

Home Page Best Practices for Local Businesses

Lorrie Thomas , [Web Marketing Therapy](#) - Feb 9, 2010

The home page of a website is valuable marketing real estate to brand, build, and boost your locally based business. Follow these home page best practices to maximize your selling power.

Employ a Professional Website Designer

You communicate value not only through your words but also through your design. Don't look at professional website design as an unneeded *expense* -- rather as an *investment* that lasts years and sets a tone that supports sales. In addition to graphics, your design can include professional photos of your business location, or even a video introduction.

Trust starts visually. Of course, web surfers scan rather than reading carefully, so design with that in mind. You need text to allow search engines to index your site properly and get higher rankings. But you'll also want to communicate visually -- with art, photos and video -- to motivate your visitors once they land on your home page.

Communicate Clearly Who You Are, What You Do

You have two seconds to capture your website visitor's attention. Make it immediately clear what products and/or services your local business sells. Identify what market you serve (geographically and demographically) to immediately pre-qualify the right customers. Do not be afraid to identify your niche. Use your home page to attract the *right* customer so your sales time is spent on quality candidates. Your time is money.

As a locally based business, make it very clear where you do business. Using the local area code with your phone number instantly indicates that you're nearby. A toll-free phone number is great for customer service, especially for out-of-town callers. But when you show a local phone number under the toll free number you clarify your location, build trust, and increase leads.

Make your home page a "north star" that guides your visitors to where you want them to go. Success begins with that first page. Getting people *to* your site is only half of the local marketing puzzle, getting people *through* the site is what makes a real impact. Invest in the health of your local business; secure a smart web solution that serves your business for years to come.