

01

SQUIGGLE How to Design A Homepage WEB DESIGN

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WELCOME

Getting Your business online

02

HOW TO DESIGN YOUR HOMEPAGE

Your homepage will be the most important and the most visited page on your website. You only have a few seconds to capture visitors and tell them how you can make their lives better.

LET'S TURN VISITORS INTO CUSTOMERS

This guide is based on a service website. It will help you convert visitors into customers and grow your business.

SO WHERE
TO START?



MY SECRET!

Let me share a secret with you about designing a homepage. Obviously it's not going to be a secret now, but I like to share.

No, my secret is the homepage is the last page I design on a website.

Why, I hear you ask?

Well it's simple. The homepage, in my mind, is a summary of your website. It's your shop window where you can display your wares to the general public.

Sometimes, when you are designing a website it takes a turn in a different direction. Therefore if you have designed the homepage at the start you'll just have to change it!

Simples!

You also need to find your "voice". The voice is the look, feel and message your website is trying to tell its visitors.

You only have a few seconds to capture a new visitor so make those seconds count!

LOGO & BRANDING



“A great brand is a story that is never completely told.” — SCOTT BEDBURY

YOU NEED BRANDING

You need a logo but more important than that you need branding and I'm not talking the painful type!

You need to think colours, fonts and the message. Try and limit your choice of colours, the same goes with fonts. Too many colours, fonts and different font sizes leads to a confusing and busy page which can be quite off-putting.

You want to make it easy for the visitor to navigate.

Anyway back to the logo.

A logo is normally placed in the top left-hand corner. That said I have seen a logo coming out of the water in a video as soon as the homepage opened.

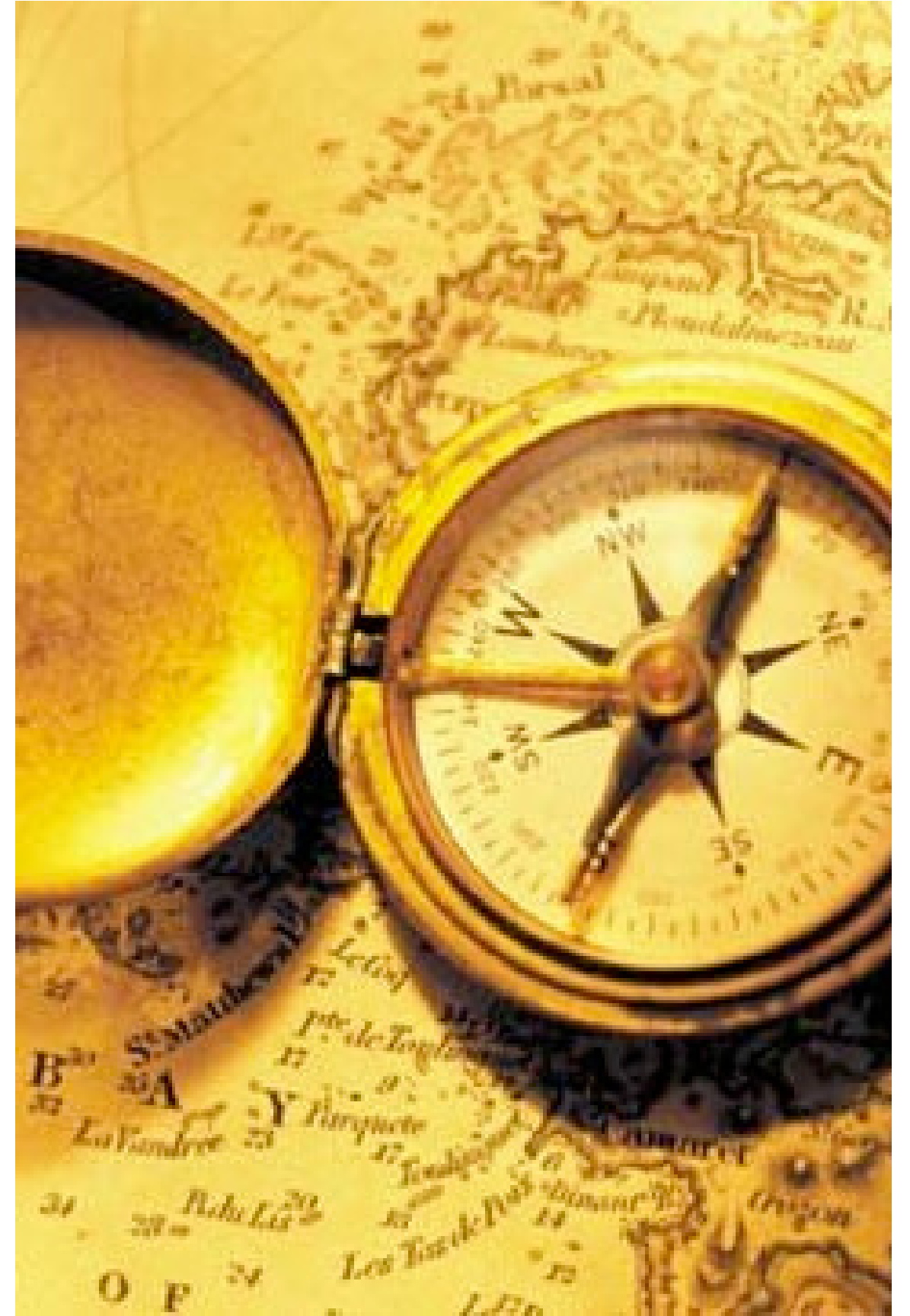
It was different, eye-catching (though it took a while for the logo to fully appear) but it made me smile and it caught my attention.

However you choose to display your logo, make sure it fits with what you want to convey.

SITE MENU



Guide your visitor to becoming a customer



GUIDE YOUR VISITOR

The main rule is make it simple.

Too many tabs and people get confused.

If you're thinking of using a burger menu, you know the one that has lots of lines stacked up on top of each other. Then you might want to consider using the word menu beside it.

Just in case it's not obvious.

A simple, easy to use site menu will not only be good for your visitors but it will help your ranking with Google too.

HEADLINE

03

“Headline writing is an art form.”

- JENNIFER LEE



BE ENTICING

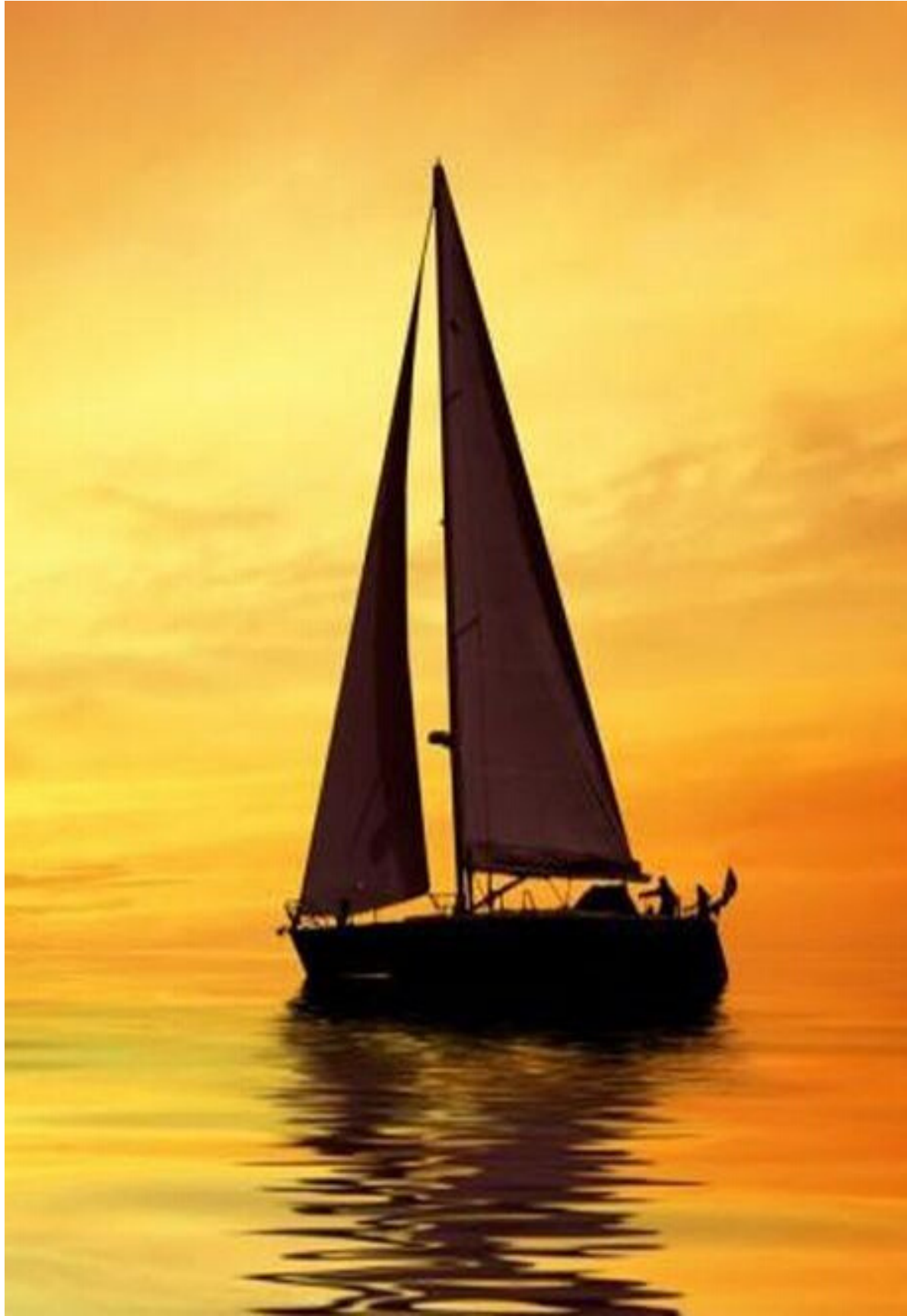
Have an enticing headline.

Again this goes back to the fact you only have a matter of seconds to get your message out there.

One way of doing it is putting yourself in your clients shoes. Think of the questions they would want to know the answers to and try and capture that in a headline.

For example I put “WordPress website design & branding for small businesses”. It says I design WordPress websites, I also do branding and I do it for small businesses, all in 8 words.

I then try and entice the visitor further by inviting them to book a free consultation with me.



MAIN IMAGE

04

Every picture tells a story

MAKE IT EYE-CATCHING

Make sure it is above the fold!

Above the fold is the first thing a visitor sees when the website is loaded.

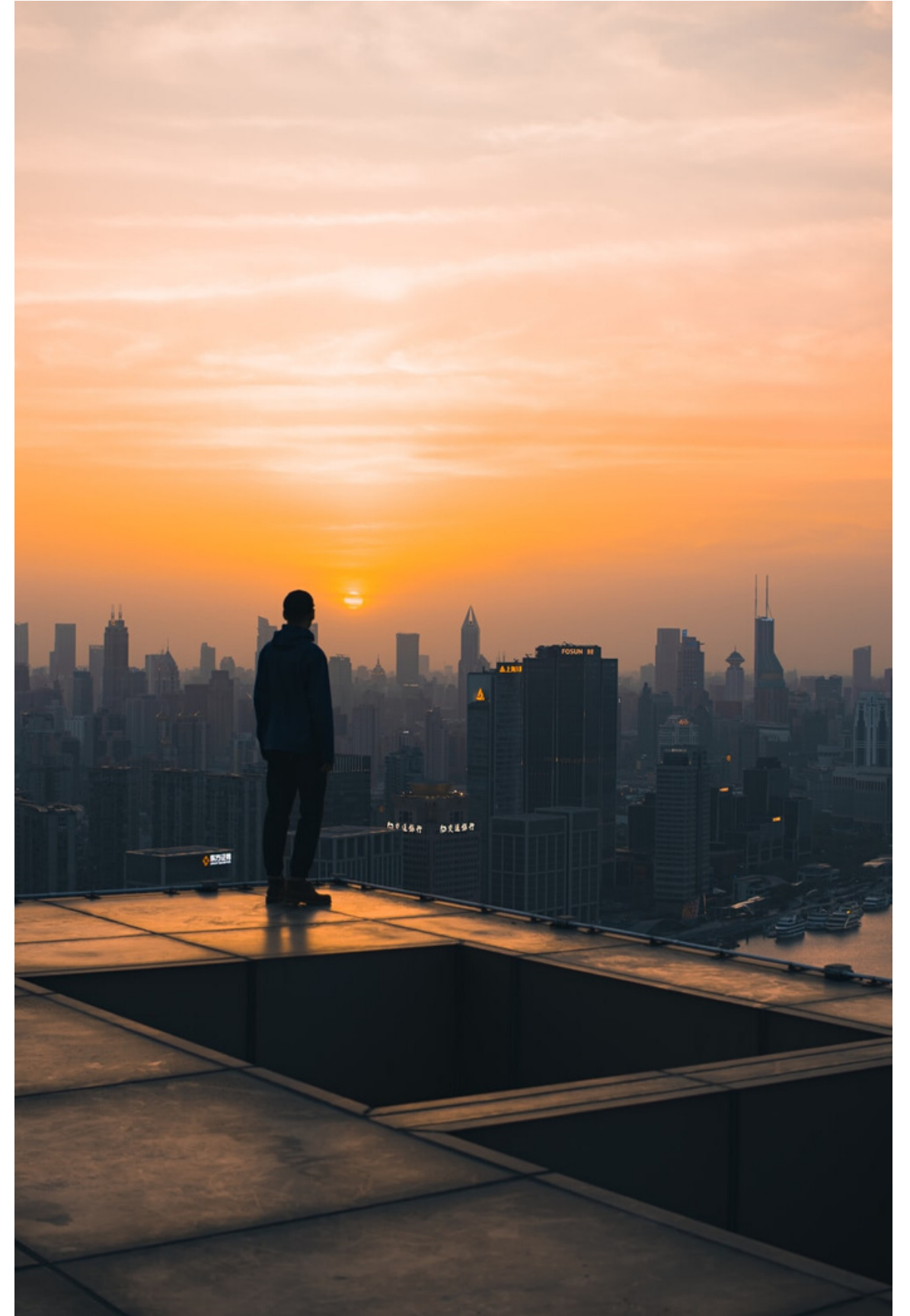
So you want your image to be eye-catching, along with your headline and make sure you include, as mentioned, your call-to-action above the fold too.

Another thing, make sure you can see everything I have mentioned so far on different devices, particularly on mobiles, again above the fold.

Remember a picture is worth a thousand words!

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT YOU

Walk in their shoes



FOCUS ON YOUR CUSTOMER

This relates to the text.

So by this stage you want to try and connect with your visitor and start to convert them into a customer.

Yes, you could tell them that you can do XYZ and how wonderful your services are etc but you know what?

THAT ISN'T GOING TO WORK.

Your visitor wants to know how you can help them. You should focus on their needs, their goals and their issues and what you can do to help them.

Again think what would the visitor want to know if they visited your website and if you're not sure brainstorm it with some friends or ME.

BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH YOU



EMPATHISE

Tell them how you're going to solve their problems.

Now you can tell them about the services you offer and how you can help them and why they should choose you.

Mention any awards or accolades you have received. You need to convince them that you are the right choice.....right now.

Try to empathise with your visitor.

LET VISITORS SEE WHO THEY ARE DEALING WITH



Yes it's me!!!!



HELLO!!

It's a tad scary this bit as you should have a photo of yourself/team and yes it's me in the photo above.

People want a face to the business.

They want to make a personal connection. They are tired of big faceless companies.

I only have two photos of myself on my website and I have to be honest, I'm not a great fan of websites that have the owners photo on every page, email etc.

It seems a bit me, me, me but that is only my personal opinion, you might differ.

It's also a good idea to say hello in text form too. I usually recommend say, a couple of sentences and then a button leading you to the about me/us page.

TESTIMONIALS



Love is all you need - I wish!

WE LOVE YOU

Commonly known as social proofing, why I have no idea, someone just came up with the term!!

So what does it mean?

Essentially through testimonials you are showing the visitors that other people love you, and one day they could love you too (obviously not literally).

It also proves that what you say you do is real.



A SUBSCRIPTION



Sign me up Scotty (yes I know it should be
beam me up)

HELPING YOU GROW

A subscription or opt-in form or box.

Purely and simply put, it's a great way of growing your email list.

Don't forget to connect to Mailchimp or something similar and make sure your follow-up emails are great in design. Don't send too many of them, people will just unsubscribe if you do.

Offer something good and they will come.

Really it's about the offer and how attractively you can sell it to your visitor on and off site.

THE FOOTER



One small step ... you get the message

IS IT THE END?

And now we've reached the bottom of the page!!

It might be the very last thing your visitor views, so think carefully as to what you want it to say.

This can be a simple footer with just the copyright info and your privacy and cookie page (a total must).

Or you can highlight your social media links, sitemap, contact details and so on.

Make it work for your website.



NICE TO HAVE THINGS

11

Why the flamingo.... why not!

WISH LIST

These are few of my favourite things...

Search function – if you have a large website or blog section let people search for what they want rather than having to plough through the various pages.

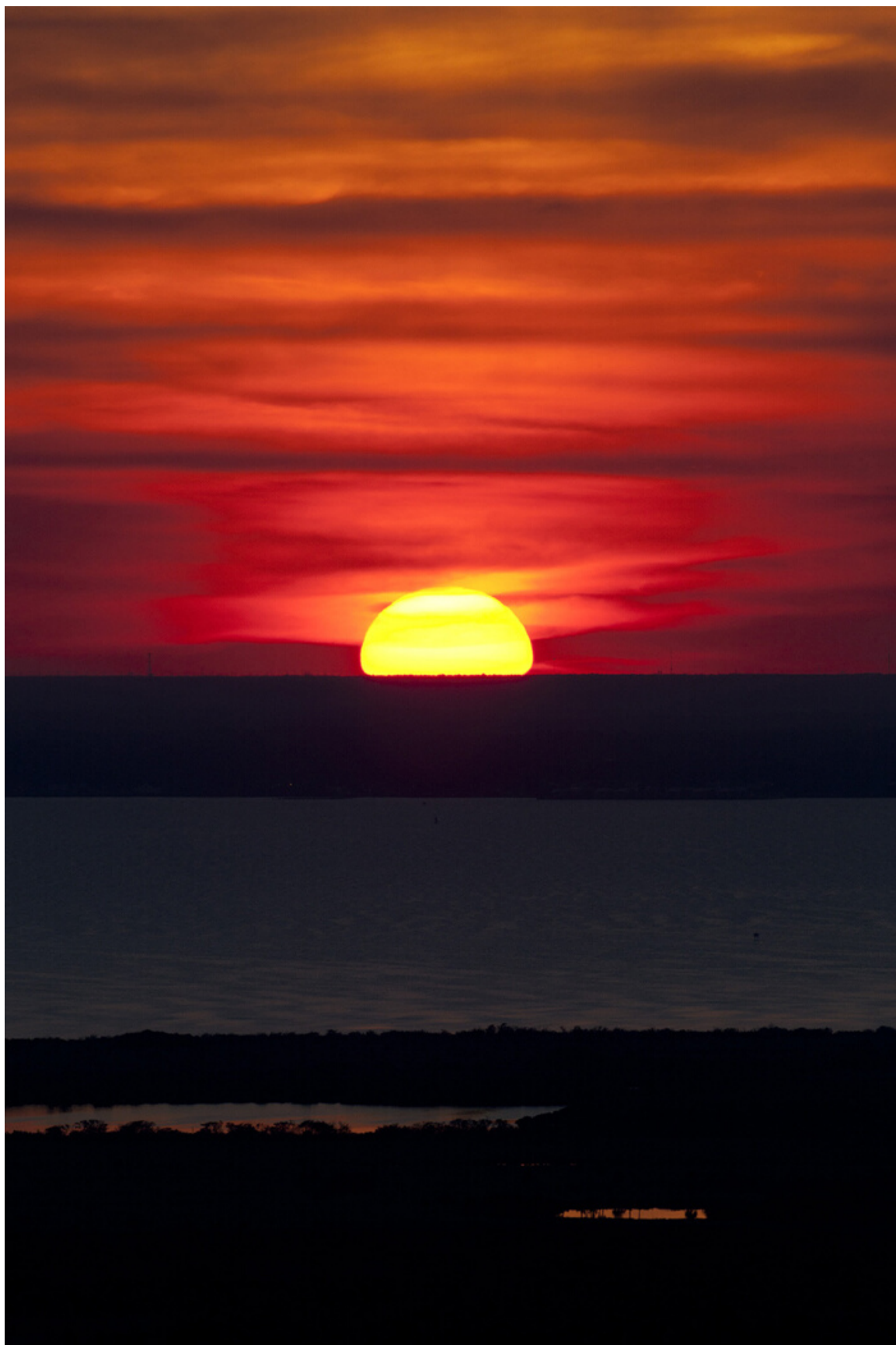
A blog – you can either just have it mentioned such as "follow my/our blog" or you can show various blog excerpts.

Live feeds such as Instagram, Twitter etc. No, no no I don't recommend them. They just slow the loading of any page they are on. Social media links on the other hand are a must.

Space - let your website breath, have space whether it be white or not. It makes what you are trying to say or show pop out more.

Try text over an image. I did for my homepage main image. Don't be afraid to mix it up a little.

Make sure your homepage is fully optimised in terms of SEO and loading speed.



FINALLY

12

I love a good sunset

PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW

William Shakespeare

Finally enjoy the process!

For example, if you need to design your homepage on the piece of paper first do so.

You can also use wireframe but paper and post-its work just as well and it's way cheaper.

If you need to do your text first, then again do so.

It's your website so whatever works for you GO FOR IT!.

PS IF YOU GET STUCK YOU CAN ALWAYS GET ME TO HELP!

LET'S WORK TOGETHER

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