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THE IMPORTANCE OF TELLING YOUR STORY ONLINE

Your website is the

online gateway to your company and an introduction to your identity as a business for new customers. By telling your story through the pages of your website you can influence how your audience sees your company's brand and how they react to it.

It's so much more important to tell a story with your website rather than simply listing your company's services.

The question of "What's your story?" can often be a one to answer, especially

if you never thought about your business in that way. This is the type of question that visitors to your website will think of when they land on your home page. They want to know how you can help them and why you want to.

There are a lot of companies out there that might be able to solve a customer's

problems but when a visitor decides they want to work with somebody or get in touch it's not a sales pitch they're interested in. They want to know about your story and what adventure you can bring them on.

When you read a good story, you remember the one who told it to you.

Pitching an idea to a potential client works, but if you put together a compelling story then, even if they don't partner with you straight away,

they'll remember your words.

Stories create feelings and help build relationships that will attract people who are genuinely interested in your business. People remember how you make them feel.

If you want to create content for your website you should start thinking of putting yourself in the role of storyteller. You want to be able to craft a compelling story for your audience and present it to them so they'll continue to want to know more.

You need to figure out what unique factors about your business are important to your customer. Always keep your audience's needs and interests at heart so you can grab their attention before they click away.

Here are three ways that will help you create compelling stories that will keep your audience on your website:

1. Draw Your Readers In

The best kind of marketing is one that tells a story. Whether you are writing a post for your social media



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pages or creating a landing page for a new product or service, stories work. If you try and tell a story for your posts instead of simply trying to sell, your audience will become a lot more interested, a lot quicker.

The public is used to advertising, it's everywhere they look and more often than not, they tune it out and ignore it.

When you tell a story to your audience, they're more likely to pay attention – and here's why:

- Storytelling has the ability to simplify complicated subjects and make a topic that could be boring become quite interesting for the reader.
- Stories appeal to the emotions and get your readers invested in what you're telling them.
- People buy from an emotional response, before looking to back it up with logic.

If your site is dreary, boring and only has a couple of stock photos, some bland facts about your company and your phone number – then it's not going to have much of an effect on your visitors is it?

What's even more important is that our industry is con-

stantly changing online. People go online to have a good time, so be aware of short attention spans and their overwhelming need for instant entertainment.

Every day that goes by your audience is going to be expecting something new and exciting. Facts and statements won't intrigue them, but a good story will.

As well as this, you're up against competitors. They probably sell similar services and products to you so you really need to stand out and your story will help you. It's the perfect way to show your audience how you're unique and they should partner up with you for all their mowing and lawn care needs.

2. Make A Human Connection

Telling stories is the perfect way to build relationships and when it comes to getting more loyal customers, building a solid relationship is a great place to start. You don't need an award-winning website design when you've got the perfect story to tell.

Your audience isn't looking for stunning features and design gimmicks on your site, they want to be able to make a connection with you. If you communicate the story behind your brand, why you're here and why you want to help them then you'll create an important human connection with your clients.

Here are some tips on how you can make a human connection with your audience:

- **Tell Them Your Origin Story** — The



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best way to make a human connection with your audience is to let them know your origins. Did you have the humble beginning of a family-run company or was your company set up as a lifelong dream? Maybe you invented a brilliant new product or perfected the ideal irrigation system. Every business out there has a story to tell about how they began, and each story is unique. Be sure to use this on your website and to even include it in your e-mail marketing, brochures, and advertisements.

- **Give Your Company A Face** — People hunger for personal connection so let your customers put a face to your company. You can do this by simply adding staff photos and biographies to your website. This will allow you and your staff to tell your own personal stories. Let your customers know what drives your staff to get out of bed in the morning and about what their passions and dreams are. This will make your potential customers feel more comfortable about your company and make them feel like they could trust you and your work.

- **Start Conversations** — When telling your brand story, you don't want to use too much jargon or you'll confuse your customers. They might not be familiar with the words you'd usually use with your colleagues and competitors so don't add them into the content for your audience. You want to sound authentic when creating your brand's story so be sure to show your audience that you truly believe that your services are the perfect solution for their problem. People can spot false promises a mile away so don't promise anything you can't follow through with. If you do, it can hurt your brand, so be honest and transparent when engaging with your clients.

- **Customers Have Stories Too** — Everybody wants to be part of a story and this includes your customers. You can include your customers in your story by making them stand out in testimonials and case studies. This sort of engagement with your audience will not only make you seem a lot more trustworthy as a company but it will also help make more connections with potential clients in the future.

3. Put Stories into Your Design

Our brains are hardwired to understand visual information a lot quicker than text – and we also have an easier time learning from interactive environments. So, if you can craft your website to appeal to the brain's visual and interactive cravings, you'll be able to tell your stories with a unified voice.

You can use your website to tell your story through pictures, sound, video and of course copy. It can all be delivered together in an attractive interactive package. ➤



This article was written by **Pam Haskell**, owner of the website design & development company Chili Pepper Design (cpdesignco.com). She helps businesses in the landscaping and outdoor living space create and maintain a modern web presence along with online marketing and reputation management services.