Ten things a stranger checks on your homepage

A customer, a banker or a buyer who has never heard of you decides in about a minute whether your company looks looked-after. They do not judge the design. They notice small things. Open your own site on your phone, as if you had never seen it, and go down this list.

BEFORE YOU SCROLL

1. **The tab title.** Search for your company and read the blue line in the result. Does it start with the word “Home”, or is it only your name? It should say what you do and where.
2. **The first sentence.** Could a stranger tell from it what you sell and to whom? Read it aloud to someone outside the company.
3. **The next step.** Is there one obvious thing to do: call, ask for a quote, book? Can you see it without scrolling?

AS YOU SCROLL

4. **Someone else’s words.** Is one customer speaking, by name, on this page? Not a logo. A sentence.
5. **One piece of finished work.** A named project, order or client, with a picture. Not “we handle even the toughest jobs”.
6. **The licence, certificate or approval** your buyers check first. Is it near the top, or at the bottom under everything else?
7. **Your own history.** If this is an anniversary year, or the company has a new leader or a new owner, does the homepage know?

AT THE VERY BOTTOM

8. **The year.** What year does the footer say?
9. **Leftovers.** Any line that came with the website template: sample text, a code in brackets, the builder’s own name, a link that goes nowhere.
10. **A way to stay in touch** for the visitor who is not ready to call: an email box, a newsletter, anything.

HOW TO USE IT

> Tick what is fine. Circle what is not. Most owners circle two or three, and most of those are a ten-minute fix for whoever looks after the site. Hand them this page.

WHY THESE TEN

Each one is something we have found on real company homepages this autumn: manufacturers, contractors, engineering and accounting firms. None is a matter of taste. Every one can be checked by looking.

No company is named here and none will be.

If you would rather a person did this for you. Send your website address and I will send back a page and a half within two working days: what a stranger sees in the first minute, what already works, and what to fix first. I read each one myself. No call, nothing to sign.

Ask for a free website read

013labs.com/free-website-read
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Darren Weiss, founder, 013 Labs. Lawyer by training; ran operations, growth and legal at a company that scaled from regional to national in a heavily regulated industry.