



Ebook

The Ultimate Style Guide

The Ultimate Style Guide covers BLUF style, objective vs. subjective writing, and technology's role in improving communication.

VisibleThread.com



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What is a Company Style Guide?

A company style guide, often referred to as a brand style guide or brand bible, is an essential toolkit for businesses that want to present a consistent, cohesive, and recognizable face to the world. At its core, it is a set of standards and guidelines that dictate how the company's brand should be represented across various mediums. Here's what you need to know about it:

- **Purpose:** The primary purpose of a company style guide is to ensure consistency in the presentation of the brand's identity. Consistency breeds recognition, and over time, a consistent brand presentation can lead to increased trust and credibility with consumers.
- **Components:** While the specifics can vary, a style guide generally includes guidelines on the company logo (including size, color variations, and placement), official company colors, typography, imagery, voice, and tone of content, and sometimes even guidelines for writing emails and correspondence. It ensures that everything, from an official advertisement to a simple internal memo, resonates with the same brand ethos.
- **Audience:** While the style guide is a crucial tool for internal teams like marketing, design, and communications, it's also invaluable for external stakeholders. Freelancers, agencies, partners, and even franchisees can refer to the style guide to produce on-brand content and designs.
- **Format:** The presentation of the style guide itself can vary based on the company's size, needs, and technological aptitude. For start-ups and small businesses, a simple PDF might suffice. Larger corporations might have an interactive, web-based style guide, complete with downloadable assets and detailed explanations. Some even integrate video tutorials or interactive examples.
- **Evolution:** It's important to note that a company style guide isn't a static document. As the brand evolves, so too should the guide. Regular updates ensure that it stays relevant and aligns with the company's current vision and market positioning.

Bad writing costs businesses \$400 billion a year

Josh Bernoff
Author and ex- Forrester Analyst

In essence, a company style guide acts as a north star for brand representation, ensuring every piece of content or design produced aligns with the company's identity and values. Whether you're a budding start-up or an established conglomerate, having a well-defined style guide is key to consistent, effective, and resonant brand communication.



Understanding BLUF

This is a strategy or ethos we always recommend. “BLUF” stands for “Bottom Line Up Front.” It’s a writing style primarily used in the military, intelligence, and certain business sectors to ensure clarity and conciseness in communications. The purpose of BLUF is to ensure that the main message or essential information is delivered immediately, without the need for the reader to wade through excessive details, background, or qualifiers.

Here’s a Breakdown of the BLUF Style:

- **Start with the Conclusion:** Begin with the most critical information or conclusion right up front. This allows the reader to immediately grasp the central message.
- **Clarity:** Use clear and straightforward language. Avoid jargon, unless it’s well-understood by the target audience.
- **Brevity:** Be concise. Avoid unnecessary details or information that doesn’t contribute directly to the primary message.
- **Structured:** Organize the information in a manner that flows logically. After presenting the bottom line, follow with pertinent details or background as necessary, but always prioritize the primary message.
- **Focused:** Stay on topic. Only provide information relevant to the central message or decision at hand.





Example of a BLUF Statement:

Instead of saying:

"I've reviewed the quarterly financial reports, and after analyzing the costs and revenues, it's clear that our expenditures on advertising have not resulted in a proportionate increase in sales. Therefore, I recommend revising our advertising strategy."

A BLUF version would be

"I recommend revising our advertising strategy as it's not giving a proportionate increase in sales based on the quarterly financial reports."

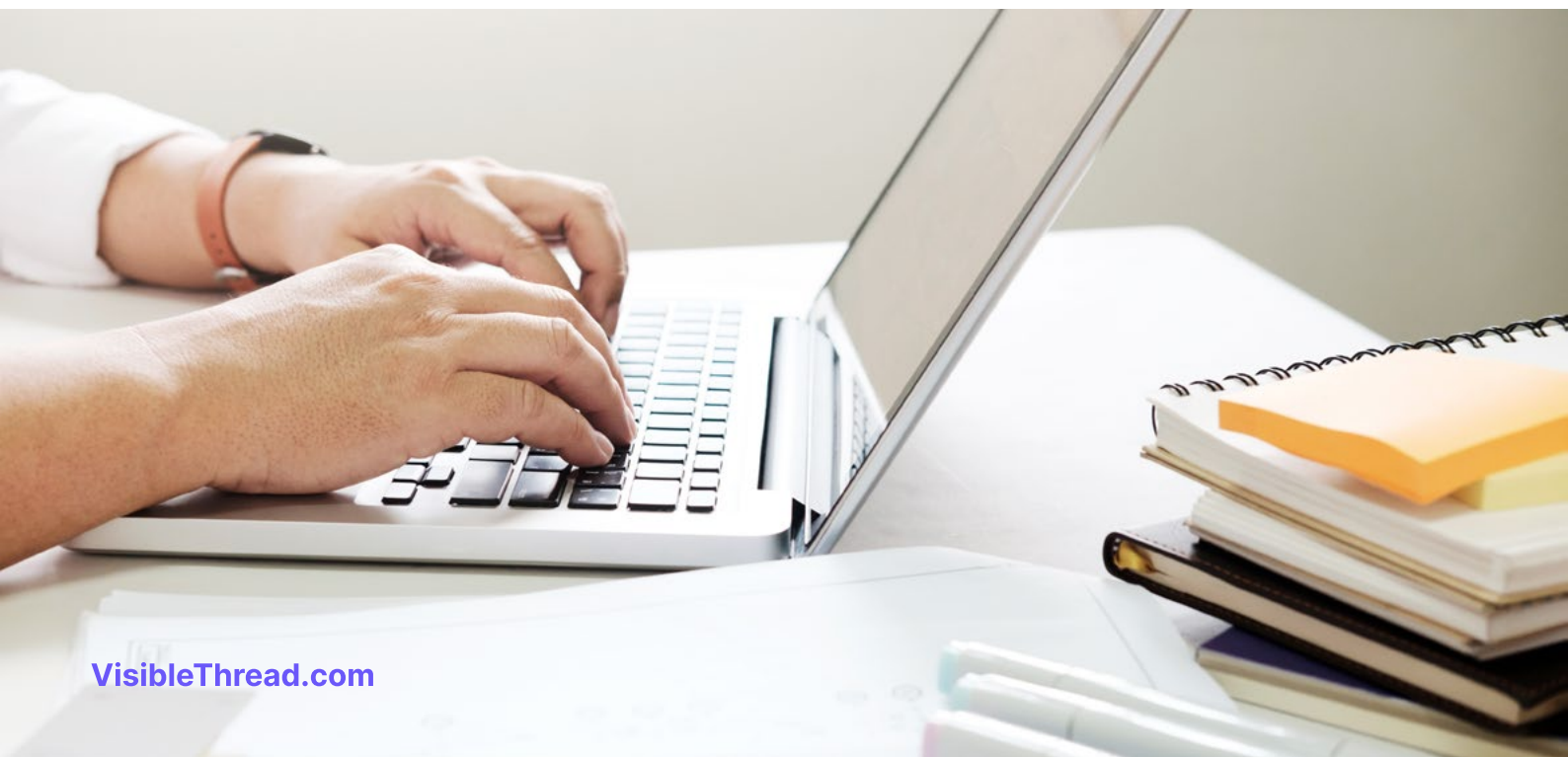
By rewriting memos to officers, the US Navy determined they would save \$25-37 million each year since officers took 17-23% less time reading.

Joseph Kimble
Professor of Law

The BLUF style is particularly useful for busy professionals or decision-makers who need to understand the main point quickly and then decide whether to delve deeper into the details or background.

The Overlooked Element of Style Guides: The Editorial Process

Many style guides meticulously detail how content should look and sound, ensuring brand consistency and quality. However, an alarming number of them overlook one crucial element: the editorial process. Not clearly outlining or understanding the editorial process can arguably be the single biggest pitfall in content creation. This oversight can lead to inefficiencies, inconsistencies, and confusion among content creators and editors alike.





What is the Editorial Process?

The editorial process is a structured workflow that dictates how content is planned, produced, reviewed, revised, and finally, published. It establishes roles and responsibilities at each stage of content creation and distribution.

The RACI Model in the Editorial Process:

A common tool utilized to clarify roles and responsibilities in processes like this is the RACI model. "RACI" stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed. Applying RACI to the editorial process can provide clarity and streamline workflows. Here's how:

- **Responsible (R):** The person or team who does the actual work, such as writing the content or making edits. They are the ones carrying out the task.

- **Accountable (A):** The individual who owns the process or decision. This person ensures the work gets done and signs off on it. There's typically only one person who is 'Accountable' for each task or decision.

- **Consulted (C):** These are the stakeholders who provide input or feedback during the content creation process. They might be subject matter experts, senior editors, or other teams whose insights can enhance the content's quality.

- **Informed (I):** Parties who need to be kept in the loop about the content's status but aren't directly involved in its creation or revision. This might include teams like marketing or distribution who need to know when content will be ready for release.

RACI Matrix						
Task	Role 1	Role 2	Role 3	Role 4	Role 5	Role 6
Task 1	R		C			
Task 2	R		A		C	
Task 3	R	R	I	A		I
Task 4			C		R	
Task 5	A	C		I		
Task 6		I	C	C		R



For instance, in the content creation process:

- A writer (R) may be responsible for drafting an article.
- An editor (A) would be accountable for ensuring the article meets quality standards and is ready for publishing.
- Subject matter experts or senior leadership (C) could be consulted for their expertise or input.
- And the marketing team (I) would be informed about the article's status and release date.

Why is the Editorial Process Essential?

Outlining the editorial process, especially with tools like RACI, ensures:

- Clarity: Every member of the team knows their role, reducing overlaps and gaps in responsibilities.
- Efficiency: Clearly defined roles and expectations reduce back-and-forth, leading to faster content production and release.
- Quality: With a structured review and feedback mechanism, content quality is enhanced.
- Alignment: Ensures all content aligns with the brand's voice, tone, and style as defined in the style guide.

**"The pen is
mightier than
the sword."**

Edward Bulwer-Lytton



Advantages of Technology

The advent of technology has significantly revolutionized the writing landscape. From word processors that have made typewriters obsolete to advanced software tools that refine and enhance content, the benefits of technology in writing are manifold. Here's a summary of the various advantages technology brings to the table for writers:

- 1 Efficiency and Speed:** Gone are the days when writers had to manually rewrite or type out entire pages due to errors. Modern word processors allow for quick edits, and tools like autocorrect and spell check further expedite the writing process.
- 2 Enhanced Quality with Automated Analysis:** Solutions like VT Writer analyze content to ensure it aligns with readability standards, spotting jargon or complex sentences. This allows writers to produce clearer, more accessible content for their audience.
- 3 Data-backed Insights:** Advanced tools provide data-driven insights on the document's readability, SEO optimization, and other key metrics, helping writers refine their content to better suit their target audience.
- 4 Consistency and Style Guides:** Technology enables adherence to specific style guides or custom criteria. With platforms that can analyze and suggest edits based on predetermined standards, maintaining brand or publication consistency becomes easier.
- 5 Document Organization and Management:** Technology facilitates better organization with tools that allow writers to categorize, tag, and store documents systematically, making retrieval easier.
- 6 Accessibility and Inclusion:** Technology in writing also plays a pivotal role in making content more accessible. Features like voice-to-text, text-to-voice, and translation tools break down barriers, allowing a diverse audience to engage with the content.
- 7 Feedback and Revision:** Platforms that incorporate AI and machine learning, like VT Writer, offer instant feedback. This not only speeds up the revision process but also educates writers, helping them avoid repeated mistakes.
- 8 Protection and Backup:** Digital writing platforms often come with automatic backup features, ensuring that hours of hard work aren't lost due to unforeseen circumstances or technical glitches.

The integration of technology in writing has not only made the process more efficient but has also elevated the quality and reach of written content.



Example of an Editorial Process

1 Concept Development:

- Brainstorming content themes and defining objectives.

2 Planning & Consensus:

- Identifying the target audience
- Setting clear goals
- Detailing the process
- Applying the RACI model

3 Drafting & Enhancement:

- Crafting content
- Utilizing technology for quality assurance

4 Style Guide Compliance:

- Reviewing content for alignment with style guide standards and principles

5 Editorial Assessment & Refinement:

- Undergoing a thorough review
- Making necessary revisions

6 Publication:

- Finalizing
- Releasing the content to the intended platform or audience

In conclusion, while style guides play a vital role in determining how content should look and sound, the editorial process ensures that the content is created smoothly, effectively, and to the highest standard. Both are integral to a brand's content strategy and should be given equal importance.



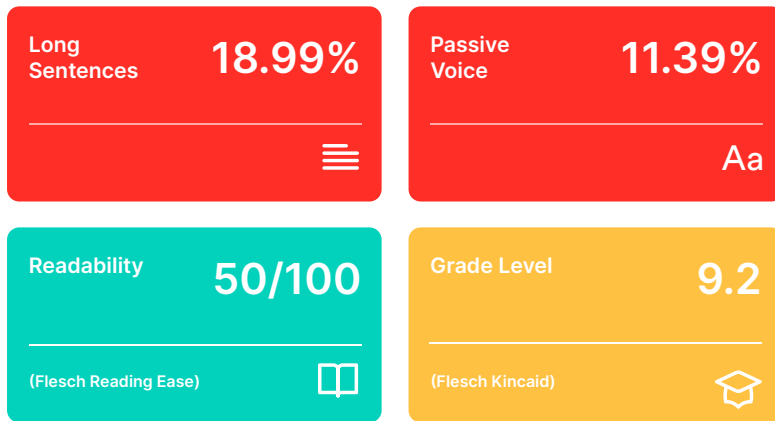
Objective versus Subjective:

Good writing is completely subjective right? Wrong! Objective metrics in a style guide provide measurable and quantifiable standards against which content can be evaluated. Integrating such metrics offers numerous benefits:

- 1 Consistency Across Content:** With clear, objective metrics, all content—from marketing materials to internal documents—adheres to the same standards, ensuring a uniform brand voice and presentation.
- 2 Elimination of Ambiguity:** Objective metrics remove subjective interpretations, leading to clearer guidelines that reduce the possibility of misunderstandings or different interpretations.
- 3 Efficiency in Review:** It's quicker to review and approve content when there are specific criteria to measure against. This can expedite the content creation and editing processes.
- 4 Enhanced Credibility and Professionalism:** Consistently meeting specific standards can boost the perceived credibility and professionalism of a brand or organization.
- 5 Clear Benchmarks for Improvement:** Having clear metrics provides a benchmark. Over time, these benchmarks can be adjusted to continually elevate the quality of content.
- 6 Data-Driven Decisions:** Objective metrics can be linked to key performance indicators (KPIs), allowing companies to assess the effectiveness of their content strategy and make informed improvements.
- 7 Facilitated Training:** New team members can be onboarded more effectively when there are clear, measurable standards in the style guide. It provides them with an understanding of what's expected right from the start.
- 8 Reduction of Disputes:** In cases where content is disputed or questioned, objective metrics provide a solid ground for justification and decision-making.
- 9 Ensuring Accessibility:** Some objective metrics can relate to accessibility standards, ensuring content is readable and accessible to all, including those with disabilities.
- 10 Quantifiable Progress Tracking:** Over time, teams can track how well they're adhering to the style guide's metrics, allowing for a measurable view of progress and areas for improvement.



Incorporating objective metrics into a style guide brings a scientific, measurable aspect to the often-subjective world of content creation, providing clear benefits in consistency, clarity, and quality control.



“VT Writer’s red-amber-green traffic light scorecard means you can see right away whether it’s easy to read or whether you have opportunities to improve.”

Heather Anderson
Disability Solutions Manager,
Sun Life

Here’s what we recommend:

- Grade Level (Aim for 8 or lower)**
Strive for a grade level of 8 or below to ensure easy comprehension. Simplify further with shorter sentences and simpler vocabulary.
- Readability (Aim for 50 or higher)**
Target a Flesch readability score of 50 or higher to ensure accessible content. Simplify through shorter sentences and simpler word choices.
- Passive Voice (Aim for 4% or lower)**
Maintain Passive Voice at 4% or lower for clear and visible messaging. Enhance clarity and directness, making your writing engaging and easy to comprehend by avoiding passive voice.
- Long Sentences (Aim for 5% or lower)**
Keep Long Sentences below 5% to prevent complex statements from burying your message. Split long sentences or use lists as solutions.

These metrics are seamless to measure with VT Writer. Not a customer, yet? Check out our free trial.

[Sign up for a Free Trial](#)



Let's Incorporate this into our Editorial Process:

1 Concept Development:

- Brainstorming content themes and defining objectives

Subjective

2 Planning & Consensus:

- Identifying the target audience
- Setting clear goals
- Detailing the process
- Applying the RACI model

Objective

Objective

Objective

Objective

3 Drafting & Enhancement:

- Crafting content
- Utilizing technology for quality assurance
 - MS Word Add-in
 - The VT Writer Word Add-In lets you analyze your writing for clarity, directly within your Microsoft Word environment
 - Cloud users deploy from MS Store, on-premise users automatically provisioned.
 - Analyze your MS Word doc when you're ready!
 - Traffic Light Score Card for overall document
 - Track change directly in the Add-in

Subjective

Objective

4 Style Guide Compliance:

- Reviewing content for alignment with style guide standards and principles
 - Email Service - Score by Mail
 - With VT Writer Email Service
 - VT Writer's Email service enables users to send MS Word or PDF documents to a dedicated email address for analysis. Receive analysis and document scores in your inbox.
 - Send a doc by mail for analysis.
 - Instant feedback with summary clarity results
 - Zero friction and zero training required.
 - To expedite the review process, meet the objective targets upfront, allowing reviewers and approvers to focus on content.

Objective

5 Editorial Assessment & Refinement:

- Undergoing a thorough review and making necessary revisions

Subjective

6 Publication:

- Finalizing and releasing the content to the intended platform or audience

Objective



46.1% of people assess the credibility of a site by its visual design, including typography, font size, and color schemes.

Stanford Web Credibility Research

4 Elements of a Perfect Company Style Guide:

1. Brand Identity:

Brand identity plays a pivotal role in shaping the perception and recognition of a company in the market. At its core, the logo serves as the face of the company, offering an immediate visual representation that resonates with consumers and encapsulates the essence of the brand. Together, the logo, color palette, and typography weave a cohesive narrative, making the brand memorable and distinctive in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

- Logo

- Color Palette

- Typography



2. Voice and Tone:

Voice and Tone are integral components of a style guide, shaping how a company communicates its values, ethos, and personality to its audience. The voice reflects the consistent personality and character of a brand—whether it's authoritative, friendly, formal, or casual. On the other hand, tone varies depending on the context, adjusting to fit the mood or situation, be it empathetic in customer support or enthusiastic in promotional content. To create an effective voice and tone guide, a company should first introspect its core values and the image it wishes to project. Engaging with key stakeholders, understanding the target audience, and considering the brand's history and future aspirations are essential. With a clear understanding, the company can then articulate guidelines that ensure every piece of content, irrespective of the creator, resonates with the brand's unique voice and strikes the right tone for the occasion.

Here's a popular starting point:

The 7 Cs of communication provide a useful checklist to ensure clear, effective, and efficient communication.

- 1 Clarity:** Ensure your message is straightforward and without ambiguity. Avoid jargon and complex language.
- 2 Conciseness:** Be brief while still conveying the complete message. Avoid unnecessary words or redundant expressions.
- 3 Concreteness:** Use specific facts and data, avoiding vague statements. Concrete information helps in retaining the message and making it impactful.
- 4 Correctness:** Ensure your message is grammatically and factually accurate. This helps in building trust and credibility.
- 5 Completeness:** Provide all the necessary information. The receiver should not be left with questions after interpreting the message.



6 Consideration (Empathy): Understand and consider the emotions and perspective of the receiver. Avoid statements that may be offensive or misunderstood.

7 Courtesy: Be respectful and polite. Even when delivering negative or challenging messages, it's essential to maintain civility and kindness.

8 Adhering to these seven principles helps in crafting messages that are well-received, understood, and acted upon effectively by the intended audience.

“Our goal is to create a brand that is both sophisticated and accessible. One that’s authentic, caring, confident, and dynamic. Our brand is built on a foundation that includes helping clients achieve lifetime financial security and live healthier lives. How plain language plays into that is really supporting our verbal identity.”

Marianne Arnaudon
Assistant Vice President of Global Brand & Marketing, Sun Life

3. Imagery and Graphics:

Here’s some examples regarding how we select images and build upon our brand

Our logo

The VisibleThread Blue Logo, pictured right, is our primary Logo colorway, used only in situations where the brand palette is not being used. To ensure the VisibleThread Blue remains respected, we never use the VisibleThread Blue Logo (or indeed the brand Blue at all) with any of the colors from the color palette.

This elevates the brand green from the rest of the palette, ensuring that it is not confused, nor its power diluted.

If color is not an option for technical reasons or if the brand Blue lacks contrast or competes with other visual elements, you have permission to use either the black or white Logo options.

Colour

Color helps define the brand. It sets tone and sends a message. The use of color in all applications must appear consistent throughout production and fabrication media. Outlined are the color values for the primary colors in the VisibleThread Brand. These values should be used as a reference when choosing colors for printed media, online usage and signage.

Primary Logo Options

Mono Logo Options

#533FFB		#000000	
#A8A0EF	#54AFFC	#FEBBD1	#FEB22A
#2DC9AD	#A4FOFE	#E8E2D9	#DFE1E3



4. Legal and Compliance:

- Trademarks are essential tools for establishing brand identity, offering legal protection against unauthorized use, and enhancing a business's market position. They not only serve as valuable assets that can appreciate over time but also foster consumer trust and loyalty by guaranteeing consistent quality. By bolstering marketing efforts and deterring unfair competition, trademarks facilitate economic growth and drive innovation. In essence, they embody a brand's reputation and promise to its customers.
- **Trademark:** VisibleThread's logo and name are trademarked; we use the ™ symbol where appropriate.
- **Plain Language Requirements:**

"Plain language" or "plain writing" refers to communication that the audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. Over the years, various governments have recognized the importance of clear communication and have enacted laws and regulations to promote the use of plain language, particularly in public sector communications. Some of the notable plain language acts and initiatives from around the world include:

1. United States: The Plain Writing Act of 2010

- This act requires that federal agencies use clear government communication that the public can understand and use. As a result, agencies are required to use plain language in any new or substantially revised document that:
 - Is necessary for obtaining any federal government benefit or service or filing taxes.
 - Provides information about any federal government benefit or service.
 - Explains to the public how to comply with a requirement that the federal government administers or enforces.

2. Canada: The Communications Policy of the Government of Canada

- While not an act per se, this policy promotes clear and effective communication, with a focus on the diverse needs of the public.

3. European Union: Clear Writing Campaign

- The EU has an ongoing initiative to ensure that EU documents and websites are written in plain language.

4. Australia: The Australian Government's Writing Style Guide

- Australia emphasizes the importance of clear and concise communication in its style guide for government communication.

5. New Zealand: The Plain English Standard for Government Writing

- Introduced as a part of the Better Public Services initiative, this standard emphasizes clear and straightforward communication.

6. South Africa: The Use of Official Languages Act

- Enacted in 2012, this act mandates the national government to use plain and understandable language in government communications.

7. United Kingdom: Various Initiatives

- The UK doesn't have a specific plain language act, but there have been several initiatives and guidelines across different departments and sectors advocating for clearer communication.



Writing Challenges

Here's a sense of the many teams producing important internal and external written content. The teams range from Audit & financial reporting right through to Operations. Now, with more and more elements of generative AI (Artificial Intelligence), the quantity of content being produced is becoming more and more extensive. However, this also increases the risk.



Factors for success – how can we solve the “poor communications” problem?

When embarking on a quality improvement initiative, here are a few things that will dramatically improve your odds of success:

1. Score every paragraph for clarity, both good and bad. Don't just highlight the bad, reward the good. People will appreciate that.
2. Use well-understood, objective & non-proprietary scoring metrics e.g.: Grade-level.
3. Score at source & put the metrics in the hands of the writers. This reduces the reviewer bottleneck.
4. Equip everyone with easy ways to score when they reach a reasonable point in the edit cycle, e.g.: at Draft 1 stage. Use automation for this. For example, allow people to submit docs for analysis to a standard email address, or give them a writing assistant embedded in MS Word.



5. Don't rely solely on a centralized reviewer approach, this becomes a bottleneck.
6. Measure across every team, encourage people to aim for pre-defined scores. Have goals for what you want to achieve for each type of communication and each team. For example, the Australian Government mandates scoring a grade-level of 8 or below for any internal facing content, and grade 6 or below for external facing content. Why? Because the lower the grade level, the more accessible the content is for a broader cohort of the population.
7. Educate every team as to the impact of "poor communications" & the benefits of "good communications".
8. Provide c-suite visibility to all teams scores across the organization. Make these scores a part of the organization's quality KPIs (Key Performance Indicators).

"VisibleThread is rocking our world. It has dramatically helped improve the quality and readability of our documents. Saves editing time and helps to flag problem areas quickly."

Patricia A Fieldson
Manager / Capture
Advancement Team

Successful Business Writing = ROI (Return on Investment):

When you apply this approach, the results are profound. It drives tangible out-sized returns.

Consider these examples:

- **Sun Life** Insurance saved \$947,000 annually across 100 employees using VT Writer. They did this by simplifying the communications between their help center and customers. Important communications like "denial of insurance", "appeals letters" etc. This improved customer experience, lowered inbound help desk queries by 17%. And reduced follow-on re-queries by a whopping 23%. Sun Life now have over 6,000 users across the organization scoring content with VT Writer every day.
- **Airbus** saved \$75k for every complex sales proposal they vetted in internal operational costs. How? By equipping their technical writers with the VT Writer writing assistant that moved from central reviews to scoring at source. And this meant that they no longer had to retain a 3rd party consultancy company.

AIRBUS

\$75k

Savings per bid at
the review stage
*approx. 1k bids submitted per year

"VisibleThread has been a key enabler for improving quality across our commercial & contracts, legal and procurement teams"

André Zobolski, Head of Commercial & Contracts

Sun
Life Financial

\$947k

Annual productivity
savings across 100
employees

"VisibleThread offers us the performance metrics that help us improve our client experience"

Milos Vranesevic, SVP, Chief Marketing Officer



Services Australia X VisibleThread

In Services Australia's 2018–22 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), the agency committed to delivering a new website. This website depicts how First Nations communities gained access to social service benefits. A team of researchers worked with the agency's communications team to deliver the content for this new site.

“The aim was to show how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people fought for change in Australia. It uses first-hand accounts and historical artifacts that center First Nations stories. There are letters from activists, copies of old policies, and excerpts from the Acts that had to be changed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to gain eligibility.”

Emily Edmunds, Assistant Director, Communications Division, Services Australia.

Throughout this project, Services Australia used VisibleThread to help achieve the desired reading grade level between 7 and 9.

This workspace enabled Services Australia to set specific language thresholds and configure the list of 'ignored terms. These are multi-syllable phrases that can skew readability calculations. They included words used a lot across the site, such as 'Community' and 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people'. For larger organizations like Services Australia, this ability to set the targets in VT Writer is vital.

Helping writers to grasp the metrics.

During the early days of the project, one researcher provided the writers with a complex draft. VT Writer scored the draft at a reading grade level of 25. It had 100% long sentences, meaning all sentences were greater than 25 words, and 100% passive voice.

This document became integral when training junior writers on how to use VT Writer. They commented that the 'traffic light' system in VT Writer was a helpful visual representation of the document's quality. They used this to track improvements to readability.



The content targets they specified in VT Writer were as follows:



They transformed their writing process, placing the original score of the research notes at the bottom of their template. After editing the draft, the writer re-analyzed the content and made a note of the new score. This highlights the power of VT Writer when delivering tight and clean content with a consistent tone.



What makes VT Writer different – how is it unique?

Well, it'll not come as a huge surprise that VT Writer is a writing assistant designed to solve the thorny issues above. And support each success factor. And it might surprise you to hear that most writing assistants don't do a very good job of that. Let's see how VT Writer differs from other vendors.

It boils down to these six unique aspects:

1. Clarity vs. Grammar

Many vendors in the market identify grammar issues. VT Writer does too. However, the primary focus for VT Writer is to improve the clarity of content by scoring every paragraph. You get a readability "Grade Level" score for every paragraph, not just the bad ones. No other solution takes this approach. And VT Writer scores for language clarity against your organization's language thresholds. It suggests content to improve by reducing long sentences, changing passive to active voice, changing nominalizations to verbs, highlighting adverbs for inclusion or deletion. All driving a better grade level.

2. The Importance of Grade Level

Grade Level is the universal metric for all written content. Easy to set goals against, and with the right automation easy to score. It's like the canary in the coalmine, the higher it is, the more complex the content, the lower the better. It's basically a proxy for complexity. For important documents, we want to get grade level down to 8 or below. VT Writer scores every paragraph for clarity using grade level. And that is very useful as a feedback loop. Since as we edit, we will want to see paragraphs turning green. Improving the grade level will automatically improve the readability of the full document too.

3. Complements the Writers flow and does not Interrupt

The VT Writer App, the Add-in and the VT Writer email Service complement your organization's existing editorial workflow by analyzing the content when you are ready to. VT Writer does not interrupt your writing flow. It tracks improvement for each revision too. So, you get positive feedback along-side your edits. No more negative review cycles, get your content to a higher quality level in your own time.

4. Full Enterprise Visibility

VT Insights allows leadership/administrators access to view all content scored for clarity by users. This monitors the quality of writing across the entire organization. You can see how individuals and teams are doing. Who needs encouragement, who needs rewarding for great writing.

5. Deploys On-Premise / Customer Hosted

You can deploy VT Writer / VT Insights as a customer hosted option. This can be in a private cloud or on-premise in a highly secure environment. This is especially relevant if you have any compliance obligations around important content. Or if you want to score sensitive content of any description.

6. Supports non-English languages like French and Spanish

Some vendors do not support non-English languages. This is because the standard readability formulas such as Flesch Readability were developed specifically for English and rely on counting English language syllables as part of the formula. VT Writer uses the LIX readability score to assess non-English text and maps it to grade level. This is a unique facet of VT Writer and means that it can conduct clarity analysis in non-English languages such as French, Spanish and German.



Proposal Writing Best Practice

In the competitive world of business, crafting a compelling proposal can be the difference between winning a contract and missing out on an opportunity. A well-written proposal not only presents a solution but also demonstrates a deep understanding of the client's needs and challenges. Let's delve into some of the best practices in proposal writing that can set your submission apart and position you as the top choice for your potential clients.

- **Optimize Existing Content for Speed:** Leverage existing content as much as possible, but tailor it to the specific needs and challenges of the bid. This ensures that the proposal is both efficient and customer focused.
- **Show Genuine Care:** The best proposals demonstrate a genuine understanding and care for the client's needs. This can be achieved by tailoring standard content to address unique customer issues.
- **Know Your Customer:** Understand who your customer is and what they want to hear. Tailor your language and content to resonate with them.
- **Choose Words Wisely:** The word "innovative" might be popular, but it might not always be the best choice depending on the context. For instance, in a military context, words like "proven" or "impactful" might be more appropriate than "innovative".
- **Identify Pain Points in Customer Requirement Documents:** Look for repetition in RFPs or other solicitation documents. Repetition can indicate areas of particular importance or concern for the client.
- **Use Tools to Aid in Document Discovery:** Functionality like VT Docs Discovery feature can help in identifying key points and themes in solicitation documents.
- Remember, the key to a successful proposal is to demonstrate a deep understanding of the client's needs and to present solutions that are both compelling and tailored to those needs.

“The biggest thing is telling everyone what it is that you're collaborating on and towards, setting goals clearly when you're asking for feedback.”

Ginny Carson,
Chickasaw Nation Industries

“To find those pieces in the narratives, in the pricing, and in the win themes is huge. Now, we are able to build a more quality product. Ultimately, it leads to a higher P-Win.”

Fred Vlchek
Director of Business Development (BD)
Operations at Pragmatics.



“The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter. 'tis the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

Mark Twain



Marketing Strategy

It is a process to allow an organization to focus resources on the greatest opportunities to increase and achieve the company's target. Marketing strategy's goal is to increase sales and achieve the advantage over competitors. It includes short term and long term activities of marketing that has to do with the company's situation and contribute to its objectives.

The objectives will be based on how you gain sales by acquiring and keeping customers. A marketing strategy conveys effective messages with the right twist of marketing approaches that will maximize your success in marketing activities. Putting your strategy into action is how your marketing plan should work. Marketing

Conclusion

Navigating the intricacies of effective business communication requires a comprehensive understanding of various elements, from the foundational aspects of a company style guide to the nuances of the editorial process. This Ultimate Style Guide has provided insights into the BLUF style, the significance of objective versus subjective writing, and the pivotal role of technology in enhancing communication. By addressing common writing challenges and emphasizing the tangible ROI of successful business writing, we've underscored the importance of clear, concise, and impactful communication. Furthermore, with solutions like VT Writer offering unique solutions, businesses are better equipped than ever to ensure their communications are not just good, but exceptional. As we conclude, remember that the essence of this guide is to empower businesses to communicate effectively, driving both understanding and results.



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