# 5 Ways Solicitors Make Their Website Much More Client-Friendly

*"People buy from people they like."*
This intuitive truth guides potential customers in their decision to approach you.

## How to introduce your firm to potential clients

But for professional services, <u>so much is often very unfamiliar to first-time clients</u>. So people's feelings probably guide them more than when they are considering physical products of equal cost.

Many firm's websites describe the staff at the business as friendly to make them seem more approachable..

But a reasonable 'man-in-the-street' would feel the vast majority of websites are actually not very friendly. In fact, a list of '<u>14 ways you are driving people away from your landing pages</u>' shows only one is about coding – all the others are design psychology.

**It's not so easy to be friendly to strangers.** Especially from inside a business team. Many routines, habits and in-house jargon assumptions get in the way.

It takes a deliberate effort to be more than just <u>user-friendly</u>.

- **User-friendly** means a device or an interface that is easy to use – simple, clean, intuitive and reliable.

- **Client-friendly** means an information source that is accessible, understandable and relevant to client's activities.

Reconsider your website's message – ask a friend who is like your ideal client to explore it. Is it <u>really</u> client-friendly? Does it provide what visitors want to see, or what you want to say?

Here are five practical ways to use small psychology secrets to revitalise your message.

### 1. Greet visitors to your Homepage

**Greetings are very important in the first few seconds of a new relationship.** They immediately offer reassurances and begin to build trust. This is the start the emotional bond. It's what we all do.

If there is no greeting, there may be no relationship! And with professional services, where people feel more at risk because of their unfamiliarity, this is more important than ever.

**But only 8.3% of .co.uk websites say "welcome" on their homepage.**

That sort of means that more than 90% assume the visitor wants to be there, knows who you are and doesn't feel any need for introductions.

But 96% or so of people arriving at any website, arrive through Google. They are in research mode – just chasing information. And if you don't greet them somehow, they will stay that way.



As far as they're concerned, your website is informative but not engaging. It starts no relationship. It is not a *valuable website*, only a few bits of useful content.

**Most websites are written as announcements.** They're treated like digital billboards - impersonal.

But check your Amazon.co.uk Homepage: mine greets me with "Hi, Dave, Customer since 2008". I ignore it of course, but my subconscious notices the personal welcome. I feel that bit warmer than I would if it had not been there.

## 2. Welcome visitors to your product/service pages
**Less and less people arrive through your Homepage these days.**

Google or other search engine will have brought most visitors to your product or service page. They think they're doing searchers a favour – but this might not do you any favours!



Welcome:
"To greet someone arriving in a polite and friendly way"
OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

**Most websites only greet visitors on their Homepage.** So this means that Google often bypasses that welcome. It makes sense to put another one on each service or product page for those people who are searching for a service rather than for your firm by name.

The best approach is to write it to be relevant to the service or product on that page, because you now know that's what visitors are interested in.

**This is more than greeting people** – it's confirming that they've arrived where they wanted to be.

I suggest using very similar words to those on the search engine results snippet that brought searchers to that page. So write the two element in tandem (see item 3. below).

"Welcome to our [service] page – you'll find lots of helpful information".

And explore speaking directly to your browsers further down the page. You can make your writing more engaging, more involving, more motivating that way.

This can demonstrate some of the points you might explain on your About page. Rather than claim to be friendly, *do friendly* by giving visitors as much as possible – introductions, guidance, etc.

## 3. Make all your free Google mini-adverts really inviting
**Make your invitation more inviting than your competitors'.**

Because so many people arrive on your website via Google, you know they have chosen to visit you from what they found on its search results page. This has three components: the page title, the website page address and the meta-description.

You can re-write all three to be as readable, relevant and interesting as possible to potential clients.

**Google likes this, too.** It will probably rank you higher up its results page if you improve these things.

And if you can make your meta-description as inviting as possible, that improves your chances of getting more visitors to stop skim-reading the list, engage and actually click through to visit your webpage.

Invitation:
"A situation or action
  that tempts someone
  to do something or
  makes a particular outcome likely."
(OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY)

With only 70 characters allowed in your page title, 74 in your URL and 150 in your description, this is challenging. Add in prioritising your chosen keyword at the front of your description and it can take some artful rewording to get the best message.

## 4. Personalise your 404 error page
**People are most likely to give up on you when your website goes wrong.**

A tiny spelling mistake in the link – just one letter – can cause this 'Not Found' message.

**Frustration peaks when people are emotionally driven but the technology fails.** On average, about 7% of visits to any website result in a 404 error page. This sounds like it happens very rarely, but most new visitors to a website only look at 2 or 3 pages on average, within 3 minutes (and even

less on mobiles). So if one of those pages is a 404 it can be make-or-break for the relationship.
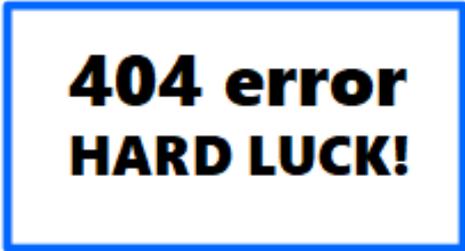
**404 error HARD LUCK!**

If you can make your error page friendly, taking responsibility, and helpful, most people will be forgiving. They are more likely to stay 'with you' through this mini-crisis. That makes it one of the Five Most Important Pages on your website.

**I suggest you check your 404 page** – misspell a page address. Most websites only show the default version supplied by your host template.

So, if you can, delete the phrase 'error 404', and write a specific message to people caught out like this. Say sorry and guide people to your Homepage or a searchbox to help them return to their journey around your website.

After all, if someone turned up at your office to find it shut (maybe through no fault of yours) they'd really appreciate a note on the door that explains why and suggests what to do next.

And replace '404' images with smiling faces and apologies. In a small business, the boss's photo helps the most meaningful apology. Cartoons will do, but real-life wins.
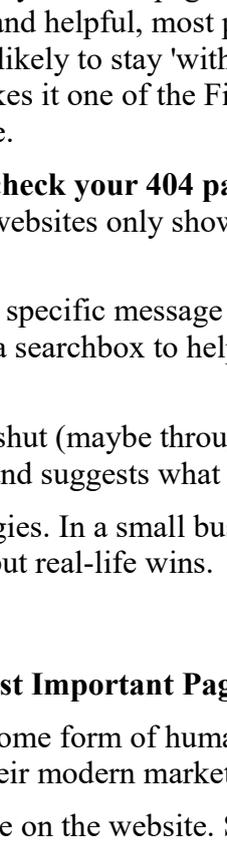
## 5. Make your Contact Page inviting
**For many businesses, your Contact Page is your Most Important Page.**

Most websites are built to encourage visitors to make some form of human contact – at the office, for instance. For many firms it is an essential part of their modern marketing strategy.

And yet it can be the most boring and unrewarding page on the website. So many firms just show an email address, a phone number, a webform and maybe a map.

It's treated as an admin page. Pure functionality. Not a shred of friendliness. Just when you want to reinforce your interest in their contacting you.

**You're Invited!**

**I suggest you check your Contact Page.** Does it have any visible invitation, or does it rather assume that people are already unstoppably motivated when they arrive on your contact page?

(And while you're checking, visit your competitors' website and compare!)

Imagine how a personal invitation, a helping hand and a Thank You would change people's attitude. And then change their action? You could get more of the enquiries you want, especially if your competitors don't demonstrate their friendliness at this crucial step. (And of course, if theirs *is* overtly friendly, you want yours to catch up, don't you?)

## *Websites are now your primary marketing channel*
Websites are a major part of the front end of your **Client-Attracting Pathway**. They have become so technically advanced these days that it is easy to overlook the human psychology that is actually going to drive the visitor's use of it.

But subsequent steps towards agreement can underperform if your website starts the relationship off with the wrong tone.

Take friendliness seriously and your visitors might relax and warm towards you more. And that is likely to be good for both of you!

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