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**Global Branding, Communications & Marketing**

# Writing Style Guide

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# 1. Introduction to the Style Guide

Welcome to the Wolters Kluwer Style Guide, the Global Branding & Communication guide to our writing style and content creation, whether for a website article, newsletter, white paper, or otherwise. It is a tool to help everyone write in a way that's natural, concise, and simple\*.

Today, lots of people in our organization are called upon to write about and speak on behalf of Wolters Kluwer. Our messages need to reflect the company's single brand identity and modern approach to voice and style: personal and people-oriented, uncomplicated and informative, concise and always serving the interest of the professionals we help.

This guide can be used by everyone regardless of their role. It presents general guidelines and standards for writing that help align all content produced on behalf of Wolters Kluwer. This updated Wolters Kluwer Style Guide provides guidelines and basic editorial principles that apply to all employees and agencies, and freelancers who create content for the Global Branding and Communications team. The style guide also features updated instructions for online writing.

Wolters Kluwer follows the [Associated Press \(AP\) Stylebook](#), with a few exceptions. Section 5 outlines exceptions where we deviate from the AP style guide, section 6 outlines where we adhere to the AP style guide.

\*Please note, you may overrule parts of this style guide if you're producing content that needs to adhere to different, externally determined standards. This may apply to more formal communications such as press releases or informal communications such social media, where abbreviations, extreme brevity, and emoticons are acceptable.

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## 2. Brand Guidelines and Messaging

### **Brand Consistency is Key**

Brand consistency is very closely related to our messaging and any internal and external content we publish. Our consistency impacts how people think about our company when they consume our words, design, offerings, or point of view. We want our brand to build awareness and develop trust and loyalty with our clients, the media, and partners.

In 2018, Wolters Kluwer established a ‘purpose’ and messaging framework for the master brand. Any corporate messaging related to our divisions can be found here. If you’re writing about Wolters Kluwer or referring to Wolters Kluwer in your copy, cross-check your final copy with the messaging framework to ensure your message reflects facts and messaging from the messaging framework. The framework reflects our strategy, culture, and aspiration for our role in the world.

For detailed information on the Wolters Kluwer message framework, access the [brand portal](#).

### **Wolters Kluwer Messaging Framework**

- Intends to serve as a guide to various leaders and functions helping to position and deliver the company story consistently and memorably.
- A common language for employees that helps us focus and talk about our foundation: what we do, what makes us different, and why that matters.
- A basis for specific communications content, materials, and activities.
- A clear structure of how brand and company descriptors relate to each other.
- A guide for crafting messages about Wolters Kluwer, our businesses etc. to customize to audiences and needs.

### **Wolters Kluwer Purpose**

Our purpose is to help professionals deliver deep impact when it matters most.

### **Wolters Kluwer Thought Leadership Platform**

We like to celebrate our organization’s successes and want to instill the same sense of pride in our colleagues. Thought leadership is an essential ingredient of corporate reputation and demonstrates that a company has a point of view about the issues affecting the environment and markets in which it operates. I.e., thought leadership provides brand relevance.

Whenever you share information or an announcement about Wolters Kluwer, aim to express our point of view and the bigger picture in a warm and informative tone as per points 1, 4, and 9 in section 3 below.

Where press releases exist to tell your audience about the company, other communications should strive to show your audience the company-specific messages without sounding self-aggrandizing. We achieve this by incorporating an external context to our messages. Help you audience contextualize your information by telling them what trends it relates to and what real-world impact the subject has.

For more information access the [thought leadership framework](#) (available Spring 2019) on the [brand portal](#).

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## 3. Top 10 Wolters Kluwer style and voice tips

### Think about the bigger picture

Our work impacts the world. Whether that be our workforce or the professional industries we serve. We play a part in making modern society better through professional information, software solutions, and services. Address Our Purpose in your writing – see below for a refresher. Use this perspective as the backdrop to your communications.

- Our purpose is to help professionals deliver deep impact when it matters most.
- We strive to develop products that help protect people’s health and prosperity and contribute to a safe and just society by providing deep insights and knowledge to professionals.

### Lead with your hook

The hook grabs your reader’s attention and can be thought-provoking, entertaining, or contentious. Facts, action verbs, people, anecdotes, statistics, or commentary, can all be used to make your hook punchy. Alternatively, your hook can be the key takeaway, putting the most critical information first.

Examples:

- We’re on the verge of a defining moment in the evolution of work. Our core assumptions about how we spend a third of our lives and what it means for professionals are changing as we speak driven by a workforce that expects convenient, relevant, and responsive experiences.  
From [‘The Future of Workflow is Here’](#)
- As exciting technologies emerge and promise new frontiers in corporate culture, many organizations are experiencing a rekindled passion for knowledge and creativity. From innovation ecosystems to unconventional work-life hacks, corporate culture is having a moment.  
From [‘Cultivating Innovation and Co-Creation’](#)

### Write as you speak

Read your text aloud, does it sound like something a real person would say? Be personal and people-oriented but informative at the same time. In other words, refrain from generic statements and if you must share company boilerplate information, do so in a personal way.

### Project authority and warmth

Our expert solutions can sound very technical, but we have control over how we say what we want to say. Aim to share information about how our expert solutions serve our customers, using concise language and an informative tone. Don’t use jargon and always explain acronyms. Be optimistic and focus on the value provided. Use contractions: it’s, you’ll, you’re, etc.

Remember, be personal and people-oriented, uncomplicated, and informative, concise and always serving the interest of the professionals we help.

### Be brief

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Prune excess words and avoid dressing up your writing with long words. This is especially important when writing for the web as it helps improve SEO (how search engines identify what exactly your content is about). You help make the audience's experience enjoyable when you are brief.

Examples:

- Use 'use' not 'utilize'
- Use 'remove' not 'extract, eliminate' etc.
- Use 'tell' not 'inform'
- Use 'to' not 'in order to'
- Use 'also' not 'in addition'

### **Revise weak writing**

Before you share your writing, revise it to take out all the things that are not the story. Whenever possible, ask a colleague to proofread your writing for grammar, clarity, flow, facts, and length. Use action verbs whenever possible to make your language more efficient.

Example:

Replace:

"The ball is thrown by me."

With:

"I throw the ball."

### **Pick your quotes carefully**

Aim to quote individuals when their remarks convey: a claim, a feeling about a fact that supports your writing, a reflection, an explanation. As a rule of thumb, do not attribute important technical information or direct messages from the messaging framework to individuals via quotes\*.

\*Different rules may apply for press releases.

### **Consult the zeitgeist**

The zeitgeist is what your audience is consuming, and the cultural moment in which they are consuming it – made up by the latest trends and buzzwords – and hence how your content is received.

Your audience is bombarded with content on the daily. Do yourself a favor and research the topics you're addressing before writing. News coverage and what other organizations are expressing about the topic can reveal trends that help you frame your content and adhere to Wolters Kluwer's modern brand identity.

For more information: refer to the [thought leadership framework](#) (coming Spring 2019).

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## 4. In practice: Create a scannable structure

### Write with the reader in mind: structure and techniques

The sheer volume of content available to audiences can be overwhelming. We create content with our audience in mind, so our voice, tone, and structure should not only support our brand voice but also help readers find what they need quickly.

We can use components to make our copy digestible and scannable. See below.

### Getting started

Accept that people scan content rather than reading it in detail. Structure your paragraphs in the inverted pyramid style, this means stating your conclusion first, then supporting it with the sentences that follow. Doing this helps scanners move from point to point and decide where they'd like to dive in deeper.

Other tips:

1. Humanize the story
  - Start from an outside perspective, and whenever possible, include why people impacted should care.
2. Embrace the line break
  - Doing so is one of the easiest ways to make your content more readable. Even complex material can be made much more reader-friendly with the simple introduction of lots of white space. Feature one idea per paragraph and keep them short — three or four sentences at most.
3. Break up your content with compelling subheads
  - Consider writing headlines and subheads based on keywords. A strong headline, and therefore a strong premise, is vital to getting readers to check you out in the first place. And solid subheads keep readers engaged, acting as “mini-headlines” to keep them moving through the rest of your content.
4. Create bulleted lists
  - They're an easily “scan-able” way to present multiple points. They look different from the rest of your text, so they provide a visual break for your reader.
5. Use “deep captions”
  - Studies have shown that image captions are consistently some of the most-read copy on a page. Try pairing a strong image with a “deep caption.” Deep captions are two to three sentences long. That's long enough to intrigue your reader to dig into your whole article.
6. Add relevant and helpful links
  - Internal links back to your content will keep people on your site and reading your best material. Plan how to drive users to content on [wolterskluwer.com](https://www.wolterskluwer.com) or to our divisional sites to increase domain authority through referral traffic.

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- Similarly, external links demonstrate that you've researched the topic and want to highlight other experts. Good content uses both to expand your reader's understanding and add value.
7. Highlight content strategically
    - Add emphasis to your content by bolding important concepts. Your reader will be able to scan through and pick out the most important information at a glance.
  8. Harness the power of numbers
    - Numbers are an incredibly effective way to both capture attention and keep the reader oriented.
  9. Where possible, use pull quotes, sidebars, tables.
  10. Refer to the keywords identified by marketing and communications to support discoverability and organic search. Read the "Web and Domain Guidelines" section of this guide for additional guidance before posting online.

(section source: Copy blogger)

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# 5. Writing Guidelines

Our corporate spelling adheres to American English standards. We officially use the [Merriam-Webster dictionary](#). Please ensure that you set your MS Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) language settings to English (US).

Wolters Kluwer follows the [Associated Press \(AP\) Stylebook](#), with a few exceptions. This section outlines exceptions where we deviate from the AP style.

The following guidelines should be followed

## Acronyms

Spell out name on first use on a page, followed by the acronym in parentheses. Do not use acronyms in headlines. If you're sure your audience is familiar with an acronym, it's OK to use it without spelling it out. Don't use the acronym if the term is just used once in your content (unless needed for SEO, in which case spelling out and using the acronym is OK).

Examples:

- a. First use on a page: We used a scanning electron microscopy (SEM) in our experiments.
- b. Second use on a page: SEM technology has been around for a long time.
- c. UNICEF is an example of an acronym your audience is most likely familiar with. In this case you do not have to spell it out (the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund).
- d. If you only mention a term once you do not have to put an acronym in parenthesis (unless it falls under point c.) unless it would benefit SEO.

## Ampersands (&)

Use an ampersand in graphs or tables, or when the ampersand is part of an official company name or used in the title of creative works such as books. You can also use the ampersand in common shorthand expressions like R&D, rock & roll. Do not use it in divisional abbreviations.

Do not use in copy unless they are part of a product or company name or visual identity.

Examples:

- a. It is OK to use the ampersand if it is part of a product or company name: Benefits & Claims Support, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- b. Do not use in divisional abbreviations ~~Legal & Regulatory~~

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## 6. Capitalization, titles and names

### Names

There are a wide range of options for treatment of names in content; some of those options depend on the type of communication and whether the usage is within the US or outside of the US.

It is not standard practice to use “Mr. Jones” in press materials, biographies or news stories. Instead, use first and last name and title without Miss, Ms., Mr., etc, in the first instance of using their name. On second mention, use first name or surname only. If you are writing a long article, you may alternate between first name and surname. When introducing someone in the first instance, the first time, add their title.

Examples:

- First mention of the name in your text: Nancy McKinstry, CEO ....
- Second mention in your text: McKinstry ...
- If you are writing a long article you can alternate between: Nancy and McKinstry

### Titles

Do not follow AP style for titles. Instead, titles are in Title Case (each word in title begins with capital letter).

Examples:

- Administrative Assistant, Chairman, Executive Board Member, Managing Director, Project Manager
- Diana Nole, Chief Executive Officer, Wolters Kluwer, Health.

Write out titles rather than using acronyms.

- Examples: General Manager not GM, Managing Director not MD, Chief Publishing Officer not CPO
- \*Exceptions: CEO and CF

Generic titles/descriptions are not capitalized.

- Examples: senior management, management team, member of the Executive Board

### Employees and their divisions

We identify employees by using Wolters Kluwer, Health etc. This helps to distinguish people in the company who may have the same title but fall in different divisions or levels of the organization. We always mention Wolters Kluwer when presenting the division or business unit/product because we are all part of Wolters Kluwer.

Always capitalize these

- Executive Board
- Supervisory Board
- Chairman
- Corporate Office, when referring to the head office in Alphen aan den Rijn
- Senior Management Council

### Bulleted items and lists

Always use a lead-in sentence to introduce a list. Make sure the sentence ends in a colon. Start each new bulleted item with a capital letter. Do not end an item with a punctuation mark unless it is a necessary quotation mark or a full sentence. End each sentence with a full stop or period.

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Example:

These items were presented at the awards ceremonies:

- CCH Tagetik
- Enablon

#### **Is it “Wolters Kluwer” or “we”?**

We like to alternate between writing “Wolters Kluwer”, “we / us / our” and “the company”. In attributing to Wolters Kluwer please avoid writing “Wolters Kluwer’s”.

#### **Divisions**

Do not capitalize “division” or “business unit.”: Write out in full at the first use in each section and include the acronym in parentheses. For subsequent uses in the same section, use the acronym alone.

Example: Legal & Regulatory (LR) operates across the globe. LR’s well-respected products include...

Always list in order shown below.

- Health (HLT)
- Tax & Accounting (TAA)
- Government, Risk & Compliance (GRC)
- Legal & Regulatory (LR)
- Emerging & Developing Markets (EDM)
- Global Platform Organization (GPO)
- Global Business Services (GBS)
- Corporate Office (CO)

#### **Font size, spacing, etc.**

Check [the brand portal](#)

#### **Hyphenated compound words**

When used at the beginning of a sentence or in a headline when capitalization is necessary, capitalize the first word in the compound and lowercase the second word

Examples:

- Computer-assisted Coding, Pre-payment, Early-out, Self-pay Service
- This rule does not apply when three words are hyphenated e.g. Out-of-Network

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# 7. Styles

## Most commonly used AP style and terms

Wolters Kluwer follows the [Associated Press \(AP\) Stylebook](#), with a few exceptions (see above). This section outlines common examples from the AP style.

## Capitalization and headlines

Wolters Kluwer uses sentence-style capitalization as opposed to title-style capitalization, used by AP. This means everything is lowercase except the first word and proper nouns, such as names of brands, produces, and services.

Example of a headline / title:

- Globalization in transition
- Globalization In Transition

If a title or heading includes a colon, capitalize the first word after it.

Example:

- Globalization in transition: The future of trade and value chains
- Globalization in transition: the future of trade and value chain

## Book and journal titles

Should be italicized.

Examples:

- *Nursing Made Incredibly Easy!*
- *Stedman's Dictionary*

NOTE: \*Notify the Online Manager when italicizing text for online publishing. They should add a tag in CSS, possibly the “em” tag so that Google picks up on emphasized copy for SEO.\*

## Cities

Large US and international large cities should stand alone. US cities include Boston, San Francisco, and New York.

European cities include Paris, London, Vatican City, Luxemburg, Berlin and Madrid. (See The Associated Press Stylebook under “datelines” for the complete listing.)

## Commas

Put a serial comma before the conjunction in a simple series.

Example: John, Paul, George, and Ringo; red, white, and blue.

Use a comma to set off a person's hometown and age.

Example: Jane Doe, Framingham, was absent. Joe Doe, 34, was arrested yesterday.

Commas and periods go within quotation marks.

Example: “We are very pleased with our portfolio,” Nancy commented. She said, “We look forward to the future.”

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## Countries

Follow AP style for press releases only. The abbreviation US (no periods) is acceptable as a noun or adjective for United States. USA (no periods) is the abbreviated form for United States of America. UK (no periods) is acceptable as a noun or adjective for United Kingdom.

\*Exception: If using the country name appears twice in one sentence, always write out United Kingdom and United States in the noun form, but use UK and US as the adjectives.

Example: More than 3,000 of our US employees are based in the southern region of the United States

\*Wolters Kluwer exception: in communications that concern investors (annual report, financial statements etc.) and other information not intended for a general, external audience, it is OK to add periods. Example: U.S. and U.K

Note: North America versus US: North America is a continent. It includes 36 countries, most notably the US, Canada, and Mexico

## EUR or €, USD or \$?

- Use the € and \$ symbols and not the three-letter ISO codes. See “currencies” on page 9 for details. Also, the sign should be attached to the number, with no space in between. Example: \$100, €100
- Dollar: “US dollar” or “US dollars” (not Dollar, unless beginning a sentence)
- Cent or cents (not dollar cent or dollar cents)

## Dashes and Hyphens

- Em dash (the width of the letter M). Put spaces on both sides. Use the em dash to create a strong break in the structure of a sentence. Dashes can be used in pairs like parentheses — that is, to enclose a word or a phrase or a clause — or they can be used alone to detach one end of a sentence from the main body. Typically, the em dash will have spaces on either side for better readability; however, in cases where there is a space limitation, it is permitted to close the spaces. The caveat is that the style (spaces or no spaces) are used consistently throughout the piece.
- En dash (the width of the letter N). The en dash is slightly longer than the hyphen but not as long as the em dash. The en dash means, quite simply, through, in a range. Use it most commonly to indicate inclusive dates and numbers: July 9–August 17; pp. 37–59.
- The hyphen is the shortest of the three dashes and is used most commonly to combine words (compound adjectives before a noun such as high-acuity, well-being and advanced-level and to separate numbers that are not inclusive (phone numbers and Social Security numbers, for example). Do not use a hyphen when the compound modifier occurs after the verb: The actor was well known. Her job became full time. He was sentenced to 20 years. See section called Commonly Used Healthcare Words and Terms for common terms. On computer keyboards, the hyphen appears on the bottom half of the key located on the top row between the 0 and the equals mark (=). Also use hyphens to hyphenate a word across a line break or to introduce items in a list.
- Nonbreaking hyphen. To hyphenate a word but keep it together on the same line, use a nonbreaking hyphen. Em and en dashes, nonbreaking hyphens and spaces are available in Word from the Symbol command, Special Characters tab, on the Insert menu.
- Use nonbreaking spaces in product names whose first part would look strange alone.
- Use a colon to introduce a quotation, explanation, or list of items.
- Forward slash. Use no space before or after a slash (/). There are two exceptions to this rule: Separating lines of poetry and in the line of a header where it may be required to generate the header to split to a second line.
- Generally, e-words are hyphenated, but exceptions are email and ebook.'

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### Commonly used (hyphenated) terms

- buyout
- decision-making
- e-learning
- email (email is not hyphenated)
- end-to-end solutions
- environment-related
- ex-dividend
- fact sheet
- fact-based
- first-class
- first-hand
- first-quarter (when used as an adjective)
- forward-looking
- full-year/time (when used as an adjective)
- group level
- group-wide
- half-year (when used as an adjective)
- high-quality
- industry-wide
- know-how
- long-term (when used as an adjective)
- longer-term
- lump-sum
- market-facing
- metadata
- mid-term
- nationwide
- no one
- non-core
- offshore
- ongoing
- online
- on-site
- outsource
- pan-European
- payout
- point-of-care (when used as an adjective)
- post-employment
- real estate
- reappointment
- reengineering
- roadshow
- second-hand
- share buyback
- share-based
- short-term
- shorter-term
- statewide
- takeover
- third-quarter (when used as an adjective)
- three-year plan
- top-line
- two-tier
- UK-based
- under-accrued
- up-to-date
- US-based
- Vice Chairman
- webcast
- well-established
- well-known
- whistleblower
- workflow
- worldwide
- year-end (when used as an adjective)

### Currencies

Use the symbols for currencies and not the three-letter (ISO) codes without a space between the symbol and figure.

Example: €5.6 million

When referring to a currency without a specific figure, write out the currency names. Do not capitalize.

Example: consolidated financial statements are presented in euros

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When referring to currency of a specific country, capitalize the country but not the currency.

Examples: U.S. dollars, Canadian dollars, British pounds

### **Dates**

Format is “Month, day, year.” Always use Arabic figures, without st, nd, rd or th.

Example: October 30, 2016

Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used in body text, do not abbreviate the month. When a phrase lists only a month and year, do not separate the month and the year with commas

Example: The new program will launch in December 2017.

In tabular material, use these three-letter forms without a period: Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.

Use a hyphen when referring to a span of years. Do not use a space before or after the hyphen.

Example: The LTIP 2004-06 vested on...

When referring to a figure on a specific date for example in an annual report, use the term “at” and not “as at” or “as of.”

Example: Cash and cash equivalents at January 1.

When sentence starts with “In 2016,” always use a comma.

### **Fractions**

Spell out amounts less than 1 in stories, using hyphens between the words.

Example: two-thirds

Use figures for precise amounts larger than 1, converting to decimals when practical.

Example: 1.45

### **Numbers**

- Use numerals for 10 and above.
- Spell out zero through nine unless the number precedes a unit of measurement.
- Spell out numerals that start a sentence; if the result is awkward, recast the sentence: Twenty-seven detainees were released yesterday. Yesterday, 993 freshmen entered the college.
- Use a combination of numbers and words for numbers higher than 1 million (1 million, 1.5 million).
- Use numerals for numbers that precede units of measurement (30° and 3 degrees).
- Avoid starting sentences with numerals (Not “16 people are coming to my house for dinner tomorrow night.” but “Sixteen people ...”)
- Thousand separator is a comma (1,000).
- Decimal separator is a period (\$1.99).
- Billion: in the United States this is 1,000 million; in Europe it means 1 million millions. Use the US convention and clarify if needed for a worldwide audience.

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## Percentages

We spell out % (percentage) in internal and external content – unless the content benefits from a shorter format (e.g., social media), in which case using % is encouraged.

## Punctuation

- One space after periods and colons, not two.
- Apostrophes in numbers: Do not use an apostrophe for plural numbers (In the 1980s).
- Apostrophes in acronym: Do not use an apostrophe in the plural of an abbreviation Example: There are many CEOs in the world
- Do use an apostrophe if the acronym is possessive

Example: The CEO's decision is...

- The plurals of single capital letters, acronyms and Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3,...) take an “s” without an apostrophe. Examples: Z (the capital letter Z) – Zs, UPC (Universal Product Code) – UPCs, GUI (graphical user interface) – GUIs, 3 (the Arabic numeral 3) – 3s, ORs, ICUs, EDs, etc.

- Periods and commas go inside a closing quotation mark

Examples: He said, “Hello.” Not He said, “Hello”.

- Semicolons and colons go outside a closing quotation mark

Example: There are three situations in which you might use the word “hello”: ..

## Quotation marks

- Use double quotation marks (“ ”) to indicate quotes.
- Do not use single quotation marks (‘ ’) except for quotes within quotes.

Example: Nina Smith said “Our accountants told us directly ‘the figures are correct’, so I will use these accordingly.”

## Sourcing Data, Third Parties

- In marketing collateral, white papers and other promotional documents, there are a few acceptable ways to reference third-party data or information:
  - Direct quote or data point within the copy itself, with a reference and link to the original source.
  - A footnote that corresponds to a full list of sources at the very end of the piece.
  - A footnote that appears on the same page as the reference. In this case, begin a new number sequence on the next page.
- In infographics, the preferred method of sourcing information is to include a list at the end of the infographic. The exception is when there are multiple sources within a single infographic, in which case footnotes should be added.

## States

- Spell out the names of the states of the United States in text when they appear alone.

Example: Wildfires continued to rage through southern California yesterday.

- Follow AP style for press releases only: abbreviate a state name when it appears in conjunction with the name of a city, town, village or military base.
- Do not follow AP style for any other content.
- Use postal abbreviations for state without periods (e.g., MA, CA, IL)
- Place one comma between the city name and the state name, and place another after the state name, unless at the end of a sentence or in a dateline.

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## Times

- Format is 12-hour clock with AM/PM.

Examples: 9:15 AM, 4:30 PM

- Include the time zone (GMT, CET, etc.) for clarity when appropriate.

## Trademarks

In the case of summing up of product names, we don't use trademarks, like in [Annual Report](#)

- Example: CCH IntelliConnect, CCH ProSystem fx, CCH Integrator, Prosoft, TeamMate, and Twinfiel

## Using first and last names

Example: Suzanne Johnson, CEO <used when writing in a bio or when quoting for the first time in a press release, as a list of people on a committee, or as a signature>

## Various

- Wolters Kluwer N.V. (not nv or NV)
- Growing our Value is always italicized and capitalized
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): write out in full at first use (see acronyms section)
- Three-year strategy or three-year plan
- Wolters Kluwer is a global leader in information services and solutions for professionals not a “publisher”; it is a “global” company, not “international” or “multinational”.

## Web

In 2010, AP style adopted the use of the word website (one word, lowercase) instead of Web site. Web remains capitalized as a proper noun when it stands for World Wide Web.

## Whole numbers

- Use numerals for 10 and above.
- Spell out zero through nine unless the number precedes a unit of measurement.
- Spell out numerals that start a sentence; if the result is awkward, recast the sentence: Example: Twenty-seven detainees were released yesterday. Yesterday, 993 freshmen entered the college.
- Use a combination of numbers and words for numbers higher than 1 million

Example: 1 million, 1.5 million

- Use numerals for numbers that precede units of measurement
- Example: 3<sup>o</sup> and 3 degrees
- Avoid starting sentences with numerals

Example: Not “16 people are coming to my house for dinner tomorrow night.” but “Sixteen people ...”

- Thousand separator is a comma Example: 1,000
- Decimal separator is a period Example: \$1.99
- Billion: in the United States this is 1,000 million; in Europe it means 1 million millions. Use the US convention and clarify if needed for a worldwide audience.

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## Financial terms

Below is a list of the most commonly used financial terms.

- Accounts receivable
- Acquisition payments
- Actuarial assumptions
- Allocated tax
- Amortization of intangible fixed assets
- Amortization, depreciation, and impairments
- Appropriation of acquisition provisions
- Audit fees
- Audit-related fees
- Average invested capital
- Before appropriation of results
- Benefits paid
- Cash and bank balances
- Cash and cash equivalents
- Cash flow from operating activities
- Consolidated balance sheet
- Consolidated profit and loss account
- Contingent liabilities
- Costs of raw materials, subcontracted work, and other external expenses
- Current assets
- Current liabilities
- Deferred income
- Deferred tax assets
- Deposits
- Depreciation
- Diluted earnings per share
- Dutch fiscal entity
- Earnings per share (EPS)
- Earnings before interest, tax, and amortization (EBITA)
- Employee contributions
- End of exercise period
- Exceptional other income/results from divestments
- Exceptional restructuring expense
- Exchange rate gain or (loss)
- Exempt income and non-deductible expenses
- Exercise rate (average)
- Fair value at January 1
- Financial fixed assets
- Financial instruments
- Financial statements
- Financing activities
- Financing results
- Finished products and trade goods
- Fixed assets
- Free cash flow
- Full-time equivalents (FTEs)
- Income before taxation
- Initial number of options
- Intangible fixed assets
- Interest payable
- Inventories
- Long-Term Incentive Plan (LTIP)
- Long-term loans
- Minority interest of consolidated participations
- Net expenditure fixed assets
- Net expenditures
- Net income
- Net income (loss)
- Net operating profit after allocated tax (NOPAT)
- Non tax-deductible intangible fixed assets
- Non-consolidated and minority interests
- Normative taxation on income
- Number of options outstanding
- Number of options outstanding at 1 January
- Operating income
- Options exercised
- Options expired/eliminated
- Options granted
- Ordinary net income
- Other current liabilities
- Other fees
- Other liabilities and accruals
- Other operating expenses

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- Other receivables
  - Plan liabilities and assets
  - Prepayments
  - Provision for pensions
  - Provisions
  - Purchase value
  - Raw materials
  - Receivables resulting from divestments
  - Reconciliation between net income and benchmark ordinary net income
  - Reorganization/restructuring commitments
  - Results non-consolidated participating interests
  - Return on invested capital (ROIC)
  - Revenues
  - Royalties payable
  - Salaries and wages
  - Salaries and holiday allowances
  - Service costs
  - Share-based compensation
  - Shareholders' equity
  - Shareholder value
  - Short-term loans
  - Social security charges and pensions
  - Social security premiums and other taxation
  - Subordinated bonds
  - Tangible fixed assets
  - Tax effect of:
    - Tax exemption on results from divestment
    - Tax fees
    - Tax incentives and other
  - Tax receivables
  - Taxation on income
  - Total current assets
  - Total current liabilities
  - Total fixed assets
  - Total operating expenses
  - Trade creditors
  - Trade receivables
  - Utilization of tax losses carry forward
  - Value at spot rates of forward exchange contracts
  - Work in progress

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## 8. Web Guidelines

### Keywords

Keywords are the terms customers use when they search for content. To help customers find your content in search engines, front-load keywords in headings, subheadings, and page descriptions.

The search terms that customers use aren't necessarily the same terms you would use when searching. So before you write, identify the keywords that you think customers will use to find your content. These resources can help:

- Bing Keyword Research tool
- Google Adwords Keyword Planner
- Google Analytics

When you've identified the keywords that apply to your content, use them as early and as often as possible (without being contrived or repetitious) in these places:

- Titles
- Headings and subheadings
- Summaries
- Overviews
- Introductions
- Page descriptions
- Paragraph text
- Link text
- Image and table alt text

If your content is video, audio, or images, include keywords in a nearby text description and in alt text.

### Links and backlinks

Linking to supporting information is a good way to stick to the point and keep content concise. In a large body of content, cross-references can improve navigation and make content easier to scan.

- Write short link text (four or fewer words) that's descriptive and includes keywords.
- If it works, use the title or description of the target page as link text.
- Link to background and related information rather than summarizing it.

Backlinks are links from other online content to your page. Although search engine algorithms change frequently, backlinks are often part of the criteria that determine search ranking. As you plan, think about promotion and what other sites can appropriately link to your content. The more authoritative the site and the closer it maps to your keywords, the more weight the backlink carries.

Never create backlinks just to improve your site's search ranking. Search practices that don't make sense for your content rarely work and often backfire.

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## Write digital content with usability and search in mind

We follow The Associated Press Stylebook, with a few exceptions. Below we have highlighted some of the most common writing guidelines. There are some exceptions, for which we have adopted our own, in-house writing styles. Note that these rules do not apply to all foreign languages.

Digital content can include

- Written content
- Video
- Audio (podcasts)
- Infographics
- Social posts

Start with keyword and hashtag research

- Many tools and agencies can help with this. Here is a basic keyword guide and list of hashtags.
- Choose one to three primary keywords and build your page and content around those words and phrases.
- All your selected keywords should be relevant to the topical context of the page.
- Create copy that uses primary keywords in the URL, title, and meta description. Use a keyword in the body of the article at least three times, including once in the first paragraph.
- When writing content, use natural language and do not attempt to repeatedly stuff your keywords together, separated by commas. Search engines may see this as spam and penalize our rankings.
- Disperse keywords throughout the content on the page in a way that would make sense to a site user.
- Use at least 2 to 10 supporting keywords in the body. Supporting keywords are relevant to the primary keyword and add depth to the blog. Use supporting keywords once in copy, but add them in subheads, which is helpful for SEO.
- Suggested keywords are available from social and communications teams and update regularly.
- Resize and compress images according to site specifications.
- Use keywords in the file name.
- Tag photo(s) and use alt tags so search engines can crawl the imagery and the copy.
- Optimize PDFs (in properties)
- Optimize the PDF so it's a manageable file size
- Search-friendly file names
- Keyword-optimized titles
- Meta description

## Meta descriptions

The meta description is often used by search engines as the page description included on a search engine results page. The text itself is not used by search engines for the ranking of Web pages, but it is critically important in compelling users to visit a Web page.

- The optimal length is 150 to 160 characters.
- Incorporate relevant keywords and use natural language.
- Write a meta description that is unique for each Web page on the site.

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### Copy pointers

- Keep paragraphs short.
- Include lists and copy that can be scanned easily.
- Hyperlinks are the basic building blocks of the Web, yet they are often poorly managed. Search engines use hyperlinks to measure importance; include at least two or three links.
- Include article sources at the end of the article in the form of a list instead of footnoting within the article.

In addition to following the editorial guidelines, content should be tagged with metadata and contain a meta description to ensure that internal and external search engines can recognize and categorize keywords. This document provides general guidelines about how to tag content appropriately.