

7 Ways to Improve Your 'About Us' Page



Chances are, it's one of the most-visited pages on your site. It's probably also the weakest. Here's how to fix it.

Which page of your website gets the most visitors? If you're like most businesses, your About Us page is at or near the top of the list.

That's great--unless you treat your About Us page as an afterthought.

After your site gets potential customers interested in your products or services, they naturally head to your About Us page--often within three to four clicks--to make sure your company is the right choice to provide those products and services. That's why your About Us page is often your website's make or break page.

Of course writing about yourself and your business is awkward; so many About Us pages read something like this:

"Next Bighting Technologies is a global solutions provider that redefines enterprise networking and connectivity by providing a unique blend of innovative world-class services and outstanding customer experiences."

Sounds impressive, especially if you like buzzwords. But it says nothing.

So take a different approach. Make sure your About Us page gives potential customers what they need to feel comfortable choosing you:

1. Start with the customer's needs.

Forget what you do. Customers don't care about what you do; they care about what they receive: solutions and benefits.

So what do potential customers want to know? At a basic level, first-time visitors want to know you own a real business with real capabilities. What questions do customers typically ask during sales calls? What information tends to seal a deal or win over a hesitant customer?

If I want to outsource product fulfillment, "providers of outstanding customer experiences" means nothing to me, but "99.7% on-time shipping with a .0021% error rate for the past five years" means a lot--because it means you care about, measure, and deliver a service critical to my business.

2. Think facts, not superlatives.

Many About Us pages are filled with words like visionary, outstanding, disruptive, excellent, world-class, cutting edge...

If your business really is outstanding, give me facts: I'll decide if you're outstanding. If your business really is visionary, tell me about cool products you've developed: I'll decide if they're visionary.

And if you're a new business and don't have facts and figures, don't make them up. Describe what your business hopes to achieve and how you plan to achieve it. Give me the chance to decide if I want to jump on board with you.

3. Never try to be something you're not.

Check out a few About Us pages: Generally speaking, the smaller the business the "fluffier" the content.

Fluff is boring. Candor is compelling. Be who you really are and make that your advantage.

If you're a start-up, own it. If you're bootstrapping, own it. Start-ups are cool, and so is bootstrapping. Describe how new clients will benefit from the fact you're new or small: You can put more focus on individual customers, you can provide shorter lead times, you'll take relatively small orders so you can prove yourself in a new market, etc.

Speaking of being who you are...

4. Use real photos.

Always use photos of real people and places. If you can't, don't use any photos.

And don't let your Web folks convince you to use stock photos in order to add visual appeal to the page. We're all experts at spotting stock photos.

The pretty boy wearing an ill-fitting hard hat and pretending to read blueprints doesn't add visual appeal. He just looks silly.

5. Streamline your accolades.

Certifications are important, except when they're not.

If I want to build a sustainable facility, finding an engineer with LEED accreditation may be important. If I want a wedding photographer, finding one who is a member of the Wedding Photojournalist Association may not be so important, especially since the acceptance requirements are easy to meet.

Awards can also add credibility, but pick the few that make the most impact on potential customers. (If you can't stand the thought of leaving any awards out, create a separate "Industry Awards" page and get all crazy with your self-congratulatory self.)

So if you won a Tony award, it's probably okay to leave out your "Best Ensemble Dancer in a Comedy or Drama at Curly Joe's Dinner Theater and Swap Shop" award.

6. Never stop tweaking.

A great About Us page should be a work in progress. Whenever you land major customers, add expertise and capabilities, enter new markets, open new locations, etc., update your About Us page right away.

Make sure your About Us page always matches what you would say if I asked you about your company today.

Play pop quiz.

Ask people who know little or nothing about your business to read your About Us page and then describe what you do. If they can't answer most of the five Ws (who, what, when, where, why), get back to work.

By the way, that's a perfect task for all those social media connections you have but never actually seem to connect with. Asking for input is a great reason to reach out, and most people will be flattered by the fact you want their opinion.

7. Finally, get over yourself.

If you're fairly modest, writing your About Us page feels strange and self-congratulatory, so you stop short of describing your business accurately. If you aren't particularly modest, writing your About Us page is really fun, so you go way over the top.

Either way, get over yourself. The end result is too important. Fortunately it's easy: Just focus on facts, figures, and accomplishments. Objective information is a lot easier to write.

It's more powerful, too. Simply think about the needs you fulfill and the problems you solve for your customers.

Then use plain language to describe how you fulfill those needs and solve those problems. Use plain language to describe who you really are.

That's the best way to establish credibility and help potential customers decide you're the best choice--because ultimately people do business with real people, not with companies.