



# A Letter From the Editors

## Customer Voice | Writing Authentically and as a Human

Though we're all human, it can be hard to write like one. When writing on behalf of someone else, and when moving rapidly through our work, voice can fall by the wayside, but it's an important factor to consider so that our copy is engaging, authentic, and conversational. Let's talk about how to write in a way that's natural and human while keeping our customer's voice in mind.

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### Think about language, word choice, and grammar.

Voice begins with the basics. We need to consider transitions, flow, punctuation, word choice, sentence length, and more when writing a sentence with voice in mind. Take a look at these two examples:

*"We are organizing the event, and we will be providing sustenance and entertainment. People not included on the guest list are not permitted and will be rejected at the entrance. Arrive promptly at 5 PM to take part in the celebration. We wish to see you there."*

Pretty formal, robotic, and cold, right? Doesn't sound like a party I'd want to attend. Let's compare the formal example to one that sounds more human.

*"We're throwing an end-of-summer bash! Don't worry about food and drinks. We'll have an open bar and plenty of appetizers for everyone to snack on! This party has limited spots, so only arrive if you bought your ticket ahead and are on the guest list. The fun starts at 5 PM sharp, so put your sun hat on and be ready for a splash. Hope to see you there!"*

Notice how this example varies punctuation, uses contractions, employs more casual words and phrasing, and has varied sentence lengths and structures? These variations can feel small on their own, but as you can see comparing these two examples, they add up and help make the paragraph read more smoothly, warmly, and casually, which, in turn, makes it have more voice and read in a more human and inviting way.

**Tip:** After writing your copy, try **reading it out loud**. The way we read something in our head will likely read differently out loud, which can help to spot awkward phrasing and stilted language. The authentic voice should sound effortless.

## Think about your customer's voice and brand.

You've read about our [recent strategy update on customer voice](#) and how each customer was assigned one of the five customer voices: sincere, excited, competent, sophisticated, or rugged. These words can provide insight and guidance on the kind of voice your customer may want, but voice is more than just a word.

As noted in the [customer voice article](#), we have to consider several elements when crafting the right voice for our customers: the themes that correlate with their brand (like cheerfulness, honesty, luxury, etc.), sentence structure and grammar, language and word choice, and even other elements such as photo choice, the use of puns or humor, and more. Let's take a look at this customer description for [Rock 'N Fun](#):

### CUSTOMER DESCRIPTION

*Games, burgers, and beer. We've got all that and more in a fun, spacious environment for the whole family. While the kids play the latest games, you can sip a cold beer at the bar and watch your favorite sports team. Or show 'em how it's done with your classic arcade favorites. All you need to do is load up your Good Times Card with credits to start having a blast and earning prizes. Plus, with Johnny Rockets on the scene, delicious burgers, shakes, and fries are never far away. For the past 100 years, Fernandez Entertainment has been bringing fun, food, and entertainment to the islands. Good times really do start here!*

This customer's voice is "excited, fun," and this description effectively uses several customer voice elements to access an excited and fun voice. We have a lot of customer-specific detail about their atmosphere and services, but the writer also uses punctuation and grammar (e.g., "show 'em how it's done," a well-placed exclamation point) to create that voice. Furthermore, the word choice and language used, like "having a blast," "sip a cold beer," and "good times really do start here," shape the voice as well.

Incorporating these elements of voice into our customer copy will naturally help elevate the language with detail, customer specificity, and authenticity, which ultimately creates a stronger voice that will likely connect to more consumers. Knowing the intended audience your customer is trying to reach will help influence the right voice, but having the right voice will also attract the right audience.

## Connect with the details (and the humans reading them).

Whether it's a photo for a post, the promotional language given for a social ad or content request, the situation a reviewer shared, or the details provided in a welcome call, we want to approach our copy with customer specificity in mind. You all know this, but it's a good reminder that detail is a huge part of customer voice. Even in our daily lives, the details we add to our spoken language is a huge part of our personalities and the way we engage with the world and people around us. Take these examples:

*"I'm going to the store to get some things. I may make a stop on the way. I also may pick up my friend. Then I'll head back for the event. Don't worry."*

Notice how lifeless and inaccessible this writing is? It's cold, distant, robotic, and unrelatable. It reads like a vague list rather than something a person would actually say or write. Now let's look at a more detailed example:

*"I'm going to the grocery store on Red River to pick up some party supplies and snacks! I might drop by Party City while I'm out since it's not too far from there. Oh, and Tyler asked for a ride, so I'm going to pick him up on my way back. Then we'll head back together with all the goods. And don't worry: We'll show up on time and be ready to rock and roll -- I promise!"*

Now the writing has detail, warmth, personality, variety in diction and syntax, and most importantly, a voice. In our customer writing, we want to take advantage of whatever customer-specific detail we have to strengthen our writing and add to the customer's voice so that we're responding as humans to our human audience with warmth, accessibility, and care.

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## Challenge

Re-read our page on [customer voice](#) and choose a customer you're writing for. Check which voice category they fall into and read that voice in more detail. Try incorporating more of this voice and its specific markers into your writing for that customer. Proud of the content you created? Share it with your peers or manager.

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## Jourden Sander

Jourden is an Austin-born and -raised Sagittarius who remembers a time when Leslie was here and free parking spots existed. She received her MFA in fiction over the summer, and with that MFA, she's writing a novel and nagging you about commas. You can find her playing tennis, performing with her improv troupe, dancing to Toxic by Britney Spears, or declining ice cream in her spare time. She fully believes the Mattress Firm conspiracy theory and probably finds you suspicious. In da clerb, we all fam.

**Main Street Hub**