



INFORMATION HIGHWAYMAN
ACE COPYWRITER & ATTENTION-THIEF FOR HIRE



REVIEW of the WEBSITE at WWW.ILLUMINATEDMIND.NET, as requested by JONATHAN MEAD on JUNE 9, and conducted by INFORMATION HIGHWAYMAN with RECOMMENDATIONS toward the STATED OBJECTIVE:—

TO CONVERT READERS INTO BUYERS OF THE EBOOK(S), MEMBERSHIP COURSE (PAID TO EXIST), OR TO SIGN UP FOR LIMIT BREAKING COACHING.



— OVERVIEW —

A DESCRIPTION OF MY FINDINGS, AND THE PRINCIPAL CHANGES I RECOMMEND:—

Illuminatedmind.net stands out as a strong website, designed by someone with an obvious passion for typography. The visual style is appealing, the layout is clean and easily grasped, and the copy oozes with personality. However, there are some faults in both the design and copy which may be holding the site back; and with careful changes, it could be made even stronger. My top recommendations are:—

1. REWORK THE HEADER AREA INTO A HEADLINE & LEDE (*see Headlines & Ledes*)
2. SETTLE ON A NARROWER SELECTION OF FONTS (*see Presentation & Typography*)

This Review, for the site at www.illuminatedmind.net, was hand-set using the finest tools, typefaces & typography on Friday, June 11, 2010.



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3. **ADOPT A STRONG VERTICAL GRID** (*see Presentation & Typography*)
4. **REWORK THE MAIN HOMEPAGE LINKS INTO PROPER CALLS TO ACTION** (*see Calls to Action*)

– COPY –

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CONTENT

Copy is the written content of your website. In this section I'll evaluate its effectiveness in terms of its visual appearance, tone and believability, and also comment on the strengths of specific elements. But first, an overview:–

The copy for illuminatedmind.net is generally very strong. It's written in an authentic voice that resonates well with the reader, and your personality shines through—which is excellent for forming that crucial relationship you need if you're going to sell him on anything. However, there is a lack of up-front explanatory text to give first-time readers a direction on the site—although the “Don't read this website if you want ordinary” header speaks strongly to first-time readers, there's no follow-through. You don't clearly answer the all-important question: “What's in it for me?” Many first-time readers won't bother to find out if you don't tell them straight up.

PRESENTATION & TYPOGRAPHY

Although obvious care has been put into the use of typography, the number of different fonts selected makes for a slightly frantic feeling when reading some sections of the site. The main header area, for example, uses a confusing array of fonts—no fewer than five separate typefaces or styles in the space of 12 words.

This section has huge potential for a visually-compelling headline and lede, but to make the most of it, you need to rework the typography to be more visually consistent (as well as adding additional text; see *Headlines & Ledes* below). The tracking on “Illuminated mind and body” is probably somewhat too wide, and the “body and mind” text doesn't sit on the same vertical grid as the “Illuminated” text. Similarly, “Don't read this website if you want ordinary” sits on a different grid (or at least at an odd point on the same grid).

As an example of the impact that the variation in fonts and grid layout has on legibility, I've found myself typing no fewer than three separate variations of “Don't read this

website if you want ordinary” in the process of writing up this report—none of them right.

Similar issues with fonts occur in the email signup form, with six different fonts or styles used; and the Dojo ad suffers from the “before most people” text being vertically squished compared to “The Dojo” text.

Even in the main copy, headlines are set in Helvetica while body text is set in Lucida Grande. While this would be quite a happy coexistence in most cases, it has a tendency to compound the site’s existing font inconsistencies, and subsequently add to its visual breathlessness.

My recommendation is to select a single font for the main blog copy, and at most two others to supplement this in the ads, forms, “imagified” headlines and so on. Also decide on four or five sizes to use, and specifically what each size denotes (heading level 1, subhead, etc). Then re-set the text using these fonts and sizes, ensuring they all fall on the same vertical grid. Don’t go too crazy with alternative font *styles* either.

(Incidentally, the Dojo PDF preview is set in an overly geometric font (Avenir), and both its tracking and leading are far too wide. Additionally, the two-column landscape layout makes it hard to follow because of the vertical scrolling required at lower resolutions/higher zooms.)

VOICE & CREDIBILITY

The writing style of illuminatedmind.net is very strong. There’s no meaningless marketese or bland corporate-speak. The copy is authentic; obviously written by someone with a passion for his topic, for connecting with and helping other people, and with a sense of humor. You focus largely on your reader, rather than yourself, which is excellent—but at the same time, you don’t skimp on proof that you’re the expert you claim to be, offering a great deal of value up front in the form of free reports, an ebook etc. I don’t believe you need to make any changes here; in terms of voice and credibility, you’re doing everything exactly right.

HEADLINES & LEDES

As I’ve mentioned, because your site is largely a blog, its purpose isn’t clear to the first-

time visitor. If you're wanting to generate leads and conversions, you need to answer the question which most concerns your reader: *What's in it for me?* Without giving him this, the "Hire Me", "Explosive Products" and "Zero Hour Workweek" links don't have the context they need to be compelling. That'll lead to a lot of lost conversions.

You've got a very strong headline in "Don't read this website if you want ordinary". However, it can't stand by itself. It's the kind of headline which works best to tease your user into reading an explanatory subhead, which in turn hooks him into the lede, which then paints the picture of his problem and how you can solve it.

Because you are focusing a lot on blog content, this lede needn't be long—just a paragraph which distills your reader's problem, and your solution. This will then lead naturally into the three main links ("Hire Me" etc), which should be reworked slightly themselves to function as proper calls to action (see Calls to Action below).

My recommendation is to re-set the "Don't read this website if you want ordinary" heading into a proper headline (in a single font), and to develop a compelling subhead and lede for it. This will go a long way toward drawing in first-time readers and helping them to understand what the site is about, and what you can offer them—which should result in a lower bounce rate, and higher conversions.

BODY COPY

Since the "body copy" is largely blog content, I'm going to focus on the Limit Breaking Sessions page. This seems to me the weakest, as compared to the Reclaim Your Dreams page, which is very strong and doesn't need improvements in my view.

The copy here is good; it's concise, yet takes the reader from his problem to your solution in a personable and genuine way. It walks him through what you will do, and how you will do it, and it ends in a good call to action—followed by not only a strong guarantee, but some excellent testimonial proof.

There are two recommendations I'd make here. Firstly, the testimonials *feel* long compared to the rest of the copy. I wouldn't necessarily suggest redacting them, but that's definitely an option. The other would simply be to break them into shorter paragraphs so they don't overwhelm the reader. Even just breaking them into two paragraphs each would go a long way toward improving their legibility (and thus their chances of being

read).

Secondly, place a second call to action after the testimonials. Your reader may well be making up his mind as he reads through your page, and not be quite ready to sign up when he gets to the first call to action. But after reading the testimonials, he could be convinced. Make it as easy as possible for him to follow through. Generally, it's advisable to have at least three calls to action on a sales page; in this case, because it's not very long, two should work just fine.

CALLS TO ACTION

I'm going to concentrate on the homepage and Awesome Products pages here, since I talked about the call to action on the Limit Breaking Sessions page just above.

Homepage

The three main links on the homepage are *functionally* calls to action already—but only because they stand out visually. To be “true” calls to action, they should actually *call*; ie, they should use action language. I'd recommend rewording them slightly to use verbs rather than just descriptions; for example, “Hire Me” is good because it starts with a verb, but “Explosive Products” and “Zero Hour Workweek” not so much. “*Get* Explosive Products” and “*Download* the Free Ebook: Zero Hour Workweek” would be better.

I'd also think about expanding these calls to action into larger sections of their own, with individual headlines and ledes. This would, of course, push the blog content down—but if conversions are a priority, then it may be a good tradeoff.

Awesome Products

This page has good calls to action inasmuch as they are simple verbs—the recommendation I would make here, though, is to clearly indicate that the Preview links lead to PDF documents. Without this indication, and depending on a user's setup, it can be very confusing clicking on these links. It would also be wise to indicate that the Learn More links lead to external sites, rather than to pages on the existing site, as this is another thing which can confuse users. In both cases, a simple icon on the buttons would do the job.

PTO...

– USER EXPERIENCE –

CONSIDERATIONS FOR VISUAL APPEARANCE AND LAYOUT

In this section, I'll evaluate the effectiveness of your website in terms of its use of color & images, and its layout & information architecture.

Illuminatedmind.net is generally attractive and easy to use. Aside from the typographical issues noted earlier, there are only minor changes or additions I would recommend:–

COLOR & IMAGES

Both color and images are used subtly and effectively. The color scheme is pleasing, and the only change I would recommend here is to set the main blog copy in the same color as the “Illuminated mind and body” header.

The images in the main calls to action on the homepage could benefit from rollovers. Generally, users expect some kind of effect when they mouse over a link; a simple white outer glow would even suffice, though of course there are dozens of ways you could approach this.

LAYOUT & INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Information Architecture (IA) is the arrangement of, and perceived or real relationships between content.

The layout of illuminatedmind.net is generally clear, but the main navigation links could probably benefit from some attention. Their rollovers don't currently take up consistent amounts of vertical space, which tends to look somewhat sloppy. For example, the active link takes up more vertical space than the others, and the Archives link takes up less again. You should also remove the `
` text in the `title` attribute of these links; it will confuse users.

Additionally, the text of the main navigation isn't entirely clear. Limit Breaking Sessions and Awesome Products are the particular culprits; the former is very cryptic without some kind of additional explanation, and the latter tends to “hide” because people look for the word “products” before the word “awesome”. Rewording these may aid usability.

Lastly, I strongly recommend adding a homepage link to the main navigation bar. Users often like to “reset” when browsing if they get lost, or if they want to start again and go in a different direction. Many users won’t realize or notice that the header text is also a link to the homepage, meaning that once they’ve clicked through a few pages, they’ll feel lost if they want to “reset”.

