

Foundations—a Pedestal Group Publication

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FOUNDATIONS

The Pedestal Group

Summaries—Your online elevator pitch

Special points of interest:

- *SEO Tip*
- *LinkedIn*
- *Websites*
- *Conferences*
- *Work Stats*
- *Readability*
- *AND MORE!*

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You've found a new tool / directory / resource / organization / etc. on the web that looks to be useful. Oh wait—another profile to fill out? How many is that, 30? Pull out the standard text we use for these things and plug and play. Sound familiar?

Except here's the problem. Those profile summaries are what people see about you. FIRST. They form opinions about you based on what they say. So not putting time into that profile summary is costing you business.

What do we mean? Well, take a look at some real-world, bad examples.

A social media expert starts his description with, "Father to a beautiful wife, three daughters...". Um... do we now know too much about him? Or is he going to pay that much attention to the social media he provides your company?

How about the guy who says, "I am an entrepreneur. With business and marketing my passion.". Misspellings included.

Or, let's take three examples

from Google. Here is what is shown on the results page for "Mexican Restaurants, Medina OH":

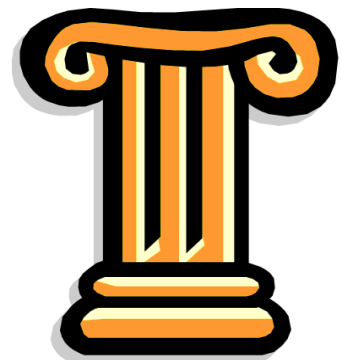
"(Restaurant Name) Mexican Restaurant. ... Our New Location: (Restaurant Name) Medina (Address and phone number)"

"(Restaurant Name) Authentic Mexican Restaurant. The very best in Mexican Food. Discover all the Best that Mexico has to offer, at (Restaurant Name)."

"(Restaurant Name) Mexican Restaurant, The real authentic Mexican food in Medina. Our family environment will make you feel like home!"

Looking at these three examples, which one would you go to? In reality, all three are great and we've eaten at them all. But when we looked them up on line, we tried #2 and #3 long before we set foot in #1.

So when you write your summary, keep in mind why it is there. This is what people will see when you come up in a list. A prospect Googling for someone in your business or using that resource to find



Who, what where and how are keys to a good summary!

suppliers / vendors / service providers sees your summary first. Someone looking up professionals on LinkedIn sees your summary first. So you can quickly see how your summary becomes your first impression on line.

So what should it say? It is vital your summary say who you are, your company name and what you do. Honestly, do you really believe people are looking to find out if you love some new social media tool or where you are in your spiritual journey?

Once you get the formalities out of the way, the rest is up to you. This is the time to put in something that will cause the person to click on the

Summaries (continued)

profile. Your goal with a profile is to get someone to look deeper. Because without clicking on your profile they can't contact you.

Go back to your elevator pitch—what do you do that no one else does? Or, what can you say that is unique to your company? Or, why do people like to work with you?



Any of those answers are great items to include in your summary. Because

each one of those will cause someone else to say, “I want that” or “I need a person who does that”.

Another great way to find out what to say is to do a search on that directory for people who do what you do. Which summaries do you like? Which ones do you hate? Editing is always easier than creating so edit theirs to fit you. Pay close attention to who comes up at the top of the list. Those are the ones that the site is paying attention to so emulating those will get you closer to the top of the list.

Side Note:

The debate still rages as to whether you should include your contact information in your LinkedIn Profile. This is a completely personal decision but if I have a list of 12 providers, and one makes it easy to contact her by having her email address in her summary, guess who got the first contact?

SEO Tip—Local Citations

LOCAL CITATIONS ARE LISTINGS ON THE WEB OF YOUR COMPANY NAME WITH ITS ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER

Search Engines are constantly scouring the internet trying to find as much information as necessary to answer their users' search needs. So how do they tell if you are a real

business and the same one they already have in their database? One way is the use of local citation.

A local citation is where your company name appears near your address and phone number. By having these together, the search engines are able to verify this listing belongs to the same company as another listing. Or can tell if this is a new business. This can definitely help separate you if there are multiple companies with the same name!

To get local citations, you want to list with directories and other sources that give you that option. Google Places and Yahoo Local are critical for any

business. Other places to list include:

- Yelp
- Superpages
- Citysearch
- Yellowpages
- Infogroup
- Localeze
- InsiderPages
- Best of the Web

Even if customers aren't going to specifically look for you on those sites, having a profile will help your presence on search engines which your customers will use.

LinkedIn Contacts

Sending information to your LinkedIn contacts can be a little overwhelming. After all, you have some contacts that need the information and others that don't. Instead of hunting for the right people, use the Tags feature to organize your contacts.

In the LinkedIn Contacts tab, you can create your own “groups” or “tags” so you can better organize your contacts.

When you first get there, the contacts will be ordered by the way you indicated you knew them when you connected (colleagues, co-workers, etc.). But, you can add as many tags as would be helpful in communication.

The easiest way to do this is to bring up a list of your contacts, and put check marks in the boxes to the left of the name. Once you have them

checked, you can choose Edit Tags in the right-hand box and add a new tag or select the appropriate tag.

Contacts can have as many tags as you like so be sure to organize your contacts for effective communication. Once you have them organized, it becomes very simple to send targeted messages to your contacts!

New Web Addressing Coming

This week will be a big meeting in Singapore that may change web addressing in a major way. ICANN is the not-for-profit Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers that controls the way websites are addressed. If you ever wonder who controls the “www” and “.com, .net, .org, etc.” of a domain name, it is ICANN.

This week they are expected to move to a new set of domains that will allow companies or groups to purchase domain names that are just “something major category”. Mean-

ing, if executive recruiters wanted their web address to be “yourcompany.executive recruiters”, after next week that could be an option.

According to sources who follow the group, ICANN will be monitoring who buys these domains very carefully and only those with a good reason to have them will be able to get on board. In addition, currently the information says a domain at this level will cost \$185,000 because the owner will have the ability to sell domains with that address going

forward.

If you are affiliated with a large organization or part of an association, we strongly recommend making sure they are aware of this change and find out if they are planning to purchase one of these domains. The goal is to make a .com address something less as it is not targeted by industry so having the ability to move to these addresses is vital!



Managing Conference Attendance

Summer is the time for conferences! Most people attend for a combination of information and sales opportunities. We’ve talked before about the sales opportunities, but here are some great tips from Trish McFarlane at Monster Thinking to maximize your attendance to the information!

1. Study the Agenda—know what you want to attend and we would add, a value on the attendance. Deciding that ahead of time allows you to change your thinking if you need to, but gives you structure so you know where you are going. The value on it

helps you remember how important it was to attend if someone asks you to go somewhere else.

2. Look at the speakers and see what they are saying on their blogs. You may get great tips or insider information to the conference.
3. Invite other attendees to connect on LinkedIn and then see if you can arrange to meet at least 3 of them at the conference.
4. Take notes. While some of the earth-shattering things said at conferences really do rock your world, the

reality is most of it will be forgotten. Take a couple minutes at the end of each session to mark To Dos and then summarize them in a To Do list at the end of the day.

5. Finally, attend a session that has nothing to do with you or your work. It is amazing how it will relate and spark new and creative ideas!

The most important thing is to participate. Going to a conference and spending the time checking email or on the phone in the hall is a waste of money. Be sure to be engaged, involved and learn something!

Interesting Stats on the World of Work

The Bureau of Labor Statistics released their “American Time Use Survey Summary” this month. Some of the interesting facts that came out of it include:

82% of employed persons in 2010 worked on weekdays with only 35% working on a weekend.

7.5 hours is the average work day with

7.9 the average on weekdays vs. 5.5 on weekends. As an average, this means there were many people who worked more than an 8 hour day.

On any given work day, 24% of people with jobs did some or all of their work from home. Self-employed workers were three times more likely than wage and salary workers to work from home (64% vs. 19%).

Finally, 36% of individuals 25 years of age and older holding a bachelor’s degree or higher did some work at home, compared with only 10% of those with less education.

Clearly we are seeing an increase in flexible working locations and in total work hours performed. And fun to quote at parties!

The Pedestal Group

4809 Lexington Ridge
Medina OH 44256

330-952-1121

kathy@thepedestalgroupp.com

www.thepedestalgroupp.com

Twitter: K_Breitenbucher



Putting our clients where they belong.

The Pedestal Group was founded to answer a need we saw in small businesses to have a source for help. That could be how to find and integrate the right technology, how to better hire and manage people, how to set goals and create a strategic plan, or really attack and own your marketplace.

Our team has worked in a variety of industries including staffing, recruiting and executive search, retail, technology, healthcare software / IT, higher education and franchising and the consistent theme we have found it is very hard to see the forest for the trees. In small business, that is compounded by the number of resources available.

Our approach is unique in that we don't just say it is all about the customer, it really is. The Pedestal Group puts our customers on a pedestal – right where they belong. That isn't to say the customer is always right because that is an adversarial relationship – in our case, we always come to agreement. We are always in a partnership with our clients but also remember who's the most important – YOU.

The Pedestal Group - Putting our clients where they belong.

Article Readability

How often have you written an article, email or document and wondered how readable it is? There are lots of ways to guess, but in Microsoft Word there is a tool to help. It is called Readability Statistics.

To turn it on, go to the Office Button in the top left corner of the screen, choose Word Options and click on Proofing. Under the grammar options you can turn on “readability statistics”. (NOTE: This won't work if you aren't automatically checking grammar.)

What will happen is when you run Spelling and Grammar on a document, you will see a description of the document. Most of the information is obvious: number of words, characters, etc. but at the bottom is Readability.

Under this heading is the Flesch Reading Ease score. Flesch, a readability expert and consultant who worked in

Counts	
Words	1040
Characters	5552
Paragraphs	18
Sentences	53
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	4.0
Words per Sentence	19.3
Characters per Word	5.2
Readability	
Passive Sentences	5%
Flesch Reading Ease	38.6
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	12.6

the field his entire career, developed the scale to help determine readability. According to Wikipedia, Reader's Digest magazine has a readability index of about 65, Time magazine scores about 52, an average 6th grade stu-

dent's (an 11-year-old) written assignment has a readability test of 60–70 (and a reading grade level of 6–7), and the Harvard Law Review has a general readability score in the low 30s.

Or to look at it another way:

90.0-100.0: Easily understandable by an average 11-year-old student

60.0-70.0: Easily understandable by 13 - to 15-year-old students

0.0-30.0: Best understood by university graduates

So the next time you need to determine how educated your audience needs to be to read your work, check out Readability Statistics!