

The CREATIVE REBEL Guide to Writing a Client-Attracting About Page

(So you can roll out the red carpet for your ideal clients, while subtly repelling the ones who make you want to plunge 10-inch knitting needles into your eyes . . . because that's just painful)

KIMBERLY HOUSTON INK: Personality-Infused Copywriting & Web Marketing for Photographers, Designers, Stylists and other **CREATIVE REBELS** Who Mean Business . . . because we don't believe in the term "Starving Artist" around here.

Ah, the ever important About page – one of the most important pages on your website, and one of the most difficult to write.

But here's the little-known secret copywriters know to writing an About page that instantly connects with ideal clients (and the bonus is, it makes it easier to write – without sounding arrogant or full of yourself):

Your About page isn't about you so much as it is about your ideal client or customer and *their* challenges and desires, and the solution you offer that can help them achieve their goals.

If your About page starts off from sentence one being me-focused, your ideal clients will likely just click on over to the next creative professional's website in that long list of Google results they got when they searched for a photographer/interior designer/graphic designer/illustrator/fashion stylist/insert your creative offering here.

So.

Your About page isn't the place for a boring, run-of-the-mill, corporate-sounding, jargony, deadly-dull-and-dry-as-dust laundry list of your awards, accomplishments and bonafides. **It's a place for you to make an impactful emotional connection with your ideal clients by showing them you understand their challenges and that you have a solution that can help them, *done with personality.***

You can include your experience, accomplishments and other relevant background information ***after*** you demonstrate you understand your ideal client/blog reader/audience and ***what they want.***

A client-focused About page written with personality and flair in your unique voice will help you attract and connect with your ideal clients, while gently shooing way the icky ones (think price-shoppers and other assorted pains in the you-know-where).

This template* will help you create that About page.

(*I'm against formulaic solutions by the way, so when I say "template," I mean for you to use this template as a *guide* to help you write a more client-attracting About page; don't be a slave to every single element of it in precisely the order laid out here if it doesn't work in your particular situation. **However.** You do want to stick to elements 1-3, in that order, as much as possible.)

Here's what we'll cover in this guide:

- ❖ Why the About Page is So Holy Important
- ❖ About Page Sins and Wins
- ❖ The About Page Template
- ❖ How This About Page Got Style: A Before-and-After Story
 - Example of a “Bad” About Page (one that contains all of the aforementioned “don’ts” and pretty much none of the “do’s”)
 - The “Bad” About Page Becomes a Thing of Beauty (wherein we use the template to transform a boring, lackluster, overly formal, flaccid About page into one full of client-attracting brand personality)
- ❖ Examples of Some Pretty Great About Pages from Around the Web

Why the About Page is So Holy Important

- ❖ It's a key element of your digital domain and one of the best places for forging an instant connection with your ideal clients. I can't overstate the importance of this.
- ❖ It's one of the most visited pages on your website, so you can't ignore it or half-ass it. It's got an important job to do: building the afore-mentioned connection with your ideal clients, customers, or readers, **the connection you must make so they'll want to stick around, check out your services, sign up for your email list, and most importantly, decide to work with you *instead of one of your competitors.***
- ❖ The About page is **the perfect place to show off some personality and differentiate yourself from the teeming mass of humanity online that offers a similar product or service to yours.** Because there's only one you, snowflake, and the About page is an ideal place to demonstrate it.

IMPORTANT

If you're a photographer, interior designer, illustrator, graphic designer, or a creative professional of any kind, you know that **A.**, there are **a lot** of other people online who do what you do, and **B.**, if you troll through their offerings, pricing, and other web content, you'll find that one photographer sounds pretty much like the next, and the same goes for interior designers, graphic designers, illustrators, copywriters and every other group of creative professional out there.

This *every-creative-professional-seems-just-like-the-next, so-how-the-hell-do-I-decide-which-one-to-work-with* is a big problem, seen all over the web. In a recent search for wedding photographers in my town, for example, the first 20 Google results returned showed 20 photographers with nary a unique differentiating feature or selling point among them. If I were a bride looking for a wedding photographer, I wouldn't have been able to hire a damn one of 'em, because half of them didn't even **have** an About page, and the other half that did had content like this:

Joe is an award winning photographer with over 12 years' experience providing professional wedding, commercial and family photography to hundreds of happy clients throughout North Carolina. Joe received his professional training at one of the finest photography schools in the country and soon after began photographing weddings and families, bringing joy and delight to all of his clients.

Now if I'm a potential client looking for a wedding photographer, is there anything in that About content that would make me want to hire Joe over one of his competitors, most of whom have similar-sounding About page copy?

That's a big fat resounding NO. **There's no personality or nothing else there to differentiate Joe from his competitors.**

What this means for you is, if you write your About page using the template here as a guide, you will instantly set yourself apart from other creative service professionals who do what you do, putting you miles ahead in the connecting-with-ideal clients game.

ABOUT PAGE SINS & WINS

Before we dive into the template, let's take a quick tour of a few About page do's and don'ts, shall we?

DO:

- ❖ **HAVE AN ABOUT PAGE.** I'm not kidding. It's shocking how many creative professionals out there don't have an About page, period. I've google searched creative professionals high and low, and many have no identifying details about themselves on their websites beyond the basics. This is bad for business, as you can imagine.
- ❖ **Before** you talk about YOU, demonstrate you understand YOUR AUDIENCE and their fears, desires and goals.
- ❖ Make an emotional connection with your ideal client. You do this by getting uber-clear on what your ideal clients struggle with and demonstrating how you can help solve that, using their language.
- ❖ Please, for the love of all that's holy, show us a picture of your bad self. I know, I know, I don't love having to do this either, but people want to see your face – it creates trust, and you can't sell unless you establish trust.
- ❖ **Show some personality!** Be human, be your quirky self, and tell us something that makes you different from your competitors. You don't have to overshare, but effective About pages let us in on a little something personal.

DON'T:

- ❖ Write your About page in the third person, especially if you're a one-person shop. This comes off as creepy and weird. It's off-putting. Don't do it. Now, as you will hear me say over and over again, templates and rules are made to be broken, so do what works best for your business and your particular situation, but **as a rule, About pages in the third person tend to put up a false barrier and don't make an emotional connection.**
- ❖ Be boring, dull, jargon-y, stiff, overly formal, corporate, stale or lackluster. Instead, make it conversational – write like you speak.
- ❖ Immediately launch into me, me, me, here's a laundry list of **my** experience, **my** awards, **my** former jobs and lots of other what not **all about me**. **No one cares about that when they first arrive at your website.** Seriously.

Here's what they do care about: a solution to their problems. You have to prove you're all about THEM first, and that you understand THEIR challenges related to the product or service you offer; then and only then can you talk about yourself. Once you demonstrate that, go for it – talk about you, you, you. (Yes, this *IS* the 2nd or 3rd time I've said this, but it bears repeating. Because I really want you to have an About page that your ideal clients instantly resonate with and that gets you more client inquiries.)

OMG, FINALLY, THE ABOUT PAGE TEMPLATE.* HAL-LE-LU-YER.

The first key to writing a compelling About page that connects with your ideal clients and makes them want to do business with you is *understanding who they are and what they want*. You must, must, must get this figured out *numero uno* before you can write a kick-ass effective About page. So let's assume you've got that covered and you're ready to get this party started. This is how you do it:

- 1. Headline That Makes an Emotional Connection with Your Ideal Client/Audience.** The headline's job is simply to get the audience to read the next line. So that's it, right? It doesn't have to convince them to buy your product or service, its job is simply to get them to read the next bit of your copy on the page. And no, "Welcome to my site, I'm so glad you're here!" doesn't count. And I can say that because that's the sorry headline I had on my About page for months. You've done the research on your ideal clients and you know what they need help with; use your headline to make a connection that demonstrates that.* (***Extremely important!***)
- 2. Paragraph That Focuses on Your Ideal Client/Audience and Speaks to What They Most Desire.** This is where you can demonstrate that you understand your ideal client's challenges and that you have the solution they seek. I call this "painting a picture" – you essentially "paint a picture" of your ideal client's ideal outcome, weaving it throughout the copy on your About page.
- 3. Paragraph About You and/or Your Site and What You Offer That Can Meet Their Needs/Fulfill Their Desires.** Ah, at last, you are free to move about the ME-focused cabin by talking about what you offer and how it solves your ideal client's challenges.
- 4. Your Backstory or Journey as It Relates to Your Business and the Solution You Offer, AND/OR more details about you or the business.** How you got here, what caused you to come up with the product/service/solution you offer, your story along the way, etc. You can get creative here, but keep it relevant, no random musings.

Your backstory is important because it's one of the most effective ways to differentiate yourself in the marketplace. It helps develop a connection with your audience, which aids in getting them to trust you, and if your audience doesn't trust you, they won't buy from you.

(***Note:** *Your backstory doesn't necessarily have to go on your About page, you could create a separate page for it and link to it from your About page.*)

5. **Social Proof.** Add a “what others are saying” section with a few quotes from clients about some of the best results you achieved for them, or include a couple of full-fledged testimonials here. This builds trust.
6. **A Call to Action.** Create your call to action based on what you most want your audience to do next, which in most cases will be to sign up for your email list.

*Big props to Ashley Ambirge. This template is similar to an About page formula she suggests, revised to reflect added elements I think are important.

EXAMPLE OF A “BAD” INTERIOR DESIGNER ABOUT PAGE*

For this example of a “bad” About page, I found six About pages (among dozens) of interior designers who committed most of the “don’ts” and none of the “do’s” from our list above and created a mash-up of the worst of the corporate jargon and personality-lacking copy. (I’m not picking on interior designers – I LOVE interior designers – it just so happens that so many of them have About pages that commit nearly all the sins of bad About pages.)

***Every word of copy in the following example is a real, true sentence I found on an interior design website About page.** (In other words, “I am not making this up,” as writer Dave Barry would say.)

:: EXAMPLE: The About Page, Before ::

Jane Smith Design is a full-service interior design firm with over 10 years’ experience in the design and construction industry. Jane specializes in interiors, space planning, and construction management, working integrally with every member of the design and construction team. Her diverse and imaginative portfolio speaks volumes and demonstrates her diverse range of creativity.

Jane graduated from Parsons with a degree in interior design and a minor in studio art. She is an active member of ASID Carolinas Chapter and the local design community. She attends many conventions and workshops locally and internationally to stay on the cutting edge of design.

Jane began her professional career at a local architecture firm where she focused on residential and commercial interiors. In 2008, she opened Jane Smith Design, a full-service interior design firm. Jane’s fundamental belief is that the design of interior spaces should be elevated beyond what people typically expect so that their day-to-day experiences in their everyday surroundings can be enhanced. With her varied residential and commercial experience, she is able to address the functional needs of any space while still creating the desired aesthetic.

Jane makes each project unique for each client and has a fine-tuned ability to work with a variety of interior design styles and settings. Her signature design style combines practicality with sophistication. Jane Smith Design can offer you everything from a few hours of design consultation to a full home or office remodel.

:: END OF EXAMPLE ::

So, what's so wrong with that About page?

Right away we notice the copy commits all the aforementioned About page “sins” – it’s written in the third person; it’s boring, overly formal, corporate and full of jargon; it’s lacking in personality or emotional connection; and it’s terribly “me-focused” – there’s not one iota of anything in that copy that shows Jane understands her ideal clients, is there?

The copy **doesn't connect with the reader** by talking about what's important **to them** as a potential design client. It doesn't answer the “WIIFM” question – *“What's in it for me?”*

Instead it leads with Jane's background, experience and design credentials, which we don't care about yet as a potential client until we know that Jane gets **us** and the design challenges we want solved.

Now let's apply the template to it.

:: A Better Interior Design About Page ::

(***IMPORTANT NOTE:** If “Jane” were a real client of mine, she'd answer an in-depth questionnaire about her ideal clients, the way she works, her design philosophy and aesthetic, and other pertinent details. Since I don't have that here, I used quotes and information from interviews I found online with a hip young designer named Heather whose interior design work I happen to love, “pretending” she's Jane the client and using some of her story, quotes and background info to write the “better/after” version of the About page.

This “after” About page is crafted solely on the basis of the information I was able to find out from reading interviews with Heather, it is NOT the current About page on her website. This designer's business is in the South, and she works with “families with young kids or messy grown-ups looking for a sophisticated interior that is human-proof – peanut butter, dog hair and red wine, no problem!”)

Accessible Luxury for the Modern Young Family on the Go

[This headline speaks to Jane's ideal customer – a busy family with a hectic schedule who want a beautifully designed interior that's "human-proof," i.e., "accessible luxury."]

Dog hair, sticky kid handprints & red wine spills.

Modern, sophisticated design.

The truth? You **can** have both.

You're a busy professional with a demanding career, soccer practices, dance recitals and playdates to ferry the kids around to, dinner dates with your significant other (when you can find the time), and possibly a menagerie of pets at home to boot.

Crazy-busy? Yes. Ready to give up and give in to the idea that a young family with kids, careers and a rambunctious pet or two isn't meant to come home to an oasis of comfortable elegance at the end of (yet another) jam-packed day?

Definitely **not**.

[The section above focuses on Jane's ideal clients and their needs and desires; it demonstrates that she has a genuine understanding of what her ideal client's life is like. BOOM – we're starting to establish emotional connection and trust.]

Hey, I know kids, pets, and red wine are facts of life (they're definitely the facts of *my* life), but that doesn't mean you can't have an inspiring, sophisticated home environment – one that stands up (gracefully) to your energetic young family's wear-and-tear.

*[What I did here, using the parenthetical – "they're definitely the facts of **my** life" – won't always be applicable, but here it lets Jane's potential clients know that she's just like them – a wife and mother with a demanding career and a busy life who still believes she deserves a beautiful home. This also goes to establishing trust, and we know that if they don't trust you, they ain't buying from you.]*

That's where I come in.

I'm Jane Smith, and **I create interiors that are luxurious, yet livable for the modern young family on the go.**

[Here Jane talks about herself (after she's focused on her ideal clients and their wants and needs), and begins to tell us about the solution she offers, one that is specifically geared to her ideal clients – busy young families on the go.]

I'm a Parsons-trained interior designer and an active member of ASID Carolinas who honed my skills at the elbow of master French designer Robert Couturier. I've been called a "decorating superstar" and a "Southern visionary with an impressive sense of style," but at the end of the day? My most important goal is create a space that works for the family living in it, so they get to experience that "I can't believe I get to live here!" feeling every time they walk through the door.

From French Modern to Classic Contemporary to Southern Traditional with a twist, I create interiors that balance natural elegance and glamor with practicality. My designs combine casual, organically modern style – think sophisticated finishes, elegant nature-inspired elements, and gorgeous lighting – with durability that stands up to your life: sticky fingerprints, dog hair, wine spills and all.

[More details about Jane's business and her design philosophy. If she wanted to include her backstory – as it relates to her business and the solution she provides – she could do it here, or link off to another page on her site.]

What Others Are Saying

"With 2 small children under the age of 7, two dogs, and a crazy schedule, I'd almost given up on the idea that my home could be beautiful, comfortable AND practical at the same time, but Jane made it happen. She created a true sanctuary for our family that we're thrilled to come home to everyday." Abby M.

"She's a creative genius, I could not be happier with the beautiful, warm, calm space she created for me and my husband. Bonus: she's a dream to work with – friendly, down-to-earth, and easy to talk to and collaborate with." Elizabeth G.

"We still can't believe we get to live here, in our own personal magazine spread. Our teenagers actually want to hang out at home now." Tom and Cindy H.

[Social Proof section: Be strategic about the testimonials you choose – again, they should speak to the ideal clients' wants and frustrations. You don't have to call this section "What Others Are Saying" – call it whatever makes sense to your personality and writing style.]

Enter your email below to grab my free guide, “From Chaos to Calm: 7 Simple Steps for Transforming Your Home into an Oasis of Practical Luxury.” (Plus weekly design tips and inspiration I only share with my email subscribers.)

*[The ***incredibly important*** call to action. It could be a prompt to sign up for your email list, or call for a free 15-minute consultation, or whatever specific thing you want them to do next. It should be the next logical step in the process that deepens the relationship with you. In most cases, that will be to sign up for your email list.]*

Here’s another place you could add your backstory as it relates to your client-helping solution. **(See Tech Husband example linked up below for a good example of this.)**

Again, you can get creative with this. Mix up the elements, leave some out if they don’t work, rearrange the order of things, etc.

That said, do be sure to:

- include a client-focused headline
- include a client-focused first paragraph
- include a paragraph about you and the solution you provide geared specifically to your ideal client’s challenges and desires

A FEW EXCELLENT ABOUT PAGES FROM AROUND THE INTERWEBZ

As I mentioned previously, you don't have to follow the About page template to the letter – you can get creative, as long as you demonstrate that you understand your ideal client's challenges and present a solution that will help them. You'll see that the following examples don't follow the template, but they all work because they do the most important thing: **convey a deep understanding of their ideal audience, offer a solution, and do it with personality that creates an emotional connection.**

<http://wondergrow.com/about/>

Kelly Parkinson is a B2B copywriter and marketing strategist.

Notice these things about her About page:

- She leads with painting a picture of her client's ideal outcome and talking about how she can help them achieve it.
- It's got personality – even though she's a B2B copywriter, you'll find no boring business jargon here.
- She provides social proof by sharing results she's achieved for clients.
- She then tells us a few interesting personal things about herself. This makes her real and human – not always easy to do on the web – and builds trust.
- She uses a quirky photo of herself, not some boring headshot where she's wearing a business suit.

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<http://techhusband.com/about/>

Forest Linden helps small businesses with the techy parts of building an online business.

Notice these things about his About page:

- Nice, succinct, solution-oriented headline, **with personality**: “Web Technology Advice & Training You'll Wanna Give a Big Happy Hug.”
- He talks about one of the biggest, most frustrating challenges of online entrepreneurship – learning the software and tech pieces of it – in a way we can all relate to.
- He tells us succinctly about the specific solution he offers: “I created Tech Husband to help people take the easiest, quickest path to getting the technology set up for their online businesses.”
- He includes a benefit-driven call to action to join his email list: “Join the growing community of people getting fresh baked Tech Husband knowledge delivered right to their inboxes.”
- Only **after** doing all this does he tell us more about himself, in the form of his backstory. (**Note how his backstory relates to the solution he provides.*)
- Picture of himself at the top of the page is casual and relatable; pic at the bottom of he and his family is real, relaxed, and human – in other words, relatable. And at this point we know that does what? That's right, builds trust!

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<http://www.picmonkey.com/about>

PicMonkey is a free online image editor.

Notice these things about this About page:

- It doesn't follow the format of client/customer/user-focused paragraph first, but it mostly works because has a distinct voice and personality.
- However. If I were rewriting this About page, I'd start with a user-focused, solution-oriented headline, followed by a target audience-focused paragraph, **then** launch into what they have here.
- If you've ever used PicMonkey, you know the whole experience is about their quirky, fun personality and how simple they make the editing process – a great differentiator for them.
- Semi-related factoid: I've always had this thing for monkeys, they crack me up. I even find the word "monkey" funny, so when I read this line on the PicMonkey site – "It's the real deal you already know, plus 78% more monkey" – I knew I was going to be a loyal lifetime fan and user. The point? Using personality in copy **works**.

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If your About page is flaccid, dull or just not getting the job done, it's time to fix that.

Write your About page using this guide, and you'll begin to differentiate yourself from the droves of competition online and start making that ever-important trust-building emotional connection with your ideal clients.

If you're ready to make your business stand out among the dozens of others who offer a similar product or service to yours with client-focused, personality-infused About page copy, then carve out some time today to print out this guide and get busy writing!

If you need more inspiration, remember this: so few creative professionals do this (go ahead, Google some up), that if you do, you'll **instantly** set yourself apart online. How cool is that?

With that said, now go write your client-attracting About page, creative snowflake, and I wish you great big gobs of good luck!

P.S.— Now that you're subscribed to my email list, you'll get weekly tips and advice on using personality-driven web copy and bespoke web marketing strategy in your creative business to:

- Instantly captivate clients who are perfect for what you have to offer . . . and subtly repel those who aren't
- Get client inquiries rolling in consistently so you can get off the feast-or-famine roller coaster for good
- Book more projects & make more folding money

All while being your one-of-a-kind self and keeping your creative integrity intact.

P.S.S. – Ready to skip right on over to having an About page that reflects your brand personality and connects with your ideal clients without having to write the darn thing yourself?

Visit <http://kimberlydhouston.com/work-with-me/> to find out more about my **About Page and other copywriting services for creative pros just like you, and let's get busy transforming your digital domain from lackluster to luminous, so you can start rolling out the red carpet for your dream clients, booking more projects, and making more cash.**

Let's connect:

Read more on the blog: <http://kimberlydhouston.com/blog/>

Join the fun on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/KimberlyDHouston>

Connect with me on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/wineandwalnuts>

“The difference between the almost right word & the right word is really a large matter – it's the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

– Mark Twain

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