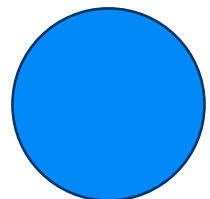# ClientX

Prepared for Mr. John Doe
Chief Marketing Officer

Content Guide
Recommendation
Voice and Tone

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Executive Summary and Recommendation

To: Mr. John Doe, Chief Marketing Officer
From: Cynthia Everitt

ClientX's vision is to revolutionize supply chain logistics with your logistics platform by closing gaps between manual processes and existing technology in global trade. You are "a diverse group of problem solvers, passionate about delivering results for clients." Establishing a voice and tone for the ClientX brand is a priority to maintain success by being deliberate and cohesive in communication across all platforms.

This report analyzes the voice and tone guidelines for two different companies: Atlassian and Shopify. Their values, industry, and customer relationships are like those of ClientX. I analyzed each guideline for content in terms of the amount of material, instructions, plain language, and goals to determine which guide is the better fit for ClientX to adapt to your brand voice and tone.

Both Atlassian and Shopify have excellent voice and tone guidelines that are easy for content creators to use. However, Shopify's guidelines have goals that fit better with your goals for brand voice and tone. Their goals are brand-wide, customer-focused, and business-like without being too stiff. They are also adaptable and presented with real examples to guide your content creators.

For these reasons, I recommend the Shopify voice and tone guidelines.

Company Profiles
ClientX, Atlassian, and Shopify

An overview of the companies considered in this report, **Atlassian** and **Shopify**, and how they compare to **ClientX** in four key areas: Mission, Industry/Products, Customer Relationships, and Voice Guidelines.

	ClientX	Atlassian	Shopify
Mission	To eliminate wasted time, effort, and manual data entry	To help unleash the potential of every team	Making commerce better for everyone
Industry/ Products	Supply chain technology Business/productivity software	Software Business/productivity software	E-commerce Internet software
Customer Relationships	Bridge the gaps that exist between human-driven processes and their existing technology footprint	Build tools that help teams collaborate, build, and create together	Supports millions of businesses across Shopify—from startups on Shopify to Fortune 500s on Shopify Plus
Voice Guidelines	TBD	Be bold Be optimistic Be practical, with a wink	Be real, but not too tough or overly familiar Be proactive, but not needy or pushy Be dynamic, but not scattered or impulsive Guide, but don't prescribe

Voice and Tone Guidelines
Atlassian vs. Shopify

Atlassian Voice and Tone Principles	Shopify Voice Guidelines	Shopify Tone Situations
Inform to build trust **Empower to inspire action** **Encourage people along the path** **Motivate by showing possibilities** **Satisfy by meeting expectations** **Delight with unexpectedly pleasing experiences**	**Be real, but not too tough or overly familiar** **Be proactive, but not needy or pushy** **Be dynamic, but not scattered or impulsive** **Guide, but don't handhold or prescribe**	**Everyday tasks and activities** **Learning and education** **Simple errors** **Acknowledging effort, progress, or completion** **Motivate or encourage action** **Serious problems or errors** **Announcing new features and updates** **Celebrations and congratulations**

Amount of Material in Guidelines

Atlassian. Atlassian's voice and tone principles guide establishes its principles based on Atlassian's brand personality traits: Be Bold, Be Optimistic, and Be Practical (with a wink). The design system's content section contains six voice and tone principles. Each is defined and described in terms of when to apply the principle, how the customer feels when using it, where to apply it, and any other related design principles. Atlassian's guide has an equal balance of instructional material regarding both voice and tone.

Shopify. Shopify has four voice guidelines in the Polaris design system's content/voice and tone section. Each guideline has bullet points that further educate the content creator on the guidelines and give them some words to avoid. Each situational adaptation of the guideline's tone includes screenshots for dos and don'ts. The tone situation "simple errors" includes a link to the content

section on error messages that gives more instructions for those situations. It contains specific examples and screenshots. Shopify's guide has more instructional material on tone than on voice.

Instructions for Content Creators in Guidelines

Atlassian. Atlassian emphasizes building customer relationships through communication in its voice and tone principles guide. Rather than instructing content creators on what to do/what not to do, it designates who follows and when to use the principles outlined in the guide. Examples in the guide are "when we need to be less bold/more bold," "person is feeling," and "some places we use this principle."

Shopify. Shopify intends for voice and tone to reflect the company's personality and to be clear to customers "whenever someone uses our products or services." They want their voice and tone to indicate that Shopify is a "company, built by real people who understand this business and care about helping others succeed."

The voice and tone guide lists guidelines with bullet points to clarify each further. One bullet point states, "avoid words that generalize success like 'every,' 'all,' and 'most.'" It also includes seven sections for guidance on adapting tone by situation. Each section on adapting tone by situation includes screenshots illustrating the dos and don'ts for each.

Plain Language in Guidelines

Atlassian. Atlassian instructs its creators to use voice and tone in specific ways. Its guide includes advice to "inform," "be open, humble, and warm," "write as if you are educating," "inspire," "provide quick and thorough answers, guidance, actions, and instructions," and "'wink' where appropriate."

Shopify. Shopify's voice and tone guide tells content creators to "use business casual language, be plain-spoken, not pretentious or overly playful." It emphasizes clarity, helping customers understand the why, directness, and not being overzealous or overly dramatic. Content creators are instructed to use plain language within the error message guidelines linked in the "serious problems or errors" portion of the voice and tone guide. This includes not defaulting to industry terms, editing unnecessary or repeated words, writing for small screens to encourage focus, and reading content aloud for clarity.

Voice and Tone Goals in Guidelines

Atlassian. Atlassian clearly states "voice is our personality, tone is our mood." In addition to their brand personality traits of bold, optimistic, and practical (with a wink), there are other points of emphasis in the guideline for voice and tone. These include:

Voice	Tone
• **Clear** • **Consistent** • **Friendly** • **Helpful** • **Authentic** • **Wise** • **Relatable**	• **Serious** • **Direct** • **Sometimes a little loose** • **Familiar** • **Knowledgeable**

This guideline is focused on providing complete information for content creators to communicate effectively with customers while maintaining the Atlassian voice. It also equally focuses on explaining the why and how for approaching tone with Atlassian customers.

Shopify. Shopify expresses that its voice reflects who they are as a company and tone depends on the audience and their context. Other points emphasized in the guideline for voice and tone include:

Voice	Tone
• **Understanding** • **Caring** • **Upfront** • **Honest** • **Supporting action, movement, and progress** • **Specific** • **Clear** • **Brief**	• **Appropriate** • **Meaningful** • **Direct** • **Empathetic** • **Simple** • **Focused** • **Not overzealous** • **Not about us**

This guideline focuses on establishing the definition of the Shopify brand voice and how it shows through Shopify products and services. It concentrates heavily on adapting tone by situation and uses screenshots to help content creators understand what to do and not do in specific situations. The priority is to support the customer, be clear and concise, and not overdo.

Comparative Analysis
Atlassian vs. Shopify

How the Guidelines are alike. Atlassian and Shopify have thorough voice and tone guidelines for their content creators. Each guideline begins by establishing the principles of the company voice and explaining how to adapt the tone of that voice based on different situations and contexts for customers. The layout of information within the guides is logical and contains thorough details. Both guidelines are highly adaptive and are easy for you to customize for Slync.io. The guides contain similar amounts of information on voice and tone and are easy to read and follow. Examples and links are provided to additional helpful information when needed. Customer context and situation are a clear priority in each guideline.

How the Guidelines are different. Atlassian's guide contains an equal balance of information on voice and tone, while Shopify's guide has more information on tone than voice. Atlassian's guide provides a breakdown of when, how, and why to apply its voice and tone principles, while Shopify's guide contains screenshots to show content creators the dos and don'ts of adapting the tone of voice. The approach to plain language by Atlassian feels warmer and more familiar, as they say, "with a wink," while Shopify aims for business casual language that is clear and not pretentious. The overall content goal for Atlassian is to build relationships authentically, while Shopify wants to convey that they "understand the business and care about helping others succeed. "

Guideline Recommendation. The guideline in this report that best aligns with ClientX for adaptation is the **Voice and tone guide** in **Shopify**'s Polaris Design System. While the guidelines are similar, Shopify's Voice and tone guide aligns more closely with ClientX and your goals for the voice and tone of the brand. ClientX has a "fresh take on a centuries-old problem" in global trade and supply chain technology. Because ClientX is involved in international business logistics, a business casual voice with an appropriate and meaningful tone, like that of Shopify, is better suited.