



“Contact Us!”

One of the hardest working pages on your website, but possibly the most underrated, is the “Contact Us” page - it gives the most basic but essential information about an organisation.

Generally it’s a very straightforward page, but the information it contains is essential. It’s added to the website, and forgotten about, but if it is effective, it does its job.

So how do you make sure your “Contact Us” page is doing exactly what it says its doing?

It should answer two essential questions:

1. How can people contact your organisation
2. Why would people want to contact your organisation

Always list a physical address or postal address. It is quite popular today for organisations to suggest they are reachable online, by supplying an email address or contact form from the website. Having wasted time searching various websites for mailing addresses, I can confirm how frustrating this is.

- ❖ By listing a phone number and physical address you appear more “legitimate”, also many people prefer to work with organisations locally and look online for organisations in the area. If you don’t want to list a physical address for security reasons, provide a PO box number and local town.
- ❖ List all appropriate phone numbers – at the very least, list your business telephone number and fax number if you have one. It is also worth mentioning where and how a voice-mail message can be left. Not leaving a phone number suggests you don’t want to be contacted.
- ❖ List at least one email address that is checked regularly. This might mean that you get spam, but email communication is a necessity these days and is a convenient way for your supporters/service users to contact you after hours.
- ❖ Create an email link so that users can instantly open the link in their own e-mail to send you a message. To do this is similar to creating a ULR link; replace “http://www.myorganisation.org.uk with “mailto:me@my organisation.org.uk”
- ❖ Embed an e-mail submission form if necessary. Web site e-mail forms can be very irritating, and give the impression that the information given will be used in marketing against you! However, it can also be argued that just providing an email address can result in multiple messages and wasted time. If you plan to retain customer information, you should have a data protection and privacy policy.
- ❖ Include directions. Obviously this isn’t quite so important if you don’t have a reason for people to visit but if your organisation depends on getting people to visit, you may want to consider a separate "Directions" page. A picture of your building and sign or logo may also help some people find you more easily. You could also add a link to googlemaps or multimap underneath your post code.





- ❖ If relevant, link to your social-networking site or blog page. "Contact Us" means being reachable through the Web too, but make sure the fit is right, or your customers/service users may become confused. For example, if your organisation sells services to the elderly but your blog is about windsurfing, you probably should leave the link out.
- ❖ List events you attend or promote. The downside to this is that your "Contact Us" page will need frequent updating, but this is a smart way to market your organisation and allow service users/supporters to connect with you.

Why people should contact you?

Be subtle, but guide people on why they should contact you, without too much text.

- **Offer simple instructions on using your contact information.** For example: "Please call us or e-mail us to find out more about our service, or visit us to see our facilities." Another: "Call us for more information about the training course."
- **Provide related page links for more information.** Where appropriate, include links to your products or services pages, customer service or technical support, your newsletter sign-up page, and/or your FAQ page. Example: "To learn more about sector news, sign up for our monthly newsletter."

You can do a little bit of marketing on the "Contact Us" page, but too much can look unprofessional.

Additional tips

- **Only use images if they add value.** Photos of members of staff add approachability and personality, but clip art of a telephone or a mailbox doesn't add much value.
- **Make it easy to find and skim.** Ensure your Contact Us page is displayed prominently in your site navigation, and design it so it is well organised and easy to read.

[Thanks to Microsoft Office Live Small Business](#) and the [E-WRITE Bulletin](#).

