

Statement of Content Accuracy and Proofreading Tips

Statement of Content Accuracy

As the person or department requesting this project, you are responsible for its content accuracy. Please review your supplied proof(s) carefully and respond with your edits in a timely manner. The Communications department does not have a formal proofreading process and cannot be held responsible for errors in content or typography not caught during the review

process. This includes, but isn't limited to, spelling, grammar, and structure. The Communications Department uses the copy/paste function from supplied content to create the final design/document. One time-saving method that helps avoid errors is making sure your supplied content is "clean" of typographic, spelling, or grammatical errors.

Proofreading Tips

General Tips

- Print it out and read it slowly.
- Read it out loud.
- Have others read it.
- Read it backwards to focus on the spelling of words.
- Use a spell checker and grammar checker as a first screening, but don't depend on them.
- Use a screen (a blank sheet of paper to cover the material not yet proofed).
- Point with your finger to read one word at a time.
- Don't proof for every type of mistake at once – do one proof for spelling, another for missing/additional spaces, consistency of word usage, font sizes, etc.
- Keep a list of your most common errors (or of the writers you are proofing) and proof for those on separate "trips."
- Give a copy of the document to another person and keep a copy yourself. Take turns reading it out loud to each other. While one of you reads, the other one follows along to catch any errors and awkward-sounding phrases. This method also works well when proofing numbers and codes (we highly recommend this tip).
- First, proof the body of the text. Then go back and proof the headings. Headings are prone to error because copy editors often don't focus on them.
- Check the proof against your original document(s). Be sure everything you supplied is included.
- Double check fonts that are unusual (italic, bold, or otherwise different).
- Carefully read type in very tiny font.
- Be careful that your eyes don't skip from one error to the next obvious error, missing subtle errors in between.
- Double check proper names.
- Double check little words: "or," "of," "it," and "is" are often interchanged.
- Double check boilerplate text, like the company letterhead. Just because it's frequently used doesn't mean it's been carefully checked.
- Double check whenever you're sure something is right – certainty is dangerous.
- Closely review page numbers and other footer/header material for accuracy and correct order.

Editing for Content

- Ask yourself who, what, when, where, why, and how. Does the text answer all the questions you think it should?
- Highlight the sentences that best answer these questions, just so you can see if the facts flow in logical order.
- Do the math, do the math, and then do the math again. Somewhere between the screen and the printer 2+2 often becomes 3.
- Test all web links and make sure they are correct.
- Make a list of "bugaboo" words and do a search for them before final proof. Include every swear word, words related to product terminology, and other words that pop up on occasion. Then do a "find" for all these words.
- Actually do every step in procedures to make sure they are complete, accurate, and in correct order.
- Count the number of steps a list promises to make sure they are all there.
- Check that figure numbers match their references in the text and are sequential.
- Check that illustrations, photographs, pictographs, and models are correct, relevant, and right-side up.