

# Make Your Content PREsell!

How To Build Your "Brand of One"  
And Build Income Through Content

The world seems to think that  
“Technology Rules”  
or  
“Image Sells.”

Wrong.

*"Words are, of course,  
the most powerful drug used by mankind."*  
Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)

This book is dedicated to  
those who realize the power of words  
and who want to learn how to use them.

Communicate.

PREsell.

The world will be yours.

## Preamble

Building a business is all about building relationships. **Understand this simple but critical concept...**



**... and the rest of this book will fall smoothly into place.**

Let's set the scene. We'll begin **offline**...

*Your local baker...* Impeccable shop. You could eat off the floor. Friendly smile. Every now and then, he throws in a couple of pastries, free, into your purchase... "something for your children... lightly sweetened with honey so no sugar highs before bedtime!" Big smile and a "have a great day" as you leave.

*Your hairdresser...* big friendly hello. She asks all the right questions about your family, your job... and avoids the wrong ones. All the latest gossip as she weaves her magic on your hair. And an enthusiastic "see you next month."

*Hotels...* well, I won't even go there. The best know your name when you walk in, have every preference set beforehand... our family's favorite even asks if we'll be ordering in from Carnegie's Deli on our first night's stay in New York.

In "the real world," business people build relationships with you, the customer.

Now... get ready for a "radical" concept that very few *online* small business people understand.

*PREselling is the online version of relationship-building.*

PREselling warms up and builds **trust and respect**...



**...far more than any online BBB logo ever could.**

There is nothing wrong with displaying the BBB graphic to enhance trust. But nothing gives hesitant surfers/customers a sense of trust, appreciation and loyalty the same way that effective PREselling does.

Here are just a couple of examples of the **power** of PREselling. After that, I know that you'll have one big question. Not to worry. I also know that *Make Your Content PREsell!* will provide the answer!

Dr. John Burch is a dentist. Most local small businesses have not yet put 2+2 together. Dr. Burch, on the other hand, has done the adding and “gets it.”

Not only does he realize how much more valuable a Web site is than a Yellow Pages ad (not to mention far cheaper), he is mastering the art of PREselling. He builds relationships online through his Web site, drburch.com (<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/local-business-john.html>).

The results? Dr. Burch's Web-discovered patients will travel 50 kilometers to see him. Before his site's development, all his patients came from within a 10 km radius.

*That* is credibility and trust.

Richard Bergman's Ideas-For-Deck-Designs.com (<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/hard-goods-richard.html>) allowed him to seed the market, prove the concept and then create a buzz that now has people going into stores and demanding his product.

*That* is viral power of words.

Fiona McCardle and Jim Andrew have created a site, rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com (<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/rental-agency-tuscany.html>), which is every bit as warm, golden and inviting as Tuscany itself. They no longer work in the old-world textile industry, dependent on others in cold, cloudy Scotland. They now live the new-world Internet life, one that *they* own, in sunny Tuscany, Italy.

*That* is the power of PREselling.

Just like the offline baker, hairdresser and hotel, people want to do business with you. Why? Because they like you. Why? Because you took the time to build a relationship.

Can it be faked? No. People see through fakes, just like in the real world. *But it can be learned.*

And that brings me to your question...“*How can I write like that?*”

The answer already lies within you. *Make Your Content PREsell!* and I will help to unlock it.



**Let's get started...**

# 1. “I Can’t Write Like That”

Oh yes you can. You *can* write to PREsell.

Or I wouldn’t bother writing this book.

All day long, you *already* PREsell. You do it in your personal relationships. You do it in your business. You do it **every day, in every way**.

Yet, somehow, when you sit down in **front of a keyboard...**



**... it’s as if a great big STOP sign shuts you write down** (get it, “write down”? OK, no more puns. After all, I’m trying to build a relationship with you!)

You usually have an opinion (right or wrong!) on everything and anything. **But the moment a keyboard lies under your nose...**



**... you don’t have a clue what to say.** It’s as if someone has shut down your brain. And the truth is...

**Someone has.**

Your teachers. Starting from grade school until your PhD, we learn to write to impress our teachers/professors. The denser the language you use, and the longer the words, the sentences or the paragraphs, the more intelligent you **must** be, right?

You *do* know that PhD stands for “Piled higher and Deeper,” right?

This book is going to undo that damage. The first step is easy...

Forget everything you have learned in school about writing. **It’s quick and simple...**



... **please take three steps backward**, right under that big hammer.

The second step requires a bit of habit-forming practice...

Write friendly, the way you talk (well, almost).

Write short, sharp, **active** sentences. Your sentences should *not* be written in the longer, too formal, passive voice... *like this one was!* Let me rephrase that sentence into a more active version...

“Do not write in the longer, too formal, passive voice.”

And better still...

“Write short, sharp, active sentences.”

Yes, that’s how I started the above paragraph. And that brings me to another point -- only repeat something if it’s really important. *And this is really important!*

**A tip...** Watch for the passive “be” word in your sentences (“be written,” for example) and rework them into the active voice.

If you happen to know some grammar and spelling, great! If not, we’re going to take care of that, too. These mechanics are the easy part.

Actually, it’s *all* easy, once I’ve unlearned ya. (Hey, I didn’t say that you can’t have fun with the language, too!)

Good PREselling is a bit like good art...

Visitors know great content when they read it. Winning, PREselling content “works” at several levels...

- 1) It has that “been there - done that” voice and flair.
- 2) It has specific knowledge that comes from real experience.
- 3) It supports a depth of useful information -- good reference material plays an important part.

4) It is spun or positioned in a way that is uniquely yours.

Furthermore, it is consistent, from Web page to Web page, from e-zine issue to issue, from week to month to year.

And finally, it is **for the customer**, absolutely. If you write to please just yourself, you have a hobby. Nice creative outlet, but it's not likely to pay much.

Good writing is the key to good PREselling. The key to **C → T → P → M** success is weaving your personal experience into some researched background information (more or less depending on the subject), **credentializing you as the expert in your field and inspiring trust, at the same time**. Do this in an original way that is uniquely you and really set yourself above the crowd.

Always remember, of course, that you have **two** audiences, not one. You must also write to impress the Search Engines while you **OVER**deliver for your human visitors, too. This is why **non-SBI!** small business sites fail so dismally.

It doesn't matter where you are in the **C → T → P → M** process...

- brainstorming your site's theme
- reviewing your master list of profitable topics
- building an optimized keyword-focused content page
- deciding which monetization models "fit" best
- creating the first issue of your newsletter
- selling your e-book via ClickBank, or earning affiliate income, (etc.)

**No matter where you are...**



... **C → T → P → M** gives you the jump on your competition. The process works!

**C → T → P** is the engine that drives your own free, PREsold, ready-to-Monetize traffic. Once you have that warm, PREsold traffic, **monetizing is easy**. You just...



... collect the cash.

I'm serious about how easy monetization becomes. (The cartoons are just to keep me... uh, you... relaxed.)

DAY 4 of the Action Guide introduces you to the Monetization HQ where you will discover a wide array of potential income streams for your business...

<http://mhq.sitesell.com/>

Everyone loves monetizing, of course. First, though, let's get down to brass tacks...

What is profitable PREselling really all about? It boils down to getting “**The Big 2**” right...

**BIG #1)** Present a clean, intuitive, professional-looking “Look & Feel.”

**BIG #2)** Use your words to OVERdeliver what Web surfers seek... specific information. Communicate effectively and in a voice that is uniquely yours.

A clear, credible, and confidence-inspiring site will *effectively* PREsell your products, your recommendations, and/or your services (depending upon your choice of monetization models). And warm, willing-to-buy (i.e., PREsold) visitors convert more easily into customers.

Let's begin with BIG #1 -- it's the simplest to address (yet somehow, it seems to interest everyone the most)...

## 1.1. BIG #1: Look & Feel

Present a clean, intuitive, professional-looking “*Look & Feel.*”

The instant your visitor arrives on your Web site, she will (consciously or unconsciously) form an immediate opinion. A good first impression is critical. Your design can either put your prospective customer at ease, or telegraph a

lack of professionalism. Obviously, you want to engage every visitor, and put everyone into a receptive mindset, immediately.

What if you have “zero design skills?” No problem...

Design templates make it easy and remove the guesswork. Straightforward, clean design. If you somehow feel a deep-seated need to design your own sensational Look & Feel (“L&F”), remember the golden design rule...

**K-I-S-S!** (Keep It Simple, **S**\_\_\_\_\_)! If you have superb graphic and HTML ability, go ahead. But even then...

Clean. No bells and whistles. The Net is an information medium, and providing a clean L&F, along with good content, remains as important now, as it was in 1998. And so it will be in 2010.

Taking L&F out to the cutting edge is simply not necessary, in most situations. For example, Flash is misused today, the way animated graphics were a few years back. (“Hey, ya want TV, turn it on.”)

No graphics skills or inclinations? Just use a pre-designed template. SBI! provides top-notch, customizable templates. Get the solid L&F you want.

Some folks worry that Web surfers will recognize a template. Heck, most people don't remember what they had for supper yesterday, let alone which sites they visited and how each Look & Feel was designed.

For example, the odds of even one Web surfer visiting two SBI! sites with the identical Look & Feel templates are astronomical. What are the odds that it happens in a short enough time to actually notice? Extremely remote.

So don't get hung up on templates. Are you the practical, non-artistic type of person (like me, actually)? Then pick one of the many SBI! pre-designed templates. You'll have a solid Look & Feel... and you will be ready to move on to Big #2 (Words).

And if you are a power Dreamweaver/PhotoShop Web professional, SBI! can take everything you upload into it.

The *Upload Your Own HTML* module interacts seamlessly with the rest of SBI!'s functionality. Its WebFTP features simplify your life even further...

- *Quick Re-Upload It!* lets you fast-upload multiple files that are known to SBI!'s database.
- *XML It!* lets you upload a file with the .rss, .rdf, or .xml extension for advanced purposes.
- *TXT It!* allows you to modify your robots.txt file, or upload any other text

file residing in your root folder.

- *Special Manager* permits you to quickly upload and manage media and support files.
- *SBI! Includes* makes site revisions a snap. You update your Include file and SBI! rebuilds all pages accordingly.


**You get total design flexibility without sacrificing SBI!'s traffic-building-and-monetizing results!**

Either way, template or PhotoShop/HTML wizard, it's the same advice...

Clean, simple, professional... that approach wins the day, every day.

Your site's L&F goes deeper than just its graphics and layout...

**The actual appearance of your words is important.** For example, here are some killers...

- filed with typos 
- difficult to read or follow (ex., odd fonts, a kazillion links)
- **BOLD ALL CAPS FONTS ALL OVER THE PLACE.**
- over-use of a variety of colors -- red is, more and more, the sign of an amateur. Save colors for very special circumstances.

That's the "Look" part of "Look & Feel." What's in "Feel?" I consider important concepts such as usability and navigation in the "F" of "L&F" -- things like your site structure and NavBar.

A user-*un*friendly site, with confusing and difficult navigation, is deadly. You may have the single most glorious-looking site in the world. But if you have a 14-tiered site with one of those hierarchical javascript-driven NavBars that folks can't figure out, you're going to lose business.

Since this book is about **writing** to PREsell, let's summarize usability here and move on...

**K-I-S-S.** Geez, same advice as for the "Look" part of "Look & Feel." I'm getting awfully boring.

One warning -- be ready for "smarter than thou" folks. They'll comment that 15 buttons in a straight-down, left-margin NavBar are "too many buttons." Of course, visitors find a simple layout, such as this, easy to navigate and get around just fine.

But don't dissuade the "smarter-than-thou" types with the facts. First of all, it can't be done. And secondly, they'll be your competition. So you might as well keep these little nuggets for yourself... and your visitors.

Some folks like to make things too complicated. It pleases their mind, somehow. Leave them be.

Bottom line advice...

**K-I-S-S.** You will do just fine. *That* is the last time I say "K-I-S-S," uh, in this paragraph...



...I promise.

A final note on "BIG #1"...

Please do not memorize all the above as "things not to do." Instead, simply use some common sense.

Step back, every now and then, and ask yourself...

"Is this a Look & Feel that my audience will like and use?" Of course...

It will take a totally different approach to please teen iPod lovers vs. quantum physicists. But no matter who your target is...

**The value of good content sinks if its presentation and usability are poor.**

You may be more knowledgeable or have more expertise in your field than any of your competitors. But if you can't communicate this message in a credible setting, or if your visitors get lost, it won't do you any good. Your visitors won't stay around long enough to see your strengths.

Of course, a solid L&F will not complete your sale -- heck, it doesn't even complete the PREselling.

L&F merely starts it. You'll never earn commissions or generate sales on the strength of your "L&F" alone.

**But a bad L&F will kill you, no matter how well you do everything else.**

Are you thinking that you may need assistance with a custom design? No need to worry. An SBI! coach will gladly help you...

<http://coaching.sitesell.com/>

A solid Look & Feel sets the groundwork, the subconscious mood to receive your message. Your visitors are ready for you to “deliver the words.” They are happy, too, as they move about your site easily, always securely aware of their location. So, they are more than ready... they are anxious and open to receive your message.

Then, and only then, good content completes PREselling and leads to monetization.

*Only* good content *can* complete the job. And that reminds me... it’s time to move to the BIG #2.

BIG #1 is indeed part of PREselling. SBI! tools, and your common sense, easily make BIG #1 a “done deal.” **What you want and need to know is how to do the words.** Which brings us to BIG #2...

## 1.2. BIG #2: The Words

Use your words to OVERdeliver what Web surfers seek... specific information. Communicate effectively and in a voice that is uniquely yours. Let me say it another way...

Convey your message to your visitor in a **clear, concise, and confidence-inspiring manner**. Write in a style (i.e., voice) that is unique and personable.

Individuality works wonders on the Net. It quickly differentiates you from the bland, characterless, and uninspiring (which just happens to be the vast majority). And I’m not just talking about style.

A special spin or approach or twist can provide uniqueness to what would otherwise be a generic or a “me too” kind of theme. One way or another...

**A unique edge sets you apart from competitors.**

And your “between-the-lines” tone of voice is so important...

Many online businesses, big and small, make the mistake of speaking **at** their visitor instead of **to** their visitor. Since the Net is an informal medium, speak to your visitor as a friend. This will help you to “connect” and develop a bond.

Obviously, use common sense here. If your audience expects material to be delivered in a clinical, dry manner, cater to their needs. I would not be

too flip with the embalming market. Otherwise... differentiate yourself with “appropriate flair”!

OK, we’re just about done...

**1) Provide a confidence-building, solid Look & Feel.** Check out eBay or Google to reassure yourself that your Web site doesn’t have to look like it belongs in the Louvre. “Solid and simple” wins the day.

**2) Deliver words that OVERdeliver,** in your own voice, with credible, trust-inspiring knowledge, and a unique twist.

That’s it. I hope you found Make Your Content PREsell! helpful.

**What’s that, you say?...**



... **“HOW can I write like that?”**

Oh right. OK, I’m not done, after all. I did promise to answer that question...

## 2. Words Rule

In the kingdom of C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M...



... **CONTENT** is king.

Everything flows from content.

Anyone who “gets” the Net, gets that.

*Valuable Content = Credible Recommendation = Turned ON customer = High CR.*

In other words, do *not* push your visitors to the click. Instead, make them *want* to click through. It makes all the difference if your visitors feel that it’s their idea to deliver your **Most Wanted Response**.

Lucky for you, most small businesses (large ones, too) do not “get it.” They prefer to believe the “get your site (or store) up in 15 minutes” pitch. It’s shameless. But it’s *not* our problem. Actually, it’s to your *advantage*, because most small businesses either can’t be bothered or don’t understand the importance of creating real content.

Most online stores, for example, think that product descriptions = content. **Wrong.** Fatally wrong.

**Any type of online business** will soar by following the SBI! process...

**CONTENT ➡ TRAFFIC ➡ PRESELL ➡ MONETIZE**

Sell hard goods, e-goods, your personal or professional services... or all three. Or become a “pure infopreneur” and earn substantial income without selling at all, through Google Ads, affiliate fees, finder’s fees and other techniques.

Visitors convert to customers and generate income through monetization models that “fit” with your niche. **But remember...**



... **CONTENT RULES** in the kingdom of C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M.

A few more basics to review -- make sure you thoroughly understand them before proceeding. **Your success rests upon it.**

**After laying this foundation...**



... we'll pick up the pace...

## 2.1. THE #1 PREselling Reality

People use the Net as a searching tool. **They search for credible high-value information.** They search for **solutions** to fulfill a wish, or fix a troublesome problem. Surfers, for the most part, *do not know* who or what provides this -- they just know that they want to find a *trustworthy someone* that can make it happen.

That's the winning advantage of a content-rich site. It clearly shows to your visitors that you understand their search for quality answers to their questions... and that you aim to provide exactly that. A content-rich site builds trust and credibility. In your visitors' eyes, you are a knowledgeable expert who cares!

And consider the alternative. What must a site *without content*, without free SE traffic, have to do?...

**Advertise.**

Advertising *might* be a good *supplement* for sites that have a solid base of free **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M** traffic. But by itself, it has so many disadvantages. It only makes sense for those who sell highly profitable goods or services. Unless you have an extremely high **ROI (Return On Investment)**, you simply won't generate enough return from advertising to make money. Here are the disadvantages...

- 1) You still have zero credibility.** Who buys from an unknown entity? Your Conversion Rate (CR) soars when you PREsell.
- 2) The relationship is purely commercial.** The visitor who clicks on an ad is going to be pitched... and she knows it.
- 3) The traffic stops the second you stop paying.** Not much of a foundation to build a business upon.

What happens when a visitor arrives at a content site that is really just one big store, or a single-product sales site? Put yourself in that visitor's shoes for a moment. She does not see inspiring, relevant, editorial content. **She sees a sales effort...**



**... but she was searching for content!**

**Selling** is trying to get the sale. But your **C** → **T** → **P** → **M** site first satisfies your visitors' needs, and *then* leads them to your Most Wanted Response (MWR). It's only at that point that "selling" enters the picture.

Most people resist sales efforts. So if your content is heavily pitching something, visitors will resist you rather than *embrace* you.

Add to that resistance, as well, feelings of frustration and annoyance because she didn't find what she sought. She wanted information not a sales pitch! Simply stated... "*put up a site and sell,*" the approach of 99+% of small business sites on the Net, is a doomed approach. Despite that, the largest Web hosts in the world promote exactly this process (relying on their brand to sell, disguising a failed approach with convincing copy, and even upselling disconnected, added-cost tools and services -- a rather ruthless exercise in dollar extraction).

As I said above, this is actually lucky for you. Most small businesses (large ones, too) like to believe the "*get your site (or store) up in 15 minutes*" pitch.

It's shameless, because they are indeed "up fast." But 99+% of these small businesses lose a year or two of their lives and thousands of dollars before they see the "failure" written on the wall.

As I said earlier, that is *not* our problem. Use it to *your* advantage.

**PREselling**, on the other hand, **warms up your visitor** with high-value information that fosters trust and builds credibility. Your information fulfills a wish and/or provides a much sought-after solution for him or her. As a result of this positive/beneficial experience, the visitor begins to *like and respect* you.

Great content encourages your visitor to think about you as a "friend" making a recommendation rather than a stranger making a sales pitch. And if you create a truly info-rich site, you'll actually become a trusted expert, sharing your wealth of knowledge.

Effective PREselling creates an *open-to-buy frame of mind* in your visitor and gets the click through to your income-generating source. It's this "openness" to

find out more about you and your business that produces higher Conversion Rates and generates more income for you.

The key is to reinforce your credibility to your visitor/potential customer every step of the way. To accomplish this, *get inside your visitor's head* and think about how she will react to your PREselling efforts.

Whatever you do, consider the impact on your visitor... If it does not make her more "open to buy," don't do it. The *needs of your target group* must be your #1 priority, the reason behind every action you take. So keep your visitors in constant focus.

The bottom line here? I call it "***The #1 PREselling Reality***"...

*Your CR will literally vary from 1% to 10%, purely because of...*

- 1) HOW YOU REACH your visitor, and*
- 2) WHAT YOU SAY to her, and*
- 3) HOW YOU REFER her to your income-generating source.*

A positive mindset turns into a "purchase" mindset with amazing regularity. A negative one is near-impossible to overcome. Your success with anything you do in the world of e-commerce flows from it.

Of course, it goes without saying that you have to know your customer. What the heck, I'll say it anyway...

## **2.2. Before You Write Your First Word... *Know Your Customer***

Unfortunately, most people give this no more than a passing thought. But *you* won't make that mistake, right?

Build a **customer thumbnail profile**. This is an excellent way to focus your PREselling efforts. Know your customer's needs and you will...

- know what kind of content is wanted
- know how to say whatever you say

- have a firm picture of your audience of “one” (invaluable for creating that one-to-one voice)
- know (when it comes time for “M”) how and what to monetize and what benefits to stress in your sales copy. **Benefits, not features, connect with emotions.** Most people rely on emotion rather than logic when they are buying. The “feeling” has to be right before they will exchange their hard-earned money for your solutions.

### A good way to create a thumbnail profile?...



... Ask yourself questions. Is my “ideal customer”....

- young, middle-aged, or senior?
- predominantly male or female?
- financially secure or budget-minded?
- etc., etc.

Continue to pepper yourself with more questions...

What excites or interests him or her in terms of leisure activities? What are his or her most pressing concerns? How much disposable time and income, does s/he have? And so on.

Flesh out your profile by creating a master list of topics that might interest your target group. Start with the Keyword Brainstorming Search Category, STEP 1 of the free version of the **Search It!** tool...

<http://searchit.sitesell.com/>

**STEP 1: Select Search Category**      **STEP 2: Select Search Type**

Brainstorming      STEP 2: SELECT SEARCH TYPE

[Click Here for Information About Search Type AFTER Completing Step 1 & Step 2.](#)

**STEP 3: Enter 1st Search Term**      **STEP 4: Enter 2nd Search Term**

STEP 3: ENTER 1st SEARCH TERM      STEP 4: ENTER 2nd SEARCH TERM

[Click button...](#) **Search It!** ...not "Enter" key.

A Site Build It! Resource

People who are interested in your theme/topic are using these keywords at the Search Engines. Consider, as well, what your own life experience has taught you. First-hand information is invaluable.

For example, let's suppose you are a *home inspector*. Your prospective client is...

- a woman (makes the buying decision)
- aged 20-30 (if you are focusing on first-time home buyer)
- low-mid-level income
- careful, or she wouldn't be researching this online

In addition, she recognizes the importance of an intact foundation or a roof that does not leak -- although, she wouldn't recognize one if it poured all over her. She is likely not aware of the dangers posed by dry rot, mold, asbestos insulation, termite infestation, or other hidden concerns.

Her husband may be a bit savvier about construction (or pretend to be!), but you want to build the relationship with the wife here. She calls the shots.

Do you see how an entire plan starts to form? The content? The way you'll spin it? Your voice? All because you have a firm vision in your brain of your PREselling target... the "*who*."

One more example for good measure...

Let's involve a first-time home buyer once again. But, instead of home inspection, your site is going to be about the process of buying that first home. Same basic thumbnail, except this time the topics are shaping up differently...

- learn the fundamentals of home purchasing so that she can feel comfortable and confident about the biggest investment of her life
- receive tips on how to select a competent agent or broker
- meet a trustworthy real estate agent who has only her best interests at heart
- fully understand financing options, resources for mortgage rates, and solutions for paying down her mortgage as soon as possible
- know how to deal with her bank professional -- in order to squeeze out the best rate possible

- be aware of other critical unknown elements of home purchasing -- for example, a home inspection. (Hmmm... do I detect the beginning of an online empire here? This topic would link to your home inspection site!)

The bottom line in all cases is this... Your writing will be more credible, no matter how well you know and love your material, when you have a clear, detailed picture of your target visitor in mind.

As you write, always, always, always remember -- your content must serve two masters...

- human visitors (deliver good content)
- Search Engines (Search Engine Optimization -- SEO).

Sometimes you must walk a fine line in your efforts to serve *both* masters well. Site Build It! makes the "Content/SEO balancing act" a snap.

And what about "off-page SEO criteria?" **Make Your Links WORK!** shows you how to grow targeted traffic organically, without tricks or chasing algorithms. Sleep easier at night knowing that you are working *with* the Search Engines not against them!

<http://sbitips.sitesell.com/MYLW.pdf> (Right-click to download.)

While you have two masters to please, this book focuses on the *human* one. So... **always keep the thumbnail of that person in front of you...**



**... and I do mean directly in front of you.** Pretend she is there, right in the monitor, as you create your content. Picture how she responds to your information. Adjust it if she grimaces. This is how to create content that addresses needs/wishes and OVERdelivers on expectations.

Really let the content juices flow. This is my cue to bring our attention back to a closer examination of the "The Big 2" of PREselling, beginning with BIG #1... **Look & Feel.**

## 2.3. How Do You Spell "Content"...

### It Starts With 2 Letters... L & F

Earlier, we briefly outlined the "big picture" of why Look & Feel is an important part of the content. In this sub-chapter, we'll zoom in for a closer examination...

Unfortunately, many Webmasters think L & F *is* content. So many more businesses spend so much money on L&F but then ignore the words.

Let's boil it down...

Bad L&F will ruin you. Good L&F sets the stage for your words. Period.

**What would you think if you met a person....**



**... who greeted you like this?** He might be the nicest, smartest, most generous person in the world. But, due to his unfortunate choices in dress (and accessorizing!), you won't stick around long enough to find out, will you?

Web sites are like that...

Your Look & Feel sets up your visitor's *first impression*... that all-important judgment call. Clean, simple, and intuitive designs, ones that are appropriate for your specific type of customer, make a positive impression on your visitors. Cluttered, garish Web sites accomplish the opposite.

If you find this difficult to believe, visit a few of the most popular sites on the Web. Yahoo!, Google and eBay are good places to start. They can afford the highest-priced graphic designers to creatively spruce up their Web pages. But they seem to like simplicity.

What does that tell you?

*Blinking kabobbies, bandwidth-hogging graphics or Flash do not PREsell visitors* (i.e., create an open-to-buy attitude). Yet another site -- showing photos of 30-something business types, in \$2,000 Armani suits, shaking hands -- inspires boredom, not confidence.

**Online, simplicity rules.**

There is absolutely nothing wrong with creativity, of course. Google has fun with their logo...

 on July 4... or  on Halloween. It's actually become cultish to collect 'em all!

But it's not necessary. **Get the basic Look & Feel right...**



**... and you're off to a great start!**

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. Creativity, especially if it's "way out there," is simply not necessary. In fact, it will likely lose you a certain percent of visitors.

No matter what graphic tools you have, use the special effects sparingly. Just because you have plenty of opportunities for personal expression, don't go overboard as you indulge your creative side.

At the far end of the design spectrum, Dreamweaver (or FrontPage, etc.) and PhotoShop offer supreme design flexibility. (And SBI! is perfectly compatible.) But unless you are a pro with plenty of experience, you run the risk of doing more harm than good.

Other recommendations? Avoid...

- banners
- animated gifs
- animated "ticker" tapes or flags
- Web rings
- awards buttons, and buttons of any sort
- multiple color schemes

Stick with simplicity and class... *it's the safest, most profitable way to design!*

Want some examples? The following sample sites show a range of SBI! sites. Modest, professional, consistent with the theme, they illustrate the power of clean, simple design. Study each one -- note how the Look & Feel does its job... *inspiring trust and credibility, pulling visitors into the words.* We'll begin with...

Make Your Content PREsell!

## Flower Gardening Made Easy

www.flower-gardening-made-easy.com



Inspirational and ecological! Next...

## DebtSteps.com

www.debtsteps.com



More elaborate, this is a good example of what an HTML editor and Photoshop can accomplish in conservative hands. This site accomplishes a high degree of **L&F credibility**. This is especially important, given its theme.

Next...

**Vieques Travel Guide.com**  
www.viequestravelguide.com



Simple, yet as authentic as this stay-at-home Mom, *and* as exotic as this unknown island off the coast of Puerto Rico. Read the site -- you'll see how the voice and the L&F fit like a glove.

This travel Netpreneur shares her story here...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/travel-luisa.html>

Next...

**Sonoma Health Products**  
www.sonomahealth.com

Make Your Content PREsell!



This practical businessman merely took an “off-the-rack” template when he first started, added his site’s name, and went into business. His focus was on meeting the needs of his customers. He now owns an over \$1 million dollar per year company.

Read the full details here...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/sales-agency-jerry.html>

Next...

**Artella Words And Art**

[www.ArtellaWordsAndArt.com](http://www.ArtellaWordsAndArt.com)



Totally customized, the L&F accomplishes the highly whimsical ambience necessary. But it's the words that make this a site that visitors love...

Make Your Content PResell!

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/egoods-marney.html>

And finally, speaking of “looking good,” **here’s another “Top 1%”...**

## Style Hair Magazine

[www.style-hair-magazine.com](http://www.style-hair-magazine.com)



This work-at-home mom takes her haircutting expertise and builds a site around her specialized knowledge...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/wahm.html>

Many of the example sites in this book feature Google AdSense ads. Whenever one of your visitors clicks on an ad, you earn money from Google. They pay you a percentage of their advertising income. (More on this in DAY 4 of the Action Guide.)

Once you are in the AdSense program, their ads are easy to integrate on your site. Just copy-and-paste a few lines of code.

Notice the pattern by now? Simple. Elegant. Right for the site. Right for the customer.

You don't have to "be good" to "look good." No sweaty workouts required.

SBI! themed templates get the job done nicely. And if you can design *your own professional look*, "simple-elegant-appropriate" works best.

### What's the #1 take-home lesson for L&F?

I'll answer that question with a question...

Assuming a normal business situation, who would you most want to let into your computer and tell you more?...



A clean, simple, professional interface wins every time. Naturally, adjust for the particularities of your audience. For example, the correct answer to the above question is...

- 1) #1 if your site is about Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention (look it up!)
- 2) #2 if your site is about clowns
- 3) #4 if uh, well... OK, maybe not #4
- 4) #3 for most business situations.

Beyond the design (i.e., the Look)...

**Add straightforward, simple navigation and usability** (the Feel).

**Bottom line...**

Both the Look **and** the Feel are completely within your power. Get them right, which is indeed *simple and do-able*, and you will have mastered the first two letters in "Content"... "*L and F.*"

A few more details about BIG #1 before we move on to BIG #2...

### 2.3.1. Web Page Layout

What's the difference between a *Look & Feel* and a *Layout*?

Look & Feel describes the overall appearance of your Web pages -- the logo, graphics, font choices, the entire package.

Layout is how and where you place text and images. It also contributes to a site's Look & Feel.

As you construct your Web pages, keep in mind that *reading* is done much differently online. People tend to scan text, so it's important to keep paragraphs short, and use plenty of white space.

Once again, "simple" and "clean" rule the day. Even though high-speed Internet access is more widespread, use images only when needed, and keep them as optimized as possible.

This is less true if your market is higher-end and urban. But it would still be a very big concern if your product targets lower socio-economic, rural customers. Or developing nations.

Easy Elements ([www.easyelements.com](http://www.easyelements.com)) gets it right as you can see...



And here is another clean L&F, with a “healthy” amount of white space...

## Juicing-for-Health

www.juicing-for-health.com



Sara is a Network Marketer (“MLMer”) who knows how to PREsell...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/network-marketing-sara.html>

### Let's lay out “layout” for you...

Make your visitor's reading experience as enjoyable and as time-efficient as possible. Think of each Web page as a cake with icing. The *cake* is made of short, scannable paragraphs of quality information -- that's why your visitors are here! The *icing* (“eye-sing?”) is the appropriate placement of graphics to enhance the material. A delicious, visual treat, ready for consumption.

### 2.3.2. Font Style And Color

In the offline world, “Times New Roman” is the font style of choice. It works well in print but not online. Sans Serif fonts, such as Arial, Verdana and Helvetica, are best for easy online scanning. That's why SiteBuilder's default font is...

**FONT face="Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif" size="2".**

Even if you are creating and uploading your own HTML pages and/or CSS style sheets, we recommend this font. You could, if you wish, customize the font style of the <H1>-, <H2> and <H3> heading tags for emphasis. Some designers like to set a serif font for the bigger, bolder headlines.

See how **Best Motorcycle Gear** uses non-serif for both headings and text...

## Best Motorcycle Gear

[www.best-motorcycle-gear.com](http://www.best-motorcycle-gear.com)

**Motorcycle Gear Reviews**  
**Best Tips, Articles & Resources**

**Looking for Great Motorcycle Gear ?**  
**Well, you came to the Right Place !**

Discover the Best Motorcycle Gear Review Guide with discount gear links, tips, checklists and more... We have exactly those motorcycle clothing tips, gear reviews & resources you need for making the best choice.

Your choice is all about style, comfort, safety and features. You want something great, but you don't want to break the bank getting it, right?

## What about font colors?

Visit any of the major portals (ex., Yahoo!). Visit the Web site of any Fortune 500 company. Visit any serious, well-done site. You will *not* see text in any color but black. The occasional exception might be the heading tag, which could vary in color slightly. Otherwise, the only other reason for varying color would be for branding purposes, as Best Motorcycle Gear does above.

Black text on a white or off-white background is the order of the day. There's a very good reason why this is so... it's easy to read. Why make it difficult?

Multiple font colors are jarring, and they telegraph "inexperience" to your visitor. Deliver the goods in a professional, business-like fashion. Save "cutesy" for personal sites where the emphasis is on fun rather than profits.

Instead of varying font colors, you have a number of options at your disposal. You can use the following to emphasize certain words or phrases...

- bold tag (<B>**this text will appear bold**</B>) -- use sparingly as too much boldening can be distracting and nothing stands out.

This remains a fault of mine -- it's hard for me not to emphasize what I consider to be important. However, in this case, I am not referring to this book. Here my sole goal is to communicate as clearly as possible, so I bolden where needed.

However, I still use bold tags too often on Web sites. They can give the impression of "trying too hard." But I am getting better. I'm embarrassed to send you to earlier versions of our site, but it's all for a good cause (i.e., *you* don't have to take years to learn *this* lesson!)....

[http://web.archive.org/web/\\*/sitesell.com/](http://web.archive.org/web/*/sitesell.com/)

As I said, it's all for a good cause. Note how we've "toned down" the site over time.

- italics tag (`<I>this text will appear in italics</I>`) -- once again, use sparingly. Italics are more difficult to read on a monitor than on a printed page. But *italics* are not as "obtrusive" as **bold**.
- italics tag and bold tag combo (`<I><B>this text will appear in bold AND italics!</I></B>`) -- of course, the same advice outlined above applies to the combo.

The take-home lesson is my "broken record"... K-I-S-S. **Do not overlay with font styles and colors.** The result hurts receptiveness. Mish-mashing the fonts...

- alienates your visitor by "hurting" her eyes
- telegraphs your inexperience
- makes your pages difficult to read
- distracts you from the things that *really* matter to the success of your business (i.e., the content itself).

Keep your focus and efforts on building more and more content, while keeping its delivery simple. Your business depends on it.

### 2.3.3. Web Page Background

Colored or tiled backgrounds are rarely seen on business sites (even then, they are subtle). Generally, a colorful or busy background indicates a novice Webmaster. However, certain business themes are the exception (i.e., games for kids and parents, birthday party ideas, a new puppy resource center, etc.).

### **A background image must...**

- compliment your site's theme
- “fit” with your visitors' expectations and add to their experience
- increase your credibility as a professional, viable business.

### **On the other hand, it should not...**

- hinder your visitor's ability to read your text and receive your message
- give the impression that you are an inexperienced Webmaster.

### **Should you even use a background on your Web site?**

Your Site Concept or theme determines the answer. If you have a light and fun theme, then experiment a bit and follow the above guidelines. And a discreet background adds a nice touch without compromising the integrity of a site.

For example...

#### **Beauty and the Bath**

[www.beauty-and-the-bath.com](http://www.beauty-and-the-bath.com)

Family, friends, and colleagues will benefit from a rested, rejuvenated and calm you.

As an added bonus, you'll look and feel more beautiful and get an extra jolt of enjoyment out of your life!

Taking the time to take care of you is often easier said than done, but at Beauty-and-the-Bath we'll show you how to take pampering to the next level. Spend half and hour soaking in a bubbly tub with French bath salts – delivered directly from France.

### **Key point?**

If you're unsure, stick with the white background... you can't go wrong!

### 2.3.4. The Typo Gremlins

It's exciting to see each new Web page take shape as you build your site full of information-packed, keyword-focused, content pages. You know and love your theme, so "what" to write is easy. Getting it perfect takes time and effort... and *lots of rewriting* to get it just right (as we will see soon -- I promise).

As a result, you may become too close to your material to really see it anymore... exactly the type of situation those pesky typo gremlins love. It means that they can comfortably hang out on your Web pages, undetected.

And that is not good for your credibility as a small business owner. Remember the importance of a **positive first impression!** Visitors who see typo after typo on a Web site wonder if the business operation is run just as carelessly.

So, take time to review the pages on your site carefully. Your text editor's spell-checker is just "the first pass." Watch for out-of-context typos that your spell-checker won't necessarily flag (for example, "sole" and "soul").

Then ask a member of your family or a friend to double-check your work. Fresh eyes at this point are very helpful to catch anything you might have missed.

You put time and effort into creating high-value, engaging content. Do *not* blow it on something as simple and avoidable as typos. Chase those gremlins away, even if you need help to do it.

OK, that covers BIG #1: Look & Feel. We won't be touching on that any further in this book. By now, you realize the importance of setting the stage. And you also know that "getting L&F right" is totally do-able. There simply is no excuse to miss this. Even with zero L&F skills, you should be able to achieve results that are as good as these...

<http://results.sitesell.com/>

Of the hundreds of sites shown at the above URL the vast majority were built by small business people who have no special L&F skills. There is no reason that you can't achieve the same solid results. Of course, you may need SBI! to obtain their more important results, the ones *that really count* -- they are *all* in the Top 1-3% of all sites in the world!

Let's now zoom in on the second of "The Big 2"...

BIG #2: *The Words...*

## 2.4. The PREsell Is In... The Words

So, why are “the words” so important, again? Oh yes...

Online income generation depends upon converting targeted visitors into customers. Your words, and how you put them together on a Web page, play a powerful role in achieving this outcome. If you alienate your visitors because of poor communication, you waste your traffic-building efforts. You won't get your Most Wanted Response (i.e., a sale, or an affiliate commission, or a fee, or a contract, or a click on an AdSense ad, etc.).

**It is so darn obvious, and yet...**



... so many **Webmasters** put more emphasis on the mechanics and graphics of building a page, rather than on its content. They devote huge amounts of time towards keyword research, page optimization, linking strategies, etc.

Then they breeze through content development. Big mistake...

The typical example is the SEO expert who worries about tweaking keyword density and 30+ other on-page criteria to the 14th decimal place. Even if he gets a Top 10 ranking, the content is so bad that the visitor hits the BACK button about 3 seconds after arriving!

Most Webmasters just don't get understand the importance of what the words actually say to the human beings who visit. *That's bad for them.* But this, too, is *good for you.* I love weak competition, don't you? (The answer, by the way, is “yes” -- this is not a game -- you're here to earn real money, so take every edge you can get.)

In order for you to PREsell your audience, your content must be high quality, all the way.

Please reread that sentence... it's that important!

**In order for you to PREsell your audience, your content must be high quality, all the way.**

Once the vehicle (the L&F) for your content is solidly professional, WORDS will drive your passengers the rest of the way to your MWR for your monetization models.

### How do you know if your content is PREselling?

The best way is to ask some friends to evaluate your site. It's difficult to be objective about your own writing skills.

No one likes to admit weaknesses, but this *is* business. You *need* to know. Don't let your ego get in the way of making your Web site profitable. Ask several friends (friends who you can trust to tell you the truth, no matter how ugly it may be!) to review a couple of your Web pages. Listen carefully to their responses and adjust your content accordingly.

Seriously, unless you have unlimited financial resources and can afford to hire a professional copywriter, this is the way to go. **It also makes the most sense...**



... **YOU are the ideal person** to write the content for your Web site.

Even a professional copywriter cannot bring the same sort of unbridled enthusiasm to a topic that you know and love. On top of that, a personal style can make a faster and stronger connection with visitors.

People expect an aloof and detached writing style from a corporate giant, but not from small business owners. They want to feel that they “know” you... that you are going that extra mile for them.

Creating your own content may seem like a daunting task to you. In fact, it is every bit as do-able as getting the L&F right. And that is what the rest of this book will show you how to do.

The basic elements of good writing are easy to grasp and implement. The only tools you need are your brain, your favorite word processing program, and a dictionary and thesaurus as bookends.

Good *non-fiction* writing can be done by anyone. This book could never show you how to write like Hemingway. You are either born with that kind of talent, or you are not.

**But every last one of us can deliver good non-fiction *with personality*.**

You just need to forget everything you (mis-)learned about writing. Stop using complex language to impress, as we were taught to do. It seems the higher the level of education, the worse it gets!

**Now, we write to communicate, not to impress.**

What happens when you write in a complicated manner to impress your reader (i.e., as if you were trying to impress your college professor)? A large percentage of your audience will not understand you. Some will leave due to frustration and urgency. Others will perceive you as being an arrogant show-off -- they will mentally cross off your business.

Could I have said that “others will perceive you as arrogant or pedantic or both” instead of “others will perceive you as being an arrogant show-off?” Sure, but why make some readers look up “pedantic?” Heck...



... they might have thought I was pedantic after looking up the term.

So keep your writing presentation **uncomplicated and direct**. Yes, if you are targeting engineers, medical professionals, or an audience who expects a more complex style, scale your language up. *But still keep it simple in relation to **that** level of reader.* For most people, though...

Recognize that they read most comfortably at a Grade 7 level ( i.e., twelve-thirteen year olds). Match your writing to that benchmark.

Please take that Grade 7 level as a starting point. Too many people who *do* try to “keep it simple and direct,” don’t adjust for their audience. If your target audience is composed of high-IQ, left-brained individuals, you’ll insult them terribly. Are you targeting sophisticated, high-net-worth people? Scale your language up to the world of the rich.

The most important point...

**Match the level of your language to your audience.** Don’t talk down to them. But don’t talk above them either.

The Web is a fast place. Everyone’s in a hurry. So communicate your message *as quickly and as efficiently as possible*, out of respect for your visitor’s time. Use...

- headlines and sub-headlines to pull the reader through, and to divide the page (both visually and conceptually)
- short, snappy, active words
- single lines of text for emphasis

- to-the-point sentences
- short paragraphs of 2-3 sentences (4-5 sentences, max!)
- lists and bullet points

Here is a good example that sticks to the above guidelines...

### **The Swing Trade Guide**

www.swing-trade-stocks.com

#### Scanning For Stocks

Now we'll **run our scans** to find some potential trades. Remember that we are looking for stocks that have **pulled back** into the **Swing Traders Action Zone**.

Specifically, we are looking for stocks that:

- are in **Stage 2 or Stage 4**
- are in **strong trends**
- have **relative strength** or weakness
- are at a **support or resistance level**

Sift through your scan results and find the ones that show these specific characteristics. Add these to your watch list.

Notice how the paragraphs are only a sentence or two long, but they still get their message across?

See how the bullets add emphasis and help readability.

Catch how the headline and “in-context” text links work well?

Subheadings make it easier to get the “**big picture**” at a glance.

Scanning eyes love a page that visually breaks and attracts. The steps/subheading make it easy to “negotiate” through its content...

“Five Strategies to Negotiate Any Sale”

1. Always be Prepared
2. Set Objective Negotiating Standards
3. Work With, Not Against, the Other Party

4. Finalize All Agreements
5. Follow Through

The reader gets great advice in manageable chunks of information!

### A few more writing tips...

- Use the **inverted pyramid style of presentation...**



**... to give an overview or summary right off the bat**, clearly communicating the direction of your discussion. A visitor landing on your site immediately knows what to expect and how to quickly access the content that interests her the most.

- Get into the head space of your visitor, talk in his language, and show that you empathize with his concerns/wishes.
- Write with a friendly, upbeat tone, letting your visitor know that you share a passion and interest in the same subject area.
- Remove all extraneous material (i.e., cut to the chase) -- why waste time?
- Develop one idea per paragraph. This makes it easier for you to stay on topic and build a smooth flow from one paragraph to the next. No confusion for the visitor!

By the way, improvement comes quickly as you...

### Practice, practice, practice!

I shudder when I look at my first site ever. We all start somewhere. By writing, reviewing, polishing, and then pushing it some more, you get better. Yes, it's as straightforward as that.

The critical point of this chapter?

*"How you say it"* is just as important as *"what you say."*

A bit later, I'm going to show you "how to say" how-and-what you say!

First, though, here's the **#1 MUST** for your content...

## 2.5. OVERdeliver

These days, your content cannot merely be “good.” **It must be...**



... **g-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-reat!**

Yes, you can get by with “OK material.” **But excellent content differentiates you from competitors.** Blend in a clear, unique voice, and some original information that could only come from experience. Spin all this from a unique perspective, and...

Well, I’ll see you in the Top 1% Circle!

Luckily, it’s easy to OVERdeliver on your visitors’ expectations when your business theme reflects your **interest and passion.**

Valuable content **credentializes** your business, establishing you as the expert in your field. **There is no better way for a small business to build a brand.**

Credibility is what separates the online *haves* from the online *have-nots*. If your visitors don’t trust you, they won’t buy from you, or hire you, or click-through to your merchant recommendations.

Fortunately for you, 98% of online small businesses concern themselves with only one thing -- making the sale. And that’s where they go terribly wrong. Unless there is big-brand recognition, people don’t buy. Appearances can be deceiving -- that shiny flashy \$50,000 Web store? The lights are out. You just can’t see that.

So how do you write great content? **Combine knowledge with passion.** Knowledge and passion go hand in hand. This powerful combo connects you with your visitors.

Research and supplement what you know and love by using Search It!...

<http://searchit.sitesell.com/>

As “the only ecommerce-related search resource that you will ever need,” the **Reference Library for Content** Search Category (STEP 1 of Search It!) presents you with an invaluable assortment of research sites. Use it to develop background information, to add depth to what you bring to the table.

OVERdeliver great content, know...

- your business theme inside and out
- the needs of your customers
- the benefits of your solutions.

*Make Your Content PREsell!* assumes that you are knowledgeable about your site's theme and related topics. If that's not the case, either...

1) Acquire the necessary knowledge base.

-OR-

2) Start a new online business, one about something you love and know.

Why? You can't fake good PREselling. Today's surfers are just too discerning. You do *not* have to be the only site in your field... but you do have to OVERdeliver. Combine OVERdelivery with other PREselling techniques (ex., "spin," "voice" -- more on this later)... and you simply must win on the Web.

"But," you interject. "How do you convince a visitor that your solutions, products, services, and/or recommendations are superior... that they have merit? How do you convince a visitor to deliver your MWR?"

Good question... how *do* you sell?

## 2.6. PREselling Leads To Selling...

We call it PREselling because it comes before the sales effort. If it came after the sale, we'd call it POSTselling (also not a bad practice to keep in mind, in order to address "Buyer's Remorse" -- but that's another book!).

So this means that you need to fully understand the difference between "selling" and "PREselling."

**PREselling "warms up" your visitors and develops "open-to-buy" mindsets.** You are not a brand. So most people won't buy or follow your recommendations, simply on your say-so.

**Selling is selling.** You make your case for your product/service/monetization model through sales copy (i.e., the presentation of benefits), culminating with

the copywriter's well-known closing... the “**call to action.**” See *Make Your Word Sell!* (also free!) for “selling” advice...

<http://myws.sitesell.com/>

How do 98% of small businesses start online? With sales copy. **With a store...**



... shopping carts everywhere.

But the horse of **C** → **T** → **P** is nowhere on the horizon.

Talk about putting the “cart before the horse.” Fatal. Selling does...

- **NOT build trust** -- most people are inherently suspicious of a sales pitch made by a stranger.
- **NOT drive traffic** -- Search Engines find little value in pure sales copy. And good sales copy is near-impossible to SEO, in any event. As a result, sales copy draws near-zero free, targeted traffic from the SEs.
- **NOT build a relationship** -- selling doesn't operate on the same “*give and then take*” principle that makes PREselling so effective. You are “just another pitch” to your visitors... if you get any surfers.

When your focus is on the customer (where it should be), PREselling just naturally comes before selling. The same way A comes before B -- it just *does*.

Suppose, for example, your target group is composed of first-time home buyers. Along with lots of free, valuable information on your Web site, you also sell a comprehensive e-book that contains exclusive golden nuggets. Your content pages PREsell, warming them up to your business. They convince your visitor of your expertise.

**You build your “Brand of One.”**

Your keyword-focused content pages (which is how this visitor found you) PREsell... and they lead gently, with the occasional contextual text link, to your sales page for your e-book.

On this page, your goal is to sell your book... to close the deal. There is no need for more PREselling. Your credibility is solid, and you already have a strong rapport with your prospective customer.

She is presold and receptive to your sales effort. **It's time to "get the sale."** Of course, the precise tone and language must be appropriate (even now, you may weave yet more content into the sales copy), or you could still blow it.

**First... PREsell. Then... sell.**

Your Conversion Rate (CR) soars when you PREsell, regardless of how and what you are monetizing.

OK, let's wrap the "basics" up with a metaphor -- it will tie everything together for you. We'll be accelerating quickly after that, so get ready...

## 2.7. Anguilla As A Metaphor

Anguilla is an island in the Caribbean...



Anguilla has also become a metaphor. Let me explain....

A young lady started an SBI! Web site in August, 2003, when she was only 14 years old. It's a site that is all about her favorite vacation spot. Here is her original logo...



<http://www.anguilla-beaches.com/>

Bottom line results?

She earns well over \$2500 per month through her monetization models...

- Google AdSense ads (easy, totally passive income)
- commissions on house sales and villa rentals (from the real estate agent she recommends), eBay affiliate listings

- finder-referrals to other local businesses (ex., boat tours, rental cars, caterer)
- sales of her own creations and other products

Four major sources of income! A nice little *diversified* business for a young student!

This young lady happens to be my daughter, Nori. She does about 95% of the content, with me along to push her to brush and polish it. Make Your Content PREsell! comes from my one-on-one sessions with Nori.

There is no reason why you can't have ten times the success she does. Part of growing from teen to adult is the acquisition of discipline, focus, and determination. I'm proud of all that she has accomplished.

But for you, as an adult business person, whether aspiring to start a new business or enhance an existing offline one, *I say this with all due respect...* I expect more out of you.

**Please note:** I'll mention Nori's site from time to time, but not to promote [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com), of course. (There is no particular reason why this topic should interest you.) And I'll also use other sites for certain points.

Of course, when I talk about [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com), I can take you through the exact, first-person rationale. So I'll tend to use it when that viewpoint is necessary.

When Nori started, there were already several huge, well-established sites on Anguilla. They are still there. However, *there is always room for "one more site" in any area...* if it's well done.

Even when she's too busy to give her business a second of her time for 10 weeks (due to exams, family vacation), her business rolls merrily along "without" her. The momentum and sustainability are tremendous. **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** builds and BUILDS.

There is no limit to how big she could grow this, or in which possible directions it could go. If she were an adult, she would have quit her day job months ago and would now be living in Anguilla -- experiencing the same type of exhilarating lifestyle change that many other SBI! owners are enjoying in their respective areas. (Nori, however, plans to take an extended school break in Anguilla sometime soon and will work on her business full-time during that period.)

So how is Anguilla "a metaphor"?

**Every body of knowledge is "an island."**

Marc Liron, an SBI! case study, is an expert in the Island of Windows XP (<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/webmaster-marc.html>).

And Elad Shippony masters the Island of Children's Birthday Parties (<http://www.my-sbi-adventure.com/>).

*Everyone* knows something about something... if you look hard enough.

Whatever YOU know about... **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** and then ➡ **M**.

Let's continue the metaphor...

The teenaged girl from [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com) followed **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** to a tee. Now, she's a mini-celebrity in Anguilla. Restaurant owners refuse payment. Her favorite clothing store gives her clothes! She was interviewed by the big local TV talk show. Tourists point at her.

Now here comes the good part, and how it applies to everyone, including **you**.

Visit the Results site for more examples...

<http://results.sitesell.com/>

Each one of these small business people, each in widely and wildly varying types of businesses, are celebrities on their little islands... on their islands of knowledge.

And this is what you will do, too. You will build your... "*Brand of One*."

Remember, *YOU* have no brand. Amazon has a brand. Google has a brand. You must build one.

And there is only one way to build your "Brand of One"...

**C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M**

*THAT is what builds the core for a long-term, ever-growing business with sustainable profits and true equity.*

All set? We've covered the basics. Now that I know that everyone is working off the **same knowledge base**...



... put on your running shoes!

### 3. The 1-2-3 “Forget Grade 3” Mechanics Of Writing To PREsell

So what’s the bottom-bottom-bottom line on PREselling?

Oh, about **the same as life itself was as a fourteen year old in Grade 9...**



**... make people like you.**

People want to do business with people they like and trust and find credible.

From here on, we’ll be focusing purely on the words... how to write those words to PREsell. Don’t forget **#1 of The Big 2**, of course, but people have more trouble with words than L&F!

By the time you finish this book, you will NOT be one of those people. **Let’s start...**



**... pounding that keyboard.**

#### 3.1. Unfreeze... Thaw... Right Now

The education process ruins the all-important teaching of “*writing.*” Writing is so easy, but our school experience (past and present) makes it so hard. Why? Teachers, for the most part, lose sight of the one (and only) goal of good writing...

**To communicate. To build relationships.**

**The goal...**



**... is not to write the next “Old Man and the Sea.”**

So *if* this is your image of **what it takes to write well...**



... **dump that image.** You do not have to be an egg-head to write *NON-fiction* well.

What does “NON-fiction” mean? It means “real” -- it does not take superb imagination, or incredible creativity. You already know this stuff. Actually...

All day long, you *already* PREsell. You do it in your personal relationships. You do it in your business. You do it *every day, in every way*. You know how to communicate verbally -- you talk with your spouse, friends, children, boss, colleagues, customers, suppliers, etc., all day long.

And all day long, you PREsell yourself. You build your personal “offline brand of one” -- *this is the image that people have of you*.

Building a “Brand of One” is just as easy to do online. It does take a bit of preparation, though.

So relax... unfreeze... thaw... you *can* do this. Here’s how...

## 3.2. From “First Thought”... To VPP... To Monetization

**Writing to PREsell starts from the earliest moments...** from your first thought about a possible site... to brainstorming and researching profitable topics... to developing your best site concept... to planning monetization options... to refining and registering your domain name. (Yes, only after the preceding preparation!)

**Think about how you are going to write to PREsell for that site.** As an example, I’ll take you through my daughter’s site... the exact thought processes we used to develop its **VPP (Valuable PREselling Proposition)**. Your VPP explains, in very few words, the specific and high-value themed information your site delivers and your unique positioning for this delivery (i.e., your angle of approach).

Ready to begin? Here are the kinds of thought processes to follow as you work through these early steps...

Our family spent the whole month of August, 2002....



... on the Caribbean island of Anguilla.

*It was our second trip.* We loved the people, the beaches, the food... and the “atmosphere.” Nori could very happily live there, unusual for a teen (although she does love cities, too -- tough choice!).

So she came to me, while we were still there and asked... “Could I use your software to do a site about Anguilla?”

Great idea! She loves Anguilla. She already knew a lot about it. A bit young (14 years old at the time), but we had been working together on her writing skills for 2 years. This would be a great chance for me to stay close as she grew older, *and* to hone those skills. (OK, enough about my ulterior motives!)

Now, if you look up “anguilla” at Google, you’ll find millions of sites about this hidden Caribbean gem. (Is anything hidden on the Net?) They are almost all commercial, general sites. One site, “news.ai” (a family of sites) stood out. It is superb. Simple in design, it is everything a great SBI! site should be...

Knowledgeable. Acceptably written. Passionate. The L&F is very plain, barely acceptable. But it’s good enough to get you into the content, which is the main goal of the L&F.

A few other sites were extremely well done, clearly high-end professional. Very commercial (private and government sites) -- they were “selling” Anguilla.

The Net, even then, did not need another general site about Anguilla. Today, they continue to spring up. Ho hum! This “niche” is already too popular to just create another site about Anguilla.

First, we used SBI!’s **Brainstorm It!** tool to brainstorm “Anguilla.” Then we did some sub-brainstormings. These “sub-storms” may point out lucrative sub-niches (for example, the too-general “cholesterol.com” domain becomes “cholesterol-and-your-heart.com”).

But this did not occur for Anguilla. It was already the right size of a niche -- *not too big, nor too narrow.* (You may need to do both types of brainstorming before you find a niche that is “just right.”)

All it needed was the right positioning or a way to spin the theme.

Whatever you call it... **the key is to spin your theme in a way that connects with your audience.** (More on this in the last chapter of this book.)

Nori had a “natural spin.” A site written by a 14 year old, filled with family adventures -- how natural! Rather than being encyclopedic (like news.ai), this site would contain only our adventures and favorite spots. How would this stand out from the “competition”?...

- The news.ai site is terrific, but it has too much information for prospective tourists.
- The commercial tourist sites are obviously selling -- no PREselling there.
- Various Anguillian sites have the same disadvantage -- they are all **selling**.
- Ditto for government sites. Very slick, nicely done. Like every other island.

Nori’s site would be the charming, youthful voice of experience. Her “dad” (i.e., Ken) would add the credibility that a 14 year old might lack. In other words, this site would have both “age plus beauty.” (Ouch!)

We would develop a list of favorites in Anguilla (already well advanced, even before she had the idea for a site!). And we could easily identify potential monetization sources... i.e., a favorite real estate agent, a boat operator for local referrer income. **And then...**



... **Google AdSense came along!** Wow! Free money! (But I’m getting ahead of myself).

**What about her “unique voice”?** Nori already had a charming, direct, writing style. We would hone that style. It would be a teenager talking respectfully to older visitors -- friendly, and self-assured (but not arrogant). There would also be enough mentions of “dad” to hang it altogether, and importantly, give “young” Nori credibility.

Luckily, we had just bought our first digital camera. So we decided that we would take tons and tons of photos.

Any visual topic will drive some decent traffic through Image Search at the engines. I consider images to be part of our content for that reason.

While this book is about WRITING to PREsell, consider your theme. *Is it visual in nature?*

**Image Search** can drive a ton of traffic, if you include images on your site in a way that they “get found” by the Image Search function at Google, Yahoo!, etc.

This topic is thoroughly covered in the “**Image Search HQ**” in SBI! You also receive an Image Search Report. This 2-level drill-down report shows you the data you need to grow your image search results (from all major engines) substantially.

Our focus here is on words. But do remember... a good picture is indeed worth 1,000 words. It adds to that “been there, photo’d that” voice of experience. It adds spice to the site. And, if you Search Engine Optimize properly for images, they will please your “spider audience” too, bringing you more traffic.

<http://sbisearch.sitesell.com/graphic-search.html>

And that’s why SBI!’s Content 2.0 allows visitors to include images when they submit comments/stories about specific topics on your site...

<http://sbitips.sitesell.com/#C2>

So... we had the unique spin, a positioning that was uniquely hers. We nailed down the "been there - done that" voice and flair. I showed Nori how to research and add information to our own specific experiences, for added depth, when needed. And we had identified enough monetization models to know that this was a viable business.

Only one thing left to do... pick a domain name. Like all content, your domain name has two audiences. “Anguilla” was our ultimate general keyword... so that much had to be in there!

Some folks get mixed up. They think they have to **win** a Top 10 for their toughest keyword, the site’s central theme keyword. In fact, it’s the reverse. The last word to start scoring in the Top 10 is the hardest, most competitive of all keywords. For the longest time, you couldn’t find Nori’s site in the Top 500 for “Anguilla.” Then it showed in the Top 100.

Now it’s usually pretty close to the Top 10 (out of millions and a lot of professional competition), while ranking a Top 10 for many of her other keywords. As her site grows, as its reputation increases, as more links come in from other sites about Anguilla.... she keeps doing better and better on the engines. She is now found by 8,000 keywords.

It’s a process... and the hardest words take the longest. But the build is oh-so-sweet... stable and long-term.

These “unique searches” are an important aspect of *long tail marketing*. You need to understand this concept in order to understand the future of

small business, how you fit in, and how to capitalize upon it. For more details...

<http://sbitips.sitesell.com/keyword-analysis.html>

Back to picking the domain...

The engines certainly look at the domain name when determining relevance (wouldn't you?). So "Anguilla" had to be in the domain name. But no other phrase was particularly important. **So the rest of the domain name could be left open for "humans" and "marketing/branding" purposes... part of the positioning.**

Anguilla is most famous for its beaches, one of which is acknowledged as the best in the Caribbean. So *anguilla-beaches.com* gave us a great way to deliver the VPP on the home page. (I like Nori's home page headline so much, we've never changed it, which is unusual for me!)

I prefer dashes for word separation within domains, both for humans and engines, but it's not a critical point (unless the lack of a dash could create ambiguity).

And there you have it... from the first thought of "hey Dad, what if" to the home page VPP and monetization models. **Think these out before you write your first PREselling words.**

And here's the important part...

Yes, Nori has benefited from "Ken being her Dad," but almost *entirely* in this area of writing to PREsell. And now you can benefit, too. All of my "PREselling Nori one-on-one help" is in this book.

Make Your Content PREsell! covers the only online activity that software can't handle. Writing to PREsell needs a biological tool... *your brain*, helped by this book. You have what you need to write effectively.

A quick "P.S." about Nori's "easy, natural spin"...

What if Nori didn't have her "teenager-and-family adventure" spin?

**There is always, always, ALWAYS a new way to spin a theme...**

- [romantic-anguilla.com](http://romantic-anguilla.com)
- [anguilla-hikes.com](http://anguilla-hikes.com)
- [high-end-anguilla.com](http://high-end-anguilla.com)

By now, you should be able to see, based on those domains, the spin that each would have.

Once you have the spin, the “voice” of your PREselling copy falls into place. For example, the voice of a 25 year old woman writing about romance and honeymoons (romantic-anguilla.com) will be very different from the voice of the 50 year old woman who is writing for high-net-worth individuals (high-end-anguilla.com).

Many of the keywords will even be the same. But the content that we wrap around those keywords will vary greatly. *The people* who click on your listings on the search results pages of the engines... who then read your content... who then read more of it... who then read your site-blog or subscribe to your zine... who then become PREsold... who then, ultimately, deliver income... *will be different, too.*

Can there be a bigger difference between a 25-year old fiancee and a 50 year old multi-millionaire? Not much, yet they'll both deliver you a good income if you PREsell well!

**Please note...** all these sites are about Anguilla, as far as the engines are concerned. The difference is in the voice and the positioning.

And, in case you are wondering, as time goes on, the engines *will* get smarter and smarter. The smarter they get, the better your SBI! site will do. Why?

No tricks. **C**  **T**  **P**  **M** keeps it real.

For example, Google is recognizing more and more the “high-net-worth” search patterns and is delivering surfers to the site that is specifically aimed at them. The closer Google gets to being “human-smart” at recognizing what a site is all about and what someone is searching for, the better SBI! will do, and *without* making any adjustments (while SEO experts simply find it harder and harder to keep up).

<http://blog.sitesell.com/sitesell/2008/07/keep-it-real-pr.html>

### 3.3 So... What's Your Spin?

Want to do a site on New York City? Take a number... the line forms on the left.

It is one of the great cities of the world, and also great subject matter for a Web site. But you have to find a way to spin it. Pick an area, perhaps the East Village. Or focus on “great-buildings-of-new-york.com,” or “romantic-spots-in-new-york.com,” or “magic-picnic-spots-in-new-york.com.”

Get the idea?

Position it. Pick an “island within the island” of New York... geographic, culinary, activities, whatever.

It’s a matter of slicing New York in a way that excites you, that you know, and that can generate money.

Hmmm... watch for “consignment-shops-in-tribeca-new-york.com”...



... by Yuki, my other daughter!

Remember, the spin affects what kind of visitors you’ll attract and retain as PREsold, monetizing clients. So think your business plan all the way through, starting right from “your first thought.”

Speaking of romance in New York, here’s an SBler who positions romance...

### **Excellent Romantic Vacations**

[www.excellent-romantic-vacations.com](http://www.excellent-romantic-vacations.com)



What do you notice? Yes, this SBler is positioning “romance,” not New York. It’s a fascinating spin. “Romance” is obviously too big a topic to master. So narrow it down to the fun, interesting niche of romantic vacations around the world.

### **Best piece of advice?...**



... Spin it.

## **3.4. So... What’s Your Voice? You *DO* Have A Personality, Right?**

A unique voice doesn’t require you to be a master wordsmith. It simply means that you write in a way that *differentiates* you from other small businesses in a similar business or niche.

A unique voice doesn't have to be elaborate or super-creative. It just needs to provide that simple twist that gets the attention of your visitors and puts you way out in front of the "same-old, same-old" pack.

Your personal stamp could be...

- a unique character, personality, or friendly tone

or...

- a unique style

or...

- from a unique perspective or situation, either business or personal

or...

- any combination of the above elements.

To some degree, the nature of your voice follows your site's positioning. If your site is "**work-at-home-tips-for-moms.com**"....



... **your voice should sound as if you were having a friendly phone chat with a good friend.** On the other hand, "jock talk" would work for a sports site, depending on the exact spin.

**Important point...** Your voice must be genuine and "**all you.**" Combine this with your passion and knowledge of your theme. Do that and your Web pages will seem to write their own content. Your site becomes an extension of yourself!

Note that word "almost" -- we're getting to the exact "how to." So far, though, writing to PREsell **sure is a lot more do-able**, right?

Remember... people don't expect "a human being" or a personality from faceless corporations. But you're not Microsoft. Surpass your visitors' expectations. Connect on a personal level -- be the voice of a trusted friend, not a bunch of words floating around in cyberspace.

Think about your own experiences in the offline world, for a moment. Let's say that you are looking for a mechanic. Would you want to be treated like just

another number? Or would you rather be addressed by your name, and be offered a cup of fresh coffee when you arrive for your scheduled tune-up?

People do business with big business because of brand. But generally, they do business with people they *know and like* -- effective PREselling makes that happen. Many are even willing to pay a little more for that comfort level.

See how Nick's content site expanded his photography business globally...

<http://case-studies.sitesell.com/services-nick.html>

Spin... quality content that OVERdelivers... all with a unique voice.

### **How could you NOT succeed?**

Here is an excerpt from a visitor to [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com). Don VanSlochem is a high-powered executive at a major financial company, working strategic investments through his company's Tokyo office. His job brings him to Caribbean off-shore islands every now and then.

Don was so enthralled with the Anguilla that Nori portrayed, that he contacted Nori's recommended realtor to arrange a villa rental. Another commission for Nori!

Quickly review his comments. Then read them again... carefully. There is a world of information in there from this extremely insightful man. Note how Nori's passion for Anguilla had a major impact on a sophisticated, executive and world traveller. Ask yourself whether he would have come to the same conclusion by reviewing "yet another expensive, professional-agency Caribbean site."

Hello Nori,

I have thoroughly enjoyed viewing your site and your most capturing way of communicating the interest and beauty of Anguilla. I am a frequent visitor to many Caribbean islands, but have never gone to Anguilla because it is a little difficult to get there, and other islands have direct service from US gateways. However, your writings about Anguilla have now made it a must for an April 2004 visit.

I must tell you however, Nori, and or other people who were involved in structuring [Anguilla.beaches.com](http://anguilla.beaches.com), and composing the information on the site have a true gift. Not only from the technical aspect, but most impressively from a presentation and communications perspective.

I am an extensive user of the web and find myself navigating

## Make Your Content PREsell!

many sites to source information. Anguilla.beaches.com is without a doubt the best piece of work of this kind I have ever come across. The organization and approach to telling the story of Anguilla is so well done the essence of taking a vacation becomes intuitive after one exploration your site. If you and Nori don't work for the Anguilla Chamber of Commerce - you should - and perhaps they could compensate you with a complimentary Villa for life!

I will be trying to arrange a villa through Jackie for the week of April 15 through the 21st. And I am also interested in real estate there, it seems well-priced. I wanted to stay longer, but between school schedules and flight arrangements for 5 people that seems to be the most time we can stay for this trip. My wife's clear priority will be lodging with close proximity to or staying on a very nice beach. I will also need to further investigate the feasibility/need of renting a car while we are there.

Again, Thank you for allowing the world to have access to Anguilla.beaches.com. By that I truly do mean the world because I live/work in Tokyo most of every month, and now I will be Emailing my wife Peggy who will explore Anguilla.beaches.com, and assist in planning our April vacation. The writings, pictures, personal feel, and passion for Anguilla, bring a new refreshing dimension to the world of expression and communication. Perhaps I am so excited by this web site because I see way too many executive level PowerPoint presentations where there is no clear message, and certainly no passion.

Don VanSlochem  
DonaldVS@comcast.net

What wonderful encouragement for Nori. She was floating for a week!

There are a couple of monetization ideas in that letter, too. But the key points have to do with PREselling. Re-read it, carefully this time, before proceeding to his follow-up letter.

I asked Don for permission to use his comments for this book. He replied...

Hello Ken,

Indeed you can use all or any part of my correspondence as a testimonial. And if Nori ever needs my comments as college reference, I would be pleased to be more articulate about the free community service, value and "charismatic draw" of Anguilla-beaches.com.

I am pleasantly surprised, but not shocked that you and Nori are involved in the Web site building business. The work on AB.com is just too good for the "run of the mill" web master. Perhaps "almost anyone" could do this with the tools as your SiteSell information suggests, but the keen sense of packaging and presenting the information is an art form.

## Make Your Content PREsell!

Nori has that gift, and I am sure your support and driving the key message to TELL THE STORY makes the shining difference in AB.com vs other similar sites. Of course the technology that incorporates all the cool things that the site allows you to do is a big part of putting the "whole package" together.

As I said before, rarely do I come across a web site where every thing seems to work the way it is supposed to. On [anguilla-beaches.com](http://anguilla-beaches.com) I have yet to find a bug or "endless loop" as I continue to navigate the site. Additionally, the response time seems very good as I shuttle between prompts, links, etc.

After having our children it has been hard to get back to the Caribbean, but I am now anxiously looking forward to our adventure to Anguilla. [Anguilla-beaches.com](http://Anguilla-beaches.com), and especially Nori's passion and presentation of Anguilla information are largely responsible for rekindling my interest to get to this island. If we love Anguilla (I am certain I will), it could be a difficult decision to decide on our vacation plans for end of August. We have gone to Martha's Vineyard for the last 4 years, but I could easily see me wanting to reserve a villa in Anguilla for this period. Life is Good!!

Best Regards,  
DonaldVS@comcast.net

I can't stress how many times you should read that letter. This book is contained in those two letters!

But for the purposes of this particular chapter and for the book itself, two passages stand out...

### # 1

I must tell you however, Nori, and or other people who were involved in structuring [Anguilla.beaches.com](http://Anguilla.beaches.com), and composing the information on the site have a true gift. Not only from the technical aspect, but most impressively from a presentation and communications perspective.

### # 2

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I do believe, of course, that there are “gifts” -- the ability to write like Hemingway is a gift. I could not teach that to you in a million years. Tom Clancey sold insurance before he discovered his gift.

However, doing what Nori did was not rocket science. She benefited from dad/Ken’s help with matters that we cover in this book -- organization, forethought, voice, positioning, research, and “how to write.” **But these are all acquirable skills.**

As I said earlier, our educational system abysmally fails in helping you to develop these skills. Most folks graduate college (never mind high school) without acquiring these necessary skills.

Anguilla-beaches.com is almost *all Nori*. I wrote the financial pages, which bring in some good Google AdSense income, and our house-building journal. Even though it’s hard to win for such competitive words as “offshore corporation” and “offshore companies,” she still has a top 30 and a top 10 listing for her specific keywords for those pages, as well as some other secondary words. *No special “Ken tricks”* -- I just followed my own advice.

If you are still stuck in “secrets of the month” or the latest-greatest tool that will **unlock the riches of the Web...**



... **STOP!** There is an entire industry that exists merely to get your money. Period. Full Stop.

If you can’t stop, if you repeatedly get sucked in by an amazing story (and can’t boil that story down to “just another get-rich-quick twist”), please read **“Why People Fail”**....

<http://www.sitesell.com/why-people-fail.pdf>

It will give you perspective. No, I’m not calling you a failure if a ridiculous fad sweeping the Net catches you off-guard. “Why People Fail” will give you some **perspective, insights and some self-defense psychology**. To paraphrase an old saying...

“Yes, Virginia. There *are* people who are simply out to get your money.”

But I digress. The point is that Nori did 95% of anguilla-beaches.com, when she first began. Some people think that Nori had an advantage because she has “Ken as Dad.” If she did, this book puts you on equal footing.

**It’s all here...** how to package a site for PReselling (starting from the first moments of your “very first thought of a site”), through to the monetization options, and then how to write the words to do it!

I don't think I could add anything more to drive the point home better than Don's letters (above). So let's look at some other examples...

Speak **to** your audience instead of **at** them, as this SBler exemplifies...

### **Diva Girl Parties and Stuff**

[www.diva-girl-parties-and-stuff.com](http://www.diva-girl-parties-and-stuff.com)

What are the best **party themes** anyway?

You know those parties you just can't forget even months after, the ones where attention was paid to every detail from the invitations to the activities, and where every guest felt at ease and no one wanted to leave.

When you read this text, don't you feel like the owner is speaking directly to you?

A unique voice requires nothing more than a one-to-one style and the appropriate tone. Show your visitors that you share their passion and interest, and you're off to the races. The following two examples demonstrate this point...

### **Cooking Nook**

[www.cookingnook.com](http://www.cookingnook.com)

Food brings us together. It's how we celebrate, show our love and share our lives and our homes. Some of the best times are had sitting around the table with family and friends.

This Webmaster shares her visitor's passion for food preparation. It seeps through her content. *It's real*, just like conversations that you have every day.

It's obvious that this person is doing something because she loves it (and not simply for monetary reasons). She is credible. Her visitors will like her. **That is the basis of PREselling.**

In the next example, this SBler uses a light, casual tone to describe teen wishes...

## Family-Vacation-Getaways

www.family-vacation-getaways-at-los-angeles-theme-parks.com

**\* Got teens?** Southern "Cali" attractions (the new, "cooler" name for California!) will give them a chance to "scream their heads off" while riding white-knuckle-steep coasters; to "see and be seen" as they stroll along the most "happening" piers in the nation; to catch a wave at one of the many surfing beaches; or to see a flick and grab a snack with friends at one of the area's super-stylin' entertainment complexes throughout the area.

These above two sites **communicate** because they are *not* written by Madison Avenue copywriters. So don't feel that you must be an amazing "auteur" (fancy French word for "author") to succeed.

Writing with a unique voice does more than merely bring you closer to your visitor, and your visitor closer to you. It distinguishes your business from the bland, characterless melange that clutters the Web. Maximize the potential of your business by being **you!**

One more point...

How far can you go in the name of uniqueness? It's your judgment call but *always factor in how your target group will react.*

OK, time to get down to the "brass tacks" of "how to"...

## 3.5. OUTline Before ONline

OK, you have tons of great information to share. But if it is presented poorly, no one will read it or appreciate its value. Solution?

**Develop a framework or outline.** An outline keeps you smoothly on track, so that your visitor will be too! Outline at *two* levels...

### LEVEL 1) For the entire site...

The 3-TIER structure is ideal. Your home page links to 7-15 second TIER pages, each of which link to TIER 3 pages. Clean, simple site architecture is key for both humans and spiders.

SBI! takes you through site architecture, which is oversimplified here. It is actually easier than it sounds, but detailed discussion is beyond the scope of this book.

## LEVEL 2) For each page...

Construct each page with the same basic components. **So get your hard hat...**



**... and other tools.** Oh yes, bring your word processor. And get ready to apply a little elbow grease. Here's where we separate the readers from the soon-to-be "do"-ers of this world.

Before you start writing your own Web pages, we'll do a practice outline of a content page together, step by step.

Let's go back to our home inspection theme from an earlier example and create a page related to it, using this outline...

### a) Document name

Insert the name of the document...

```
HomeInspectors.html
```

### b) Goal

Highlight the goal or purpose of what you are presenting, in a sentence or two...

Buying a home is the biggest purchase you'll ever make. Protect your hard-earned cash with a Home Inspection before you sign on the dotted line.

### c) Heading And Opening Paragraph

Your main heading is the first thing your visitor sees when visiting any page on your site. As a result, each heading must do two things well...

#### i) Flag visitors in a concise and appealing way...

"10 Ways A House Inspector Can Eliminate Uncertainty and Save You Money!"

It's a great big Web out there. Your visitor's time is at a premium. Don't make her guess what your article is about. It's far easier to hit the *Back* button, returning to the SE search results page.

**Important tip...** Place your most important keyword (or keyword phrase, if applicable) for each individual page into your document name, heading, etc., for extra relevancy ratings at the Search Engines.

SBI! walks anyone through all the SEO criteria, and its Analyze It! tool corrects you until it's right. But you might as well get into the habit now.

*Remember... you have two masters. Write to please each, without losing quality for the other.*

ii) Pull the visitor into your article. The heading example above is more effective than just writing...

"Hiring a Home Inspector."

Why? Because a good headline reaches an all-important emotional connection that pulls the reader into the content.

A strong heading not only makes a visitor feel that she must read your article, it also makes her feel that **she would lose out by not reading it**. Nobody likes to be left forlornly standing on the sidelines.

Follow your eye-catching heading with a brief paragraph that presents your conclusion first (i.e., the "inverted pyramid" style)...

After weeks of searching and viewing houses and neighborhoods, you discover the perfect house that has everything you want. You can hardly wait to sign the papers and start living the dream. But now is the time for patience. **Do not rush.**

Finish the most important part of your research first... **get a home inspection.** A cracked foundation, dry rot, or a leaking roof is not the kind of surprise you want **after** you take ownership of the house.

A Home Inspector can ensure your peace of mind and save you thousands, even tens of thousands of dollars. It's one of the smartest investments you will ever make!

Make sure your most important keyword makes it into this introductory paragraph at least once, if not twice.

#### d) Body

People read differently online -- they scan text, briefly skimming material for the most relevant points. Divide the body of your discussion into small

paragraphs, one point per paragraph. Use subheadings to pull your visitors down into your content and allow them to quickly grasp what you are presenting.

Anguilla-beaches.com generally does not need subheadings, since each page tells a story. But some sites benefit from breaking up a page. Subheadings make it easy for individuals to zoom in on the most relevant parts for them. Shape the body of your presentation in this manner...

i) Subheading and Point #1

ii) Subheading and Point #2

iii) Subheading and Point #3

And so on. For example...

Point #1 -- Common concerns

Point #2 -- What you can't see, can hurt you!

Point #3 -- Checklist for home evaluation

Add notes under each subheading, as ideas occur to you. There is no need for brilliant composition -- just get your ideas organized and down "on paper"... before you forget them. You'll polish and tie it all together later.

Proper inclusion of your keywords into HTML-coded subheadings (i.e., the <H> tags) may also help your page at the Search Engines. Don't overdo it, of course. A good strategy is to feature your main keyword once in your top heading, and also in one subheading. Use your secondary, associated keywords in other subheadings.

Again, if you forget any of this, SBI! points out errors before you build your page. (And if your page does not rank well, it also suggests ways to improve that. Or it will tell you when to leave well enough alone and simply build more content, the best strategy in the long run.)

## e) Conclusion

Cleanly summarize your presentation. Depending upon your monetization model, now is an appropriate moment to insert an in-context product or service recommendation (your own, or one that you represent) and a link...

Mary Smith's "**21 Tips for the New Home Buyer**" will help you make a wise investment. She covers all the must-know details, including how to hire a credible home inspector. You, as a first-time home buyer, will not go wrong with Mary's book -- it's filled with valuable information guaranteed to make your home purchase smooth and headache-free. I heartily endorse it.

While the conclusion for a Web page is a natural place for a Monetization opportunity, *anytime is the right time... as long as it "fits and flows."*

OK, we have the bones of your outline done. It's time to put some flesh on the body. Let's write the first draft.

Review your entire outline. Does the heading, opening and conclusion still fit the body copy? You'll be surprised how often your body takes on a life of its own. You may need to adjust one or more components to keep everything in sync.

Now... build out those notes, ideas and random thoughts that you jotted under each subheading. You're going for "real content" now -- so it's time to start polishing, although not obsessively... not yet.

First draft done? Congratulations. We're getting closer.

Review your content as carefully and as objectively as possible. Does it hang together? Will your reader clearly understand your information? Do you feel the presentation pulls the reader in and keeps her reading?

If you're not happy with the content, make it better. Repeat this review-improve-review-improve cycle until you are satisfied.

**Now you are ready...**



**... for the acid test.**

**Read your content out loud... *slowly*...** to hear how it *feels* coming off your tongue. You will be amazed at how many grammatical errors and clunky sentences slip under the eye, *but fail to make it past the tongue*.

*If it doesn't sound right coming out of your mouth, you can be sure it doesn't belong on your Web site.* Make your corrections. Then repeat the process. Repeat tongue-correct-tongue-correct until you are satisfied.

*I guarantee you -- if you do this, you will have quality content.*

Ready for the truly final test?

Read the page aloud to your spouse, friends, etc. Note your own reactions to reading it to a third party, as well as theirs.

Fix anything that embarrasses you to read -- if it doesn't ring true or golden here, it won't in your reader's eyes, either. If your "listener" raises doubts about something that "kind-of-bothered-you-but-you-were-letting-it-slide," don't let it slide anymore.

I can't stress this point enough...

### **Always read new content aloud before posting it to your Web site.**

Each one of us has a varying degree of natural **writing** ability. But we all know what good sentences *sound* like. You will know it's good (or bad) when you hear it. Clunky or unwieldy sentences won't escape your sensitive ear.

A final little tip...

What do you do when you run out of listeners?



Or if they charge too much?

**Use a tape recorder.** Listen to your own words. Be your own listener!

### **One final step** (OK, OK... I mean it this time!)

Put some distance between you and your content before it goes live on the Net. When you are too close to a topic, it's hard to be objective. That answers to questions like the following need a bit of time, like fine wine, to mature...

### **Have you hit the right balance?**

Too much material will paralyze your visitor, and prevent her from proceeding through your site. Too little, of course, won't effectively answer her questions or address her needs, leaving her to hit that dreaded Back button, back to the SEs.

### **Do you like your page?**

I mean *really* like it? Are you proud of it? Does it effectively address the needs of your visitor and provide the information they are seeking?

Great! But do not put it up on the Web yet. Instead...

Put your writing aside for a minimum of 24 hours. Do something different. Give yourself some breathing space before you come back to it. Then do your final-

final-final review -- read your new Web page one last time. Ask yourself the above questions. Notice “clunkers” that escaped the last review.

I guarantee... you **will** polish it some more. Once you're done, ask yourself the above two questions again. If your answer is “yes” both times... *you're ready for prime time!*

The OUTline is done. Now it's time to put it ONLINE.

This sub-chapter covered the “big picture” of putting a page together. Now let's cover the ABCs of actually writing that content...

### 3.6. The ABCs Of Simple, Solid Writing

You just hung up the phone. Talked for an hour. Covered all kinds of ground. **Now you sit down to create a Web page...**



... you're dead.

Tongue-tied.

Stuck for words.

Brain-freeze.

There is only one way to thaw out brain-freeze and that's to knock everything you've ever learned about writing out of your head. You have two brain-clearing options at your disposal...

**1) Ask me to knock you over the head** with that hammer I showed you much earlier in this book. Or...

**2) Keep on reading.**

We're going to replace all that you have ever “mis”-learned with some very simple guidelines for each and every Web page (e-zines, too). *All you have to do is turn them into habits.* It really is as simple as that...

But you have to take the first step and do it. OK, ready?

Here's my no-magic formula for great PREselling writing... *ABC.* Let's start with *A...*

### 3.6.1. A = Activate It!

OK, you know your topic for this keyword-focused content page, right? Just start “blabbing.” Seriously, just start talking...

**1) Picture your customer** (remember that thumbnail profile) inside your monitor.

**2) You are “talking” to her (not at her), and you are not “writing.”** More importantly, you are not writing “War and Peace.”

Get into the headspace of your visitor. Talk in her language -- empathize with her concerns/wishes. Show that you share the same passions and interests.

Now, we get to the tough part. Some writers get “writer’s block.” Procrastinators do what they do best... put it off.

But most of us just flat-out freeze, *intimidated by the very thought of writing*. Suddenly, while we can all talk up a storm, we can’t type the first sentence. If that’s you, stop worrying about making a “perfect first sentence.”

Heck, don’t even worry about making it decent. *Just make it!*

**Activate!** And by that, I mean...

**3) Just start typing.** Just start. You know (roughly) what you want to cover. So just start “blabbing.” **As Sean Connery said to his young writing apprentice...**



...“**Pound those keys, dawg.**”

(See this movie just for the inspiration in that line.)

Pound *friendly*, though -- write with a friendly, upbeat tone.

What do I mean by “friendly?” Well, it depends on your particular circumstances. Here are just some of the synonyms for the word “friendly” (from reference.com)...

“affable, affectionate, amiable, amicable, attached, attentive, auspicious, beneficial, benevolent, benign, buddy-buddy, chummy, civil, close, clubby, comradely, conciliatory, confiding, convivial, cordial, faithful, familiar,

favorable, fond, fraternal, genial, good, helpful, intimate, kind, kindly, loving, loyal, neighborly, outgoing, peaceable, peaceful, propitious, receptive, sociable, solicitous, sympathetic, tender, thick, welcoming, well-disposed”

Read them carefully. Each has a different nuance. Choose the one that fits your audience, theme and intent best.

Just start typing the way you’d talk to that person inside your monitor. Well, almost -- you’ll clean it up later, but that’s not important right now.

Speaking of “blabbing”... if your keys are still frozen solid, *literally start blabbing*... into a tape recorder. Yes, dictate to yourself! Just talk away... some good thoughts and ideas will start to flow. Then play it back to yourself and start typing...

One way or another, once the flow starts, you’ll be on your way.

**4) Keep right-brain typing** -- let it flow. Ideas will come to you. The page... the content... may often take a new direction. That’s OK. Do not censor your **T** ➡ **T** ➡ **T** (*The Triple T = Think-Talk-Type*) process. Just pound those keys.

**5) Don’t let good ideas get away.** Got a new idea that doesn’t quite fit your current topic? Open a new page in your text editor and save it there, until you can use it. Never fits into *this page*? You have a topic for your next Web page!

Do this! Some of my best ideas for future topics have come this way. If I didn’t save them, I’d forget them.

**6) Support your right-brain, “depth-of-personal-knowledge” content creation** with researched reference material. Your experience-based knowledge makes you “real.” Support it with a depth of useful, factual, researched information. It all fits together into quality that OVERdelivers!

Use [Search It!](#)’s “Reference Library for Content” to integrate good background information into your own personal knowledge and experience. I’ve mentioned this earlier. Let’s cover how to use the **Reference Library for Content** in more detail.

### **STEP 1: Choose Reference Library for Content**

### **STEP 2: Choose Search Type**

In this example, we’ll use Wikipedia Encyclopedia.

**TIP** Before you do STEP 3, click on the [Click Here for Information About Search Type](#) help link. This provides more information about that Search Type, including instructions on what to enter into STEPs 3 and 4.

### STEP 3: Enter the search term(s).

Let's say that Nori is looking for background information on Ronald Webster, the "father of Anguilla." She enters "Ronald Webster" into STEP 3 and then clicks on the **Search It!** button...



The screenshot shows a search interface with four steps. Step 1 is 'Select Search Category' with a dropdown menu set to 'Reference Library for Content'. Step 2 is 'Select Search Type' with a dropdown menu set to 'Wikipedia Encyclopedia'. Step 3 is 'Enter 1st Search Term' with a text box containing 'Ronald Webster'. Step 4 is 'Enter 2nd Search Term' with a text box containing 'NO TERM FOR THIS SEARCH'. Below the text boxes is a 'Search It!' button and a note: 'Click button... Search It! ...not "Enter" key.' At the bottom, it says 'A Site Build It! Resource'.

Et voila!...

A quick and usable discourse on Ronald Webster. He is one of my personal mini-heroes, who I've actually had the pleasure to meet -- **I really have to convince Nori to do a page on him...**



**... even if there's no money in it!**

Use Search It!'s Reference Library. Together with your passion and personal knowledge, how can you not succeed?

Search It! is my personal pet project. I regularly add new, useful searches. We've even set up the most useful kinds of "advanced searches" at all the major engines. And it's going to keep getting better and better.

### Take-home lesson?

The key to **C** **T** **P** **M** success is weaving your personal experience into researched background information. Naturally, the "personal-to-researched" ratio will vary, depending on each topic.

**But always blend the two sources in an original way that is uniquely "YOU."**

As you do this, I hope that, by now, two points are constantly and subconsciously working deep in your brain...

1) You are developing that "*been there - done that*" voice and flair. It won't come all at once. You'll polish and sharpen your voice as you

advance, as you get better and grow over the months. But make your writing “YOU,” from DAY 1. Improve from there by writing, writing, and writing some more.

2) You are *constantly spinning* or positioning your content in the unique way you have determined earlier.

### 3.6.2. B = Brush It!

All done? Before you “bless” a Web page as “done,” follow this tried-and-true brushing strategy...

**Read it aloud.** Reorganize it. Add. Delete.

Improve the flow.

Look for obvious ways to “say it better.”

Pretty happy with it? Good. Go away. Start another page. Leave this one for a day, at least. **When you come back to it...**



**... fresh eyes will make it easier to polish it to a fine sheen.**

You will see material that you no longer think is so brilliant. Edit your page so that your writing meets these simple criteria...

**1) First, is your “voice” there?** If not, blend it in now. Friendly, upbeat, irreverent -- whatever your “voice” is, carry it throughout your site. While doing that...

**2) Fit this page into your site's special spin/approach/twist.** Every page must hang together and fit into the positioning of your site. Your site's unique twist turns the mundane “me too” into the “unique must-read” category.

**3) Use the inverted pyramid style of presentation.** Give an overview or summary right off the bat, clearly communicating the direction of your discussion. A visitor landing on your site immediately knows what to expect and how to quickly access the content that interests her the most.

**4) Write to communicate**, not to impress how smart you are (knowledgeable, yes... arrogant, no). The content, tone, Look & Feel must, of course, impress the heck out of your reader, **but must not look like it's trying to do that.**

**5) Use short, snappy, active words.** This naturally leads into the next point...

**6) Write short, sharp, simple, active sentences.** These sentences become the base for the next "must-do"...

**7) Develop short, sharp, snappy paragraphs** (2-3 sentences, 4 max). Please... no 18-line paragraphs. They're brutal on reader motivation. Break them up. And please... only one idea per paragraph.

**8) Cut-cut-cut to the bone.** Remove all extraneous material.

**9) Break up a list into bulleted items.** Stay away from long paragraphs with comma-separated (or even worse, the semi-colon) items.

**10) Further break up the page with headlines/sub-headlines** at just the right moment(s). Keep your reader moving through the page.

**11) Speak "to" and not "at" your reader.**

**12) Write in a style (i.e., voice) that is unique and personable.** Differentiate yourself from the bland, characterless, and uninspiring.

**13) Do not "broadcast-speak"** -- eliminate all sentences that contain phrases like "for those of you" and "all of you." You would never say that if you truly were writing for that single "thumbnail profile" person inside your monitor. (These will all die when you do the "read aloud" test.).

**14) K-I-S-S.** You are not writing to impress. You are writing to **communicate.** You are writing to **PREsell.**

Generally, aim for that Grade 7/twelve-thirteen year old level as discussed earlier. However, if your audience expects a more complex style, adjust your language accordingly.

At this point, it's already "good enough" -- all it needs is the "**Clean it!**" ("C" in the ABC). But first, if you're like me, "*good enough*" is not "*good enough*." Separate yourself from the crowd.

So push it *again*. Say it better *again*. Supplement with research material.

Add a personal experience. Combine knowledge with passion. Knowledge and passion go hand in hand. This powerful combo connects you with your visitors.

*Then brush it some more.* Polish and brush. Brush and polish.

It may seem like a lot of work, but remember this...

Once you put your page up, it earns you money forever. It's *more* than worth the effort.

Naturally, your specific keyword was always on your mind as you were writing. At this point, review the page once, looking for ways to work it in here and there.

This way, when you "Analyze It!," you won't have many changes to make. You can develop such an intuition for this that it eventually becomes second nature.

OK, done? Wow!

Pulitzer prize material. It's ready for cleaning...

### 3.6.3. C = Clean It!

Spelling and grammar. So simple. Yet again... the educational system has let us down. Luckily, I can boil down **what you really need to know...**



**Here are 10 common grammar boo-boos.** Get them right from now on and you'll be on your way to making a better impression...

**1) It's vs. Its:** "It's" means "it is" (as in, "It is cold."), and sometimes "it has" (as in, "It has come to this."). Meanwhile, "its" means "belonging to it" (as in, "The bear wiped its paw on the rabbit.").

**2) Apostrophes:** Apostrophes never make a word plural, they usually make it possessive (i.e., "Fred's" = belonging to Fred; "Fred's" = a roomful of dudes named Fred).

**3) He does that well vs. Trump's hair looks good:** Actually, I simplified this one. The word "well" is an adverb meaning that it describes a verb (as in, "You throw, run, or hit well."). But your mom is a good person, because the word "good" is an adjective, meaning it describes nouns.

**4) Literally:** Don't use "literally" unless you are describing an action that really is happening. In which case, why use it? Just say that it's happening.

**5) Me and I:** "That's between my girlfriend and me" is correct. Here's a simple trick... Before you speak, remove the other party from the sentence. Would you say "that's between I"? It works the other way around as well -- "My dad and me went to the game" is wrong because you don't say... "Me went to the game."

**6) You're vs. Your:** A biggie! "You're" means "you are" (as in, "You are sexy."). "Your" means "belonging to you" (as in "Your friend is sexy."). If you write "Your welcome," you're wrong.

**7) They're, There, Their:** "They're" means "they are" (as in, "They are old enough to know how to spell."). "There" means "there" (as in "Over there." Or.. "There, there." Or... "There you go."). "Their" means "belonging to them" (as in "Their grammar is an embarrassment.").

**8) Who and Whom:** The code is "who = he/she" and "whom = him/her." The answer to the question provides the telltale clue. So, with "Who is that?" "He" is that. "With whom did you go to the show?" I went to the show with her.

**9) Split Infinitives:** The splitting of infinitives with adverbs (as in, "to boldly go") is acceptable, sometimes preferable. So don't sweat this one.

**10) Prepositions at the End of a Sentence:** Technically, you're not supposed to end a sentence with a preposition. However, in general, the only people who really care about this rule are too uptight to recognize that a sentence like... "What did you come up with?"... is always better than... "Up with what did you come?"

Sean Nelson wrote the primer above. As grammarians go, he's a pretty "user-friendly" chap. Still, I simplified and removed some of the stodginess.

Believe me, grammar freaks get very uppity and self-righteous. So don't feel too badly if someone slams you for getting some arcane rule wrong (think of it as giving that person a little pleasure, albeit at your expense). As long as you communicate well, **I'll never slam you...**



**... I'll only smile.**

Next, let's go up one level of "stodginess" for a few "plain english" rules (this time from University of Western Florida article)...

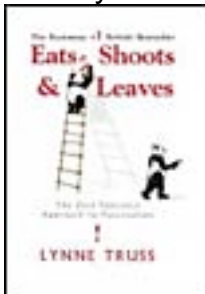
You'll have to think about these ones (so much for "plain english"!), since each rule intentionally violates itself to deliver its message...

- 1) Try to **not** split an infinitive.
- 2) Verbs **has** to agree with their subjects.
- 3) Each pronoun must agree with **their** antecedent.
- 4) Don't use commas, which aren't necessary.
- 5) **Its** important to use **apostrophe's** correctly.
- 6) Do **not** use **no** double negatives.
- 7) About **sentence fragments**.
- 8) **When dangling**, don't use participles.
- 9) Use a modifier **only** to describe what is intended.
- 10) Be **real** careful about using adjectives and adverbs **correct**.

Two more quickies, simple rules that are broken so often...

- I before E except after C (“receive”) or when sounded like A as in “weigh.”
- **Principal** is a **pal**; **principle** is a **rule**.

And if you really want to clean up your grammar, **I highly recommend...**



### **Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation**

By Lynne Truss

Hardcover: 240 pages ; Dimensions (in inches): 0.93 x 7.66 x 5.28

Publisher: Gotham Books; (April 12, 2004)

ISBN: 1592400876

This book is a fun way to brush up. A panda bear eats shoots and leaves -- we all know that. But if he eats, shoots, and leaves that means he went into a

restaurant, had a good meal, fired his gun in the air, and ran out before the police came.

Good grammar prevents misunderstandings like that!

Finally, here's my own special grammar rules...

**1) I like to help the eye along** as it reads (doubly important onscreen, a more difficult task). So I'm a big fan of the ellipsis, leading the eye within a sentence, **or from one paragraph to the next...**



**... like this.** (In this case, it really was gratuitous!)

**2) Don't be afraid to customize (i.e., break the rules) a little.** Use dashes instead of brackets. They can make a sentence feel lighter. But if you break the rules, do it for a reason. And make sure it works.

**3) I like to tuck thoughts that are slightly off-topic into SIDEBARS.** That way, the reader does not lose the main train of thought. I far prefer one SIDEBAR to 2 paragraphs of text in parentheses.

**4) Use a comma when a sentence needs a brief pause,** like this, so you can continue in the same vein.

**5) New thoughts require a period** and a new sentence, not a comma, too many people run-on sentences like this one. (That should have read as follows... "... not a comma. Too many...").

**6) Complete changes in thought direction require a new paragraph.**

**7) Break sentences** that start with "If" into a question and answer (or two other kinds of sentences) whenever you can. In general, try to break two-part sentences (i.e., those that start with "if, when, while," etc.) into two sharp shorties.

**8) It was covered above, but let's say it anyway. Make sure the subject and verb agree with each other.** "They was" just does not cut it. Be careful of "A and B and maybe even C is going down to the pond." Since A, B, and maybe even C are three people, the correct word was "are going to the pond."

**9) Use an active voice.** The passive is so weak and pompous. Instead of "a good score was achieved by the team"... say "the team scored a season high." In this case, it's not only active, but it's stated with more flair.

**10) And my most important rule... read it out loud.** If it sounds OK, it will be. That rule will stand you in good stead 99% of the time. The other 1% of the time won't be noticed.

Don't worry about any other rules of style. You'll build upon this foundation until you have your own style and voice.

Oh, one last "rule"...

*Do not take it too seriously.* Get it right, yes. Communicate, of course. But I'll bet that you didn't notice that I started this section with...

*Finally, here's my own special grammar rules...*

Correct grammar is...

*Finally, here are my own special grammar rules...*

Unless you are writing for grammarians or other super-picky types, no one notices the really small stuff. Why? They scan when they read online. So get it right, but don't drive yourself crazy.

You will earn a lot more money by creating more and more content that OVERdelivers, than by sweating the dangling participle.

Done? Great! You're ready to turn it into a Web page and upload it. Do a final-final check for typos, step by step...

**1) Spell-check with your text editor.** Grammar-checking is a good idea, too.

**2) Proof-read it** for the kind of "peak" vs. "peek" context typos that only a human can pick up.

**3) Ask a third party to proof it.** Why? Because buy now, your to clothes to it.

Now... bless your page as being "done," upload it and *keep on "keeping on"!*

### **3.7. Get It Right... And "The Spin Spins"**

Combine a good choice of material, with the right spin, and with a voice that grabs loyalty and friends. What do you get? A winner. And not just with the humans.

We won't cover the step-by-step SEO that SBI! carefully takes you through, nor the Analyze It! module. But this "writing-to-PREsell" process will get each page fairly "close" for its specific keyword.

There is an amazing array of keyword analyzers out there. You can dissect a page down to every last electron on the page. But SBI!'s "keep it real approach" (combined with the integrated "Analyze It!") is far more powerful... now **and** for the future.

SEO experts are constantly chasing the newest algorithm change, worrying about the latest "Google Dance," wondering how many keywords they can fit on the head of a pin... all in an attempt to "duplicate reality." **And with very little or no attention to the quality of PREselling... it's a treadmill.** In the long run, they can't keep up.

No wonder SBI! sites even outrank expensive, "professional" sites. SBI! owners just keep it real, "**C** **T** **P** **M** like crazy," and consistently drive their sites into **the Top 1%**.

And when you get PREselling right, guess what? Sites link to you. Forums discuss you. Search Engines pick up on all that. You start to become recognized as an authority. Your PageRank starts to climb. So...

Your rankings improve. More people find you, increasing the number of people who like your site and style. More links. Meanwhile, you keep creating more content. The engines spider that, and see an ever-growing site. More links. Higher traffic again.

**It's a snowball...**



**... rolling downhill, ever bigger, ever faster.** (Uh, I'd advise letting go and just enjoy watching the ride, both in this cartoon **and** "for real!" With **C** **T** **P** **M**, there is no need to ride and over-steer.) **And so "the spin spins."**

You are on your way. Which means it's time for your advanced degree in PREselling...

## 4. Your PREselling Masters Degree

OK...



We're building...



We're inspired...



We're loving it....



We're up and running. Ready?...



Hyper-speed time.

### 4.1. The Pivotal Home Page

Your home page is your site's most important page. The reasons for this prestige are not complicated...

- It introduces your *voice*. You will never be so closely scrutinized than on the home page. Make your visitor like the way you talk, the way you walk. Yes, even your "walk" is part of your "talk"... so do not swagger, unless it's right for the site!

Do this correctly, and you're 50% of the way to getting that next click.

The other 50%?...

- Your home page also establishes your **Valuable PREselling Proposition** (VPP). Your visitors immediately understand what your site is all about.

A visitor who likes your voice *and* your VPP means that you're 100% of the way to getting that critical "next click."

That critical "next click" says, "I like you and I want more."

Your home page will be your most visited page. It will be the most common page to *start* a visit.

It will also be the most common page to *end* a visit. No matter how well you write, visitors do leave. Your goal is to reduce that statistic and keep them on your site for as many pages as possible. PREselling does that.

Equate your home page to the front door of a house. Your voice and your VPP will determine what your visitor does with that door...



**"Hey, I'm in. Show me around."**

**-OR-**



**"Don't get up. I'll show myself out."**

Stay? Go?...

Confidence? Warm and fuzzies? **Or derision...**



**... and laughter?**

OK, I may overstate things just a bit, but it's to prove a point.

*It all happens on the home page.*

Labor over your home page. Revisit it every month or so, with fresh eyes. Can you say it better, shorter, crisper?

Consider a home page a constant work-in-evolution. It's never "perfect."

**But strive for it.**

What's the difference between a **VPP** and a **USP** (Unique Selling Proposition)? A USP explains your product's most powerful benefit, in combination with a strong, unique feature of your business. It answers the question...

"Why should potential customers buy from or hire you?" It belongs on a sales page (i.e., at the Monetization stage), not on your home page.

See *Make Your Words Sell!* for more details...

<http://myws.sitesell.com/MYWS!.pdf>

Your VPP becomes clear as you refine your Site Concept (through the early steps of **C** → **T** → **P** → **M**). You must be 100% confident and delighted with your VPP *before* you register your domain.

Let's analyze some SBlers who are good role models. Again, you'll see that their sites *work*, without requiring Madison Avenue level L&F or copy. They work because they are *not* the "same old, same old" professional, passionless words. They nail "**V&VPP**" (Voice and VPP) down tight, right on that all-important front door. For example...

### **Outback Australia Travel Secrets**

[www.outback-australia-travel-secrets.com](http://www.outback-australia-travel-secrets.com)

Right off the bat, the site owner reinforces the "authenticity" of the content...

"This Australian Outback travel guide is **written by a real person, who has a very real life here out back.**"

The writing draws the reader into the page and ignites his or her imagination...

The Australian Outback is more beautiful than you ever imagined, to travel here gives you a sense of space and freedom you never thought possible, and it is nowhere near as dangerous as they try to make you believe.

Note the following...

- friendly and personable tone -- the owner speaks *to* rather than *at* visitors.
- shows emotion – you can easily tell that she loves the Outback!
- chooses accessible language -- short sentences and paragraphs

All in all, this home page does its job well!

And so does this one...

### **Standard Poodles USA**

[www.standardpoodlesusa.com](http://www.standardpoodlesusa.com)

“Everything You Need and Want to Know About Standard Poodles”


What do you think about the following two home pages? First, a snippet from this site to pique your curiosity...

### **Computer Guide**

[www.build-your-own-computers.com](http://www.build-your-own-computers.com)

This web site is meant to help you answer those questions. There are guides on **selecting the best computer parts**, as well as tutorials on how to install the various components. You'll also find several **product reviews** covering the latest in computer technology.

It takes time to get understand computers - I've been meddling with computers myself for more than 15 years. But you need to be patient. The key thing is to read, learn and experiment - before long, you'll be building your own computers like the experts!



What do you notice at the above excerpt?

(Turn the page when you have some answers.)

Hey!

No fair peeking ahead for “the answer”! Really... stop and take a few seconds. *And don't ask to see more of the home page.* You have just about this much time to convince your visitor that you and s/he were made for each other.

OK, full marks if you said “this section gets it done in two paragraphs.” **Yes, I gave you the answer just above...**



**... a tricky way to make a critical point...**

*Dragging it out is mouse-clicking fatal* -- your visitors’ trigger fingers are itchiest in the first minute of a visit.

**Let them know exactly what to expect, right upfront** -- sure, you’ll lose the person who’s not interested. But you would lose her anyway by being too vague or too all-inclusive. The key to this approach is that *you keep the person who wants what you deliver.*

And you get “double full marks” if you said *what* they got done in those first three paragraphs... “they both clearly state the VPP.” Visitors will immediately understand where the owners are going with their sites.

There are no hard and fast rules, so do whatever works for your business. For example...

### **Rent A Villa In Tuscany**

[www.rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com](http://www.rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com)

The advertisement features a large sunflower in the top left corner. The main text reads "rent a villa in TUSCANY" with "TUSCANY" in a large, serif font. Below this is the tagline "a corner of paradise in the heart of Italy". A central banner says "Experience this magical region of Italy" above a "Discover Tuscany" banner which contains a collage of Tuscan scenes including a villa, a sunflower, and a landscape. To the left of the main text is a vertical menu with the following items: Offers, Villas & Farmhouses, Luxury Villas, Tuscan Castles, Tuscan Coast, Country Apartments, Village Houses, Small Apartments, Bed & Breakfast, and Hotels & Residences. At the bottom, a paragraph describes the offerings: "For a truly enchanting holiday **Rent a Villa in Tuscany.** Choose from our handpicked selection of lovingly restored villas, tastefully converted farmhouses and pretty village apartments, all set amidst breathtaking scenery that is the essence of Tuscany."

These owners take charge right away. They introduce the monetization aspect upfront. But they quickly back that up by establishing their credibility. It also

demonstrates their willingness to go above and beyond to help (ex., they will act as your bilingual representatives).

A friendly voice is already detectable. These are friends in a foreign country. Talk about warm fuzzies! Anyone interested in Tuscany (and there are, or Jim and Fiona wouldn't be here) will keep reading **and then...**



... yup, the sound of that all-important “next click.”

Your visitor just walked through the front door...



... and will be staying awhile.

One more point...

Tuscany is *visual* subject matter... big-time. And Jim and Fiona use that to the maximum.

The orange color is a brilliant, warm choice. The horizontal lineup of images in the logo... it all works.


In this case, *the L&F is more than pulling its weight...*

I like these folks before I even read a word!

So let's keep going. Check out this home page next...

**My Dreadlocks.com**

[www.mydreadlocks.com](http://www.mydreadlocks.com)

<b>Makes your dreads turn heads</b>	
	<p>No matter your hair type, this dreadlocks information site has everything you need to get locks that get looks!</p> <p>Get professionally-verified tips and techniques that work for your hairstyle, <a href="#">growth stage</a> and background.</p>

**This site has voice...** crowned by a great turn of phrase. She summarizes the VPP with one simple fun phrase... *"Makes your dreads turn heads!"* Those few words cement a positive first impression of your site.

What about this one?...

### **Homemade Baby Food Recipes**

www.homemade-baby-food-recipes.com



Wait... do *not* panic. A catchy phrase *may not* occur to you on your first draft. Maybe not even in the first few *months*.

But your mind works on this in the background. That's why you should revisit your home page periodically. Even if it never comes to you, it's *not* the end of the world. But I'll bet that if you revisit your home page monthly and **spend a solid hour working on how to improve it...**



**... good things will happen!**

### **K-I-S-S!**

There's nothing complex, overdone, or pretentious about the sites of our role models. They all get their message across effectively...

*"Here is our VPP."*

*"Here's what you can expect."*

All said in a visitor-specific voice.

Period. Save the detailed discussions for your content pages (the next two TIERS of your site).

At the home page level, your visitor needs a quick and very concise overview of your site. Your most important goal?

Get her to like you. Stimulate interest and curiosity, even excitement. Cause her to want more information. In other words...

**Get that all-important “next click” through the front door and into your site’s deeper TIERS.**

As your skills improve, you can relax these rules. Become a bit more creative.

See how Nori creatively intrigues her audience....

### **Anguilla Beaches**

<http://www.anguilla-beaches.com/>

Catch the voice? Catch the “we”? Who could that be? Note the “insider” appeal -- travelers want that insider’s point of view. And when “dad” gets introduced, it’s a family.

This is “one level up PREsell-writing,” and you can do it.

But walk before you run. Start with the tried and true.

Push your copy, but begin with what you can handle.

*Then* think about pushing it to the next level. You have to “obey the rules” to understand them completely. And you have to *understand* them to know when it’s OK to bend and stretch them.

### **Important note...**

What is the one thing you *didn’t* see on the home pages of our role models? That’s correct... *a sales pitch or an immediate recommendation*. This is an automatic turn-off for your visitor. It’s easy to figure out what happens next...

Did you hear the sound of that back-button click?

Use your home page to nurture trust and let your visitors know that you can help them. These people *are* interested in what you have to offer, or they wouldn’t be on your Web site. So relax -- a sales pitch now is fatal.

Instead, cater to their needs *first* by providing the information they are seeking. They will follow your recommendations later on.

Give... then take.

Well done! Your visitor likes your V&VPP (Voice and VPP) and wants more information...

Click!

## 4.2. Content Pages That OVERdeliver!

“What do I write about?”

Ah, that’s easy to answer now. Your brainstorming and “sub-storming sessions” laid out a blueprint for the three TIERS of your site. Each page focuses on one profitable specific keyword, developed during brainstorming.

Your keyword-focused content pages (KFCPs) must OVERdeliver high quality information about a topic (“keyword”) that is related to your theme. This is what your visitor requires and expects.

**Present this information in the most effective way possible.** Remember those guidelines we discussed earlier [in Chapter 3?](#) Start applying them now...

- snappy customer-oriented words
- subheadings for emphasis
- short sentences
- small chunks of information (2-3 sentence paragraphs -- 4-5 sentences)
- lists and bullet points
- inverted pyramid style (i.e., present your conclusion first)
- one idea per paragraph
- no extraneous material

**Your KFCP has two key jobs after Content builds Traffic (C ➡ T)...**

**1) PREsell** -- build credibility and trust through the OVERdelivery of great, free content

**2) Monetize** -- lead into gentle, in-context introductions to your product, service, or merchant recommendation.

**Yup, the other two jobs are P → M!**

You *could* say that the TIER 2 and 3 KFCPs are rather important!

Please don't think that one page has to complete the entire **C → T → P → M** process and monetize for you immediately. No, **C → T → P → M** is a *collective process*, the result of all your pages working together over time.

**Focus each content page on just one topic (i.e., one specific keyword related to your theme).** This keeps your writing tight, your reader focused, and your offers relevant... and the spiders happy, too!

*Always stay on topic.*

You will be tempted to drift off topic -- don't. Your visitors will suddenly have material that has no appeal to them. As a result, they lose interest, and you lose them.

So what should you do if a strong second topic emerges as you write a page? Make it the topic of a new content page. That keeps you and your visitor focused, **and** it gives you a second opportunity to build traffic via the engines.

Create a few content pages that *only address the needs of your target group*. Visitors interpret this as a sign of integrity. Your site doesn't exist to simply wring dollars from them. You are *giving* before *taking*.

These types of pages effectively PREsell *you* -- your credibility, your expertise, your willingness to help with no strings attached! Remember... No single page is going to complete the **C → T → P → M** process. **It's a collective effort.**

Want to see more keyword-focused content page examples that deliver great content, and build trust and credibility?

The best way to learn is to tie the "theory" to actual practice that works. Your wish is my command...

### Important Features for Necklace Displays

- Visibility of the necklaces on display
- Security of the necklaces on the display
- Portability of the display
- How easily a customer can try on a necklace from your display
- How many necklaces the display can hold
- Durability, if the necklace display will be traveling to a lot of shows
- Stability of the display in a stiff breeze, if you'll be displaying outdoors
- Size of the necklace display, and how much space it takes up on the table



This content page at Home Jewelry Business Success Tips ([www.home-jewelry-business-success-tips.com](http://www.home-jewelry-business-success-tips.com)) wastes no time getting right to the good stuff. Better yet, its presentation style makes it fast and easy to digest.

Full of exactly the kind of information that a Net surfer is looking for, this page is making a major contribution to the collective **C** **T** **P** **M** effort.

This sample site also gets the words/presentation/information combo correct...

#### **Advice on Pet Care and Pet Product Supplies Online**

[www.advice-on-pet-care-and-pet-product-supplies-online.com](http://www.advice-on-pet-care-and-pet-product-supplies-online.com)



The screenshot shows a website titled "Advice on Pet Care and Pet Product Supplies Online". At the top, there is a banner with six small images of various pets: a puppy, a rabbit, a dog, a white cat, a dog with flowers, and two hamsters. Below the banner is a navigation menu with the following items: Home, WHICH Pet?, All About Dogs, Top Dog Names, Grooming, Your STAR Pet!, THE PET STORE, THE PEOPLE STORE!, Pet Loss, Pet Memorials, Pet Proof Your Home, Contact Us!, Perfect Pets Blog, and All About Hamsters. The main content area is titled "Useful Tips to Successful Dog Grooming". It features three articles, each with a small image of a dog and a link to "Ads by Goooooogle" and "Advertise on this site". The first article is "Booster Bath" by GroomStar.com, offering free shipping and great prices for pet washing. The second is "Tear Stains-Angels' Eyes" by angelseyesonline.com, discussing tear stains in dogs. The third is "Hair Brushes and Combs" by baysidebrushco.com, listing Kent, Mason Pearson, Denman, and Altesse brushes. To the right of these articles is a paragraph about dog grooming, asking why it bothers people and suggesting that it's important to keep a dog clean and healthy. Below this paragraph is another short paragraph encouraging readers to use the site's guide to dog grooming.

What else do the two examples above have in common? It's easy to see that the owners...

- know their theme and topic inside and out...
- understand that relevant, high-value information is what visitors are seeking!

Writing good content is a straightforward process. There's nothing magical, mystical or complicated about it. Your visitors are searching for quality information. OVERdeliver it to them... in great, big spades.

**Practice writing.** It develops your skills and your voice. It's perfectly professional to present your material very simply and concisely. By working on it, your writing voice will become stronger.

As you get more comfortable, become more creative. Develop new ways to phrase, and have some fun with your writing.

Once you really start to enjoy it, you can't help getting better and better.

*Practice makes perfect!*

Great PREselling is not restricted to Web page content. Why should you just “sit there” and wait to be found? Keep PREselling to your best visitors. Here’s how...

### 4.3. E-zines -- The Repeated PREsell

Why limit PREselling to your Web pages? A quality, regularly scheduled newsletter or e-zine puts you in front of your very best visitors... those who like you enough to give you their e-mail addresses. They *want* to hear from you again!

An e-zine repeats your PREsell, enhances your credibility, and encourages repeat visits to your site. In a nutshell, it keeps your business front and center in the minds of your subscribers.

Subscribers are highly qualified, prospective customers. They share the same passion as you do -- the double opt-in subscription process confirms that interest. They are also telling you that they like what you are presenting on your site and *want* to get more of it.

Want more reasons to publish an e-zine? A well-thought out, regularly published newsletter...

- **demonstrates concretely your commitment to *giving before taking*** -- each issue builds upon the valuable information and solutions that you share on your site.
- **builds a sense of community** -- when subscribers hear from you at regular intervals, you become more like a trusted friend, and less like some faceless medium on the Internet. A bond takes root and grows.
- **reinforces “Voice and VPP”** -- stay consistent in both, from issue to issue.
- **encourages repeat visits to your Web site**
- **reinforces your “Brand of One” and your PREselling message.**
- **generates profits** -- it takes a prospective new customer anywhere between 7 and 13 exposures to your message before they’ll act upon it. Your newsletter keeps you on their radar screens, exposure after exposure, deepening your credibility and leading to additional sales.
- **illustrates your recognition of, and commitment to, the lifetime value of a customer.**

PREselling in your newsletter and PREselling in your Web page are not that different -- all the rules outlined earlier still apply. However, because your audience knows, respects, and trusts you, it's not a problem to make your recommendations or product/service offerings slightly more forthright.

“Forthright” doesn't mean *pushy*, though. Let your audience decide whether or not your solution addresses their needs. It boils down to this...

**Every single page of your Web site has the potential to be your visitor's first (and last!) experience with your business.** Visitors arrive via different entry points, from all walks of lives, from all points of the globe. So... give, then take.

Work monetization models into your content, in-context, gently. *Your site is not a sales pitch from an unknown entity.*

In your newsletter, you can make your recommendations a bit more direct. Your subscribers already know you from your site... heck, they *like* you! They value your advice because they feel you have their best interests at heart.

As long as the quality of your newsletter is consistent with the quality of your site, and you have a customer-first focus, **C → T → P → M** flows seamlessly from Web site to e-zine and back to your site.

Is an e-zine a lot of work? Publishing an e-zine can be as easy as updating folks monthly about new pages on your site. After all, folks have more to do than calendar your site for regular repeat visits.

So use your e-zine to jog their memory. Pique your subscribers' curiosity with short teasers about the new content on your site. Keep them coming back for another look!

Publishing a site-blog is another fantastic, non-intrusive way to maintain contact with your visitors. SBI!'s RSS/Blog It! converts your site into a blog. With the click of a button, it turns your RSS feed into a perfectly formatted and visible TIER 2 Web page. Of course, *that* gets the attention of both your human and spider visitors!

#### 4.4. How Many Exposures Does It Take To Get To **C** → **T** → **P** → **M**?

The process is **C** → **T** → **P** → **M** -- but how long does it take to get to **M**?

That depends on *what and how* you are monetizing...

Selling a unique investment software for \$1,000 will take at least 10 visits, up to 20-30 visits over a period of a year! It's also going to take at least a few issues of your e-zine. Confidence has to be pretty high for a customer to pay that kind of money.

And *that* is one more reason to diversify your monetization models.

Never lose sight of a basic fact of e-life...

Your visitors will all, each and every one of them, *leave your site sooner or later*.

You might as well make a few hundred per month (or more) by putting Google Ads on some content pages. Many visitors will click on those to exit, rather than just closing the window or going BACK to the Search Engine.

Just make sure you don't sabotage your main monetization effort.

So the bottom line answer to the “**How Many Exposures Does It Take to  M?**” question *is another question...*

How long is a piece of string?


And the answer is...




**As long as it takes.**

Diversifying monetization models is like having several pieces of string, each of a different length, each appropriate for a certain job.

## 4.5. Integrate Your Offers... Without Spoiling the PREsell!

Alright, your content development is under control. It's well-written, nicely formatted, and inspires confidence. Your visitors love your site. Congratulations are in order!

Only one step left to master...  **M... where the money is!** Yup, that final red arrow. Let's not lose track that, ultimately...

*This is why you're here.* Yes, it's a joy to build a **C  T  P  M** site. You attract like-minded people to you. You PREsell. Everyone is having a great time, including you.

But it's still a business. And you're here to do business. **No need to hide that...**



**... it's great when customers love the folks they do business with.**

Just don't forget to get around to Monetization, *the big M...* or all you have is a hobby. So the final skill-testing question is...

How do you integrate your monetization options into your content pages *without* compromising hard-earned trust and credibility? You want to convert **visitors into income, without making them feel like it's your primary objective.**

It's an interesting challenge, at first glance. But, at second glance, how is this any different from *offline* business? Build relationships... PREselling is like the famous "business lunch"... the baker, hairdresser, and hotel at the beginning of this book.

*No difference.*

Just be straightforward and natural about blending the PREsell and Monetization. Naturally, it goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway!)

There's no point in working hard to deliver high-value content in a unique voice, and then blow it all with a bad, "just-for-the-money" recommendation. Instead...

- **Be honest.** People like to hear about genuine recommendations about high-quality products and solutions that make their lives easier. Your quality content reinforces authenticity.
- **Selling your own products or services?** Relax, this is going to be fun. People know and like you. Simply tell and show them what you have to offer. You'll be amazed at the response.
- **Know the products you represent or sell.** This is the most obvious, and most important rule. It is only when you are truly familiar with a product or service that you can clearly match it to your visitors' needs and speak authoritatively about it.
- **Share your experience.** Do you *use* the products you represent or sell on a regular basis? Then say so.
- **Make your monetization offerings/recommendations *in context*...** within the natural flow of your content.

- **Don't be pushy.** Tell your visitors what you recommend or sell, and why. If they need it, they will pursue it. If they don't, there's nothing you can say to change that. Whatever you do, don't turn your site into a "hard pitch" site. You'll close down the "open to buy" attitude that you have spent so much time and energy to foster.
- **Diversify.** For those visitors who are not interested in a certain offer, introduce them to something else rather than lose them immediately.
- **Briefly outline any weaknesses of the product or service,** or why it would not be appropriate for some people. It's not easy to speak negatively about your offerings, but let's face it ... no product is perfect, nor is it for everybody. Your visitor is well aware of this fundamental truth.

By providing some sort of analysis...

- 1) You save your visitors time and energy. Their investigation work is already done. You earn their gratitude and respect.
- 2) You demonstrate your complete knowledge of and objectivity about the product/service.
- 3) You add credibility to all other recommendations, as you have clearly demonstrated your #1 priority is the customer. And a final special recommendation (further to the topic of selling your own products, touched on above)...

- **Don't be afraid to create special sales pages for your own special products and services.** If a product is worthy of special attention, dedicate a special sales page. If you offer a service, that is always worth its own sales page. The goal of this special page is simple... **sell with class.**

Writing sales copy is beyond the scope of this book. However, *Make Your Words Sell!* covers everything. It is the perfect "selling bookend" to this book...

<http://myws.sitesell.com/MYWS!.pdf>

### **What's the biggest monetization mistake that newbies make?**

They are so desperate to monetize their traffic, they end up hitting their visitors over the head with their offers. Nothing is more distasteful than an aggressively hyped pitch. Your visitors recoil, regardless of its quality and your best intentions. Why?

Because she feels "pitched!" *It's all bad...*

- Your credibility is damaged.
- Your ability to PREsell is severely compromised.
- Your visitor is likely to leave your site quickly, bad taste in her mouth, and unsubscribe from your next issue of your e-zine.

The best way to approach PREselling effectively boils down to one word... Relax. *Stay the course.*

What does that mean? **Stay customer-focused -- don't switch to "you-focused" at the last second.**

Yes, you want your Web business to be profitable. But relax -- introduce or recommend within the natural flow of your content (i.e., an in-context reference). Do so in a natural manner that does not trigger your visitor's bad-taste radar.

Try this... take a step back and pretend that you don't care whether your visitor heeds your recommendation or not. There will always be something else you can introduce, right? Without that "gotta make a sale" mentality shining through, you will be pleasantly surprised at how your copy flows... and how your visitors respond.

*A change in perspective works wonders.* Look after your visitors' interests first and foremost -- great and profitable things will happen. Your recommendations have an entirely different feel. Your visitors feel confident about them.

**Ignore this advice at your peril.** You *can* attract Traffic. You *can* PREsell. And you *can* Monetize. But **if** you alienate your visitors at that very last step, you'll blow the entire **C → T → P → M** process, right when it counts the most.

SBler Paul Crane describes his PREselling approach. He monetizes through a variety of means -- participation in various affiliate programs, the sale of his own e-book, and Google AdSense ads. I'll let Paul take it from here...

Thanks Ken. Before I begin, I'd like to add my own comments about the change in perspective needed for effective PREselling. When I began messing around on the Internet in 1998, I had the same pie-in-the-sky dreams of instant wealth shared by many newbie netpreneurs. I had only one interest for making the move online -- income. And my Web site reflected that perspective.

A few short months later, it began to dawn on me that making instant millions wasn't going to be all that easy. I had made the understandable but fatal mistake of putting my own interests first. Consequently, I had yet to make one sale, or earn one referral fee. So much for instant riches!

## Make Your Content PREsell!

Believe me, when I stopped solely focusing on making the sale, it's like some benevolent genie came along and sprinkled magic fairy dust on my Web site. Seriously. All of a sudden, visitors were heeding my recommendations, and the site was earning income -- just like that. Yes, I'm aware that it may be a little hard to swallow, but that's exactly how it happened. It all boils down to a very simple mantra... **Take care of your visitors, and they will take care of you!**

Before we go any further -- no matter how or what you are PREselling (whether it be your own products or services, or a partner's or whatever), you must start with a stellar product. Do not, under any circumstances, recommend anything less or you'll do yourself immeasurable damage -- no one will trust your recommendations anymore!

Whenever I do a product review...

I always prefer to buy a product I'm interested in as opposed to approaching the author for an evaluation copy. Why?

First of all, it does not leave me in an awkward situation should the product not measure up to my standards and I don't feel I can recommend it. Secondly, it allows me the option to approach the author with a possible joint venture invitation at some point... with my credibility intact.

Take your time to get to know a product. It's very tempting to take shortcuts. That's only natural. The thing to keep in mind is that you only have to do this once. Do it properly, and this PREselling preparation effort will earn you income for months, even years. Trust me, you'll thank yourself later for doing it right.

Discussing a specific chapter and presenting a quotation (if it is applicable to the PREsell, of course) is something I like doing a lot. Not only does it add a nice touch to the discussion, it really trumpets your knowledge of the product -- after all, you can't accomplish this unless you are intimately familiar with the product.

While this actual PREselling technique is only relevant to publications, software (where you could use a screenshot as well), how-to-manuals and so on, it's important that you demonstrate that you have personal experience with whatever it is you are PREselling. If you can't do this, chances are you're ignoring that essential rule -- know the products you sell or represent. Your visitors will certainly pick up on this and your income potential will drop like a stone.

Next point...

Repeating a partner's sales copy is not what your prospective visitor is looking for -- she wants **real** information. And real information, 9 times out 10, involves bringing a product's shortcomings into view.

I re-emphasize my own experience with the product (by discussing a specific chapter instead of making a generalization) and I provide the customer with what she wants -- objectivity.

## Make Your Content PREsell!

Believe me, what I'm doing isn't revolutionary -- I'm simply showing my visitor that I have their best interests at heart by telling them the stuff they will find out on their own anyway. In this case, the book is too long-winded in a few places.

Sure, I might lose a commission from someone who is not willing to buy because it's too long. But I'd rather keep that person as a happy, PREsold reader, than lost him as a disgruntled owner of a product that was "too much work."

I'll earn a commission from him elsewhere, AND he'll be happy. This is so, so important.

Final zoom-in... I outline who this product is for, and who it is not. This is another strong way of delivering excellent reviews that are in my PREcustomers' best interests.

Remember, if you act in THEIR best interests, you act, IN THE LONG RUN, in your own best interest. BUT you have to be willing to think "long run."

I don't sugar-coat anything? There would be absolutely no point in doing so. First of all, if the wrong person makes the purchase, they'll be resentful towards me for not telling the whole story. Secondly, by diverting the wrong people away from an inappropriate purchase, I can perhaps monetize them some other way. Thirdly, by telling it exactly the way it is, I gain extra credibility.

Here's something else to keep in mind, should you ever find yourself tempted to recommend a product that is not ideal for your audience...

These days, many products (especially digital products and software), come with a 100% satisfaction or your money-back guarantee. So even if you do manage to generate a few extra initial dollars by misrepresenting a product to your audience, chances are they'll just ask for a refund -- and you'll be no further ahead. In fact, you'll be further behind, since your audience now knows your recommendations are self-serving and can't be trusted. Therefore, it's extremely unlikely they'll ever buy anything on your say-so again.

Bottom line?

At first, it may seem hard to believe, but you'll gain a lot more credibility and a lot more income if you present both sides of a product or service (i.e., the pros and the cons) instead of waxing lyrical about it. Every consumer on the planet knows that no product or service is perfect, nor does she expect it to be. As long as the benefits outweigh the detriments, and it addresses the issues she has, she will buy the product.

If it is not the right product for her, well... it's likely that you will have something else that will address her concerns.

So, let's come full circle and wrap things up...

If you are undergoing a dedicated PREselling effort (like the one I've outlined directly above), the most important message is to tell

## Make Your Content PREsell!

the whole story. Put your thoughts down on paper, like you would do for a composition, and try to remain objective.

Obviously, if you genuinely like the product, and are excited about it, don't be afraid to share those feelings with your audience. At the same time, don't cross over the line into bad taste. Anytime you're integrating a reference to a particular product or service within the course of a discussion, remember the lesson outlined earlier...

Relax, make the recommendation and move on.

If you do this, you will reap the results.

Great stuff, Paul. Thanks much for your "street-smart" insights!

Paul is using a fairly common PREselling strategy... common, that is, among *successful* Net marketers. Web guru Ralph Wilson's "**WilsonWeb.com**" is a master of impartial PREselling. Read some of his book reviews. 9 times out of 10, you'll find a "*but*" in the review. As in...

"This was a great book, but... etc."

The *but* is where Ralph enters his own comments, generally on how the publication might be improved, or where it may be lacking. Yes, Ralph will lose a few commissions by detailing some of a book's weaker points. But he ends up sending more appropriate, highly targeted customers who don't mind the warts... now that is PREsold!

These folks are much more likely to buy, so Ralph invariably delivers high Conversion Rates... and happy customers.

What about the potential sales that he loses?

Just like Paul experienced, they remain satisfied pre-customers. They are likely to earn Ralph a commission on some other product in the future. Ralph's unwavering dedication to the best interests of his visitors means that they *will* return and, following Ralph's advice, find the right product for *their* needs.

**Zero in on the best interests of your visitors.** Integrate your offers smoothly and naturally into your high-quality, customer-first content and guarantee the long term success of your business!

Affiliate reviews apply to **products** you sell (e-goods or hard goods), as well as **services**. Be honest. Be customer-focused. It all shines through and ultimately builds you a significant, profitable business.

Speaking of "long term success," here's how to protect the uniqueness of your business...

## 4.6. Protecting Your Content From Thieves

There is nothing more infuriating than working extremely hard to develop high quality content that both establishes your credibility and wins the SE wars, only to have some lowlife come along and claim your work for his/her own.

What do you do if someone copies your content?

First, I'll show you how to find the rip-off artists. Use [Search It!](#) for periodic investigations. Start with the Search category, "**Site Legalities**" and then choose the Search Type, "**Find URL Thieves.**"

This is an extremely useful technique. From the SBI! Forums comes another excellent idea. Do a search at Google for a unique, unusual phrase that appears on each page (for example, "fiber and so digests more slowly"). The phrase should be rather distinctive, making it unlikely to appear on another Web page.

Back to the "unique phrase" idea. You can perform the "unique phrase search" in Search It! like this. Select "Search – Straight Up" in STEP 1 and "Google, with quotes" in STEP 2. In STEP 3, insert your series of words.

Keep a list of the actual URLs that turn up in the browser, one for each page on your site. Turn that list into a group of bookmarks. Every month or so, click on the bookmarks and you'll find the rip-off artists. Now that you've found them, here's what to do about it..

### **Take action.**

All of your content *automatically* has a copyright, whether you register it or not... or whether you indicate the copyright or not. However, it's always better to indicate and date your copyright ownership at the bottom of every page. You are protected online by the **Digital Millennium Copyright Act**.

Theft of "**Intellectual Property**" ("**IP**") should be as clear and simple, morally and legally, as any kind of theft. In some instances, though, it's tricky to prove it.

Of course, if someone just flat out copies huge chunks of copy, the case is straight forward. At the other end of the spectrum, however, when someone paraphrases the content, you enter a very gray zone -- even if YOU know they're dirty dogs, it can be impossible to prove in court. Rest assured that these

people can only go so far, and only those who truly labor will ultimately succeed.

So what to do in cases where the violation IS “cut and dry?”...

**STEP 1)** Document your ownership of the Intellectual Property in question. If you have material dated or archived, this is easy enough to do. Additional third party documentation can be helpful, too. For example...

<http://www.archive.org/web/web.php>

Make note of your own WHOIS data, including domain name registration -- anything you can to make your case effectively.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Going forward, make it easy on yourself. Document your IP now, so that if you ever need to prove dates and ownership, here's what to do...

a) Copyright every page on your site by adding the following to the bottom...

Copyright (c) 2004 Your Name. All Rights Reserved.

b) Burn your Web site to a CD every 3 months and date it. Leave it with a notary or attorney as of that date.

c) Copyright your site every 6-12 months. It's cheap and not difficult to do. No matter where you may reside, register in the United States...

<http://www.copyright.gov/>

The first one is an absolute must. The second two are not “must do's” according to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. But they set you up much more strongly, if you ever need to go to court. Imagine producing material that has been copyrighted in court, straight from a rip-off site? Wow! Iron-clad.

But remember, you likely won't use this in court. It does make you bullet-proof with ISPs and Search Engines. *That* is what is important, if you ever need “swift justice.”

**STEP 2)** E-mail and snail-mail (by registered mail) the offender, and his/her ISP (get this information through a WHOIS search). Document your case that you own your IP, that it came *before* this thief stole your material. Give a deadline for removing the material, after which point legal steps will be taken. Do it this way...

a) Send a stiff e-mail to the thief (cc to the ISP, for its information). Include a registered mail to the thief.

b) Send a gentle e-mail to the ISP, letting them know that you have e-mailed their client and that they are subject to IP law.

Web hosts generally respect IP rights and will pull down the bad guys. Also, while they are not liable for a thief stealing your content, they can be held liable for keeping it up. So they are not likely to risk legal complications for the sake of one Web site. If you document your ownership and dates properly, this is the fastest way to get material taken down if the thief will not comply (they often do, actually).

Search Engines will also delete copyright-violators, if you document your case well. But that is becoming less and less likely to happen, since their algorithms for detecting and preventing this are improving. If it does happen, however, and if the infringer and the ISP are not helpful, Search Engines will generally delete copyright violators.

**The bottom line...**

You *cannot* build long-term quality business by stealing material, and I'd be surprised to see any Webmaster attain any success by adopting such underhanded tactics. But there are "get-rich-quick" lazy thieves who will try. And fail.

So don't lose too much sleep over it. There is only one set of circumstances that could do some damage... a copycat who hosts at an ISP in a country that does not respect IP rights, and who ranks better than you at the engines. That is an extremely unlikely situation. And even then, appeal to the engines to delete that thief... quick justice!

And please... don't consider this legal advice. Consult a lawyer.

Personally, although we've shut down rip-offs, my experience is that they do very little damage and we don't actively look for them. However, your subject matter and "thieves" might be different. *Now you have strong ways to detect and shut them down.*

Before we wrap up your graduate studies in PREselling, here are a few SBlers who share some very helpful insights. I'm turning the book over to them in the next chapter, so their "voice of experience" can tell you how it's done *in their own words*.

## 5. Words Of Wisdom From SBlers

Nothing succeeds like success. I asked a few of our successful Site Build It! owners to share their personal experiences and tips on how to write well and PREsell effectively.

It's not surprising that successful SBlers all follow the same "rules" of effective PREselling...

- Know your stuff.
- Be passionate about your topic.
- Put your customers' needs first.
- Present your material cleanly, using a unique voice.
- **Practice, practice, practice -- it's the best way to improve.**

Give this chapter a quick read. Then come back. Do a second (even a third!), more careful read-through. It's that important. These SBlers are wonderful mentors. Absorb and apply their wise words... and you too can join the winner's circle!

Let's get the mentoring ball rolling with Rena...

### 5.1. Jewels From Rena

**Rena Klingenberg**

[www.home-jewelry-business-success-tips.com](http://www.home-jewelry-business-success-tips.com)

When I write, I imagine myself talking heart-to-heart to one of my friends who wants to sell her jewelry. I want to be sure she avoids all the pitfalls, so I share all the tips and secrets I can think of that she needs to know to be successful.

Then I re-read what I wrote and tone down anything that makes me sound like a bossy big sister - anything that says "Do this", "You have to", "Don't do that", etc. I try for a friendly writing voice that says, "hey, you might want to do this because . . ." or "if you're having trouble with that, then try . . ." or "I recommend using (XXX) because . . .".

I use emoticons -- exclamation marks and smiles in my writing, because that's just me, and I think it makes my writing more readable, genuine and friendly. I want to avoid being dry

## Make Your Content PREsell!

and lecturing my audience! Like me, my audience is made up of "artsy types", and believe me, we don't take kindly to anyone telling us what to do! :-)

I think also it helps to back up my friendly recommendation with a sound concrete benefit, and surround the recommendation on all sides with great, free information.

For example, in my article about getting set up to accept credit cards for your jewelry business, I start with info on why it's vital to a jewelry business to accept credit cards. Then I mention how much my own sales jumped when I started accepting credit cards, and how my customers tend to buy more when they pay with plastic rather than cash.

Then I list the important features to compare when you're choosing your credit card service provider. Now, as my visitors are feeling overwhelmed with the merchant provider research task ahead of them, I mention the provider I chose. I simply say, "I use (XXX) for accepting credit card payments in person. I've been very happy with their convenience, speed, flexibility, fee structure, and customer support." And because of the tons of friendly, free information I'm giving them, my readers trust the research I've done and investigate the merchant I've recommended.

I then wind up the article with more good, free information - how to ensure that your customers know you accept credit cards, how to sell add-on items to credit card customers, and pricing your jewelry to cover your cost of accepting credit cards.

So my formula is:

- quality free info
- here's what I recommend as a solution and briefly explain why
- more free info.

How do I know this strategy works? Well, I get incredible emails every day from jewelry artists thanking me over and over for providing the information they need to start and build their jewelry businesses. Sometimes I get some great "success stories" from readers who implemented the information I provide and had fantastic results!

In my SBI! traffic logs, I find that a great deal of my traffic also comes from people emailing my site link to others. And sometimes my site visitors post information about my site on forums I've never been to, and I receive heavy traffic from those posts. In fact, one visitor apparently posted something about my site on a glass art forum that I've never been to -- and three months later, I'm still getting several visits a week from that one post!

Rena establishes her unique voice and writing style by following a strategy that works for her -- using a friendly tone, supported by **emoticons**. It works for Rena's "artsy type" audience who obviously appreciate her approach.

Personally, I like emoticons for e-mail. I use them even when corresponding at the highest levels. Why?

They may be perceived by hard-nosed business types as corny or soft. But so what? I'm not a hard-nosed business person.



When I'm kidding, I wink. It avoids confusion.



When I'm happy about a point, I smile.



I don't use this one too often.

While emoticons are not professional enough to use on our main Web sites, I can certainly imagine target markets for whom they'd be fine on the Web. Consider them.

## 5.2. Greg On Romancing

### Greg Mattson

[www.excellent-romantic-vacations.com](http://www.excellent-romantic-vacations.com)

Basically, I approach writing content as if I was talking to a friend, or someone asking me for some advice or directions. I try to be straightforward and easy to follow. It's best not to "try to sell" - just let your own natural enthusiasm come along with the sentences. The rest will take care of itself.

I read a lot of travel guides and travel writing, so my style is probably a mix of what impresses me in that field. I make it a point to notice as I read: What makes this memorable, or easily understood? How would I describe my own experience this way?

It's good to try anticipating what a visitor to your site or particular page would ask you about your subject or keyword. Like anything, some of my pages are better than others. I'm learning what works, and how to spot strong areas that attract greater attention.

And, I can't take all the credit - my wife Maureen is a great second opinion and proofreader. I usually run everything by her before it goes online.

As Greg's comments demonstrate, unbridled enthusiasm and passion are your best PREsellers. The passion oozing from your content will put your visitors at ease. It encourages them to act upon your recommendations, secure in the knowledge that you know your material, and have their best interests at heart.

Greg is one smart guy. He gets his wife to proof-read everything. They know the importance of a second set of eyes to ward off those typo gremlins!

## 5.3. Don't Forget to Thank Jim & Fiona For This...

**Jim Andrew & Fiona McCardle**

[www.rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com](http://www.rent-a-villa-in-tuscany.com)

How to do proper joined-up writing? Haven't the faintest. Just kind of write down the first thing that comes into my head usually! I do have a few wee tricks up my sleeve...

**1)Keep a notebook with you all the time.** Jot down anything that seems interesting -- could be ideas for newsletter articles, words or phrases you see or hear. Anything, you don't have to know what to do with it at the time.

**2)Know your readers.** Young cool, techie, older, experts on a particular subject, total beginners etc. This will influence the style of writing (how much jargon, how serious or jokey, etc.) I have a particular problem with this one! People who want to rent luxury villas in Tuscany don't always understand my Scottish schoolboy humour (I sometimes have to self censor some newsletters, even though they keep me amused, no one else has the faintest idea what I'm on about). On the other hand, text, which is too American over the top sales pitch doesn't go down well in the UK.

**3)Study why you like certain writers.** I don't mean copy what they write but they may have a particular way of seeing the world that might fit your readers. Newspaper magazines have some great writers, who are able to write 1000 words on anything and can describe events or situations in really clever ways. Again check out lots and take notes. For example, I love the travel writer, Bill Bryson. He has a quirky way of looking at the world. In one of his books, he described a restaurant "they serve steaks the size of hot water bags" or a gallery "had a queue coiling round it like an abandoned garden hose." Great !

**4)Paint pictures in words, describe how you feel.** Compare a situation to another, etc. A list of facts can be a bit boring (except if it's meant to be only a list of facts) Of course, it depends on your readers but if you can make them feel what it's like to be in a certain place or do a certain thing you are half way there. Also describing how a particular product can help/change someone's life is always better than describing only what it does (advantages not technical spec).

**5)Know your MWR (most wanted response). Write to get it.** For example, don't complain about the heat or the cold if you want people to come on holiday. Describe what fun it is. Describe what great things you can do in the great weather (there is no such thing as bad weather only different types of good weather). I hear it's -40 in Canada! Great snowballing weather!

**6)Give clear instructions.** If people can get confused they will. For example, the sbi opt in newsletter doesn't actually say "click on the link below"!!! I get so many emails saying "yes it's me."

7) **It's easier to write if you are sincere...** if you actually like what you are doing. If you've been there, done that and bought the t shirt, it's easier to describe it to others. So, a bit of passion, enthusiasm and first-hand experience all help.

8) **Re-read, and spell-check everything.** There's nothing worse than badly written text. If your first language isn't English, get the text checked or translated properly.

9) **Don't wait for inspiration.** Write often, even when you don't feel particularly inspired -- you can go back and tweak it later.

It's a bit like humour, if you try to analyze it, it isn't funny.

Jim makes a number of good points -- all are worth a second, third, and fourth read. These two are especially note-worthy...

1) **Study why you like certain authors...** Increase your awareness level. Reflect upon what you read. Is it inspiring or depressing or silly or engaging or creative, etc.? There is no need for hours of deep thought but do make a mental notes about what you like or don't like.

2) **Don't wait for inspiration...** Trust me, without perspiration, there is no inspiration. Often, if you wait for inspiration (especially if you are juggling a full time job and an online business), it will be a long time before you get anything done. Which brings me back to...



“Pound those keys, dawg.”

## 5.4. And Send Erwin A Big Thanks, Too...

**Erwin Steneker**

[www.customerservicepoint.com](http://www.customerservicepoint.com)

1. **Know your stuff:** Major point to writing an article is that I have to write from a basis of knowledge. I really can't write about something I don't know about... So to prepare me for an article, I collect all kinds of material on a given subject (from books, the Internet, notes from talking to colleagues and

so on).

When I'm ready to write the article, I read all the stuff at once. Then, when all information is fresh in my head, I'm ready for the next step.

**2. Setting up a bone structure:** I need to have a structure for my article, a bone structure so to speak. I set out the article in a number of short sentences that in "staccato" tell the story that I want to tell in the article. It's almost like a presentation, where you have a number of sheets from which you tell your story. This bone structure always has the form head-body-tail.

The head I use to give the article a purpose. It's not a bed time story. I'm trying to make a point! The head "sets the stage" so to speak, introducing the reader to the subject of the article. For the unfinished article, I usually put some kind of working title, describing the subject, as the skull.

The body is used to actually make the point, and I use as many bullets as I need to get it across. Short sentences here, I'm not writing yet!

The tail wraps it all up. Usually this has a form of a conclusion or punch line. Often, I do not put anything in the tail before writing, as I don't always have a firm conclusion in my head. I found that during writing, I oftentimes learn different angles on the subject that I didn't have before. The writing process is also a teaching process, after which I'm much better enabled to come to a well-founded conclusion.

**3. Fleshing it out:** I use the structured article, and start to put some flesh to the bones. I don't start with the head paragraph(s) as I found that it is much easier to write the introduction if the rest of the article is done. This is also true for the final conclusion. For each bullet in the body I'm writing out what I want to say at that point. This is much easier than writing the whole article, because I only have to focus on that single point.

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Sidebar

**Get in "the zone."** I do my best writing when I'm in "the zone". The "zone" or "flow" is often mentioned by athletes to describe the state of mind where their athletic efforts are almost effortless, movements are fluent and energy is flowing abundantly. They are completely focused on the task at hand, and every step, leap and jump is spot on.

Now, I'm no athlete (far from it, actually) but I do know when I'm in the writing-zone. No writer's block. Words flow easy, stringing to sentences, then paragraphs. I know exactly what to write, corrections are not necessary. I can write until I'm done, and even though hours may be gone in real time, I've lost all track of time.

I always try to get in the zone. I move away all distractions, such as phones and children, and just start writing. If I'm

suffering writer's block, I usually just type something, anything, to get the flow going. Even retyping a paragraph or two from a book helps to overcome the initial anxiety of not knowing what to write.

Although I know how to express myself in English, it is not my native language. Most of the time I know what to write. I think in English, and no translation is taking place in my head. But sometimes my knowledge of the language lacks. At that time, I just put in the Dutch equivalent and continue writing. Getting hung up by a single word can seriously impact the flow, so when I'm lost for words, I just write on. I often remember the line delivered by Al Pacino to Gabrielle Anwar in "Scent of a Woman":

"Tango is not like life, my dear. There are no mistakes in Tango -- if you get tangled up, you just Tango on."

=====

After I have written the basic article, I'm feeling much more confident to write the introducing and closing paragraphs.

**4. Grooming the piece:** Although a major part of the writing process is now done, I still don't have a finished product. Often, I must rewrite a sentence or two between paragraphs to enhance the flow.

Sometimes, I find myself "rambling", going on and on, using much more words than are necessary to get it across. At that moment, I scratch all writings that aren't absolutely necessary to tell the story. Usually, this is to the benefit of the article.

Also, at the moment of writing I'm using exactly the same words when I'm talking about something. For these words, I'm using a thesaurus to find synonyms. For example, "customer service" may become "after-sales support". Adding some variety in your words can make the article much more interesting to read. Oh, and spell checking is a no-brainer, so I'll leave it at that.

**5. Let it rest:** After I have "finished" the article, I let it rest for a day. This helps me to take some distance to the piece, so when I re-read it, I'm much more perceptive to what isn't working. Sometimes I must finish an article the same day, but then I'm too close for comfort, so I let someone else read it. If I have someone handy, I always let it be read by another person.

**6. DONE!** I wish! At this point, it all starts again... :-)

**P.S. One more tip:** Find a supporter, or better yet, a group of supporters that give you positive affirmation, advice and general support. Online or off. The energy that can come from two or more folks that really support each other's efforts is phenomenal!

Excellent advice from Erwin. From overcoming writer's block to using a thesaurus to final pruning/proofing, he covered everything.

His comments about distractions are important. Finding a quiet spot where you won't be disturbed helps you establish flow and continuity in your writing. You'll find it very difficult to get into the "zone" as Erwin calls it, if the television is blaring, the phone is ringing, the dog is barking and the kids are pestering you.

**Find a quiet spot... and you're off to the races.**

## 5.5. SiteSell.com... Nope, NOT Like Us

Go to SiteSell's home page... <http://www.sitesell.com/>... or any of our other sales sites. Why don't they fit the **C** → **T** → **P** → **M** process? At first glance, they don't. But let's follow our typical visitor, and then decide.

SiteSell's **5 Pillar Affiliates** do a lot of the **C** → **T** → **P** for us.

Years ago, we noticed (or at least our database-mining did!) that some of our affiliates could send thousands of visitors, with a minuscule **Conversion Rate** or CR (as low as 0.1%). Yet other affiliates could also send thousands and have a CR of 10%, even up to 20%. Granted that was for our \$17 book that was sweeping the Net marketing world at that time.

But the point is the incredible difference. The difference was statistically impossible... if they were doing the same thing to drive traffic. That meant that they had to be doing something dramatically **different**.

Sure enough, that was the beginning of a concept... **contextually relevant text links** were far more powerful than banners or other "no-value" ways of driving traffic. This was years before anyone was talking about "contextually relevant text links." Google's AdSense now has made that concept commonplace.

But in the meantime, we've grown it into a full process that anyone can do... **C** → **T** → **P** → **M**.

Our visitors arrive PREsold by 5 Pillar Affiliates, but we know that some affiliates do a great job and some still use banners! On a PREsold scale of 1 to 100, the range is...

1 to 100.

So our own sites, those here at SiteSell, have to address that reality.

Read the SBI! sales page with fresh eyes...

<http://buildit.sitesell.com/>

So what does that page establish?...

- VPP -- unique content, coined uniquely... **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M**
- “Voice” of experience, friendly but authoritative
- Content builds, interweaving content and sales copy
- USP -- builds toward the close with USP clearly stated and a solid guarantee to back it up.

It’s not an easy page to write. It has to accomplish a whole lot, covering a range of possible visitors.

Key point?

We definitely follow **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** -- we just do it differently to accommodate the fact that affiliates drive our business.

When you have a **niche** product or service or infopreneur business, as I did for my very first product, there is simply no better way to succeed for the small business person than SBI!.

But if you sell **general** products (ex., general e-commerce products like e-books or SBI!), an affiliate program is a powerful way to build a business.

Affiliates end up covering the entire “spectrum of niches,” since tens of thousands of affiliates each have their own niche, their own VPP and voice. As a result, they cover that impossibly huge elephant for you. How? By steadily quilting together thousands of patches until it is totally covered.

The point is... do not study our sites looking for a mentor. We *do* follow the basic **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** process, but greatly modified to meet the needs of a much larger company with the best group of affiliates on the Net. Rest assured... take a look and **you’ll see that...**



... we practice what we preach. But look to the folks above for more appropriate mentoring.

## 6. Putting It All Together... “Hey I Can Write Like That!”

**FACT #1** We all communicate on a daily basis. We constantly build our personal offline “Brand of One” with friends, colleagues, family.

**FACT #2** We are **not** taught to write to communicate in school. Shameful, but there you have it.

**FACT #3 SBI!** removes the barriers -- technical, Search Engines, etc. The only way for small businesses to succeed, **C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M**, is now totally do-able.

**FACT #4** No software tool in the world writes its own content -- if it did, hey, it wouldn't need you! If you see any “fill in the blanks” or “automatic page generators” for sale, **apply some common sense. Then...**



... run, don't walk, in the opposite direction.

### CONCLUSION...

Let's do something about it. Let's raise our PREselling-writing skills to the necessary level. A-N-Y-O-N-E really can do this.

**This is not about doing something you don't know how to do.** It is merely a question of bringing your personality and already existing communication skills to the keyboard. It's about building personality (AKA “voice”), a unique spin, likeability, content with zip, etc., into your site.

Your *Content* (i.e., what you write), *Look & Feel* (i.e., how you present your material), *spin and unique voice* (i.e., your writing tone and approach) form the backbone of your Web site.

Together, they affect how visitors judge you and, ultimately, how much income your monetization offerings earn. They combine to distinguish you as an expert in your field. And finally, the whole ensemble sets you profitably apart from the competition.

**Your business, however, is only as strong as its weakest link in the C ➡ T ➡ P ➡ M chain.** You can't build your business to its fullest potential if any of these critical elements are missing...

- **Look & Feel**

If your Web site looks horrible, visitors will approach it with hesitation and distrust (if they even stick around). Of course, an outstanding L&F on its own won't do it. Visitors are looking for information not style.

- **Content that OVERdelivers**

Poor content? No "meat?" No "zip?" No "spin?" All of that means "no interest" by your visitor. Click! Back to the Search Engine, she goes. High-value, relevant content, delivered in your own unique voice, positioned in an interesting way, wins.

So...

Spin that high-value content in a unique and attractive way -- one that is *extremely interesting to a smaller number of people*. Why is that better than being mildly interesting to a wider audience? Because "mild interest" does not cut it.

This strategy is especially beneficial for a rather crowded niche -- no point in going after "everyone." If you try to be "all things to all people," you'll lack focus -- you'll end up with watered down content that means "nothing to anyone." Yes, it means eliminating a good chunk of your potential market. **But that's what it takes.**

Excellent content *and* L&F will build your business. Now blend a unique voice and spin into the mix -- one that establishes your character and identity -- and your "**Brand of One**" will soar.

Bottom line?

**Content is the cornerstone of the SBI! process...**

**CONTENT** ➡ **TRAFFIC** ➡ **PRESELL** ➡ **MONETIZE**

Without **CONTENT**, you can't generate targeted **TRAFFIC** from the SEs, nor build trust and credibility with your visitors. Without **CONTENT**, you are left with no effective way to build targeted **TRAFFIC** and then **PRESELL** your visitors to your **MONETIZATION** options.

**C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** is the engine of your online success. **And content is its fuel.**

But it's **PREselling** that converts the fuel into income. It's the critical **P** before the **M**. That arrow between **P** ➡ **M** reflects the warm, open-to-buy mindset that results from excellent **PREselling** and that leads to Monetization.

We sometimes see hard-working, dedicated SB!ers putting a lot of effort into keyword research, optimizing their pages for the SEs, building quality in-pointing links and so on. Unfortunately, they do not put the same amount of effort into developing the high-value content that surfers seek, that PREsells.

Yes, it's easier to focus on the mechanical actions like brainstorming, analyzing and value-exchanging, all supported by SB! tools to remove all technical barriers. And those actions are, of course, important.

But, compared to writing well, SB! turns those mechanical steps into "child's play." No doubt about it, it takes some hard thinking and planning to create content that PREsells. But it sure is worth it!

My final piece of advice?

**Devote your time to developing excellent, wanted content. All your other efforts will bear fruit.**

What are the results of writing to PREsell well? Creating more and more content, and doing it better and better...

- increases the volume of targeted traffic week-after-week
- attracts more inbound links (many of which you don't even have to ask for!)
- creates discussion in specialized forums and blogs about your site
- generates more newsletter subscribers -- more potential lifetime customers
- encourages visitors to share their stories and ideas
- Search Engines notice and start considering you as an authority and a mini-hub
- your rankings improve steadily, especially for the more competitive words
- "spins the spin" -- increasing content and inbound links = more visitors = more inbound links, and so forth
- "spin on top of spin" -- never stop creating more content, even it 's only a page a week and updating old pages because Search Engines notice this steady growth and updating, too
- generates more return visitors, ever-more in-pointing links, more credibility, and more Search Engine traffic

## Make Your Content PREsell!

- builds your subscriber base ever larger -- more potential lifetime customers  
... and finally, the bottom-bottom line...
- **converts more and more visitors into more and more customers.**

As I said earlier... Get it right... and the spin “spins.”

### Make Your Content PRESELL!...



... and the snowball will “spin the spin,” building momentum and size with growing speed.

But...

If you fail to Make Your Content PRESELL!, **your snowball’s chances...**



... are rather poor, to say the least.

OK, let's cover one final lesson and then we'll wrap it all up into the key summary points. I actually learned this lesson from SBI! students who had paid \$5,000 for a conference to “learn and do” SBI! in 5 real-time days.

### The single most important element that folks had trouble with?

Getting the home page right. And the problem is, unlike interpreting Supply and Demand numbers, many people don't realize they are having trouble.

The Voice & Value PREselling Proposition combo does not come so easily to everyone, I discovered. And it's not just that some folks are “good at it.” Some situations are just easy to “VPP-voice” (ex., my 14 year old daughter starting a site about a Caribbean island -- would that we all had such an easy spin!). Other situations need some work and creativity.

But **anyone** can, with the right instruction and effort, “get it right.” From former police officers to millionaire real estate mavens, the range of businesses at the conference was staggering. And from those with “self-imposed writer's block” to natural authors, I learned how to push all to achieve a better, more effective

**Make Your Content PREsell!**

home page (and to apply the same to their TIER 2 and 3 pages).

I pulled together the essence of those \$5,000 one-on-one sessions into a special “Tips and Techniques HQ” article...

<http://sbitips.sitesell.com/voice-vpp-chicago.html>

And that bring us to the final chapter...

## 7. Summary... Key Points At A Glance

Here's a quick summary of the key points in **Make Your Content PREsell!**. For more details about a specific point, just click on its corresponding Chapter link.

Successful PREselling content "works" at several levels...

- 1) It has that "been there - done that" voice and flair.
- 2) It has specific knowledge that comes from real experience.
- 3) It supports a depth of useful information -- good reference material plays an important part.
- 4) It is spun or positioned in a way that is uniquely yours.

Furthermore, it is consistent, from page to page, from e-zine issue to issue, from week to month to year.

And finally, **it is for the customer**, absolutely. ([Chapter 1](#))

---

The **Big 2**...

**1) Provide a confidence-building, solid Look & Feel.** Check out eBay or Google to reassure yourself that your Web site doesn't have to look like it belongs in the Louvre. "Solid and simple" wins the day.

**2) Deliver words that OVERdeliver,** in your own voice, with credible, trust-inspiring knowledge, and a unique twist. ([Chapter 1.2](#))

The PREselling Reality...

*Your CR will literally vary from 1% to 10%,  
purely because of...*

*1) HOW YOU REACH your visitor, and*

*2) WHAT YOU SAY to her, and*

*3) HOW YOU REFER her to your income-generating source.*

A positive mindset turns into a “purchase” mindset with amazing regularity. A negative one is near-impossible to overcome. Your success with anything you do in the world of e-commerce flows from it. ([Chapter 2.1](#))

### ***Know your customer.***

Build a **customer thumbnail profile**. This is an excellent way to focus your PREselling efforts. Know your customer’s needs and you will...

- know what kind of content is wanted
- know how to say whatever you say
- have a firm picture of your “audience of one” (invaluable for creating that one-to-one voice)
- know (when it comes time to monetize) how and what to monetize and what benefits to stress in your sales copy. **Benefits, not features, connect with emotions.**

Flesh out your profile by creating a master list of topics that might interest your target group. If you are not an SBI! owner, use the **Keyword Brainstorming** Search Category of the [Search It!](#) tool. People who are interested in your theme/topic use these keywords at the Search Engines. Consider, as well, what your own life experience has taught you. First-hand information is invaluable. ([Chapter 2.2](#))

---

**Look and Feel** sets the tone.

**Reading is done differently online.** People tend to scan text, so it’s important to keep paragraphs short, and use plenty of white space.

“Simple” and “clean” rule. Even though high-speed Internet access is more widespread, use images only when needed, and optimize them.

The guiding principle for **page layout** is to make your visitor’s reading experience as *enjoyable and as time-efficient* as possible.

**Keep fonts simple.** Sans Serif fonts, such as **Arial, Verdana** and **Helvetica**, are best for easy online scanning.

Black text on a white or off-white background is easier to read. Multiple font colors are jarring, and they telegraph “inexperience” to your visitor.

Business sites should avoid colored or patterned backgrounds.

**Take the time to polish and proof each page.** It pays dividends, forever.  
([Chapter 2.3](#))

---

**To PREsell, your content must be high quality.**

Write **straight and direct**. Most people read most comfortably at a Grade 7 level (12-13 year olds). Match your writing to that benchmark. Naturally, if you are targeting a sophisticated audience who expects a more complex style, scale your language up. But still keep it simple, *in relation to that level*.

Communicate your message as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Activate your writing.

“How you say it” is almost as important as “what you say.” ([Chapter 2.4](#))

---

**OVERdeliver.** Excellent content differentiates you from competitors (most people suffer from “Good Enough Syndrome”). Valuable content also **credentializes** your business, establishing you as the expert in your field. Without this, it’s impossible for any small business to build a brand.

Combine knowledge with passion. Know your business theme, the needs of your customers, and the benefits of your monetization solutions. ([Chapter 2.5](#))

---

**PREselling “warms up” your visitors and develops “open-to-buy” mindsets.** You are not a brand. So most people won’t buy or follow your recommendations, simply on your say-so.

**Selling is selling.** You make your case for your product/service/monetization model through sales copy (i.e., the presentation of benefits), culminating with a “*call to action*.” But “selling” comes at the end.

**PREsell, then sell.** ([Chapter 2.6](#))

---

So what do you do when you don’t have a brand? You build *your own* “**Brand of One**.” *Become a celebrity on your own island of expertise.* There is only one way to do that... **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M**. ([Chapter 2.7](#))

## Relax... unfreeze.

The goal of good writing is **to communicate. Build relationships.**

All day long, in your “offline life,” you do exactly that. You **PREsell** yourself -- we all do. You build your personal “offline brand of one” -- this is the image that people have of *you*. Building a “brand of one” is just as easy to do online, *through your writing.* ([Chapter 3.1](#))

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There’s more than one way to skin a cat... or spin an island. The key is to plan it all out, from your “first thoughts”... to VPP... all the way to Monetization.

Your VPP (Valuable PREselling Proposition) explains, in very few words, the specific and high-value themed information your site delivers and your unique positioning for this delivery (i.e., your angle of approach). ([Chapter 3.2](#))

---

**Your spin** is the way you position your theme (ex., “family adventures in Anguilla” vs. “Anguilla for high-net-worth individuals”). It affects what kind of visitors you’ll attract and retain as PREsold, monetizing clients. So think your business plan all the way through. ([Chapter 3.3](#))

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**Your “voice” is your personality, brought online.** A unique voice does more than bring you closer to your visitor (and vice-versa). It distinguishes your business from the bland, characterless melange that clutters the Web. Maximize the potential of your business by being **you!** ([Chapter 3.4](#))

---

**Develop an outline.** It keeps you on track. Outline at **two** levels...

**LEVEL 1) Entire site** -- plan out your three TIERS.

**LEVEL 2) Each page** -- each page has same basic components. ([Chapter 3.5](#))

**The ABCs of simple, solid writing** are...

**A** = Activate It! **B** = Brush It! **C** = Clean It! ([Chapter 3.6](#))

---

**Your home page** is the “front door.” Your voice, spin and the all-important VPP determine what your visitor does at that door. So a home page is never “done” -- it is a constant work-in-evolution. Labor over your home page. Revisit it monthly -- the fresh eyes will prove invaluable. ([Chapter 4.1](#))

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**Your keyword-focused content pages** establish credibility and build trust through the delivery of high-value content. Their secondary function is to make gentle, in-context introductions to your various monetization models.

OVERdeliver on the first job and the second becomes automatic. **C** ➡ **T** ➡ **P** ➡ **M** is a collective process, the result of **all** your pages working together over time.

**Focus each content page on just one topic (i.e., one specific keyword related to your theme).** This keeps your writing tight, your reader focused, and your offers relevant (and the spiders happy, too!). ([Chapter 4.2](#))

---

**An e-zine** repeats your PREsell, enhances your credibility, and encourages repeat visits to your site. How? It keeps your business front and center in the minds of your subscribers. It reinforces **Voice and VPP** and builds profits.

And don't forget about the powerful convenience of site-blogging. ([Chapter 4.3](#))

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Only you can decide upon **the optimal monetization mix.** Diversifying monetization models is like having several pieces of string, each of a different length, each appropriate for a certain job. ([Chapter 4.4](#))

---

**Monetize within the natural flow** of your content (ex., an in-context reference). Be careful and classy -- visitors quickly sense a “**me-only**” attitude. Look after your visitors' interests first and foremost -- great and profitable things will happen. ([Chapter 4.5](#))

**Protect** your content from thieves. ([Chapter 4.6](#))

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Successful SB!ers all follow the same “rules” of effective PREselling...

- Know your stuff.
- Be passionate about your topic.
- Put your customers’ needs first.
- Present your material cleanly, using a unique voice.
- **Practice, practice, practice -- it’s the best way to improve.** ([Chapter 5](#))

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Devote your time to developing your content properly and all your other efforts will bear fruit. Better content determines what happens to your “snowball of success.” Does it “spin the spin,” rolling and growing in momentum? Or does it melt away painfully, losing a year or two of your life, along with thousands of dollars?

**"Hey I Can Write Like That!"** ([Chapter 6](#))

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Whenever you need a helping hand, the SBI! community is always available to advise you. Please bookmark these forums for future use...

Make Your Content PREsell!

<http://forums.sitesell.com/viewforum.php?f=13>

Finding Your Voice And Valuable PREselling Proposition

<http://forums.sitesell.com/viewforum.php?f=14>

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