



MACHINE Q™

Brand Voice Guidelines

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# Brand Voice

Words are not graphic images on a screen but often become images in the minds of our customers. Like visuals, words create concepts, follow patterns, and establish relationships between objects. The words we choose and the way we arrange them establish the voice of our brand.

When used consistently it creates a sense of trust and familiarity. When used inconsistently it can dilute the brand, erode confidence and cause confusion. This document should be used as a source of truth for verbal tone, style, and best practices across all MachineQ communications.

## SECTION ONE

# Verbal Tone

MachineQ exists at the center of an emerging technology, yet our audience has varying degrees of technical expertise. While the markets we serve require variation in content and technical depth, we always speak in an engaging, conversational tone that is direct, confident, intelligent, and informed.

## Direct and to-the-point

We focus on what matters and speak in a simple and engaging way. When writing, keep in mind opportunities for visuals to support or tell the story.

### TIPS:

- Keep communication digestible
- Focus on substantive information and get to the point
- Favor simple sentence structures when possible
- Use direct language to convey purpose
- Lead with your objective, don't bury it at the end
- Keep the content relevant to the topic

✓ *Do this...*

**We've built a platform for the full cycle of IoT management. From device to cloud to data delivery, we can support whatever IoT solution you dream up.**

✗ *Not this...*

**Our platform enables the IoT life-cycle from device creation to cloud management, supporting a diverse ecosystem of devices and third-party solutions.**

## Confident

We believe in what we do. We are passionate about our technology and the benefits it brings to the world.

### TIPS:

- Ditch hedge words or words that undercut what you just said, such as “may,” “possibly,” and “potentially”
- Write in active voice
- Remove superfluous and filler words

✓ *Do this...*

**Data delivered to your application of choice.  
Access powerful insights to run your business more  
efficiently, and identify opportunities for growth.**

✗ *Not this...*

**The MachineQ platform enables the IoT life-  
cycle from device creation to cloud management,  
supporting a diverse ecosystem of proprietary and  
third-party solutions.**

## Conversational

Our tone is conversational with a mix of important information and conviction. We engage with our audience as humans = we seek open conversations and express our sincere passion in a conversational and approachable manner.

### TIPS:

- Focus on the customer benefit and use language your audience understands
- Show your audience you are listening by playing back their questions and concerns
- Adopt a natural, conversational tone
- Avoid language that may be perceived as contrived, buzzy or inauthentic
- Use words you would actually use in speech, leave the thesaurus at home

### ✓ Do this...

**Built and tested by our incredible team of experts, we make sure your LoRaWAN® gateways achieve optimal connectivity from the moment they are deployed. Use our platform as your centralized management tool for software, application, and configuration updates. Plus get real-time updates on the health of your deployments.**

### ✗ Not this...

**Our gateways are built and tested by our in-house LoRaWAN® experts to ensure optimal connectivity for all of your deployments. Our platform provides centralized management for critical software, application, and configuration updates, while providing a window into the health of your deployments.**

## Intelligent & Informed

We are leaders in a highly technical industry. We understand our customers needs and deliver information as a source of knowledge and expertise.

### TIPS:

- Lead with a paint point or solution
- Provide information that is useful for the audience
- Tailor content to the specific audience
- Address customer needs and demonstrate our benefits

✓ *Do this...*

**As your business needs evolve, you need a solution that is flexible and comprehensive. With MachineQ as your trusted partner, you'll harness the power of IoT to reduce costs, drive revenue, and streamline your operations.**

✗ *Not this...*

**Our IoT platform makes it easy for you to access real-time data that can help drive revenue, reduce costs, adhere to compliance requirements and streamline operations.**

## SECTION TWO

# Language & Style

Our global style guide is Chicago. If you have questions that are not answered in this document, please refer the online [Chicago style guide](#), which has an extensive list of searchable style rules and guidelines, making it a one stop resource for all your grammar questions.

## Use of Capital Letters

To ensure our tone of voice is real, authentic, and natural, avoid using capitalizations except at the beginning of a sentence or when referencing a product/company/ proper nouns (such as the Cloud). Refrain from using all caps except as an acronym or company name.

## Use of Emphasis & Bold

Rarely, but when necessary, use of bold can be incorporated for emphasis within a document. Aside from the use of emphasis, bold may be used when creating a list, such as in the example of the verbal tone, where a bulleted list is not possible due to the complexity of the content.

## Use of Space

As a digital-first company, we use one space after sentences. We do not indent paragraphs.

## Use of Commas

In favor of writing in a narrative and authentic tone, we use the [Oxford comma](#). In addition, commas and other punctuation belongs inside the quotation.

*example:*

**“What will we do today, Brain?” asked Pinky.**  
**“The same thing we do every day, Pinky,” said Brain.**  
**“Try to take over the world.”**



## Use of Bullets

Use bullet points to cut to the chase and focus on the most important details. Make every point essential and impactful by following these 5 simple rules:

- 1. Treat Bullets Like Headlines**  
Use active voice and power words
- 2. Keep it Simple**  
Focus on what is important
- 3. Stay on Topic**  
Keep points thematically related
- 4. Make Points Consistent**  
Use similar words and structure within the list
- 5. Don't Overdo it**  
Use lists as necessary to retain their impact

### **The Introductory Sentence**

If the text introducing your list is a complete sentence, it should end with a colon. If it's a fragment, forget the colon and jump straight into the list.

### **Numbers vs Bullets**

Use bullet points unless the list needs to take place in a specific order.

### **Punctuation**

As a best practice, bulleted lists should not be complete sentences and do not need to end in punctuation. Each item in the list should begin with a capital letter, but this is not headline text—only proper nouns should be capitalized if they do not start the bulleted point.

### SECTION THREE

# Best Practices

When it comes to building a memorable brand, it's all about consistency. These best practices should be followed for consistency and to maximize the effectiveness of each communication.

## Headlines

When writing a headline, focus on the benefit to the customer or reader, not the “us’ or “we.”

Our headline style is Title Case. We capitalize the first word in a headline, the last word in a headline, and all of the important words with the headline.

### **We do not capitalize:**

- Articles (a, an, the)
- Coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for)
- Prepositions (at, by, from)

✓ *Do this...*

**10 Ways IoT Will Revolutionize Your  
Business in 2019**

✗ *Not this...*

**2019 Predictions – Enterprise IoT**

## Calls to Action

As the name implies, calls to action (CTA) should feature action-packed text. Effective calls to action create urgency while focusing on the value and minimizing the risk for the user.

### TIPS:

- Be direct and functional
- Use first person when it calls for it
- Limit word count to 5 or less

All forms of communication should have a CTA. Think about what we want the customer to do after they've consumed the content and make sure that the CTA supports it clearly and accessibly.

✓ *Do this...*

Check Our Prices

Contact Sales

✗ *Not this...*

Contact Us to See Our Prices

## Body Copy

When writing body copy for a blog or website, be sure to answer the following questions:

1. What does your audience want?
2. What's the biggest hurdle holding them back?
3. How do we help them overcome this hurdle?
4. What's our promise to them?
5. What should they do now that they have this information?

When writing web copy, keep in mind that the audience may not want to read every detail but instead look for the information that is most relevant to them. To help the reader, the following best practices to make our web-copy more user friendly.

### **Use Headlines Throughout**

If the text introducing your list is a complete sentence, it should end with a colon. If it's a fragment, forget the colon and jump straight into the list.

### **Keep Paragraphs Short**

Concise, relevant sentences and short paragraphs make information easier to digest.

### **Frontload Important Information**

Start with the content that is most important to our audience, then provide additional details.

### **Omit Unnecessary Words**

Most of the time you can remove about half the words on a web page without losing value. By getting rid of unnecessary words, we make the content more prevalent and easier to scan.

## Social Media

Social media can be an opportunity to engage our audience and show our brand personality, but is only effective when we serve relevant and useful content.

### TIPS:

#### Be Customer-Centric

In other words, post what our clients and potential customers want to see. Don't just talk at them.

#### Keep the Message Focused

Don't try to serve everyone at once. Make sure that you have a specific audience in mind when writing a post. Thought leadership content is one of the rare exceptions to this rule as it has potential value for all.

#### Use Relevant Hashtags, Conversationally

Hashtags are an excellent way to widen our reach, but loading messages with extra hashtag jargon can dilute the message and legibility. Find 1-3 hashtags to include in a post and make sure you can read the post coherently as a sentence.

#### Add a Call to Action

Encourage our users to visit our website, watch a video, visit us at an event, or contact us.

✓ Do this...

With our affordable full stack of intuitive tools and solutions, we leverage [#LoRa](#) so you can turn [#bigdata](#) into actionable intelligence to solve virtually any business problem with [#IoT](#) <https://comcast/2KMnU0x>

✗ Not this...

New to [@machineQ](#)'s [#IoT](#) management platform? Need a hardware, software or network demo, got questions? Request a meeting <https://buff.ly/2S1c6wV> [@machineQ](#) [#MWC19](#) [#ComcastPartner](#)

Questions?

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