Meet Our Newest Team Member

Carol Matthews has returned to the family business representing Ullrich Printing as a Sales Representative. She previously worked here as a Customer Service Representative. Recently she was the bookkeeper at Bearden Middle School which gave her flexibility while raising her two children.

She has experience in the printing industry with previous employment at JP Hogan Advertising Agency and Whittle Communications.

Carol will be providing personalized print and promotional item management for new and existing clients with an emphasis on excellent customer care.

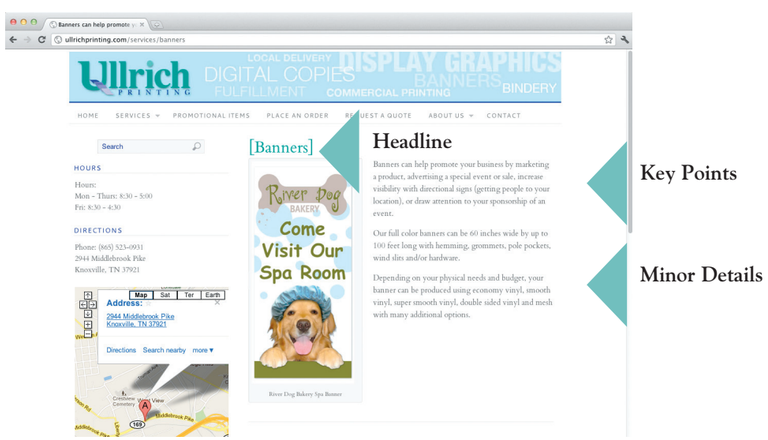
For more information or for an appointment, contact Carol at (865) 523-0931 or by email at carol@ullrichprinting.com.

Tips & Tricks

When writing copy for web pages, use the *inverted pyramid* style of writing. Borrowed from newspaper writing, an inverted pyramid puts the most important information – the *lead* – at the top of the page and proceeds to the least important. In newspaper writing, the lead usually includes the five *Ws* – **who, what, where, when, why** – thus allowing the reader to immediately learn the key elements. As the reader progresses through the story, more details are presented and the story is developed.

Because of the impatience of web page users, the inverted pyramid form is appropriate for web pages. *To create an inverted pyramid, use these steps:*

- Start with the conclusion, which may take the form of a headline.
- List key points, beginning with the most important. The key points can be displayed with bullet points.
- End with minor details (such as background information).



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We keep it small, so you get it big.

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Ullrich PRINTING

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PRINTiPS from Ullrich PRINTING

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Questions & Answers

Q. Is writing copy for web sites the same as for brochures and other marketing materials?

A. ***No, it is not.*** Readers have different expectations and behaviors when reading printed material than reading a web site. This is partly based on the interactive nature of web sites which gives users complete control over what they read and the order in which they read it.

Small blocks of type. Short sentences. Clear, concise headings.

Writing for web pages must be concise, objective and able to be scanned. Web page users have shown impatience and an unwillingness to read through long blocks of text, so if you have a lot of text that must be included, break it into smaller blocks and use hypertext links to move users from block to block.

For concise writing, keep headlines to 8 words or less, sentences to 20 words or less, paragraphs to 70 words or less, and the total word count for the page to 250 words. Use short, simple words, get to the point, then stop.

Headings are important on web pages because of the tendency of web page readers to scan. Headings can also be included in page title tags and as links on the home page. Make a heading effective by including key words, using active verbs, and limiting the use of adjectives and prepositions.

Above all, proof read your writing. Because there are fewer words on web pages, typographical and spelling errors are more prominent and undercut the professionalism of the site.

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Tips & Tricks

Gestalt is a term from psychology that means *unified whole* and describes theories of visual perception. Gestalt theory was originally developed in Germany in the 1920s and can be applied to web page design. The principles are:

- **Similarity.** Similarity occurs when objects are perceived as looking like each other. This causes the viewer to see a group or pattern. Emphasis can be created by juxtaposing a dissimilar object near the group or pattern.

- **Continuity.** Continuation describes the movement of the eye from one object to another. Continuity is often created by using lines or curves.

- **Closure.** If enough of a shape is indicated, the brain will fill in the missing information and create a whole. Perceptually, we close objects that are incomplete.

- **Proximity.** When elements are close to each other, they are seen as a group or unit.

- **Figure and Ground.** The eye separates a form from its surrounding area, so a shape is perceived as a figure and the surrounding area is the background. The perceived figure becomes prominent while the background recedes.

Through Their Eyes: How the World Sees You on the Web

When was your company's web site first launched? Was it in the dawn of the Internet age when we were still debating whether e-mail and web sites were even necessary to conduct business? Or was it more recent, after we realized that web sites needed to be more than digital display ads? Did you plan and construct the site yourself or turn to your talented teenaged nephew – the acknowledged Internet guru in your family?

No matter when your site was first launched or how it came to be, there is one thing for certain: a web site is now just as important as printed sales material for attracting prospects and informing customers. And just like your printed material, the web site needs to be periodically reviewed for brand consistency, relevancy and functionality.

The evolution of the Internet and World Wide Web

The history of the Internet can be traced back to the 1960s with the realization that a network of computers sharing military and scientific information would be valuable. Early work focused on how to connect physical networks into a logical network. First known as ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network), in 1969 it connected four computers located at UCLA, Stanford Research Institute, the University of California Santa Barbara and the University of Utah. Early users were computer experts, engineers, scientists and librarians who had to learn a complex system.

Because the Internet was originally funded by the government, its use was limited to research, education and government uses; commercial applications were prohibited unless they served a scientific or research purpose. Accordingly, the earliest web sites were associated with institutions of higher learning and scientific organizations. However, by the early 1990s there were enough commercial networks to connect the entire country without having to use the government-funded Internet. In May 1995 the National Science Foundation ceased sponsoring the Internet backbone and all traffic shifted to commercial networks. Credit for developing the protocol for information distribution that became the World Wide Web is given to Tim Berners-Lee and Robert Calliau, computer scientists working at CERN (European Organization for Nuclear Research) in 1991. Early commercial websites include Global Network Navigator (GNN) launched in 1991 and sold to AOL in 1995, and two web comics – *Where the Buffalo Roam* (1991) and *Doctor Fun* (1993). According to MIT researcher Matthew Gray, by the end of 1993 there were 623 web sites; by mid-1994 the number had grown to 2738 and by the end 1994, to more than 10,000.

The evolution of web sites

As we mentioned, early commercial web sites were often just a single page that displayed the same information that might appear on a business card or a magazine display ad – a kind of digital yellow pages listing or electronic billboard. However, as Internet technology and tools evolved and matured, businesses and organizations began enhancing their sites in stages:

- *Communication channel:* improving web site layout and navigation and adding features such as e-mail and fill-in forms to communicate with customers, suppliers or employees.
- *Information source:* providing high-quality information of interest to the viewer including new product and service offerings; improving site navigation; improving the display of information (graphics and multimedia).
- *Online ordering:* the ability of the viewer to place an order on the site.
- *E-commerce:* online payment capability and order fulfillment.

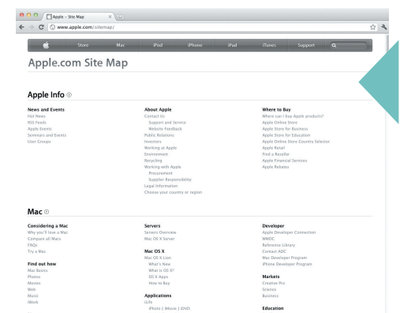
Evaluating your web site

Today's successful web site is well organized, consistent, visually pleasing, easy to navigate, intuitive and contains high-quality information of interest to the viewer. Designing and populating web pages that attract and hold viewers depends on understanding users habits.

The behavior of web site visitors is very similar to their behavior in a retail store. Just as retail shoppers browse merchandise displays looking for something of interest or for the item they are seeking, web page users glance at a page, scan some of the text and click on the first link that either resembles what they are looking for or catches their attention. If the new page doesn't meet expectations, the user either returns to the previous page or leaves the site.

Users are impatient and want instant results; they also bring an expectation of how the web site should look and work based on their prior experience with other web sites. Given this, it is best to use familiar conventions when organizing the site display and creating navigation tools. *Here are several established conventions:*

- Place logo at the upper left of every page; clickable to return to the home page.
- Use either horizontal navigation or vertical navigation on the left side of the page.
- Include *breadcrumbs* – a navigation tool that shows the user where he is on the site – located near the top of the page.



- Provide a site map (an overview of website content like the table of contents of a book) at the bottom of every page.
- Make all information on the site accessible in no more than three mouse clicks.
- Make contact information easy to find.
- Emphasize usability over design.

Conversely, there are some design features that users find annoying, distracting or otherwise react badly to. *Avoid incorporating them into your web site:*

- **Visual noise:** a cluttered page with too much text and/or visual elements. If a visual element has no function, remove it.
- **Pop-ups:** because these require instant feedback from users, they interrupt the browsing session.
- **Dead links:** links that no longer lead to the destination they describe.
- **Animation:** like pop-ups, animation is distracting. Use sparingly if at all.

A Vocabulary of Graphic Terms

ARPANET: an acronym for Advanced Research Projects Agency Network, the world's first operational packet-switching network and the core network that later became the global Internet.

Breadcrumb: part of web page navigation; shows where the user is on the site. Taken from the bread crumb trails used by the children in the fairy tale *Hansel and Gretel* to find their way.

DARPA: an acronym for Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. DARPA was funded by the United States Department of Defense for use at universities and research laboratories.

Circuit switching: a communication method used primarily by the telecommunications industry, where two network nodes establish a communication channel to exchange information. The circuit is dedicated and remains for the duration of the communication session, then is terminated.

Eye-tracking: the process of measuring either where a person is looking (the *point of gaze)* or the motion of the eye relative to the head. Used to estimate how comfortable users are with web sites they are browsing.

Fold: the lowest point where a web site is no longer visible on the screen; the region of a page that is visible without scrolling. The fold is defined by the screen resolution of the viewer's monitor.

Inverted pyramid: a writing style used in newspaper writing that presents a summary at the beginning of the article. Provides readers with an instant idea of the topic.

Packet switching: a network communications method that groups all transmitted data, regardless of content, type, or structure, into suitably sized blocks. An alternate to *circuit switching*.

Physical consistency: the consistent architecture of a web site, such as the position of logos, navigation, the use of graphic elements and typography. Physical consistency is essential for better orientation and effective site navigation.

Satisficing: a word coined by Herbert Simon in 1956 as a combination of *satisfy* and *suffice*. Describes a strategy for decision-making that emphasizes adequacy rather than optimization.

Title tags: a small piece of HTML code appearing in the top of a browser. Title tags, meta key words and meta descriptions are important factors in search engine optimization.

Wireframe: a skeleton of a web site that describes the ideas, concepts and site structure. Used to demonstrate site design, functionality and usability. Usually does not include visual elements or page layouts.