

The amateur effect

It seems to me that there are fewer experienced professionals working in day-to-day marketing. Instead, we're seeing more and more amateurs, or inexperienced people, "managing" or running things, especially digital marketing efforts. There are consequences to a lack of experience: amateur mistakes.

The amateur effect can be seen in the explosion of typos, missing information, missing links, poorly designed websites, hard-to-understand copy, and a myriad other maladies that makes your marketing look unprofessional at best, and be ineffective at worst.

Did anyone double-check this?

This is part of full-page ad in the *Washington Business Journal*:



This summer, don't lift a finger – just a glass.

Total Wine & More can help make your event planning easy and right on budget. Let us help you ramp up your company picnic and summer gatherings among other events throughout the year like grand openings, product launches, anniversary meetings and more. Our team is here to assist with expert recommendations on how to stock your bar and find delicious pairings from our selection of 8,000 spirits, and 2,500 beers. And toast to the easiest event you've planned.*

Can you spot the issue? It's the extra space in the word finger. How could this happen? Probably because nobody proofread the laid-out copy.

And then there are typos

There are typos galore in newspapers, books, and magazines. This is partially due to cut-backs in editorial staff, but it is also due to having amateurs in charge.

And misused words

Affect and effect do not mean the same thing. Enough said.

And missing information, and missing links

A few weeks ago I got a promotional email from a day spa promoting the spa's outdoor pool opening for the summer. There was a link to click for more information. The link didn't work. I went to the website because I wanted to find out if you could get a day pass for the pool, and if so, how much it would cost. Well, there was no information about the pool. None. The website was a mess, and if the information was there, it was buried so deep you'd need to hire an archaeologist to find it.

Why all the problems?

Amateurs don't believe in double-checking stuff, because they don't know what they are checking for.

Amateurs don't ask questions, because they don't know what questions to ask or to whom.

The bottom line is that amateurs don't know what they don't know, and they don't know enough to ask.

The solution is experience

There is no substitute for experience. If you don't want your marketing to be rife with mistakes, and just be plain

ineffective, you need to hire experienced people to run your programs, and to mentor the less experienced staff. People can learn to be great marketers, but they need guidance.

What do you think? Have you seen or experienced the amateur effect?