

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Proofreaders help to protect the bottom line

Businesses concerned about damaging their credibility – and their revenue – through website errors should be taking sensible precautions, according to the organisation for editorial professionals in the UK.

The Society for Editors and Proofreaders (SfEP) is urging companies to protect their online reputations by having all their web material checked thoroughly by trained proofreaders before it goes live.

A news story this week claimed that spelling and grammatical errors on websites are resulting in lost revenue for internet businesses. The report blamed the education system for failing to turn out school and college leavers who have the required skills.

But the SfEP believes that, rather than simply bemoaning the education system, businesses should take action to ensure that all their written communications are clear and free of errors.

“The truth is we can all make mistakes,” says SfEP vice-chair Wendy Toole. “Even people who are highly proficient at spelling, punctuation and grammar can slip up. It’s easy to make a typing error, or simply not see something amiss in your own writing. So there’s a lot to be said for having a fresh pair of eyes look at your work.”

The issue of poor spelling on websites is not new. As long ago as 2002 the Stanford–Makovsky Web Credibility Survey claimed that errors on websites “have roughly the same negative impact on a website’s credibility as a company’s legal or financial trouble”. And research by the Royal Mail in 2005 showed that over 70% of customers would not trust a business that has poor communication skills.

“It seems incredible that companies will risk their reputations in this way,” says Wendy. “Many organisations spend a great deal of money on an impressive website, only to spoil it with some basic spelling errors. By using the services of a professional proofreader they could avoid damaging their reputation – and at a fraction of the overall cost of the website.”

The SfEP has an online, searchable [directory](#) of members who proofread and edit all kinds of written communications, not just websites.

Notes for Editors

- For further information contact Helen Stevens, SfEP marketing and PR director, marketingpr@ssep.org.uk
- For general enquiries on the Society, please contact the SfEP office: 020 8785 5617, or email administrator@ssep.org.uk
- The SfEP works to promote editorial standards, uphold the professional status of editorial workers, and encourage the use of services offered by its membership. It has approximately 1,500 members and associates (mostly in the UK) providing editorial services to publishers and a wide range of companies, government agencies and other bodies.
- More information can be found at www.ssep.org.uk
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/EditProof
- Twitter: twitter.com/TheSfEP