

The Digital Face of Your Company

What do people look for when they visit your organization's website?

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Aside from your home page, which section of your website gets the most visitors? You might be surprised to learn your "About Us" page falls somewhere in the top five.

Think about it: When potential customers are interested in your products or services, they naturally head to your "About Us" page - usually within three to four clicks - to make sure your company is the right choice to provide what they are searching for.

Potential employees do as well, so while your company may be in the right industry - and offer the right career path - it's also important to show that your company is the right fit.

(Outstanding people can afford to worry about cultural fit; after all, they have options.)

That's why your "About Us" page must not focus solely on communicating with customers; it must also communicate your company's mission, vision, values and culture.

"From an employer's perspective," says Manjushree Badlani, SPHR, the Chief HR and Administrative Officer of Jhpiego, "the 'About Us' page should reflect the soul of the company in addition to its mission. Pictures convey this more poignantly than words; I would suggest using pictures that show the staff at work."

Here's how to ensure your "About Us" page gives potential employees the information they're looking for and creates the feeling that your company is the right fit and the best next step for their career.

Start with addressing the employee's needs.

Potential employees care about what your company does, but they care even more about how your company does it. (Culture is king.)

At a basic level, potential employees want to know your organization performs at a high level. If I'm a customer service employee, "providers of outstanding customer experiences" says nothing, but "99.7% on-time shipping with a .0021% error rate for the past five years" means a

lot - because it means you care about, measure and deliver a service that is critical. That's why you must:

Share facts, not superlatives.

Many "About Us" pages are filled with words like "visionary," "outstanding," "disruptive," "excellent," "world-class," "cutting edge," etc.

If your company really is outstanding, provide the facts and let the reader decide for themselves. If your business really is visionary, describe the amazing products it has developed; potential employees will draw their own conclusions, which makes it even more important to get this right.

And if you're a new business without many facts and figures, fine: Describe what your company hopes to achieve and how you plan to achieve it. Give potential employees the opportunity to decide if they want to jump on board.

In short, be candid and authentic. Use candor and authenticity to your advantage to attract the best talent. These are the individuals who will invest in themselves and, in turn, your company.

Share your history.

People work for companies, but, ultimately, people work for people: real people with histories, stories, anecdotes, ups and downs, and challenges and successes.

Always use real photos.

Never let your web team convince you to use stock photos to add "visual appeal" to the page. Stock photos are obvious to everyone and don't help when it comes to conveying your company culture.

The overly handsome gentleman wearing a poorly-fitted hard hat as he pretends to read blueprints will not add visual appeal. He just looks fake - and detracts from the candor and authenticity that great organizations strive to convey.

Never Stop Tweaking.

A great "About Us" page is a work in progress. Immediately update your "About Us" page whenever you land major customers, add expertise and capabilities, enter new markets, open new locations, etc.

Make sure your “About Us” page always matches what you would say if asked about your company *today*.

Then, periodically review the page to ensure you are using the plainest language possible to describe your company. Clear, simple and direct language is the best way to establish credibility and help potential employees decide if your company is the right choice for them - because, again, people work for and with real people, not companies.

Test and Validate.

Want to know whether your “About Us” page communicates effectively with potential employees? Finding out is easy: Ask a few people who know little or nothing about your company to read your “About Us” page and then describe what your company does - and just as importantly, how it does it.

Beauty is always in the eye of the beholder, and effective communication is always in the eye of the person you hope to communicate with.

If that person doesn’t “get” your company based on the “About Us” page, then the fault lies with you, not them.