



Editorial Guide

Version 1.2



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Version control

Version	Date Created	Purpose	Created/Amended by
0.1	17.12.2018	Draft	Savv-e (AS)
0.2	18.12.2018	Content/spelling review	Savv-e (AC)
1.0	20.12.2018	Final (v1.0)	Savv-e (AS)
1.1	15.01.2019	ST update	Savv-e (ST)
1.2	16.01.2019	Ken branding	Savv-e (KI)

About this document

This Savv-e Editorial Guide governs the writing conventions for all Savv-e deliverables, including high-level designs, scripts, storyboards and modules. This is a living document and may be added to.

Note that if a client has their own specific editorial guidelines and there is conflict between the client's guidelines and our own, Savv-e is to generally follow the client's guidelines (unless there is a genuine reason for not doing so).

Abbreviations

Avoid abbreviating any words that the audience won't understand immediately. For common abbreviations, include a full stop.

For example:

- Capt. Smith wrote a memo for Mrs. Mayfair, reminding her to pick up a pound of apples at the store.

Acronyms

Acronyms and initialisms are generally fully capitalised.

They should be written in full the first time, with the initialism/acronym in capitals and in brackets immediately afterwards – only if they are used more than once.

For example:

- First use: High-level design (HLD).
- Subsequent uses: The HLD.

Ampersands

Avoid using ampersands (&) in general text, headings, or subheadings—use “and” instead. An ampersand may be used in charts or tables where space is tight, or when it's part of a company name or book title.

Bullet lists

Lists of short items (without main verbs) should be introduced by a full sentence and look like this:

- introductory colon
- no initial capitals
- no punctuation (very short items) or comma after each item
- a full stop at the end.

For example:

Mary had many items on her shopping list:

- tomatoes
- oranges
- milk.

Where each item completes the introductory sentence, you should:

- begin with the introductory colon,
- label each item with the appropriate bullet, number or letter,
- end each item with a comma, and
- close with a full stop.

For example:

Remember that when you go shopping you should always:

- bring a shopping list with you,
- have enough money for your groceries, and
- take your reusable shopping bags.

If any one item consists of several complete sentences, announce the list with a complete sentence and continue as indicated below:

- Introduce the list with a colon.
- Label each item with the appropriate bullet, number or letter.
- Begin each item with a capital letter.
- End each statement with a full stop.

For example:

Here are three golden rules for those who are anxious when shopping:

- Create a 'to buy' list and don't veer off into the makeup department.
- Shop in the morning - it's less crowded, the merchandise is tidy, and the sales associates are fresh.
- Check stores return policy- and use it, rather than settle.

Capitalisation

After a colon

Don't capitalise the word after a colon.

For example:

- I'm about to list several things: one, two, and three.

Book titles

Titles of books (and eBooks) are always in title case (everything but articles, conjunctions, and prepositions capitalised).

For example:

- Today I finished *Anne of Green Gables*.

Department names

The names of departments are always lowercase.

For example:

- The people in the sales department love to play card games.

Exceptions to this rule are when referring to government departments or when it is known that a client treats such departments as proper nouns.

For example:

- Your correspondence with the Australian Federal Police will be recorded.
- There are several teams within the Finance department at ABC Insurance.

Job titles

Job titles are capitalised only when referencing a specific person; otherwise, they're lowercase.

For example:

- The staff is excited to meet Jessie, the new Managing Editor.
- The role of the managing editor in the editorial process is to...

Headings and subheadings

Sentence case is used for all headings and titles (e.g. components, topics, screens, buttons).

Only capitalise the first letter of the first word of the title and the first letter of any other word that normally has an initial capital (a proper noun). Common examples of proper nouns include:

- people's names
- significant titles (e.g. Prime Minister, Divisional Returning Officer)
- days of the week, holidays and months (e.g. Wednesday, Christmas)
- names of legislation (e.g. Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918).

Contractions

Contractions (e.g. I'm, can't, don't) can be used in scripts.

Formatting

Bold

Bold can be used for **emphasis**.

Italics

Italics should be used for titles (e.g. books, documents, procedures, forms) throughout the document.

For example:

My favourite movie is *Blade Runner*, which is based on the book *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick.

Spacing

Always use single spaces between sentences. Insert only a single space after a full stop, comma, colon, semicolon, question mark or any other punctuation.

Quotation marks

A part or section of a larger work is put in quotation marks. (This includes a chapter of a book, the title of an article in a magazine, excerpt from a policy or procedure etc.)

For example:

- Chapter two, “World War Terminus,” talks about a war that was so bad they skipped the numbering system.
- The *Vanity Fair* article “How to Tell if She’s an Android” provides examples.
- Check out the blog post “How to Launch a Rocket” for more information.

Hyperlinks

When inserting a hyperlink, ensure the text used for the link describes where the person will be taken. For example, a link to the BBC website should read ‘BBC website’, NOT www.bbc.co.uk.

Make the link into a sentence and make the action or the noun the hyperlink.

For example:

- Do: ‘Please [visit](#) our website.’
- Don’t: ‘Click [here](#) for more information.’

Legislation

When legislation is first mentioned, provide the title in full, use italics, include the date, and do not include a comma between the name and date.

- *The Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (the Act)*

For subsequent mentions of the Act, use brackets, a descriptive title, no italics, and no date.

When multiple Acts are mentioned, you can clarify when you’re referring to the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 by writing it as in the example below.

- *The Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 (the Electoral Act)*

When a section, sub-section, paragraph or sub-paragraph is referred to, the ‘s’ should be in lower case, a full stop should separate the ‘s’ and the reference, and there should not be any spaces between the letters and numbers.

- s.129(1)(b)

Numbers

Write out numbers up to and including ten, except in percentage's (see below) and hard data.

For example:

- Of the 20 marketing employees, only three decided to go to the party.

The exception to this rule is if you have a list of numbers that includes numbers under and above ten: in this case, just make the list consistent.

For example:

- The table was stocked with 2 cakes, 10 pizzas, and 24 sodas.

Write out numbers at the start of a sentence.

For example:

- Twenty-two of the experts agreed.

Dates

Dates should be written out with open punctuation, with the day appearing before the month and year.

For example:

- Monday, 1 September, 2018

Ordinal numbers

Ordinal numbers (adjectives describing the numerical position of something) should always be written out.

For example:

- First, third, tenth.

Percentages

Use numeric form for percentages, but write out at the start of a sentence. Don't include a space between the number and the percent sign.

For example:

- The survey results showed that 70% of marketers wear Converse sneakers.
- Sixty percent of marketers also wear Ray-bans.

Phone numbers

(014) 430-0124

Time

9 a.m./9 p.m.; 9-10 a.m.

Punctuation

Apostrophes

In general, use an apostrophe when you need to form the *possessive* of the word; not the plural. The exception to this is the possessive form of it, which is "its."

For example:

- The new CFO's office had its own entrance.
- A hard day's work.
- Aysha's book was damaged by the rain.

For the possessive form of a plural, just add an apostrophe to form the possessive. Note that this doesn't apply to words that happen to end with an "s", which should be treated like all other (singular) words.

For example:

- The CEOs' mass hysteria was witnessed by most of their staff.
- Everyone stared at James's new car, a Tesla Model S.

Brackets

Parentheses () and brackets [] must never be used interchangeably.

Brackets are only used in special cases and are used exclusively within quoted material.

Brackets are interruptions. When we see them, we know they've been added by someone else. They are used to explain or comment on the quotation.

For example:

- "Four score and seven [today we'd say eighty-seven] years ago..."
- "Bill shook hands with [his son] Al."

Commas

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

For example:

- Idea generation, content creation, distribution, and ROI optimisation.

Dashes

Use em dashes (or two hyphens) with no spaces for setting off text or emphasising a point in a sentence.

For example:

- 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.

Ellipses

Use three non-spaced ellipses, like this: ... (not this: . . .).

Hyphens

Use hyphens in numeric ranges, but try to use “to” (instead of a hyphen) when including a numeric range in a sentence.

For example:

- Numbers 11 to 25 are from the second experiment.
- 9-10 a.m.

Parentheses

Parentheses () and brackets [] must never be used interchangeably.

Use parentheses to enclose information that clarifies or is used as an aside.

For example:

- He finally answered (after taking five minutes to think) that he did not understand the question.

If material in parentheses ends a sentence, the full stop goes after the parentheses.

For example:

- He gave me a nice bonus (\$500).

Full stops go inside parentheses only if an entire sentence is inside the parentheses.

For example:

- Please read the analysis. (You'll be amazed.)

Quotes

Use said (not says) when quoting someone.

For example:

- “The general consensus is not to do the hokey-pokey at work,” said Shaun.

Always use double quotation marks with single quotation marks inside.

For example:

- “I read the article ‘The Dog’s Computer,’” said Dave.

Full stops and commas *always* go inside quotation marks.

For example:

- “I was riding my bike,” Jackie said, “when a deer jumped over the trail.”

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

For example:

- Mel said, “Would you like fries with that?”
- Mel asked if Matt would like fries with that. Can you believe he said “I would”?

Colons, semicolons, and dashes always go outside quotation marks.

For example:

- The following should report to the room marked “Staff”: office managers, marketers, social media managers, and customer service agents.

Voice and Tone

Savv-e strives to produce fresh, relevant, instructive content. Voice and tone will often depend on the company and content you are writing. In general, keep in mind that the voice and tone should be:

- Friendly and accessible, but not overly casual
- Helpful and knowledgeable, but not salesy or pushy
- Expert, but not know-it-all (watch the jargon!)
- Fun, but not slapstick or childish

Word Choice

Between vs. among

Use *between* with two people or things and *among* with three or more people or things.

Effect vs. affect

To *affect* means to produce a change or influence something.

For example:

- How will the new invoicing structure affect the payroll department?

An *effect* is a change that has occurred.

For example:

- The effect of the new invoicing structure will be negligible.

Affect is a verb 99% of the time; *effect* is a noun 99% of the time.

Insure, ensure, and assure

To *insure* means to protect against financial loss.

For example:

- You are insured against theft.

To *ensure* means to make certain or to confirm.

For example:

- Track your ROI to ensure your success.

To *assure* means to promise. (We assure a person.)

For example:

- I can assure you that your valuables are safely locked away.

Which vs. that

Which, when used correctly, is part of a non-restrictive clause, which is preceded or set off by commas. This clause is not essential to the meaning of the sentence, and can be taken out without changing the meaning.

For example:

- The dog sled race, which was gruelling, took place two weeks ago.

That is part of a restrictive clause, which is not set off by commas. This clause is essential to sentence meaning, and can't be removed.

For example:

- The dog sled races that take place in Anchorage are especially intense.

Rule of thumb: if the *which* in the sentence sounds funny with a comma in front of it or around the entire phrase, the sentence probably needs to be using *that*.

Other Notes

Never start a sentence with "According to" or "X has found."

Avoid heavy, overwhelming paragraphs! They should be broken down into short, scannable chunks.

Use "for example," not "e.g." or "ex."

Use first name for people upon second reference.

For example:

- Jean Spencer wrote a sentence. Later, Jean went on a run.

Starting a sentence with a conjunction, such as "and" or "but" is okay.