Brand building for the internet

By Chemory Gunko   7 Oct 2013

In a world of print magazine ads, television commercials and billboards, what the face of your brand looked like was more important than just about anything.

You had to get the exact print colours right so they'd know it's your green, and it had to go through a million sign offs before you finally released it to the printer - just to be sure no one had missed a single copy error.

Like it's changed the face of so many things though, the internet is changing the way that brands operate too - because search engines don't read pictures.

Advertising 101

When advertising first began, it was all about the words, the concept, and the copy. In fact, right back at the beginning of print and newspaper advertising, the ads were basically ALL copywriting.

Many of your great advertising legends, the Creative Directors that gave us a benchmark to live up to, such as Ogilvy, Thompson and Burnett, were copywriters by trade too.

Enter the '70s and '80s and the dawn of the digital age. Computers become more freely available and the PC is introduced. And with it begins our 30-year obsession with the face of our brands.

Is the logo perfect, scaled correctly? Do we have the right pantone shade of red and is it C or UC? Does anyone remember?

Somewhere in this process, our attachment to effective and powerful copy that is designed to sell, fell by the wayside.

The internet is code

Without stating the obvious, computers run on code.

What code is a series of letters, numbers and characters, that when read in a continuous line, forms a set of instructions that tells your chosen device how to rebuild that document so that you can view it.

In fact, even when you receive an email or open a web page, what your machine is doing is reading the instructions and

building a DIY version of the email or page for you to read locally.

Technical mumbo-jumbo

So yes, there's a point to all the technical mumbo-jumbo above - when bots search the internet, what they search is the code. The words, letters, numbers and instructions that make up the DNA of your document.

Words hidden in the copywriting will therefore be found. Words hidden in pictures will not. Because the internet reads words.

iFacebook Generation

We're addicted to the internet - tablets, mobile phones, desktop machines and laptops. Every business runs on the internet and email today.

Most importantly though, we do our searching online, and when we search, we search with a search engine. A text-based search engine. Like Google. We type in a word and away we go!

And as all those millions of little bots run off into the ether to gather the information you've requested - like the best supplier of catered food in Johannesburg, for example - what they are searching, what's been archived, sorted and indexed for quick and easy searching and reference, are the words, the content, the information hat has actually been put out there about you and your company.

Full circle

And so we come full circle to the start of our journey - copywriters. Brand building for the internet is about copywriters.

When people are searching online, they will be searching for words based around what it is that you do - and that's why you need to generate exciting and relevant content dense, keyword dense, content and copy for the web.

What's more, that copy has to be brief, concise and to the point - encapsulating everything the reader needs to know in the first paragraph, and for that to happen, you need smart wordsmiths, with experience and understanding who know what they are doing.

Design and layout - especially as it relates to technical build in digital media - will always be important. But we're going to have to rethink our marketing priorities and put more energy and focus on the copywriting we do for our digital media and websites, if we really want our brands to succeed in the global market village.

ABOUT CHEMORY GUNKO

Chemory Gunko is a seasoned Creative Director, a certified NLP Practitioner, Ericksonian Hypnotherapy Practitioner, Energy ReSourcing Practitioner & Life Coach, among others. She works as a marketing consultant and provides copywriting, SEO, graphic design and Joomla! website services.
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