

MarcComments

Tips on marketing communications

Vol. I, No. 1

What Is This Publication, and Why Should I Care?

This newsletter shares expertise in marketing communications.

In some issues (such as this one), the focus will be on the Web. In others, there'll be coverage of public relations or other areas of communications.

Who Am I?

I'm a marketing communications professional and am accredited by the Public Relations Society of America. I've won awards from the International Association of Business Communicators.

And, my rates are roughly half of what you'd pay at a traditional agency.

My Experience

I've worked as a full-time

employee for HSR Business to Business, twice named *Advertising Age's Business Marketing* "Agency of the Year."

I worked for the Kentucky affiliate of Manning Selvage & Lee, one of the largest PR companies in the United States, and Ashland, Inc.

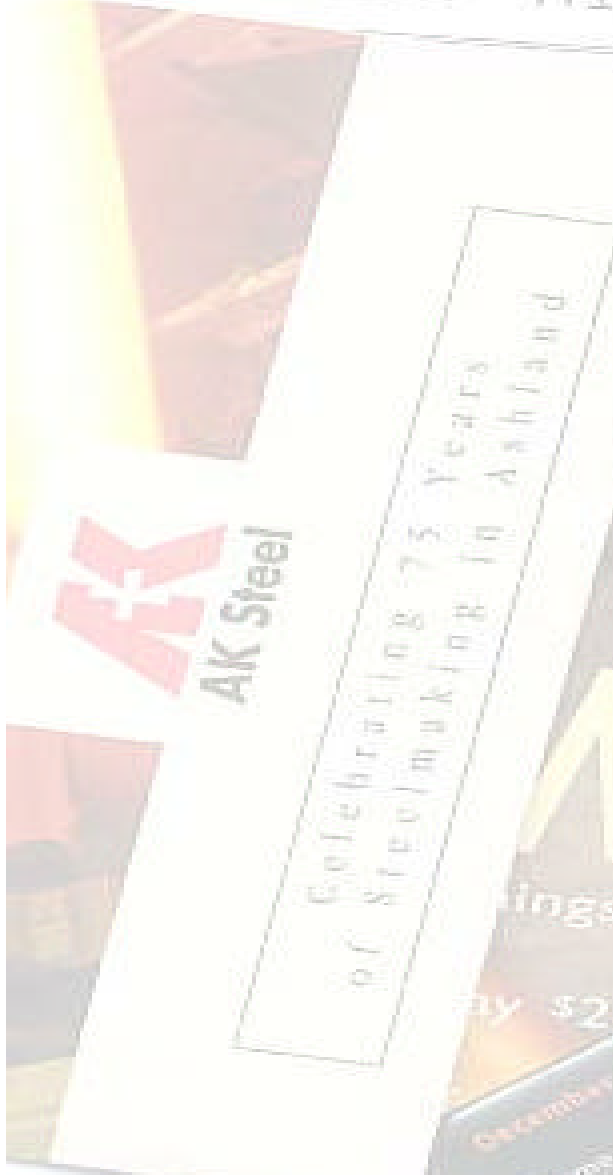
I also succeeded in having a business start-up owner named an Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year finalist.

Read On

Enough about me. Please read this and future issues to learn about marketing communications. ❖

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MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS, PUBLIC RELATIONS, COPYRIGHTING
AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING



Good Fonts, Bad Fonts and Typecasting on Screen

Looking Good on Paper Doesn't Always Translate to the Web World

Why does a brochure look great in print, but when you scan it and post it on the Web, the words are fuzzy?

Well, the Web and paper are different media.

To create its images, a computer monitor illuminates "pixels," or dots, of various colors, almost like turning on light bulbs.

On-Screen Resolution

Move close to your monitor, and you'll see how circles and diagonal lines look a tad jagged.

That's because there's a limited number of pixels monitor manufacturers can fit on a screen right now. Plus, those pixels are actually square, which means not all pictures and words show up as sharp at a distance of a foot or two, the typical viewing distance for a computer user.

Images on glossy paper, however, show up fairly sharp to the naked eye, although most color printing also uses a "dot" technique.

Print dots are much smaller than on the Web, so they're not as noticeable.

Why Not Just Scan Print for the Web?

Skilled interactive designers discourage clients from scanning and posting existing print materials.

They don't have to start from scratch, though. Designers just need a bit of time to tweak existing material for the Web.

How do they do that? By paying close attention to the Web's requirements for limited pixels and font choices.

What Web Fonts Can You Use?

You can have Arial or Helvetica (which are much the same), Courier, Times Roman or Verdana. Those are sure to work with most Web browsers and individual computers.

You have the option of making any of those fonts bold, italic or

underlined. You can also alter their size and color.

More font options are on the

Web Fonts:

Arial/Helvetica
Courier
Times Roman
Verdana

horizon, but if you want to be sure everyone sees your text as you intended, it's best to stick with the ones mentioned above.

There is, however, a way you can use a wider choice of fonts for various headlines, logos or other special, non-block-text uses.

Make Text a Graphic

You can do that by turning the type into a graphic, meaning the Web no longer sees your words as words.

They'll be pictures. But your designer will need to select a typeface that looks good when presented on a pixel-limited screen.

Why not make all text a graphic?

Text-to-Graphic Conversion Process

Text converted to a graphic is harder to change than simple Web text because the conversion is a step by itself. Considering one of the key features of the Web is the ability to quickly access information, an extra step is a hindrance to speed.

Most text that's not a graphic can go pretty quickly from word processor to HTML, a Web programming language.

Graphics Are Not Searchable

Another thing to keep in mind is that graphics are NOT registered in search engines in their entirety. You can label a graphic with a brief text tag description, but that's the extent of a picture's interest to a search engine.

So if you choose to post your text as a graphic, it's largely invisible to all but human eyes.❖

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