

# Content Guidelines by PaperStreet

## Rules for Content

- **Online Reading Habits**
  - Readers skim; they don't read
  - Readers make snap decisions, instead of evaluating
  - Readers may not even be looking at the complete picture
- **Your Content is too wordy already – cut down.**
  - a. Make your content client-centric.
  - b. Use tables, charts, maps, lists, images, diagrams and other wing dings, rather than text.
  - c. Use images and icons, rather than words.
  - d. Make headlines, sub headlines, and sub-sub headlines.
  - e. Don't just write about your business. Use industry facts, Q&A, How To, Case Studies, Top 10 lists, and niche topic content.
  - f. Use bullet points and short paragraphs for skimming.
  - g. Unique content is key. Don't steal and don't regurgitate.
  - h. Keep your content fresh, or at least up-to-date.
  - i. Design is a factor; make your content look good.
- **Would you read that?**
  - a. Why are you bothering the reader?
  - b. What does it have to do with the reader?
  - c. Why should the reader believe you?
  - d. What should the reader do about it?
  - e. Why should the reader do it right now?
- **We must pursue simplicity; any element must add value.**

## In General

- **Goal:** Keep your goals in mind and set realistic goals.
- **Timeline:** SEO is long-term, not a quick fix solution.
- **Useful:** Make your site information rich and useful.
- **Get some Style:** Have a voice when writing; don't be boring.
- **Write for your Reader:** Who do you foresee reading this content? Write for them, not for you. Avoid industry terms unless your targeted reader will already know them.
- **Break Up the Page:** People do not read on the web, they scan. Use headlines, subheads, bullet points, pull quotes, lists, graphics, and photos to break up long text.
- **Don't Have Short Pages:** One paragraph pages are not helpful, unless it's your contact page. Combine content when necessary and use subheads to break apart key text.
- **Short Sentences, Not Long Ones:** Short sentences are better than long ones.
- **Be Consistent:** Use consistent formatting, colors and layout.
- **Keep SEO in Mind:** Every keyword you are targeting should have a dedicated page of content.
- **Home Page vs. Subpages:** The home page is the most important and should have your primary and secondary keyword phrases included.
- **3 Levels:** Your content should be grouped into primary (Home), secondary (Category pages), and tertiary pages (Destination Pages)
- **100 Links:** Keep links to less than 100 per page.
- **AVOID DUPLICATE CONTENT!!!**

## Content Ideas by PaperStreet

### Ideas for Content

- About Us
- Practice Areas and Info
- Service Areas and Info
- Products and Info
- Lists
- Top 10
- News
- Articles
- Recommendations
- Directory of Resources
- Research Articles
- Interviews
- Free Tools
- Expositions
- Humor
- Reviews
- Video, Audio
- Surveys
- Contests
- Trends
- Advice Columns
- Charts & Graphics

### Ideas for Feature Articles

- Why you got into the business (money is fine, just be honest)
- What inspires you
- A compliment you recently received
- Experience
- Degrees
- Awards
- Trade, Bar Associations
- Committees
- Social Organizations
- Recent News / Events
- Personal Connections
- Who do you relate well with, what personality types
- Previous career, family businesses, or unusual jobs
- Hobby or interest that relates

## Bad Practices by PaperStreet

- Avoid tricks intended to improve search engine rankings. A good rule of thumb is whether you'd feel comfortable explaining what you've done to a website that competes with you. Another useful test is to ask, "Does this help my users? Would I do this if search engines didn't exist?"
- Pages that harm accuracy, diversity or relevance of search results
- Pages dedicated to directing the user to another page (doorway pages)
- Multiple sites or pages offering substantially the same content
- Pages that rely heavily on content or links to content created for another web site, such as affiliate content
- Sites with numerous, unnecessary virtual hostnames
- Pages in great quantity, automatically generated or of little value
- Pages using methods to artificially inflate search engine ranking
- The use of text or links hidden from the user
- Pages that give the search engine different content than what the end user sees
- Pages built primarily for the search engines or pages with excessive or irrelevant keywords
- Misuse or inaccurate use of competitor or brand names
- Sites that use excessive pop-ups, install malware (i.e. spyware, viruses, trojans), or interfere with user navigation
- Pages that seem deceptive, fraudulent, or provide a poor user experience
- Make pages for users, not for search engines. Don't deceive your users or present different content to search engines than you display to users, which is commonly referred to as "cloaking."

## SEO Guidelines by PaperStreet

### SEO Content Copy

- **Unique Content:** I know you would never copy, but don't even think about copying. Unique content is the key to top rankings.
- **Important Stuff Goes On Top:** Don't bury your lead, put what is important up top.
- **Hook 'em:** Use hooks, to make your text flow.
- **Use Primary & Secondary Keyword Phrases:** Use the primary and secondary keywords throughout the text, where reasonable.
- **Use Subheads:** Use subheads to break up text and use them for secondary keywords.
- **Do not go overboard with your SEO phrases:** Make the copy readable. If the copy is pure gibberish, it will not help you gain clients.
- **Make them Contact You:** Include a call to action on every page.
- **Anchor Those Links:** All of your links should contain anchor text that correlates with your keywords.
- **Keep It Natural:** Write for the reader, and not for the search engines. Of course, you want to mix in keywords where appropriate.
- **Don't Worry About Keyword Density:** Write in natural language instead.
- **Link Internally:** If a page is important, link to it from multiple other pages and include the keywords.
- **Variety is the spice of SEO:** Vary your content on pages and use different keywords.
- **Top, Bottom & Middle:** Use your keywords throughout your copy, use the most important ones on top.

### SEO Content Headlines

- **SEO your Headlines:** Keywords should be in the headlines.
- **Make Headlines Easy to Understand:** Short headlines are better than long headlines.

## SEO Content Footers

- **SEO Footer Link Paragraphs are OK:** If needed, create a footer paragraph with anchor links to topical pages that contain keyword phrases.
- **Don't Go Overboard:** Don't create multi-line keyword paragraphs. Keep it simple. Use your best terms.

## Web Site Architecture + Build

- **Don't Use Frames:** It will simplify everything
- **Don't Use Flash, Video, Audio, or Graphics:** Search engines can only index HTML text.
- **Javascript:** Keep this to a minimum and put it in its own file.
- **Image Maps:** Use a regular CSS or text menu, instead of an image based menu.
- **Avoid Outright SEO Manipulation:** If it seems shady, it probably is shady. More importantly, it probably has already been done and has an algorithm to detect. The greedy get caught.
- **Use Text Based Navigation:** Use text, instead of graphics.
- **Include a Sitemap:** Allows search engine spiders to see all pages easily.
- **Font Size and Color Choice:** Don't use a font size that is too small to be easily read on a screen.