

# CONTENT

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## STYLE GUIDE

# CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Writing Goals and Principles	4
Voice and Tone	6
Writing About People	9
Grammar and Mechanics	13
WordPress Publishing	27
Call to Action (CTA)	31
Writing Technical Content	33
Writing Email Newsletters	37
Writing for Social Media	40



**Hi there.**

Welcome to your content style guide for Today Digital.

This document will walk you through everything you need to know about writing styles, terminology, and tone of voice in all of our communications. You can apply these guidelines to blogs, news posts, newsletters, guides, and eBooks alike.

We created this guide for Today Digital employees, but we hope it's helpful for other content teams too. Each aspect of this guide helps our team to produce clear, consistent, and engaging content.

Notice something missing? Reach out to our team to offer feedback.



**MAKE EVERY WORD MATTER.**



# WRITING GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

Every piece published by Today Digital follows the same key principles.

Our content aims to:

- ➔ **Empower:** help readers to understand the underlying mission of Today Digital, and the content that we publish. All of our language is clear and transparent. We encourage writers to write in a way that makes readers feel informed.
- ➔ **Respect:** our writers should always step into the shoes of their reader to consider their individual needs. Our content should never be patronising or complicated. Today Digital aims to be considerate, inclusive, and friendly. We see our readers as people, not numbers.
- ➔ **Educate:** we believe in telling readers what they need to know. That means filtering through the fluff to find the most meaningful and actionable information. Remember, writers, you're the expert, and it's your job to make your knowledge more accessible.
- ➔ **Guide:** think of yourself as a tour guide for your readers. Whether you're leading users through educational materials, or helping them to understand part of our app, be helpful, supportive, and friendly.
- ➔ **Enlighten:** we ask our writers to understand the role Today Digital plays in the lives of our readers. Our content shouldn't be hyperbolic or exaggerated. We're down to earth, informative, and accurate.

# WRITING GOALS AND PRINCIPLES

To achieve these goals, we're committed to keeping our content:

- ➔ **Clear:** be sure you understand the topic before you start writing. Simple sentences are key
- ➔ **Useful:** everything we produce should have a purpose. Ask what the content is going to do for your reader, and who's going to benefit from it.
- ➔ **Friendly:** you're a human being – so write like one! Don't be afraid to bend the rules of grammar and syntax if it makes your content more relatable. We like our blogs, news articles, and other creations to be warm and personable
- ➔ **Appropriate:** write according to the situation. Your tone should adapt to suit who you're writing for, and what you're writing about.

# VOICE AND TONE

At Today Digital, we're always aware of our voice, and how it reaches people.

In this section, we'll explain what the voice and tone of Today Digital content should convey, and how you can apply these features to your writing.

So, what's the difference between voice and tone?

Well, you always have the same voice, but your tone changes to suit the situation.

You use a playful tone when you're chatting with friends, but a more sombre tone when talking about serious events. The tone you have with your partner is totally different to the one you use with your boss. Your tone even changes depending on the emotions of the person you're addressing. If someone you're talking to is scared or upset, your tone gets softer and more careful.

At Today Digital, our voice doesn't change, but our tone is adaptable. We encourage our writers to choose the right tone for each situation.



## VOICE

Today Digital is proud to say we've walked a mile in our customer's shoes.

We know the B2B world, and we understand how complicated technical jargon can be. That's why we speak with experience, compassion, and clarity. We aim to be the business partner we longed for way back when.

We treat every brand with respect and care and educate people without using confusing or patronising terms. We like to experiment with offbeat humour and a conversational tone, playing with language to bring more joy back into the industry.

Our statements are subtle, not noisy, and we prize the wry over the farcical. At Today Digital, we know our stuff, but we don't take ourselves too seriously.

Whether people approach us looking for answers to specific questions, or they're totally lost at sea, we'll help them find their way with language that encourages, informs, and engages. We're always willing to share our expertise with empathy and wit.

Any copy you produce for Today Digital should be:

→ **Candid:** we know our customers because we've been in their shoes. We're not here to confuse them with complicated language and jargon. Our content is plain, simple, but valuable. Avoid the fluff and distraction and write in a way that your reader can appreciate

→ **Genuine:** we get the small business mindset. We've been through the difficult journey of growth, and relate to our customers passions, challenges, and concerns. Our genuine voice aims to be warm, accessible, and familiar at all times

→ **Educational:** yes, our industry can be complicated, but it's our job to make it simple. Our writers demystify the jargon to deliver content in a way that's educational, but not patronising

→ **Humorous:** we have a sense of humour. It's straight-faced, a little eccentric at times, and subtle. We don't mind being a bit weird, and we aim to be smart without being snobbish (or condescending). Our readers are always in on the joke.



## TONE

As we mentioned above, our tone can vary – it's dependent on the situation.

We allow empathy and understanding to inform our tone.

Usually, we're friendly and positive. We speak in a way that encourages people to feel comfortable connecting with us. Our conversational tone bypasses complicated words and overly-intelligent waffle. We stick to everyday talk that's easy to follow and understand. We inform, entertain, and educate, while keeping our readers, interviewees, and brands in the spotlight.



# WRITING ABOUT PEOPLE

When you're writing for any audience, it's important to be inclusive, compassionate, and respectful.

Words have an impact, and you need to know what yours are doing for Today Digital. Being aware of your language, and how you reference people will help you to align with Today Digital's values.

In this section, we'll cover some of the guidelines we follow for writing about people.



## AGE

People don't always like to share their age. Unless it's relevant to your story, it's best to avoid mentioning age entirely. If it is relevant, make the age specific (not a general range), offset by commas.

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## DISABILITY

Always avoid idioms related to disability, like "falling on deaf ears", and don't refer to the disability a person might have unless it's fully relevant to the story. If you do need to mention it, ask the subject about their preferences, do they prefer identity-first language like "they are disabled", or person-first language like "they have a disability".

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## GENDER AND SEXUALITY

Groups of women aren't "girls", and groups of people aren't just "guys".

Stay away from gendered language whenever you can, and opt for neutral alternatives, like "Police Officer", instead of "Policeman".

"They" is an appropriate term as a singular pronoun. The following words may be used as modifiers in your content, but not as nouns:

- **bisexual**
- **transgender (never "transgendered")**
- **trans**
- **lesbian**
- **gay**
- **queer**
- **LGBT**

Avoid the following words in reference to the LGBTQ community:

- **homosexual**
- **lifestyle**
- **preference**

Terms like "same-sex" marriage should be avoided unless the distinction is necessary based on what you're writing. It's just "marriage".

When you're writing about a person, always use the pronouns that they prefer. If in doubt, use their name, or ask their preference.



## HEARING

“Deaf” is a suitable adjective to describe an individual with significant loss of hearing. You may also use “hard of hearing”, or “partially deaf”.

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## HERITAGE AND NATIONALITY

Hyphens are not necessary for referring to someone with a dual nationality. Use “Latin American”, not “Latin-American”.

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## MEDICAL CONDITIONS

References to medical conditions should be avoided unless they are relevant.

If a reference to a medical condition is necessary, use the rules above for writing about disabilities, and emphasise the person first. People with medical conditions should not be labelled “victims”.



## MENTAL AND COGNITIVE CONDITIONS

Do not refer to cognitive or mental conditions unless it is relevant to the content. Do not assume that anyone has a medical condition, mental or otherwise.

Don't describe people as being “mentally ill”. If you must reference a mental or cognitive condition, use the rules that apply when writing about medical conditions and place the initial emphasis on the person, “he has OCD”.

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## RACE

When referencing an ethnicity or culture (in relevant circumstances), capitalise the name. “Black” refers to Americans in the African diaspora, however “white” would be lowercase, as it refers to the colour of a person’s skin and not a specific community.

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## VISION

“Blind” is a suitable descriptor for someone unable to see. “Low Vision” is appropriate for people with limited vision.

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# GRAMMAR AND MECHANICS

Adhering to the general rules of grammar and writing mechanics keeps the language on Today Digital consistent and clear. Our grammatical style applies to all content produced by our team (unless otherwise stated).

## BASICS

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Your aim is to write for everyone.

Some of our visitors will read every word you write, while others just browse through your content, picking up messages here and there. A good way to help everyone absorb information is to group related ideas together. Headers and sub-headers help to organise your content.

Remember, good writing is focused. Don't allow yourself to go off on a tangent. Focus on the message you want to send with a hierarchy of information that places the most important point first, then follows up with related ideas. Remember, all content must be:

- ➔ **Concise:** brief sentences and words are easier to read
- ➔ **Specific:** stay away from vague and fluffy writing
- ➔ **Consistent:** maintain an ongoing focus on the same copy patterns

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

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Abbreviations and acronyms are only useful when your readers recognise them.

If you're concerned your readers may not be aware of the terms you use, spell it the first time you mention it, then follow with the shorter version.

- ➔ First use: "Voice over IP (VoIP)"
- ➔ Second use: "VoIP"
- ➔ First use: "Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)"
- ➔ Second use: "GMT"

If you're aware that the acronym or abbreviation is well-known, you won't always have to spell it out.

## ACTIVE VOICE

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Stick to active voice and avoid the passive.

Remember, active voice means the subject of the sentence does the action. In passive language, the subject of the sentence has the action done to it.

For instance, "Steven accessed his account" is active. "The account was accessed by Steven" is passive.

Be careful of words like "by" and "was" as they often indicate passive voice. One exception to this rule is when it's necessary to emphasise the action more than the subject.

## CAPITALISATION

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Capitalisation appears in various forms on Today Digital sites. Title case capitalises the first letter of each word except for prepositions, conjunctions, and articles. Sentence case only applies capital letters to the first letter of the first word in a sentence.

For URLs and email addresses, we use all lowercase

→ **john.smith@todaydigital.com**

→ **todaydigital.com**

Do not capitalise random words in sentences unless it's a name. You can see our full word list for words we never capitalise, a few examples include:

→ **website**

→ **internet**

→ **online**

→ **email**

## CONTRACTIONS

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They're great, so use them! Contractions make your writing more informal and friendly.

## EMOJIS

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Emojis are a fun way to add humour and visual interest to your writing. But be careful, don't go over the top with your emojis. Use them deliberately, but never in mid-sentence.

## NUMBERS

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Spell out all numbers up to ten (i.e. one, two, three etc.), beyond ten use numerals (i.e. 11, 12, 13 etc.)

Numbers over 3 digits get commas:

- **999**
- **1,000**
- **150,000**

Always write out numbers in full in articles. However, be ready to abbreviate for space restraints, such as in a chart or Tweet, you might use "1k" for instance.

## DATES

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- Always spell out the day of the week and the month. Saturday, March 29
- Sat., Mar. 29



## DECIMALS AND FRACTIONS

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Fractions need to be spelled out.

→ Yes: two-thirds

→ No: 2/3

## PERCENTAGES

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Use the % symbol in titles only. In main body copy use “percent”

## RANGES AND SPANS

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Use a hyphen (-) to indicate a range of numbers.

→ It takes 5-10 days to read this guide

## MONEY

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When discussing British currency, use the pound sign before the amount.

Decimals may be necessary for pennies and cents over 0.

→ £20

→ £19.99

When writing about other currencies, follow the same format, with the symbol first.

→ \$1

→ €1

## PHONE NUMBERS

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Use a country code and plus sign when possible.

→ **+447041234567**

## TEMPERATURE

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Use the capital C abbreviation and degree symbol for Celsius.

→ **25°C**

## TIME

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Use numerals and “am” or “pm”, with a space in between.

→ **7 am**

→ **7:30 pm**

Use a hyphen between times to refer to a period of time.

→ **7 am–10:30 pm**

Specify time zones when referring to events people may need to schedule.

Because Today Digital is a UK company, we often default to GMT.

Spell out your international time zones: “Greenwich Mean Time”. If there is no set name, you can use the Coordinated Universal Time (UTC) offset.

Abbreviate decades when referencing those from the last 100 years.

→ **the 00s**

→ **the 90s**

Be more specific when referring to decades more than 100 years ago.

→ **the 1900s**

→ **the 1890s**



## PUNCTUATION

### APOSTROPHES

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Apostrophes make a word possessive. If a singular word ends in an s, you can add 's. If the word ends in s, and it's plural, then just add an apostrophe.

→ **The dog stole Jeff's newspaper**

→ **The dog stole the Smiths' newspaper**

Apostrophes are sometimes relevant for contractions in words, when you drop a few letters. For instance, "got 'em" instead of "got them". This can add personality to content, but be careful not to use it too much.

### COLONS

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Use a colon (not a comma, ellipses or em dash) to begin a list.

→ **Sarah packed 3 items: her swimsuit, a black dress, and a pair of sandals.**

## COMMAS

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When writing a list, use the serial comma (also known as the Oxford comma):

→ **Tim bought a pack of gum, a chocolate bar, and a jar of jam**

Otherwise, use common sense when placing commas in text. Read the sentence out loud if you're unsure and use a comma where you take a breath.

## DASHES AND HYPHENS

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Hyphens (-) without spaces on either side can link words to a single phrase, such as “first-time user.” Dashes can also show a range, such as Monday-Friday.

Em dashes (—) without spaces indicate an offset statement:

→ Video conferencing—one of the latest features of the app—is excellent for collaboration

→ You might think that the cloud isn't secure, but that's not true—new security features are emerging all the time.

Make sure you use a true em dash, not just a hyphen or --.

## ELLIPSES

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Ellipses (...) are handy for showing that you're tailing off after a thought. Be careful to use ellipses sparingly, and never for headers, titles, or emphasis.

→ “Where did our newspaper go?” the Smiths' asked. They might never know...

In brackets, ellipses can demonstrate words emitted from a lengthy quote:

→ “When you're designing the perfect UCaaS strategy, you'll need to think about a lot of factors [...], sometimes, video conferencing is a necessary feature.”

## PERIODS

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Periods go at the end of sentences, and inside quotation marks. You can place a period outside of a parentheses when the parenthetical belongs to a larger sentence. If the parenthetical stands alone, keep the punctuation inside the parentheses.

→ “It’s an incredible new feature.” Said the CEO.

→ We now offer video conferencing (and video recording, too).

→ Video conferencing is a powerful feature (video is available in all packages.)

Between sentences, you should only leave a single space.

## QUESTION MARKS

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If a question is part of the quote, then the question mark should go within the quotation marks. You can place a question mark outside of parentheses when it’s part of a larger sentence, or inside when the parenthetical stands alone.

## EXCLAMATION POINTS

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Use exclamation points sparingly. Exclamation points can emphasise your content. Too many exclamation marks make it hard to determine what you need to emphasise. Never use multiple exclamation marks (it looks unprofessional).

Exclamation points stay inside quotation marks, and inside parentheses when the parenthetical stands alone. Exclamation points go outside of the parentheses when the statement is part of a larger sentence. Don’t use exclamation marks in alerts and error messages.

## QUOTES

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Quotes should refer to letters, words, and titles of short works and direct quotations.

Commas and periods go within quotation marks, and question marks should be placed based on whether the question is included within the quote, or not. Single quotation marks are suitable for quotes within quotes:

→ **He told us: “Our customers often say, ‘we’re in desperate need of this feature.’”**

## SEMICOLONS

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Be cautious with semicolons. Usually, they’re there to support long and complex sentences. If you find yourself needing a semicolon, ask if the sentence could be simplified.

## AMPERSANDS

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Ampersands are only necessary when part of a company or brand name.

→ **Bang & Olufsen**

→ **Brad and Sarah**



## PEOPLE, PLACES, AND THINGS

### FILE EXTENSIONS

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When referencing file extension times, use all uppercase letters. Add a lowercase “s” to refer to the plural:

- ➔ **JPG or JPGs**
- ➔ **GIF or GIFs**
- ➔ **PDF or PDFs**

### PRONOUNS

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When you don’t know the gender of the subject, stick to “they,” “them,” or “their.” You can use gendered pronouns like “he/him/his” when appropriate. Do not use “one” as a pronoun.

### QUOTES

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When quoting a person in a publication, use the present tense:

- ➔ **“We love working with Today Digital” says Ian Scott**

## NAMES AND TITLES

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The first mention of a person in writing should include a reference to them by their first and last names. All other mentions should use the first name. Surnames are sometimes suitable in certain reports.

Capitalise the names of teams and departments, but not the word “team”:

→ **Commercial department**

→ **Marketing team**

Capitalise job titles when mentioning a specific role, but not when referring to that role in generic terms:

→ **We recently hired a new Chief Marketing Manager**

→ **Our managers are very hard-working**

Use an actual title when referencing to someone’s role, not words like “wizard” or “rockstar.”

## STATES, CITIES, AND COUNTRIES

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Don’t abbreviate any city, county, or state names. Spell out the name of each place.

## URLS AND WEBSITES

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Capitalise the names of sites and don’t use italics. When you need to spell out full URLs, leave off the https://www.



## WRITING ABOUT TODAY DIGITAL

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The legal trading name of Today Digital is “Today Digital Ltd.” It’s only necessary to add “Ltd” when writing contracts or legal documents. Elsewhere, you can just use “Today Digital.”

## WRITING ABOUT OTHER COMPANIES

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When referencing other companies, make sure that you honour the way they spell/write their name or product. For instance, “Yahoo!”, or “iPad”.

Companies should be referred to as “it” (not they)

## SLANG AND JARGON

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Ditch the jargon.

If you’re using a technical term for any reason, define it briefly when you first mention it.

## WRITING ABOUT OTHER COMPANIES

---

When referencing other companies, make sure that you honour the way they spell/write their name or product. For instance, “Yahoo!”, or “iPad”.

Companies should be referred to as “it” (not they)

## TEXT FORMATTING

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Italics are suitable for referencing the title of a book, movie, or album. They can also emphasise a word.

- **The Phantom of the Opera**
- **The Phantom of the Opera is Regina's favourite play.**

When citing an example of an in-app element on Today Digital, or referencing button labels in a set of instructions, you can also use italics.

- **When you're done, click Apply**
- **Family UCaaS features—Telephony, recording, and video**

Do not use underlines in formatting, all-caps, or bold.

Left-align your text at all times and leave one space between sentences.

## WRITE POSITIVELY

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We like positive language here. Avoid words like “can’t”, and “don’t”.

Instead of “you can’t access video without a webcam”, try “you can use video with a webcam.”

# WORDPRESS PUBLISHING

Our content follows crucial rules for WordPress publishing.

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## GUIDELINES

### FEATURED IMAGES

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Featured images should have an accurate file name for SEO purposes. Use hyphens in place of spaces and stick to lowercase:

- **Yes, salesforce-acquires-slack.jpg**
- **No, Salesforce-Acquires-Slack.jpg**

### ALT TEXT

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Label your images with alt text to assist people who cannot see the images on Today Digital. Just use a brief description, such as: “A VoIP phone sitting on a desk.”

### BUTTONS

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Buttons must contain clear, concise actions. Every word must be capitalised on a button and you can use an ampersand if necessary, to reduce the size of the button:

- **Sign Up & Save**
- **Contact Us**

## FORMS

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Form titles should describe the purpose of the form clearly and concisely.

Use sentence case for form fields and title case for form titles.

Keep forms short, only requesting essential information. Do not ask for personal details (including gender). If you must ask for gender information, provide a field where a user can add their own term.

## HEADINGS AND SUBHEADINGS

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Subheadings and headings are valuable in helping readers skim content. They should include relevant keywords and describe the contents below.

Write headings in title case and do not use end punctuation except for question marks. Organise the headings on the page in a natural hierarchy, with the Title or H1 first, followed by H2, H3, and so on.

➔ H1 headings show people what they're about to read – they're ideal for blog and article titles.

➔ Subheadings (H2 and H3) break articles into specific sections. These can make your content more scannable and easier to digest.

## LINKS

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Link out to resources when you're referring to something on an external website. Links should point users to relevant content and external resources. For instance, "check out our UCaaS Smart Guide for details."

Avoid phrases like "Click here!" or "Read this." Instead, write the sentence normally, then add the link to the relevant anchor words.

For proper formatting, links should look different to regular copy, emphasis text, or strong text. Links should have hover states that demonstrate their interactive nature and should have a distinct state to separate visited links from active ones. A focus state is also essential for readers using touch devices and assisted tech.

External links should always open in a new window, while internal links can open in the same window.

## NAVIGATION

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Title case is suitable for global or primary-navigation, and sentence case is suitable for sub-navigation. Navigation links should be concise and clear.

## RELATED ARTICLES

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A long piece of copy can lend itself to various related links at the end. You can list up to 4 related links if necessary. Related articles should follow a logical order, following the "step down" guidelines. The first article should be less complex than the current article, while the second may be more advanced. Avoid repeating links from the body text in the related content.

## TITLES

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Titles organise guides and pages. Titles must appear at the beginning of a section or page, and it briefly describes the content following. Titles also tell search engines what pages are about, and they show up in search results. Titles should always be written in title case, and don't require end punctuation (except for question marks).

## SEO

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We prefer to write for people (not just search engines).

Although we're aware of SEO techniques, we don't use annoying strategies like keyword stuffing. Though we want to make our articles easy to find, they need to be simple to read too. Optimise for people and SEO by:

- **Focusing a page on a single topic**
- **Using descriptive headings and titles**
- **Giving every image the right alt text**

# CALL TO ACTION (CTA)

CTAs, or 'Calls to Action', are crucial in any website.

These tools help to guide our readers to wherever we want them to go next. They also dramatically improve conversion rates.

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## STANDARD TODAY DIGITAL CTAS

**Offer:** Watch video

**CTA:** WATCH THE VIDEO

**Offer:** Report

**CTA:** GET THE REPORT

**Offer:** Download the eBook

**CTA:** DOWNLOAD THE EBOOK

**Offer:** Webinar

**CTA:** WATCH THE WEBINAR

**Offer:** Read the story/blog

**CTA:** READ THE STORY

**Offer:** Register for the event

**CTA:** REGISTER FOR THE EVENT

**Offer:** eBook

**CTA:** GET THE EBOOK

**Offer:** Contact module

**CTA:** CONTACT US



## CTA BUTTON BEST PRACTICES

If you can't find the CTA you need above, you can create your own.

To create a suitable CTA, use the 'Action + Offer' guidelines. The right button will give users a clear action to perform, while identifying what they get for clicking. This requires creativity and care, because you should only include up to 3 words on a button.

Remember:

- ➔ Don't just say "Click Here". That doesn't tell customers what they get. Try "Get the Report" instead.
- ➔ Don't tell users to "Download Now". This doesn't tell them what they're downloading. Say "Get the eBook" instead.
- ➔ Avoid using the word "Download" when a CTA leads to a gated asset or landing page unless the asset will begin to immediately download after the user clicks. This is misleading.

Always prioritise accessibility. If you're using the same CTA repeatedly on a page, but link to different resources, you'll need to choose text with more clarity.



# WRITING TECHNICAL CONTENT

For this section, we'll be covering the basics of writing technical content, as well as discussing the main kinds of technical content that you may create.

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## BASICS

Technical content is informative and specific. If someone's reading it, they're usually searching for a specific answer to a question. Depending on the situation, a question might be very narrowly focused, or broad. The job we have is to deliver an answer that's easy to follow.

When creating technical content, step into your reader's shoes. Think about:

- ➔ **Experience:** is the reader a new or experienced user?
- ➔ **Goals:** what does the user want to achieve?
- ➔ **Situation:** how quickly does your reader need information?

Ideally, you don't want to pile too much complicated information onto a customer at once. Excessive choices, complicated ideas, and jargon-filled phrasing isn't suitable for technical content. This is particularly important when your user might be new to the industry or frustrated by their concern.

Providing a brief outline of the article topic may be helpful in some cases. Use this introduction in the first section of the article and keep your insights short and concise.



## GUIDELINES

### WRITING TECHNICAL CONTENT

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When producing technical content, use the style points we gave above in our mechanics, grammar, tone, and voice sections. Other points to keep in mind include:

- ➔ **Stay relevant:** when a user clicks on an article title, they expect to find the information alluded to in the title. Don't waffle or stray from the topic at hand. If relevant, you can link out to connected content so users can choose whether they want to learn about other related topics.
- ➔ **Short and sweet:** headlines and paragraphs need to be short and scannable. Get straight to the point for focused users who want to find answers quickly. Stick to short, meaningful sentences that are easy to follow.
- ➔ **Simplicity is key:** be clear and simple with your content. Jargon is confusing, so don't use it. Hard-to-translate idioms can go over your reader's head.

### FORMATTING TECHNICAL CONTENT

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Formatting is important in any Today Digital content. However, technical content often uses specific formatting strategies to convey meaning. Capitalisation, organisation, and other formatting techniques help to draw the eye and deliver quicker answers.

## CAPITALISATION

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Use capitals at the start of the proper names for Today Digital products, pages, teams, and features. With instructions, capitalise and bold labels and navigation titles when necessary. For instance:

- **Today Digital**
- **Customer Success Team**
- **Navigate to the Smart Guides page.**

## HEADINGS

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Organise your content with H2s and H3s, similar to the guidelines above. H2s introduce high-level goals and topics, while H3s precede complementary information.

Article title: About UCaaS

**H2:** What is UCaaS?

**H2:** How does UCaaS work?

**H2:** Components of UCaaS

**H3:** Telephony features

**H3:** Mobility

**H3:** Unified messaging

## ORDERED LISTS

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Ordered lists (with numbers) are suitable for step-by-step instructions. When introducing steps, make sure you separate them into logical chunks. Include no more than 2 related actions for each step, to make the process easy to follow. If an extra explanation or screenshot is necessary, use a line break within the list item.

## UNORDERED LISTS

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Unordered lists can display various notes or examples. If there are more than 10 items in one of these lists, use a table.

# WRITING EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

Emails are an important part of staying in touch with our readers and customers.

As devices shrink and customers search for ways to simplify the inbox, it's important to only send emails when you have something valuable to share.



## BASICS

We use email newsletters to inform and empower our Today Digital community. We share content such as:

- Event announcements
  - Latest news stories and blog posts
  - Featured insights and content
- 



## GUIDELINES

Our email newsletters follow the same guidelines outlined in our grammar, tone, mechanics, and voice policies outlined above.

## EMAIL ELEMENTS

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Emails are composed of various elements that must all be in place before you hit send. Check for the following:

- ➔ **The “From” name** – either “Today Digital” or a team member’s name. This identifies you in your reader’s inbox
  
- ➔ **The subject line** – subject lines should be straight to the point and eye-catching. Remember, many email clients only show the first few words. Let your readers know what to expect from the message and remember to write in sentence case
  
- ➔ **Preheader text** – the top line of your message will appear alongside the subject line in some email inboxes. Ensure these words set expectations for the content within
  
- ➔ **Body copy** – this is the main heart of the email. Your body content should be concise, purposeful, and connected to the central idea behind your email
  
- ➔ **Call to Action** – let your reader know what to do next. Whether you’re asking for a purchase, or encouraging a click to a website page, give readers direction. Your CTA should be clear and concise
  
- ➔ **Footer** – all campaigns from Today Digital must follow UK advertising and privacy laws. Unsubscribe links must always be present, along with our mailing address and a permission reminder

## EMAIL WRITING ADVICE

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Each email we send reflects Today Digital as a brand.

Remember to:

- ➔ **Consider perspective:** we use the third person “we” at Today Digital when sending an email newsletter from Today Digital. If you’re sending a message as an individual, use “I”
- ➔ **Segment the audience:** make sure that your emails are going to the people most likely to appreciate them. Not every user will be interested in every topic
- ➔ **Use hierarchy:** most readers scan through an email from a smartphone screen. Place the most important information at the top of the email
- ➔ **Drive action:** the next step you want your customer to take should be obvious at the end of each campaign. Link to an event registration page, purchase page, or article post. Buttons and text links can be useful for your CTA
- ➔ **Avoid unnecessary linking:** most people read emails from a smartphone screen, so it’s important to avoid too many links. Your CTA should be the central link to avoid errant accidental clicking.
- ➔ **Use alt text:** some email clients automatically disable images. Alt tags describe information in an image so your reader can still see it.

If you’re sending email campaigns through, or on behalf of Today Digital, regular testing is essential. Using the preview mode in your email campaigns will help you to determine how professional the email will look on any screen. You should also send a test email to your inbox to check that everything works as it should.

Before sending an email to our community, re-read it out loud to yourself. You might come across the occasional typo this way. Having a co-worker double-check for errors is useful too.

# WRITING FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Alongside email, Today Digital uses social media to build relationships with our community.

We love social media as a way to share the cool stuff we've been writing about and reporting on. However, there's always a chance that you could say the wrong thing when under the watchful eye of our community. It's crucial to be careful when representing our brand anywhere.

We encourage our writers to be careful about what they post on social channels. Here's what you need to know.

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## BASICS

We're proud to say that we're active on most social media platforms. Here are some of our most active accounts, and what we post on them:

- **Instagram:** Today Digital work life experiences and event images
- **Facebook:** recent news posts, video posts, and blog links
- **Twitter:** video posts, blogs, and news posts
- **LinkedIn:** blogs, videos, and news posts





## GUIDELINES

Our Today Digital social channels are managed by our marketing team. The guidelines for social media writing follow the same points addressed by our voice, grammar, mechanics, and tone sections above.

Additional pointers include:

### BE SMART AND CONCISE

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Social media platforms often have a character limit. We like to keep our updates short.

→ **Twitter:** 280 characters

→ **Facebook:** no limit but 2 sentences or less is best

→ **Instagram:** no limit but one sentence or less is best. Remember to use emojis!

Try to simplify your writing to keep your posts short, but don't alter the grammar, punctuation, or spelling of the words. Although it's acceptable to use some shorter versions of words like "tech" for "technology", or "info" for "information", we don't like text-speak.

Don't use numbers and single letters in place of words. For instance, "2" instead of "to" isn't appropriate. Don't use "u" instead of "you" either.

## ENGAGEMENT

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We ask our writers to follow our style guidelines when using social media channels to connect with followers and potential customers. You're representing the brand, after all. Use the right punctuation and grammar and stay away from excessive exclamation points.

When possible, it's fine to tag the subject of your post on Facebook or Twitter. However, don't tweet directly at other people just to let them know they've been mentioned in an article. It doesn't look professional. Don't ask with likes, retweets, or favourites either.

Good: "We spoke to @Microsoft about their #collaboration platform today. [URL link]"

Bad: "Hey @Microsoft, will you retweet this article we wrote? [URL link]"

## HASHTAGS

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Hashtags are a great way to add context to our posts and make them more searchable. We like to add popular and relevant hashtags to our posts where possible to boost customer experience and promote our content in the right categories.

## TRENDING TOPICS

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Never use Today Digital social media assets to comment on current events and trending topics that aren't connected to our brand and channel.

[todaydigital.com](https://todaydigital.com)

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# CONTENT STYLE GUIDE