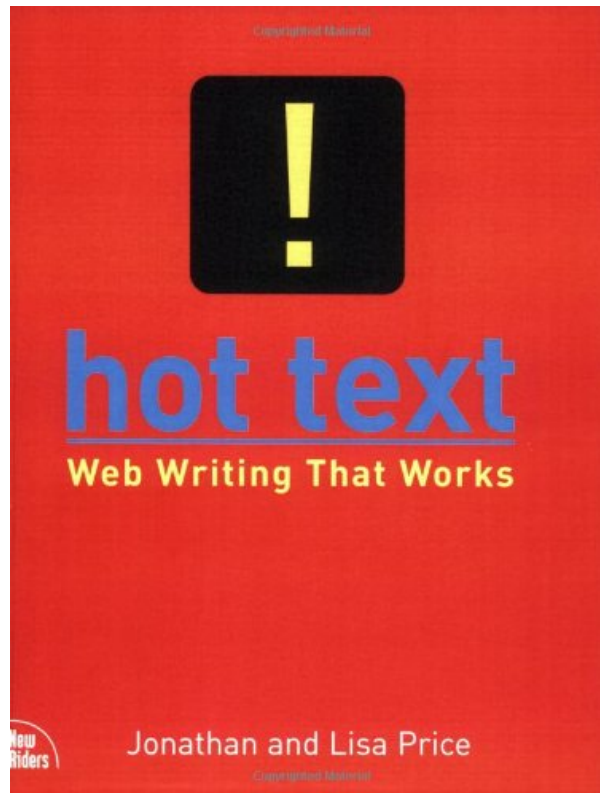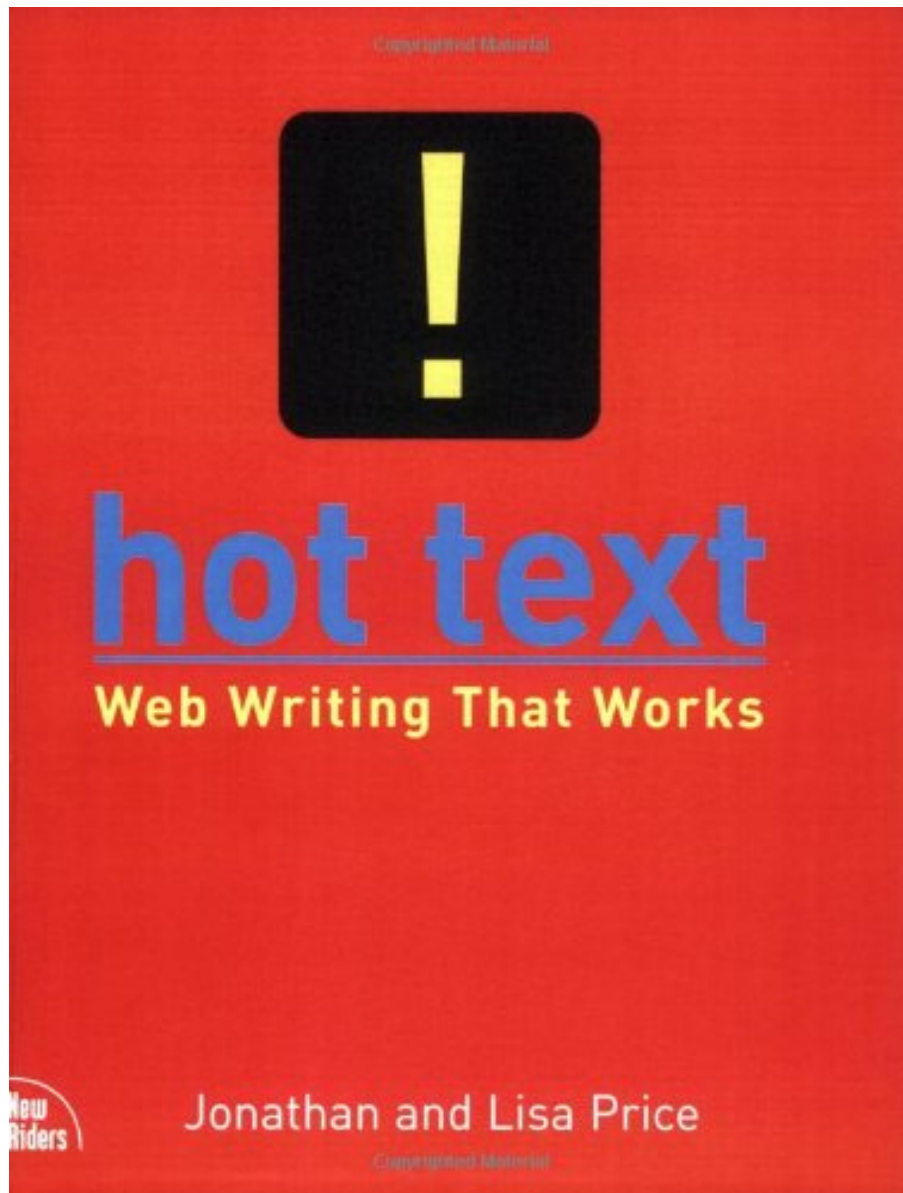# HOT TEXT: WEB WRITING THAT WORKS BY LISA PRICE, JONATHAN PRICE

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From Library Journal
There is no shortage of material on web site usability (see Computer Media, LJ 3/1/02). Hot Text shines in its comprehensive coverage of online writing. One will find information on XML and writing for database-driven sites; creating FAQs, blogs and newsletters, and online r sum s; and becoming a web writer or editor. Although it does not break any new ground, Back to the User is a solid summary of current thought on the "user-centered" approach, covering both writing and design. It largely focuses on business sites, with additional information on e-commerce and branding. Both titles are appropriate for public libraries. Shaping Web Usability, while more academic, also addresses specific issues such as designing for older adults and handheld devices. Recommended for larger public and academic institutions.
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Review
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Inspiring, authoritative, fun, and personal—Hot Text is an instant classic. -- Rich Coulombre, Principal, The Support Group, Needham, Massachusetts

This is the best web writing book around, with excellent coverage of history, theory, and application. -- Muriel Zimmerman, Coordinator, Programs in Technical Communication, University of California, Santa Barbara

Warm, informative, conversational, inspiring, and honest, this book gave me great ideas and models without feeling like a lecture. -- Colombe Leland, Web writer, newspaper editor, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Why is online writing so bad? Probably because books like this haven't been available until now. Buy it. Read it. -- Seth Godin, Author of Survival is Not Enough, Permission Marketing, and Unleashing the Idea Virus

From the Publisher

A unique book, equally suited for use in the classroom as text, or as a handbook for anyone who communicates with the written word through the web. Jonathan and Lisa Price--who research, teach and practice what they preach--have achieved a prime balance between richly informative, real-world-example-based discussion of clear communication on web sites, and a tone that is the farthest thing from the stereotypical "dry" that comes to mind upon hearing the word "textbook". As Seth Godin, author of Survival Is Not Enough, Permission Marketing, and Unleashing the Idea Virus, put it: "Why is online writing so bad? Probably because books like this haven't been available until now. Buy it. Read it. Try something new--it's got to be better than what we're used to!"

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HOT TEXT: WEB WRITING THAT WORKS BY LISA PRICE, JONATHAN PRICE PDF

Attention, Web writers! This book will show you how to craft prose that grabs your guests' attention, changes their attitudes, and convinces them to act. You'll learn how to make your style fast, tight, and scannable. You'll cook up links that people love to click, menus that mean something, and pages of text that search engines rank high. You'll learn how to write great Web help, FAQs, responses to customers, marketing copy, press releases, news articles, e-mail newsletters, Webzine raves, or your own Web resume. Case studies show real-life examples you can follow. No matter what you write on the Web, you'll see how to personalize, build communities, and burst out of the conventional with your own honest style.

- Sales Rank: #1217557 in Books
- Color: Red
- Brand: Brand: New Riders
- Published on: 2002-01-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x 1.20" w x 7.30" l, 1.88 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 528 pages

Features

- Used Book in Good Condition

From Library Journal
There is no shortage of material on web site usability (see Computer Media, LJ 3/1/02). Hot Text shines in its comprehensive coverage of online writing. One will find information on XML and writing for database-driven sites; creating FAQs, blogs and newsletters, and online r sum s; and becoming a web writer or editor. Although it does not break any new ground, Back to the User is a solid summary of current thought on the "user-centered" approach, covering both writing and design. It largely focuses on business sites, with additional information on e-commerce and branding. Both titles are appropriate for public libraries. Shaping Web Usability, while more academic, also addresses specific issues such as designing for older adults and handheld devices. Recommended for larger public and academic institutions.
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Most helpful customer reviews

55 of 55 people found the following review helpful.
More than how to write online text!
By Mike Tarrani
There are only a few books about writing that I consider classics, and despite the relative newness of this one, it qualifies.
First, the advice on writing online text is on the mark, especially with respect to organizing your message and presenting it with impact. Much of the advice can also be effectively used in paper-based documents. I particularly liked the way the authors presented punctuation because in paper-based text a mark such as a colon is easy to spot, whereas on a monitor it's lost. I've since begun using a dash instead of a colon when developing online content and that small piece of advice works where a colon does not. Of course there are literally hundreds of other tips and advice that will combine to make your content readable and understandable.
Second, the way the authors show you how to organize your thoughts, distill them into a coherent and succinct message, and how to present that message is a strategy that anyone who develops online content needs to carefully read and heed.
Finally, this book covers much more than how to write - it also gives excellent advice on a full range of related topics, including search engine placement using meta tags, humanizing the technical nature of web pages (such as making URLs easy to read and remember for non-technical users), and how to structure your content to find items of interest. The latter extensively uses principles from Information Mapping©. One disappointment was the omission of any mention of Robert Horn, the inventor of Information Mapping©, from the extensive list of cited references and recommended reading because the authors' approach is closely aligned to much of Horn's work.
If you're developing online content you cannot afford to pass this book up. Mine is a constant deskside companion and is likely to remain so for years to come.

60 of 61 people found the following review helpful.
Outstanding and comprehensive guide to writing for the Web

By David E. Rogers

If you're interested in writing for the Web, "Hot Text: Web Writing That Works" by the prolific Jonathan and Lisa Price is the best and most comprehensive guide thus far published.

The book is at its best in the section aptly titled "Write Like a Human Being." Here, you'll find dozens of practical tips and techniques for Web copywriting. From "Shorten That Text" to "Write Menus That Mean Something," the Prices not only tell you how it's done, but demonstrate it in "before and after" samples. And each tip is evaluated in an "Audience Fit" grid that assesses how well it suits various types of site visitors. These five chapters alone (covering nearly 200 pages) are worth the price of the book.

Hot Text is much more than a style guide. Another 150 pages discuss how to write for the various genres found on the Web--help text, FAQs, marketing copy, PR and news releases, 'zines, e-mail newsletters and (yes) Weblogs.

Throughout, the book is extensively supported by a wealth of useful references (many of them available online) and pertinent callout quotations. And just when you think there couldn't be any more good stuff, you'll find helpful information on how to find a job as a Web copywriter.

I have two major quibbles with Hot Text. For a book that emphasizes clarity of expression, it begins on an odd foot. After a brief introduction to some general principles of Web-writing, it jumps into a discussion of object-oriented writing that is bewildering to novices. The normally crisp text slows to a snail's pace as they wax a little too theoretical. Don't get me wrong--this is important stuff, but it is the least successful part of the book.

Second, as an information architect and Web writer, I'm intimately aware of the strong connection between information architecture, user interface, menus and text. Attempting to draw clear boundaries between them is well-nigh impossible.

Unfortunately, the Prices cross those lines too often by assigning IA tasks--for example, menu structuring and user personas--to the copy writer. While I'm certain that many Web writers are indeed saddled with such chores due to budget limitations, IA activities are best left to those with the appropriate training and experience. Yet "information architecture" isn't even included in the index! The Prices' readers would be better served by a chapter or two on the makeup of Web project teams and the central role of collaboration in site development.

Keep these in mind and Hot Text will find itself a well-thumbed addition to your bookshelf.

Well-written book on how to write for the web

By Thomas Duff

Contents

This book examines the subject of writing for the web, and how it differs from writing for hard-copy media. The book is divided into the following chapters:

Part 1 - Catch The Net Spirit - Who Am I Writing For, And Incidentally, Who Am I?; What Kind Of Thing Am I Creating?; What Will The Web Do To My Text?; Attention!

Part 2 - Write Like A Human Being - Idea #1: Shorten That Text; Idea #2 - Make Text Scannable; Idea #3: Cook Up Hot Links; Idea #4: Build Chunky Paragraphs; Idea #5 - Reduce Cognitive Burdens; Idea #6 - Write Menus That Mean Something

Part 3 - Fine-Tune Your Style For The Genres - Writing In A Genre; Creating Customer Assistance That Actually Helps; Persuading Niche Markets, Individuals, And The Press; Making News That Fits; Entertaining People Who Like To Read; Getting A Job

Part 4 - Become A Pro - So You Wannabe A Web Writer Or Editor

Part 5 - Backup - Writerly Sites; If You Like To Read

Review

On the surface, you may think that writing is writing, regardless of the medium. You may think that if you can write a 2500 word article for a magazine, that you can successfully use that same style for web sites. And

unfortunately, you'd be wrong. The mindset of online writing is completely different than for print, and this book will help you to understand that.

People read books and magazines for many reasons, but often it's to be entertained or to learn about a subject in depth. But when people visit web sites, it's usually to find an answer quickly. The reader wants to find the chunk of information they seek and then move on. If they don't see what they think they want, it's off to another site. The authors do an excellent job in this book breaking down the content structure of web writing. To successfully write for the web, you need to organize your information in discrete chunks that can be quickly linked to or scanned for applicable information. They show you how to effectively structure your writing by the use of shorter paragraphs, lists, bullets, external links, and a number of other techniques that will allow your ideas to flourish in an online medium.

The tone of their writing is conversational and easy, without the academic lecturing that often shows up in books where opinion and fact can blur together. They also use a lot of "before/after" examples to show you how the techniques actually work. I was actually surprised that I liked the book as much as I did. Many books on web site design go off on "expert rants" in which the author presents his likes/dislikes as expert opinion. Although some of the information in this book could fall into the same category, there wasn't the strident tone that often happens in other books.

Conclusion

Writing for the web entails different skills than writing for print medium. This book will help you understand the issues involved and to make a successful transition to online authoring. Recommended.

See all 14 customer reviews...

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It is really easy to read guide Hot Text: Web Writing That Works By Lisa Price, Jonathan Price in soft documents in your gizmo or computer system. Once more, why ought to be so hard to get guide Hot Text: Web Writing That Works By Lisa Price, Jonathan Price if you can choose the simpler one? This web site will alleviate you to pick and also choose the very best cumulative books from one of the most desired seller to the launched publication lately. It will certainly always upgrade the collections time to time. So, link to internet and also visit this website consistently to get the brand-new publication everyday. Currently, this Hot Text: Web Writing That Works By Lisa Price, Jonathan Price is all yours.

From Library Journal
There is no shortage of material on web site usability (see Computer Media, LJ 3/1/02). Hot Text shines in its comprehensive coverage of online writing. One will find information on XML and writing for database-driven sites; creating FAQs, blogs and newsletters, and online r sum s; and becoming a web writer or editor. Although it does not break any new ground, Back to the User is a solid summary of current thought on the "user-centered" approach, covering both writing and design. It largely focuses on business sites, with additional information on e-commerce and branding. Both titles are appropriate for public libraries. Shaping Web Usability, while more academic, also addresses specific issues such as designing for older adults and handheld devices. Recommended for larger public and academic institutions.
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