound those keys, dawg."

## 7.3 And Send Erwin a Big Thanks, Too...

### Erwin Steneker

1. Know your stuff...

Major point to writing an article is that I have to write from a basis of knowledge. I really can't write about something I don't know about. So to prepare me for an article, I collect all kinds of material on a given subject (from books, the Internet, notes from talking to colleagues, and so on).

When I'm ready to write the article, I read all the stuff at once. Then, when all information is fresh in my head, I'm ready for the next step.

## 2. Setting up a structure...

I need to have a structure for my article, a bone structure so to speak. I set out the article in a number of short sentences that in "staccato" tell the story that I want to tell in the article. It's almost like a presentation, where you have a number of sheets from which you tell your story. This bone structure always has the form head-body-tail.

The head I use to give the article a purpose. It's not a bed time story. I'm trying to make a point! The head "sets the stage" so to speak, introducing the reader to the subject of the article. For the unfinished article, I usually put some kind of working title, describing the subject, as the skull.

The body is used to make the point, and I use as many bullets as I need to get it across. Short sentences here. I'm not writing yet!

The tail wraps it all up. Usually this has the form of a conclusion or punch line. Often, I do not put anything in the tail before writing, as I don't always have a firm conclusion in my head. I found that during writing, I oftentimes learn different angles on the subject that I didn't have before. The writing process is also a teaching process, after which I'm much better enabled to come to a well-founded conclusion.

## 3. Fleshing it out...

I use the structured article, and start to put some flesh to the bones. I don't start with the head paragraph(s) as I found that it is much easier to write the introduction if the rest of the article is done. This is also true for the final conclusion. For each bullet in the body I'm writing out what I want to say at that point. This is much easier than writing the whole article, because I only have to focus on that single point.

=====  
Sidebar

Get in "the zone." I do my best writing when I'm in "the zone." The "zone" or "flow" is often mentioned by athletes to describe the state of mind where their athletic efforts are almost effortless, movements are fluent and energy is flowing abundantly. They are completely focused on the task at hand, and every step, leap and jump is spot on.

Now, I'm no athlete but I do know when I'm in the writing zone. No writer's block. Words flow easily, stringing to sentences, then paragraphs. I know exactly what to write, corrections are not necessary. I can write until I'm done, and even though hours may be gone in real time, I've lost all track of time.

I always try to get in the zone. I move away all distractions, such as phones and children, and just start writing. If I'm suffering writer's block, I usually just type something, anything, to get the flow going. Even retyping a paragraph or two from a book helps to overcome the initial anxiety of not knowing what to write.

Although I know how to express myself in English, it's not my native language. Most of the time I know what to write. I think in English, and no translation is taking place in my head. But sometimes my knowledge of the language lacks. At that time, I just put in the Dutch equivalent and continue writing. Getting hung up by a single word can seriously impact the flow, so when I'm lost for words, I just write on. I often remember the line delivered by Al Pacino to Gabrielle Anwar in "Scent of a Woman"...

"Tango is not like life, my dear. There are no mistakes in Tango - if you get tangled up, you just Tango on."

=====

After I have written the basic article, I'm feeling much more confident to write the introducing and closing paragraphs.

#### 4. Grooming the piece...

Although a major part of the writing process is now done, I still don't have a finished product. Often, I must rewrite a sentence or two between paragraphs to enhance the flow.

Sometimes, I find myself "rambling," going on and on, using many more words than are necessary to get the point across. At that moment, I scratch all words that aren't absolutely necessary to tell the story. Usually, this is to the benefit of the article.

Also, at the moment of writing, I'm using exactly the same words as when I'm talking about something. For these words, I'm using a thesaurus to find synonyms. For example, "customer service" may become "after-sales support." Adding some variety in your words can make the article much more interesting to read. Oh, and spell-checking is a no-brainer, so I'll leave it at that.

#### 5. Let it rest...

After I have "finished" the article, I let it rest for a day. This helps me to get some distance from the piece, so when I re-read it, I'm much more perceptive to what isn't working. Sometimes I must finish an article the same day, but then I'm too close for comfort, so I let someone else read it. If I have someone handy, I always let it be read by another person.

#### 6. DONE!...

I wish! At this point, it all starts again... :-)

P.S. One more tip: Find a supporter, or better yet, a group of supporters, who give you positive affirmation, advice and general support. Online or off. The energy that can come from two or more folks who really support each other's efforts is phenomenal!

This is excellent advice from Erwin. From overcoming writer's block, to using a thesaurus, to final pruning/proofing, he covered everything.

His comments about distractions are important...

Finding a quiet spot where you won't be disturbed helps you establish flow and continuity in your writing. You'll find it very difficult to get into the "zone" as Erwin calls it, if the television is blaring, the phone is ringing, the dog is barking and the kids are pestering you. Find a quiet spot and you're off to the races.

## 7.4 SiteSell.com... Nope, *Not* Like Us

Go to SiteSell's home page or any of our other sales pages. Do they fit the **C → T → P → M** process? At first glance, they don't. But let's follow our typical visitor, and then decide.

Read our main sales page with fresh eyes...

<http://www.sitesell.com>

There's a tremendous amount of useful content. You'll leave with new knowledge... the right way to build a site.

So what does that page establish?...

- VPP – unique content, coined uniquely... **C → T → P → M**
- "Voice" of experience, friendly but authoritative
- An interweaving of excellent PREselling content and sales copy
- USP – builds toward the close with the USP clearly stated and a solid 90-day guarantee to back it up...

<http://www.sitesell.com/more-info/guarantee-teeth90.html>

It was not an easy page to write. It has to accomplish a whole lot, covering a range of possible visitors.

Do not study our sites looking for a mentor. We do follow the basic **C → T → P → M** process, but greatly modified to meet the needs of a much larger company.

Take a look and you'll see that we practice what we preach. But look to the folks above for more appropriate mentoring.

Wow! We're in the final stretch already. Let's cruise down to the finish line...

## 8. Putting It All Together... “Hey, I Can Write Like That!”

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### FACT #1

We all communicate on a daily basis. We constantly build our personal offline “Brand of One” with friends, colleagues, family.

### FACT #2

We’re not taught to write to communicate in school. Shameful, but there you have it.

### FACT #3

Solo Build It! removes the barriers – technical, search engines, etc. The only way for small businesses to succeed, **C → T → P → M**, is now totally doable.

### FACT #4

No software tool in the world writes its own content – if it did, hey, it wouldn’t need you! If you see any “fill in the blanks” or “automatic page builders” for sale, apply some common sense. Then run, don’t walk, in the opposite direction.

### CONCLUSION

Let’s do something about it. Let’s raise our PREselling writing skills to the necessary level. **Anyone** really can do this.

This is not about doing something you don’t know how to do. It’s merely a question of bringing your personality and already existing communication skills to the keyboard. It’s about building personality (AKA “voice”), a unique positioning, likeability, content with zip, etc., into your site.

Your content (i.e., what you write), site design (i.e., how you present your material), positioning and unique voice (i.e., your writing tone and approach) form the backbone of your website.

Together, they affect how visitors judge you and, ultimately, how much income your monetization offerings earn. They combine to distinguish you as an expert in your field. And finally, the whole ensemble sets you profitably apart from the competition.

Your business, however, is only as strong as its weakest link in the **C → T → P → M** chain. You can’t build your business to its fullest potential if any of these critical elements are missing...

### 1) Design

If your website looks horrible, visitors will approach it with hesitation and distrust (if they even stick around). Of course, an outstanding design on its own won’t do it. Visitors are looking for information, not style.

## 2) Content That OVERdelivers

Poor content? No “meat?” No “zip?” All of that means “no interest” from your visitor. Click! Back to the search engine she goes. High-value, original, relevant content that’s delivered in your own unique voice and positioned in an interesting way is what wins.

So...

Position that high-value content in a unique and attractive way – one that’s very interesting to a smaller number of people. Why is that better than being mildly interesting to a wider audience? “Mild interest” does not cut it.

This strategy is especially beneficial for a crowded niche – no point in going after “everyone.” If you try to be “all things to all people,” you’ll lack focus – you’ll end up with watered down content that means nothing to anyone. Yes, it means eliminating a good chunk of your potential market, but that’s what it takes.

Excellent content and design will build your business. Now blend a unique voice and positioning into the mix –establish your character and identity – and your “Brand of One” will soar.

### Bottom line?

Content is the cornerstone of the Solo Build It! process...

### Content ➔ Traffic ➔ PREsell ➔ Monetize

Without Content, you can’t generate targeted Traffic (search engines, mobile search, and social), nor build trust and credibility with your visitors. Without Content, you’re left with no effective way to build targeted Traffic and then PREsell your visitors to your Monetization options.

**C ➔ T ➔ P** is the engine of your online success. And content is its fuel.

PREselling is what converts the fuel into income. It’s the critical **P** before the **M**.

That arrow between **P** and **M** reflects the warm, open-to-buy mindset that results from excellent PREselling and leads to Monetization.

We sometimes see hard-working, dedicated SBIs putting a lot of effort into keyword research, optimizing their pages for the search engines, finding quality inbound links, generating social signals and so on. Unfortunately, they do not put the same amount of effort into developing the high-value content that searchers seek, that PREsells.

Yes, it’s easier to focus on the mechanical actions like brainstorming and evaluating keywords. And those actions are important, of course.

But, compared to writing well, Solo Build It! turns those mechanical steps into “child’s play.” No doubt about it, it takes some hard thinking and planning to create content that PREsells. But it sure is worth it!



My final piece of advice?

Devote your time to developing original, relevant, high-value content.

It all starts with content...

If your content fails to impress humans, you fail to build social alliances, fail to get likes, fail to get comments, fail to impress search engines because visitors don’t stay long on your site, fail to secure joint ventures, fail to sell products or get AdSense clicks, fail to sell through your newsletter, etc.

Your content is the foundation upon which everything else builds. Creating more and more of it, and doing it better and better...

- increases the volume of targeted traffic week after week
- attracts more natural inbound links
- creates discussion in specialized forums about your site
- generates more newsletter subscribers – more potential lifetime customers
- gets search engines to start considering you as an authority and a mini-hub
- improves rankings steadily, especially for the more competitive words
- generates more return visitors, more social signals, ever-more inbound links, more credibility, and more search engine traffic
- converts more and more visitors into more and more customers.

As I said earlier... Get it right... and the “traffic snowball” grows.

Make your content PREsell and the snowball will build momentum and size with growing speed.



OK, let’s cover one final lesson and then we’ll wrap it up with the key summary points. Here it is...

The Voice & Valuable PREselling Proposition combo does not come so easily to everyone, I discovered. And it’s not just that some folks are “good at it.” Some situations are just easier to “VPP-voice” (ex., my 14 year old daughter starting a site about a Caribbean island – would that we all had such easy positioning!). Other situations need some work and creativity.

It's doable. Anyone can, with the right instruction and effort, "get it right." And from those with "self-imposed writer's block" to natural authors, all can push themselves to achieve a better, more effective home page (and to apply the same to the other pages on their site).

## 9. MYCPS! Reference Sheet

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The key points from *Make Your Content PResell!* are outlined below. Print off this list for handy reference. (And don't miss the Addendum, which covers what to do if someone copies your content.)

Ready for your review? Let's go...

### Successful PReselling content "works" at several levels...

- 1) It has that "been there, done that" voice and flair.
- 2) It has specific knowledge that comes from real experience.
- 3) It supports a depth of useful information – good reference material plays an important part.
- 4) It's positioned in a way that is uniquely yours.

Furthermore, it's consistent, from page to page, from newsletter issue to issue, from your Facebook updates to your Twitter tweets, from week to month to year.

And finally, it's for the visitor (and customer), absolutely.



### The Big 2...

- 1) Provide a confidence-building, solid site design. Check out eBay or Google to reassure yourself that your website doesn't have to look like it belongs in the Louvre. "Solid and simple" wins the day.
- 2) Deliver words that OVERdeliver, in your own voice, with credible, trust-inspiring knowledge, and a unique twist.



### The PReselling Reality...

Your CR will literally vary from 1% to 10%,  
purely because of...

- 1) HOW YOU REACH your visitor, and
- 2) WHAT YOU SAY to her, and
- 3) HOW YOU REFER her to your income-generating source.

A positive mindset turns into a “purchase” mindset with amazing regularity. A negative mindset is near-impossible to overcome. Your success with anything you do in the world of e-commerce flows from it.



### **Know your customer...**

Build a customer thumbnail profile (persona). This is an excellent way to focus your PREselling efforts. Know your customer’s needs and you will...

- know what kind of content is wanted
- know how to say whatever you say
- have a firm picture of your “audience of one” (invaluable for creating that one-to-one voice)
- know (when it comes time to monetize) how and what to monetize and what benefits to stress in your sales copy. Benefits, not features, connect with emotions.

Flesh out your profile by creating a master list of topics that might interest your target group. People who are interested in your theme/topic use these keywords at the search engines. Consider, as well, what your own life experience has taught you. First-hand information is invaluable.



### **The site design sets the tone...**

Reading is done differently online. People tend to scan text, so it’s important to keep paragraphs short, and use plenty of white space.

“Simple” and “clean” are the ruling adjectives. Use images to support the text, and optimize them.

The guiding principle for page layout is to make your visitor’s reading experience as enjoyable and as time-efficient as possible.

Keep fonts simple. Sans Serif fonts, such as Arial, Verdana and Helvetica, are good for easy online scanning.

Black text on a white or off-white background is easier to read. Multiple font colors are jarring, and they telegraph “inexperience” to your visitor.

Avoid colored or patterned backgrounds.

Take the time to polish and proof each page. It pays dividends, forever.



### **To PREsell, your content must be high quality...**

Write straight and direct. Most people read most comfortably at a Grade 7 level (12-13 year olds). Match your writing to that benchmark. If you're targeting a sophisticated audience that expects a more complex style, scale your language up. But still keep it simple, in relation to that level.

Communicate your message as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Activate your writing.

"How you say it" is almost as important as "what you say."



### **OVERdeliver...**

Excellent content differentiates you from competitors (most people suffer from "Good Enough Syndrome"). Valuable content also credentializes your business, establishing you as the expert in your field. Without this, it's impossible for any small business to build a brand.

Combine knowledge with passion. Know your business theme, the needs of your customers, and the benefits of your monetization solutions.



### **PREselling "warms up" your visitors and develops "open-to-buy" mindsets...**

You are not a brand. Most people won't buy or follow your recommendations, simply on your say-so.

Selling is selling. You make your case for your product/service/monetization model through sales copy (i.e., the presentation of benefits), culminating with a "call to action." But "selling" comes at the end.

PREsell, then sell.



### **So what do you do when you don't have a brand?**

You build your "Brand of One." Become a celebrity on your own island of expertise. There's only one way to do that... **C ➔ T ➔ P ➔ M.**

Relax... unfreeze.

The goal of good writing is to communicate. Build relationships.

All day long, in your "offline life," you do exactly that. You PREsell yourself – we all do. You build your personal "offline brand of one" – this is the image that people have of you. Building a "brand of one" is just as easy to do online, through your writing.



### **There's more than one way to skin a cat... or position an island...**

The key is to plan it all out, from your “first thoughts”... to VPP... all the way to monetization.

Your VPP (Valuable PREselling Proposition) explains, in very few words, the specific and high-value themed information your site delivers, and your unique positioning for this delivery (i.e., your angle of approach).

How you position your theme (ex., “family adventures in Anguilla” vs. “Anguilla for high-net-worth individuals”) affects what kind of visitors you’ll attract and retain as PREsold, monetizing clients. So think your business plan all the way through.

Your “voice” is your personality, brought online. A unique voice does more than bring you closer to your visitor (and vice-versa). It distinguishes your business from the bland, characterless mix that clutters the Web. Maximize the potential of your business by being you!



### **Develop an outline. It keeps you on track...**

Outline at two levels...

- Level 1) Entire site – plan out your three tiers of content pages.
- Level 2) Each page – each page has the same basic components.



### **The ABCs of simple, solid writing are...**

- A = Activate It!
- B = Brush It!
- C = Clean It!



### **Your home page is the “front door”...**

Your voice, positioning and the all-important VPP determine what your visitor does at that door. That’s why a home page is never “done” – it’s a constant work-in-evolution. Does it pull in your visitors?

Revisit it monthly – the fresh eyes will prove invaluable.



### **Your content pages have two functions...**

- 1) establish credibility and build trust through the delivery of high-value content
- 2) make gentle, in-context introductions to your various monetization models.

OVERdeliver on the first job and the second becomes automatic. **C** ➔ **T** ➔ **P** ➔ **M** is a collective process, the result of all your pages working together over time.

Focus each content page on just one topic (i.e., one specific keyword related to your theme). This keeps your writing tight, your reader focused, and your offers relevant (and the spiders happy, too!).



### **Visitors subscribe to your site, the way they subscribe to your newsletter!...**

It's the best of both worlds.

Publishing a site-blog is a fantastic, non-intrusive way to maintain contact with your visitors. Your site-blog lets them know "something's new." Since they already like your material, they click to visit your site again.

A newsletter repeats your PREsell, enhances your credibility, and encourages repeat visits to your site. How? It keeps your business front and center in the minds of your subscribers. It reinforces Voice and VPP and builds profits.



### **Only you can decide upon the optimal monetization mix...**

Diversifying monetization models is like having several pieces of string, each of a different length, each appropriate for a certain job.

Monetize within the natural flow of your content (an in-context reference). Be careful and classy – visitors quickly sense a "me-only" attitude. Look after your visitors' interests first and foremost. Great and profitable things will happen.



### **Two-way communication builds much stronger relationship than one-way broadcasting...**

Listening to your visitors will help you understand their needs, concerns and wishes. The better you understand your visitors, the easier it is to create the content, products or services they really want.

A targeted visitor who's engaged and excited is more likely to convert than a passive reader. Listen to and interact with your visitor online via social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc.) and Content 2.0.



**Successful SBlers all follow the same “rules” of effective PREselling...**

- Know your stuff.
- Be passionate about your topic.
- Put your customers' needs first.
- Present your material cleanly, using a unique voice.
- Practice, practice, practice – it's the best way to improve.



**Devote your time to developing your content properly...**

...and all your other efforts will bear fruit. Better content determines what happens to your “snowball of success.” Does it roll, growing in momentum? Or does it melt away painfully, losing a year or two of your life, along with thousands of dollars?

“Hey, I Can Write Like That!”

## Addendum: Protecting Your Content From Thieves

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There's nothing more infuriating than working very hard to develop high quality content that both establishes your credibility and wins the search engine wars, only to have some lowlife come along and claim your work for his/her own.

What do you do if someone copies your content?

Do a search at Google for a unique, unusual phrase that appears on each page (for example, "fiber and so digests more slowly"). The phrase should be rather distinctive, making it unlikely to appear on another web page.

Keep a list of the URLs that turn up in the search results, one for each page on your site. Turn that list into a group of bookmarks. Every month or so, click on the bookmarks and you'll find the rip-off artists.

Now that you've found them, here's what to do about it. Take action.

All of your content automatically has a copyright, whether you register it or not... or whether you indicate the copyright or not. However, it's always better to indicate and date your copyright ownership at the bottom of every page. You're protected online in the U.S. by the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA).

Theft of "intellectual property" ("IP") should be as clear and simple, morally and legally, as any kind of theft. In some instances, though, it's tricky to prove it.

Of course, if someone just flat out copies huge chunks of copy, the case is straightforward. At the other end of the spectrum, however, when someone paraphrases the content, you enter a very gray zone – even if you know they're dirty dogs, it can be impossible to prove in court. Rest assured that these people can only go so far, and only those who truly labor will ultimately succeed.

So what to do in cases where the violation is "cut and dried?"

### **Step #1**

Document your ownership of the intellectual property in question. If you have material dated or archived, this is easy enough to do. Additional third-party documentation can be helpful, too. For example...

<http://archive.org/web/web.php>

Make note of your own WHOIS data, including domain name registration – anything you can to make your case effectively.

**Special Note:** Going forward, make it easy on yourself. Document your IP now, so that if you ever need to prove dates and ownership, you can. Here's what to do...

- a) Copyright every page on your site by adding the following to the bottom...  
Copyright © 2013-2016 Your Name. All Rights Reserved.
- b) Burn your website to a CD every 3 months and date it. Leave it with a notary or attorney as of that date.
- c) Copyright your site every 6-12 months. It's cheap and not difficult to do. No matter where you may reside, register in the United States...

<http://www.copyright.gov>

The first one is an absolute must. The second two are not “must do’s” according to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. But they set you up much more strongly, if you ever need to go to court. Imagine producing material that has been copyrighted in court, straight from a rip-off site? Wow! Ironclad.

But remember, you likely won't use this in court. It does make you bullet-proof with ISPs and search engines. That's what is important, if you ever need “swift justice.”

## **Step #2**

Email and snail-mail (by registered mail) the offender, and his/her ISP (get this information through a WHOIS search). Document your case that you own your IP, that it came before this thief stole your material. Give a deadline for removing the material, after which point legal steps will be taken. Do it this way...

- a) Send a stiff email to the thief (cc to the ISP, for its information). Also send a letter by registered mail to the thief.
- b) Send a gentle email to the ISP, letting them know that you have emailed their client and that the ISP is also subject to IP law.

Web hosts generally respect IP rights and will pull down the bad guys. Also, while they are not liable for a thief stealing your content, they can be held liable for keeping it up. So they are not likely to risk legal complications for the sake of one website. If you document your ownership and dates properly, this is the fastest way to have material taken down if the thief will not comply (they usually do).

Search engines will also delete copyright-violators, if you document your case well. But that's becoming less and less of an issue, since their algorithms for detecting and preventing copyright violations are improving. If it does happen, however, and if the infringer and the ISP are not helpful, search engines will generally delete copyright violations.

**The bottom line...**

You cannot build a long-term quality business by stealing material. I'd be surprised to see any webmaster attain any success by adopting such underhanded tactics. But there are "get-rich-quick" lazy thieves who will try. And fail.

So don't lose too much sleep over it.

There's only one set of circumstances that could do some damage... a copycat who hosts at an ISP in a country that does not respect IP rights, and who ranks better than you at the engines. That is an very unlikely situation. And even then, appeal to the search engines to delete that thief... quick justice!

And please... don't consider this legal advice. Consult a lawyer.

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