

# Holland Cooke Media **Writing for Digital**

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## **It's different than writing for print.**

As the voluminous and useful Yahoo! Style Guide warns -- "Anyone can publish on the Web, but not everyone is publishing material that's ideal for online reading."

"Text that works best on the Web is text that gets right to the point fast and that makes it easy for readers to pick out information." Tips:

- Because "most online readers scan first," favor "concise sentences that convey their point quickly." Online content has "a few seconds – three or less! – to encourage people to read more, to take action, or to navigate to another of your pages."
- So use short words, short sentences, short paragraphs, bulleted lists, and short pages.
- Front-load your content. "Put the most important content in the upper-left area of the screen. Put the most important information at the beginning of headlines, paragraphs, and sentences. Don't spend time leading up to your point." (Consultant sidebar: Ditto to radio hosts on-air!)
- You'll pop-up better when readers Search what-you're-writing-about if you "place the most important words at the beginning of page titles, headlines, subheadings, and links. The most important words are typically your keywords," the words you figure people would type-into Yahoo! or Google or another Search box.

## **Keep it simple.**

- "Include only one or two ideas per short paragraph."
- Help the reader by "breaking up text into digestible, interesting chunks." Short paragraphs keep the eye moving.
- Bold text catches the reader's attention, "but be careful not to overuse this effect: Too much bold text is hard to read and obscures the essential information."