About Us Page

Unlike in the 'real world' where people can visit you and get a feeling for your company by talking to you, on the web your site is usual their first impression of you. The About Us page is where you show customers the people and reasons behind the business. The main thing to bear in mind is on this page you are selling your company, not your services, not your products. It is the page where you explain who is behind the company, why it was established, what makes you special rather than yet another page about what you do or what you sell. Things to consider including on this page are:

Company Philosophy
What drives you to be different? What is your business passion? Dare we say it, your 'Mission Statement'.

Company Background
Your reason for starting the company (even if it was three generations ago). For example, I was made redundant. A family member knew of my skills building websites and recommended me to her boss. My website company was born.

Key Staff
Have any staff been in the industry for a long time, did they invent something, are they 'well known' personalities?

Your Skills
Any qualifications that staff may have that are important. Include degrees, postgraduate training, commitment to constant up-skilling, etc.

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Awards

Any awards your company has won/received, but keep it relevant; a 50m Swimming Certificate is not relevant (unless you are a swim teacher). If they were a long time ago, they might not still be relevant; there is nothing worse than a dusty trophy cabinet.

Community Values/Involvement

Any community-based activity the company does. Do you work with charities, do you have a favoured cause, do you have close ties with the community? This can be a hard one, as many people do charitable work for no reward other than helping, but there is nothing wrong with mentioning that you are local and community focused.

The About Us page is different to ALL the other pages of your site as it is about you and your company and not explaining about your services or products.

Imagine you are in an elevator or at a BBQ, and someone asks you "Why is your business different to the one down the road offering a similar service?" What would you say?
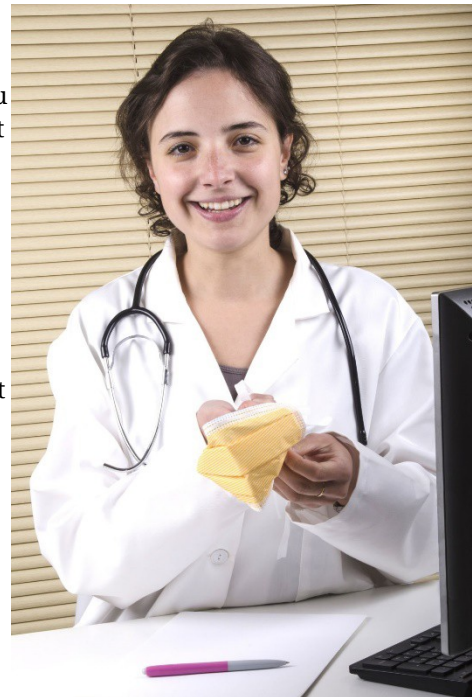
Writing Style

Like every page about your company on the website you must always write in the first-person style (*I, we and you*), and not the third person (*at Joe Bloggs, they*). You are trying to engage the viewer on a personal level, so they start to feel you are the right people to call. Below are two examples one in first and one in the third person. See if you can tell the different 'feeling' it gives you. Also, ensure you do not mix the two styles in one section.

First Person Example

'After returning home to Hamilton following a three-year OE, I noticed that there were some other companies in my industry, but they were operating for themselves, not for their customers. After some research, we opened our doors on Victoria Street in 1989 and have been here ever since. Over this time our team has grown, we offer more skills, experience and services than we did when we set up, but our focus always is and will always remain, with meeting the needs of our customers effectively. If you need any help or advice, please come and see us in Victoria Street. You will want to make an appointment first (call Janet on 07 823 8764) so that we can give you our full attention.'

Third Person Example

'Established in 1989 in Hamilton New Zealand TONY &Co. are based at 2348 Victoria Street. Their staff are skilled and experienced in dealing with customer issues and are happy to help as much as they can. Please call the number below to arrange an appointment.'

The second paragraph delivers the facts, gives the location and even has a call to action to get customers to come to the office. But it is very boring, very formal.

The first paragraph has been written to be open and inviting; it explains the company's philosophy of being customer focused and gently invites the customer to visit. In the first paragraph, the actual address was left out deliberately. This is because when they call Janet, she will confirm the appointment and tell the customer the best place to park or what bus to catch, all emphasising their personal service and care for the customer.

With regards to 'Third Person' you would write in this style is you were writing about a supplier or a customer on the site.

With regards to 'Calls to Action', please see the section in this guide about them BEFORE you write anything for your website. They are essential if you want people to call you, which you do! When you are asking people to call you or email you, put the phone number or email address directly after the call to action, even if it is also at the foot of the page.

Good service to customers is not an option anymore, neither is it a selling point. Good, honest service, respect and politeness are the norms, not the exception. On your About Us page, you need to show the customer that you are the right (and nice) people to deal with as these are part of your company culture.

When you have written your About Us page, like all the other pages in the site, proofread it and then ask someone else to read it. Ask them to be honest, and you will be surprised that they may suggest things that you had missed. The hardest part about writing any part of your website is that you know your business inside out and you often forget just how good you are.

About Us Page - Questions and Activities

What is your Why – what is the passion that drove the business to be set up?

What is the history of the company?

Are there any key staff who need to be featured on this page?

Have you won any awards?

Do you have any community programmes or charities that you actively support as a business?

What is different about how you deliver your goods or services that makes you stand out from your competitors?