



## Writing for the Web

NSNA MidYear Conference 2010  
Cincinnati, Ohio

### Basic Writing Rules Don't Change

- Keep readers in mind
  - Who are they and why do they come to your website?
- Content
  - Pyramid style vs. inverted pyramid style
  - “Chunking”
- Grammar and consistent style is important

### What are Your Goals?

- What types of content?
  - Resources, news, announcements, etc.
- Update frequency
  - Updates between each newsletter
  - A place to post each newsletter
- Features
  - Interactive
  - Members

### Who is Your Audience?

- Members of your chapter
- Potential new members
- News media
- Students (seeking information)

### Content: Student Resources

- Coursework info
- School info
- Career tips & opportunities
- Association
  - Membership benefits and information

### Content: News

- School News
- Association/Chapter news
  - Announcements
  - Press releases
    - Utilize NSNA's website (*What's New* section)
- Medical news
- Student research

## Content: News (cont.)

- Where to find news?
  - Read other chapter newsletters/websites
  - Google alerts - [www.google.com/alerts](http://www.google.com/alerts)

**Create a Google Alert**  
Enter the topic you wish to monitor.

Search terms:

Type:

How often:

Your email:

Google will not sell or share your email address.

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## Content: Other

- Calendar of events
  - Meetings
    - State convention
    - National convention
  - Fundraisers
- Links to other sites
  - Resources
  - Internship listings
  - Volunteer opportunities

## Content: Other (cont.)

- Press kit
  - Info on your chapter
  - Contact info
    - Direct links to email
      - East of use for audience vs. "spam bots"
      - Try html email forms - [www.emailmeform.com](http://www.emailmeform.com)
  - Photos
    - Public
      - Posted directly to photo section
      - Use of photo sites like Flickr, Photobucket, Snapfish
    - Members only
      - Yahoo group

## Interactive Content

- Polls
  - [www.addpoll.com](http://www.addpoll.com)
  - [www.acepolls.com](http://www.acepolls.com)
- Blogs
  - Shared/multiple authors
- Yahoo Group
  - Photos
  - Email list

## Content vs. Usability

Content is important but remember:

**Usability**

## Be Aware of the Following:

- A web audience wants quick information
- They want to move through web sites quickly and easily
- You want them to retain information presented on your site

## Keep in Mind

- Time (your time vs. your readers' time)
  - 25% slower reading
  - Slowly loading pages
- Attention span/concentration
- Priorities
- Other Websites
  - Won't return to sites that provide "empty" content

## Quick Information

- Web audiences read in "search mode"
  - Specific content

## When Writing for the Web

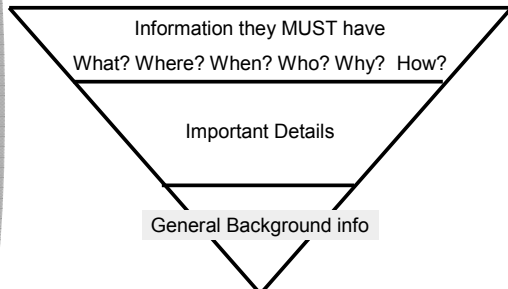
- Summarize (Inverted Pyramid)
- Chunking



## Pyramid vs. Inverted Pyramid

- Traditional writing - pyramid
  1. Problem statement
  2. Related work
  3. Methodology
  4. Results
  5. Conclusions
- Journalism/Web writing - inverted pyramid
  1. Conclusion
    - web users typically scan text ("search mode")
    - important details in the beginning
  2. Supporting information
  3. Background and technical details

## Inverted Pyramid



## "Chunking"

Exactly as it sounds

- Divide up information so that it's easy to read and can be followed by links or leads to other links of information
- It lends itself to web-reading – most people don't like to scroll and scroll to get information
- Paragraphs: 6 - 8 lines each
  - Lines: 10 - 12 words

## Remember

- Don't break up important content just because it's long. If your audience is made up of students, they are likely to invest the time to stop and read a long article.
- They are likely to print the article, however, and then log off to read it.

## Pitfalls to Avoid

- Bad grammar
- Bad headlines
- Plagiarizing
  - News items - when in doubt, link to your source
    - However: avoid linking for linking's sake (Excessive links can distract or annoy the reader)

## Pitfalls to Avoid (cont.)

- PDFing document as the basis for your entire website
  - PDFs can be useful when presenting a lot of information - can be downloaded and printed or read later
    - Don't go overboard
    - Warn when linking to a PDF
      - "For more information [click here](#) (opens in PDF)"

## Consistency

- Stay informative, but concise
  - Cut wordy sentences
- Use present tense with active voice
  - Active: "Anne is conducting new research."
  - Passive: "New research is being conducted by Anne."
- Style
  - Common abbreviations
  - Capitalization in headlines

