

Content Style Guide - Hello Partner

Authoritative, explanatory, approachable... minimal jargon

Abbreviations

Avoid abbreviating any words that the audience won't understand immediately. Commonly accepted abbreviations such as 'ad', 'spec', 'tech' are fine.

Internet slang: If it's the perfect term to use, use it, eg. FOMO, but don't overdo it, eg. 'Tbh' is a no.

Acronyms

Commonly known acronyms can be used without prior definition e.g. *ROI, CEO, SEO*.

For lesser-known acronyms, write the term in full for its first usage and then use the acronym.

E.g. The Influencer Marketing Trade Body is gaining a lot of new members. A few weeks ago, Ogilvy joined the IMTB.

If you are not going to use a lesser-known acronym frequently enough for the reader to become familiar with, you can put it in parentheses after the initial use of the full term.

E.g. The Influencer Marketing Show (IMS) is in October.

To make an acronym plural, just add s (no apostrophe).

E.g. There were 16 CEOs in the boardroom.

To make an acronym possessive, add 's (with an apostrophe).

E.g. The IAB's recent study

Capitalisation

After a colon

Don't capitalise the word after a colon.

E.g. There are three factors needed to succeed: time, money and data.

Company names

Capitalising or not depends on how a company writes it. If a company name begins with a lowercase letter, avoid using it at the beginning of a sentence. This is because the company name has to be written as it is, and starting a sentence with a lowercase letter doesn't look great.

E.g. Parents think that iPads are a great way to distract their children.

Study titles / surveys / blog posts / books etc.

References to the above are generally in the title case, with single quotation marks.

E.g. XL Marketing's 'Email Marketing Guide for 2016'.

Department names

The names of departments are *always* lowercase.

E.g. XL Marketing's sales department.

Job titles

Job titles are *always* lowercase, unless an acronym.

E.g. ...that's according to Neve Fear-Smith, journalist at Hello Partner, while its CEO, Matthew Wood, believes...

Industry-specific terminology

Industry-specific terminology is lowercase unless start of a sentence or in the title, despite often being capitalised - wrongly - elsewhere.

E.g. email marketing, retail vertical, click-through rate, e-commerce.

Headings and sub-headings

Capitalise important words (everything but articles, conjunctions, and prepositions) in headings.

E.g. The Ultimate Guide to Recovering from a Google Penalty

Not... The Ultimate Guide To Recovering From A Google Penalty

If you're unsure, we recommend using [this helpful site](#), referring to the MLA style.

Headings should be roughly 7-12 words.

Apart from the first word, you don't need to capitalise sub-headings and don't use a full stop.

E.g. Programmatic's potential

Not... Programmatic's Potential.

Contractions

Use contractions (it's, you're, they're, she's) with your own judgement. If it helps the writing to flow more easily for the reader, or if a written quote needs to come across more conversational, for example.

Numbers

Write out numbers up to nine, 10 and onwards in numerals. Percents, however, should always be written as numerals.

E.g. Of the 20 marketing employees...

E.g. Of the survey, three cited gathering data as a key problem, while 10% reported attribution issues.

Always avoid the use of numbers at the start of a sentence.

Dates

UK style: 1st September 2022

When saying 'today', add the date in parenthesis for reference later.

E.g. Launched today (3rd March), the new...

Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers (adjectives describing the numerical position of something) should be written out up to and including the ninth. Anything above this should be numerical.

In general, this rule should apply to all usage of numbers, such as when referring to decades also.

E.g. First, third, 10th.

E.g. 90s, 40s, 50s.

Percentages

Use numerical form for percentages. Don't include a space between the number and the percent sign. Avoid using at the start of a sentence.

E.g. The survey results showed that 70% of marketers don't know how to use affiliate marketing.

Time

E.g. 3pm, between 5-7pm

Punctuation

Commas

Use the serial (Oxford) comma before the "and" or "or" in lists.

E.g. Idea generation, content creation, distribution, and ROI optimisation.

Hyphens

Use em dashes (long hyphens) with spaces on either side for setting off text or emphasising a point in a sentence.

E.g. Some of the pain points – compliance, customer trust, and the proliferation of digital information – are so pressing that financial services marketers hold off on launching innovative campaigns and stick to the basics.

Use hyphens in numeric ranges (without spaces).

E.g. Numbers 11-25 are from the second study.

For differentiating between nouns, hyphens should also come in use.

E.g. Year-on-year increase in revenue.

Long-term growth
Six-month warning

Ellipses

Use non-spaced ellipses, with space after the last point (like this...)

Lists

Use full stops after list items if they form complete sentences unless the list is made of single phases.

- E.g.*
- 1. Invest in relationship-building.*
 - 2. Position communication as part of your core strategy.*
 - 3. Make a plan.*

Quotes

Use said (not says) when quoting someone.

E.g. "The general consensus is not to use programmatic," said Carter.

Always use double quotation marks with single quotation marks inside if necessary.

E.g. "I read the article 'The Programmatic Mind'," said Phelps.

Use single quotation marks if quoting an unfamiliar term.

E.g. The increasing adoption of 'account-based marketing'.

Periods and commas always go inside quotation marks.

E.g. "I was the first to join," Oats said, "when programmatic hadn't even been invented."

Question marks and exclamation points go inside quotation marks only when they're part of what the speaker is saying.

E.g. Cummings said, "Is that correct?"

Formatting

Standard news or feature article

News writing follows the format of the inverted pyramid to allow the most important points to operate at the head of the article. For more information on the inverted pyramid, you can find a bit more information [here](#). An easy way to assess whether your article does this is to study the who, what, when, where, why and how of the subject and see whether each of these points are covered off.

News pieces are at least 300 words in length and can be up to 1000 providing the coverage is justified.

If you're struggling to find information to put into the rest of the article (midpoint or towards the end) perhaps look at additional info on the company written elsewhere, but ideally on Hello Partner (Talking Influence/PerformancelN) in a previous news piece or guest article, providing it is relevant in the context of what you're writing about.

For news articles and guest features, you should use sub-headings to break up several paragraphs of text. This will allow you to separate different points of discussion.

Hello Partner's content is centered around a succinct approach, whereby guest features are typically between 800-1200 words and split up into at least two or three sub-headings. Big chunks of over four or five lines of text should generally be avoided, especially at the beginning of articles.

Linking out to other Hello Partner articles provides 'further reading', helps SEO ranking and improves the longevity of archived content.

Q&As

Name of participant will be ***bold & italic***, accompanied by contributor headshot in 80x80px. Following usage will be an acronym of the name in bold & italic. Questions in H3. All Q&As should open with an intro which sets the context and provides relevant background information. This doesn't need to be longer than 150 words.

Other Notes

- Companies are treated as a singular object, referred to as 'it', as opposed to 'them'.
- Hyperlinks may be added to individuals' names to social media accounts, i.e. LinkedIn, but companies or organisations cannot be hyperlinked to company/organisation sites unless it is sponsored content.
- PerformanceIN (the media publication) should be referring to PerformanceIN (the company)'s activities in 3rd person, with the aim of remaining impartial and portray facts - e.g. the recent coverage on the BBC into the BBC's (Panorama X Princess Diana) Scandal.
- An individual should be referenced by their full name on the first mention. Following that, just use their first name to emphasise a personable tone. If two or more references have the same first name, add in the first initial of their surname e.g. Matthew W. If surnames are also the same, just spell out their full name.
- Never use a long word/jargon where a short, commonly understood one will do.
- If it is possible to cut a word out, cut it out.

When in doubt about any of the above, please refer to the Guardian Style guide:

<https://www.theguardian.com/guardian-observer-style-guide-a>

We also recommend that you install 'Grammarly' to aid with general spelling and grammar.