

# BRAND CONTENT STYLE GUIDELINES

## 1. WHO WE ARE

- 1. Who Are We?** Express Writers is a content agency focused on providing online content for businesses of all sizes. Founded by CEO Julia McCoy in 2011 with an investment of \$75, our bootstrapped business has grown organically to include a lean and effective management team and a loyal contingent of sixty full-time writers. We've highlighted on dozens of content marketing channels, and our team continues steady growth and learning through stellar mentorship and teamwork. (Follow us on [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#).)
- 2. What Do We Do?** We are a content creation agency that serves B2Bs, marketers, and agencies with written online content that matches their needs full-circle (for example, from ideation of an ebook topic to writing and design). Our key services are blog writing and management, web page creation, social media management, product descriptions, and expert and authority content in all niches by matching expert writers that we've handpicked and assessed.
- 3. What Is Our Content Differentiation Factor (CDF)?** We stop at nothing to create amazing content. Our passion is in what we do. We interview, test and staff only the best of the best when it comes to internal content creators. We believe in constant growth and adapting to trends and best practices in our industry (content marketing), and teaching these practices and trends to each creator in our team.

**4. What Is Our Process?** Clients can check out through our Content Shop ([expresswriters.com/content-shop](https://expresswriters.com/content-shop)), after selecting the services that fit their needs, or talk to a staff specialist and have a cart custom built for them. Once ordered, the content manager assigns a best-fit creator and tracks workflow in teamroom. The content is written, then edited and proofed by our editors, design is done (if ordered), and delivery is made. Client can request up to two no-cost revisions afterwards. Volume projects are handled by a dedicated project manager and the content manager.

## II. OUR BRAND CONTENT STYLE

**Use of Brand Name.** Our brand name is Express Writers. Do not lowercase our brand name when typing it out. Do not remove the space between the two words. Shortening the brand name: “EW” is fine when mentioning the company internally to other staff or talking to seasoned, old clients (1+ year of ordering history). Do not use “EW” when talking to new clients, and refrain from ever using it in written content for branded blog and site content.

**Our Preferred Tone of Voice.** Simple, direct, informative, and authoritative. We are a team of experts with years of experience in what we do, and we write to be understood and to be heard.

**SIMPLE:** If an average reader can’t understand your sentence the first time, rewrite. Be clear in what you share.

**DIRECT:** Don’t be afraid to share the reality and the truth of what a customer needs, or an error on their site or in their content strategy that could be costing them. Be a “real friend.”

**INFORMATIVE:** *Be thorough* in all the information you share. If you make an industry claim (example: more content is better!), back it up with statistics and research from known publications.

**AUTHORITATIVE:** We write with a natural tone of authority (speaking from a place of knowledge in our industry), share what we know without hesitation, and enjoy teaching and sharing our expertise with others.

**Sources:** We like Content Marketing Institute, Hubspot, CoSchedule, MarketingProfs, and KissMetrics as credible sources to cite facts and authority statements from.

**Notes:** Content must be as error-free as possible. All specialists at Express Writers, from blog ghostwriters to specialists assisting customers through email, are responsible for representing our writing agency. We recommend installing a grammar-checking app like Grammarly into your browser to make sure that your written content and communications to clients are error-free. We appreciate your attention to these details.

### III. LOGO & VISUAL BRAND STYLE RULES

**Logo.** We have two logo variations: blue, and a variation of white for dark backgrounds. Our primary colors are in the blue logo onsite. Always use approved logo files. Do not recreate. Do not go outside a (broad) color spectrum that relates to our major tri-blues in the logo (primary color code: 0093D4).

**Visuals.** Quality sets the guidelines for all visuals developed at Express Writers. Nothing “cheap-looking” or designed at low costs by low-quality providers should ever be published. Our blog visual style includes image sets that are custom designed for each topic. Blogs must not be published without these sets, which are sized to best fit the blog with variations for social media platforms. We create variations for Instagram and Pinterest. All infographics and accompanying site visuals must be branded with our logo and be designed in complementary colors to the brand logo.

# N. OUR CUSTOMER

## Express Writers - Content Audience Persona (Developed Per an Existing Customer Audience Survey Trends May 2017)



NAME: Mike Brown

### Favorite Publications to Read:

LinkedIn Pulse (follows), TechCrunch, DigiDay, Seer Interactive, Fast Company, TechnologyReview.com, Inc.com

**Notes & Summary:** N/A

### Job Title:

VP of Digital Marketing

### Demographics

Gender: M

Age: 29-35

Income: Above \$500k

Education level: Bachelor's degree in management, Google certifications, career achievement awards, expert in SEO and inbound marketing.

### Challenges/Goals:

**Challenge:** Time + lack of inhouse expert writers to fit marketing clients. Industry challenge: no documented strategy.

**Goal:** Obtain high quality, expertly written content (price is not an issue). Save time with an easy-to-use process and system. Talk to investing.

### Likes/Interests:

Star Wars, geeky topics, tech projects, sci-fi movies, and attending conferences

### Quote:

"Your service helps with lack of time, plus lack of writers in various verticals."

"No subscription model, we've used both and find your quality to be better. However I do like their order system where they have blog ideas that you can buy from a marketplace."

Actually shared our newsletter on Twitter & said: "Normally I'm not a fan of the May The 4th Star Wars hype from companies, but this at the bottom of an [@ExpWriters](#) email made me smile."

### Existing Audience Specific Questions

- Competitors they considered besides us: Scripted
- Pain points we solve for them: No subscription model and excellent quality
- Any factors that almost stopped them from considering us: Worried if the content would be any good.
- Questions/fears not answered on our website: "When outsourcing content there isn't a good interview process. Having some back and forth to help work out ideas I think would be more beneficial and instill more confidence."