7 Tips for Making Websites Readable

ACTION PLAN

Whether you’re a content writer or designer, going through this checklist can enhance the readability of your website text. We suggest working with text on one web page or section at a time—beginning with the home page.

Tip 1: Keep it short

— Is there any throat-clearing or “happy talk”? If yes, list it here:

— Is the text width more than 70 characters? If yes, describe how to decrease it:

— Can you cut whole paragraphs or sections? If yes, list which ones:

Tip 2: Add snappy headings

— Are all headings short and active? If not, list how you’d revise them:

— Is there a logical heading structure? If not, describe how you’d reorganize them:

— Can you cut any headings or chunks? If yes, list which ones:
Tip 3: Find your focus

— What’s the point of this page (or section)? Your answer:

— What are users supposed to do? Your answer:

— Why should users care? Your answer:

— Does the text need to be “chunked”? If yes, describe how:

— Can the text be revised to improve its focus? If yes, describe how:

Tip 4: Make a list

— Try converting the text to bullet points or a numbered sequence:

— Are any list items missing? If yes, describe them below:

— Can you add some “Buzzfeed” twists? If yes, revise at least one point:
Tip 5: Get specific

— Are there generalities or marketing clichés? If yes, list them here:

— Revise at least one of those generalities/clichés with specific details:

Tip 6: Adjust the visuals

— Are there too many images on a page? If yes, list what doesn’t make sense:

— Would blockquotes or other design elements help? If yes, describe how:

— Are there enough people or references to people? If not, suggest changes here:

Tip 7: Use your words—wisely

— Is the text just filler for the design? If yes, describe how to make it meaningful:

— Do you need to cut branches (not just “needless” leaves)? If yes, list what to chop:

— Is this a first draft? If yes, revise it again—and again!