

"Nobody does a better job of showing how to use design to build relationships than Roger C. Parker!"
Jay Conrad Levinson
author, *Guerrilla Marketing*

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Roger C. Parker's

Guerrilla Marketing & Design

Details, details details!

Put details to work communicating your firm's competence and attitudes

Guerrilla Marketers understand that marketing takes place at every point of customer contact. The tiniest details play an important role in projecting either an image of competence and professionalism or an amateurish, "devil-may-care" attitude.

Although the following details, in themselves, may appear subtle, their cumulative effect either supports or undermines your message. Here are some details to watch for when preparing your next marketing message.

Punctuation

When you enter text into a word processing or page layout program, most programs automatically substitute correct punctuation. Examples include apostrophes ('), open (") and closed (") quotation marks and symbols like em dashes (—) to indicate parenthetical expressions and en (–) dashes to indicate duration.

However, page layout programs differ in their ability to substitute the correct punctuation when you import text previously created with a word processor.

Accordingly, after importing or copying and pasting previously created text, make sure that your publication contains the correct punctuation. Use your page layout program's Find or Search function to locate problem punctuation (like two hyphens in a row) that you may have to correct.

Unnecessary spacing

When working with word processed files created by others, always check to make sure the writer didn't insert two spaces after each period. The use of two spaces following periods is an unwanted holdover from typewriter days.

Two spaces following a period were necessary in typewriter days because all characters were of equal width. The two spaces helped emphasize the end of one sentence and the beginning of the next.

Today, the extra space causes a lot of problems, especially when used in columns of *justified text*, i.e., paragraphs characterized by lines of equal length.

Use the line break command to break a line without creating a new paragraph.

Your page layout program increases or decreases word spacing to create lines of equal length.

But when two spaces in a row are encountered, *each space expands!* This can create distracting spaces, or gaps, following the period. Worse, these gaps often align with each other, creating *rivers of white space* flowing through your paragraphs. Again, use your Find or Search command to locate every place where two spaces follow a period.

Line breaks

The Line Break command (holding down the Shift key while pressing the Enter or Return key) is a powerful, but often neglected, command. Use the Line Break command to break a line without creating a new paragraph.

Use the Line Break command to equalize line length in multi-line headlines. Use it to break headlines at natural pauses or to eliminate cases where one line ends with an “a,” “the” or an adjective and the next line begins with the word being modified.

When working with flush-left/ragged-right text, use the Line Break command to smooth out line lengths, avoiding long lines followed by short lines. In justified text, inserting a line break early

in a paragraph can often eliminate excessive word spacing and/or awkward hyphenation later in the paragraph.

Paragraphs

The only time to use first-line indents is to indicate new paragraphs of justified text. But don't indent the first lines of paragraphs following headlines or subheads. The headline or subhead is enough to communicate that the following paragraph is a new one.

Likewise, choose one, and only one, way to indicate new paragraphs. Use either first-line indents or extra space between paragraphs (if you are setting flush-left/ragged-right text). The use of both first-line indents and extra intra-paragraph spacing is redundant and projects an amateurish image.

To learn more...

Visit www.GMarketingDesign.com for more design and marketing tips. In addition, you're invited to download a valuable free 72-question PRE-FLIGHT CHECKLIST that can help you and your staff double-check the details.

And find out how Roger's latest book and telecourse, REcession-PROOFING YOUR WEBSITE, can help you turn recession into prosperity!



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