

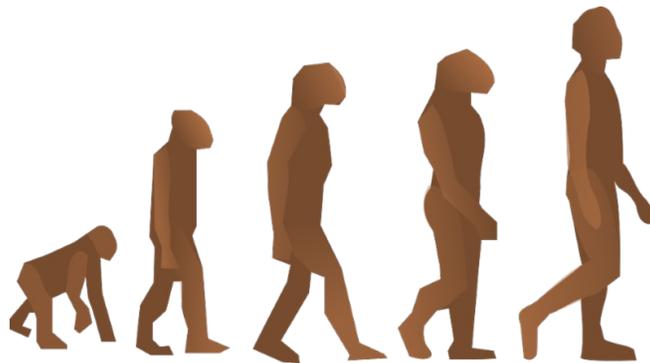
ASCRIBE TURNS 10!

From a two-person writing shop in a 300 square-foot office to a strategic content agency with a team of writers, editors and project managers, we're proud of our growth and development over the past 10 years.

We know we wouldn't be where we are today without the long list of valued clients who have put their trust in our promise of great thinking and the many partners who continue to call on us for content support.

Thanks to each of you for being part of our journey -- and for helping our team fulfill the vision Ascribe set out to achieve in 2007.

feature*



FROM COLLATERAL TO CONTENT

10 YEARS OF CHANGE IN MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

When Ascribe opened in 2007, the iPhone was a brand-new invention, Justin Bieber was just a kid on YouTube and Barack Obama's presidency was still a year away. The marketing communications landscape was very different then, too. Here's our take on how the industry has changed over the past 10 years.

The content age dawned.

Marketing communications used to be product-driven, all about generating brochures, data sheets and other collateral on a one-off basis or as part of a campaign. Digital and mobile not only introduced new platforms and channels but also the need for continuous, real-time content generation, shifting marketing communications to a practice of ongoing -- and increasingly strategic -- storytelling.

Readers became information consumers.

The proliferation of platforms, devices and media changed how people relate to information. Instead of reading, people started scanning and taking in content in nonlinear ways. The old, rhetorical ways of writing became ineffective: people wanted high-value, actionable information without obvious spin. And to make that content easy to find online, it had to be rich with keywords.

Journalistic style became the way.

While the content age was new, its best tool was nearly a century old: journalistic writing. Journalistic style had always been brisk, compact and direct, with the inverted pyramid at its heart -- the practice of saying the most important things first and drilling down into the details instead of building laboriously to a conclusion. Journalistic principles have become the basis of web style.

Brand became ubiquitous.

Continuous, real-time content made organizations more present to their audiences than ever before. Communications across all platforms had to (and still have to) look and sound the same. Sustaining that in high volumes demanded editorial oversight, quality control, a memory of what's been said before, and some capacity-support from, *ahem*, an outsourced marketing writing team.

Storytelling became strategic.

Continuous storytelling brought a demand for multi-platform editorial planning to ensure content reinforces an organization's core positioning, value, differentiation and character -- and doesn't just "fill a pipe". The pressure to generate content in quantity has not surpassed the need for quality, which is still the best way to build legitimacy and credibility.

punc'd*

FAQS? FAQS. FAQS!

Over the past 10 years we've had a lot of questions from clients and partners about punctuation. Here are some of the most common:

How many spaces after a period?

Just one. Two was standard in the typewriter age but word processing layouts eliminate this need.

Single or double quotes?

This is mostly a stylistic preference, but when quoting within a quote, use single quotation marks.

Where does the apostrophe go when abbreviating decades?

Put the apostrophe where there's been an omission (e.g., '80s - not 80's).

Can I use quotation marks for emphasis?

Please don't! Unnecessary quotation marks are often silly. Is "fresh" produce really fresh? Use italics, bold or an underscore instead.

Colon or semi-colon?

Colons come before lists, quotes or explanations; semi-colons connect independent but related sentences.



content matters*

A DECADE OF CONTENT THAT'S MATTERED

When people ask what's best about working at Ascribe, you can safely bet at least one person on our team will say, "The variety and working for so many outstanding clients." Looking back over the past 10 years, it's not hard to see why.

Dale:

We've had so many opportunities to work with organizations that are dedicated to making a difference, whether they're tackling the complex problem of addiction, meeting the global need for sustainable technologies, creating opportunities for women in the developing world or transforming society through digital technology. And it's especially gratifying to support organizations that are institutions in our community and contribute to the local economy.

Kim:

It's rewarding to do work that connects with people and helps change attitudes, like the writing we've

done to support local charities and raise awareness about eating disorders.

Steve:

And we've been able build a lean and efficient operation while helping major organizations in Canada and other parts of the world generate a constant stream of content for their audiences. About 1,600 deliverables a year out the door. I think that's something to be proud of.

Andrew:

We're always learning something new -- about technology or mental health or all the efforts that go in to things like transportation and public safety, which are sort of invisible in everyday life. We're privileged to get that kind of behind-the-scenes view.

Michael:

And at the same time, we have this unique opportunity to bring it all together, because our experience is so broad. A lot of clients are dealing with the same issues, and we're able to connect the dots, which people seem to appreciate.

pop*

POPPING INTO THE TIME MACHINE

In this issue, our POP column hits the rewind button to recall some of the big events that changed the cultural conversation in 2007.

***The Sopranos* signed off**

Fans anxiously awaiting the finale of HBO's beloved series raged at their cable companies when the show cut to black mid-sentence in its final moments -- not a signal malfunction but rather a deliberately ambiguous ending that's still the subject of debate to this day.

***Mad Men* reintroduced the liquid lunch**

Viewers didn't have to wait long for the next TV phenom when handsome, secretive Don Draper strolled onto screens and into a seven-season exploration of America's shifting psyche through the '50s, '60s and '70s.

Harry broke his own record

At the stroke of midnight on its release date, fans swarmed bookstores to buy *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, the seventh and final installment of the wizarding series. It sold 8.3 million copies in the U.S. during its first day on shelves.

Wikipedia reigned

Wikipedia officially gained the title of largest encyclopedia ever created -- taking over from the Chinese Yongle Encyclopedia, which had held the title since its completion in 1408.

The iPhone debuted

On June 29, Apple CEO Steve Jobs unveiled the future -- a multimedia communications device that was equal parts phone, iPod and web browser, causing millions of people to ditch their MP3 players, cell phones and personal data assistants forever.

practice point*

TENTH ANNIVERSARY... OR 10th ANNIVERSARY?

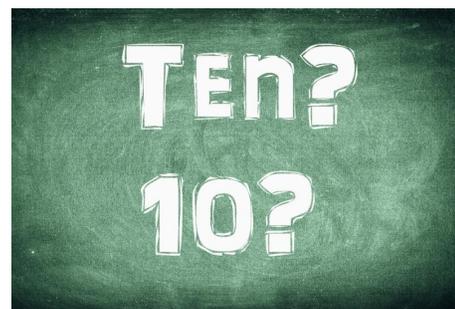
On the occasion of our milestone, here are some tips for handling numbers in copy:

If they're small, spell them out.

Style guides agree the numbers one through nine should be spelled out in words most of the time. Use digits for 10 and higher.

If they're really big, use digits.

When writing out large numbers, use the form that best improves readability. Often that means using numerals, or a hybrid form like "10 million" to keep the number compact.



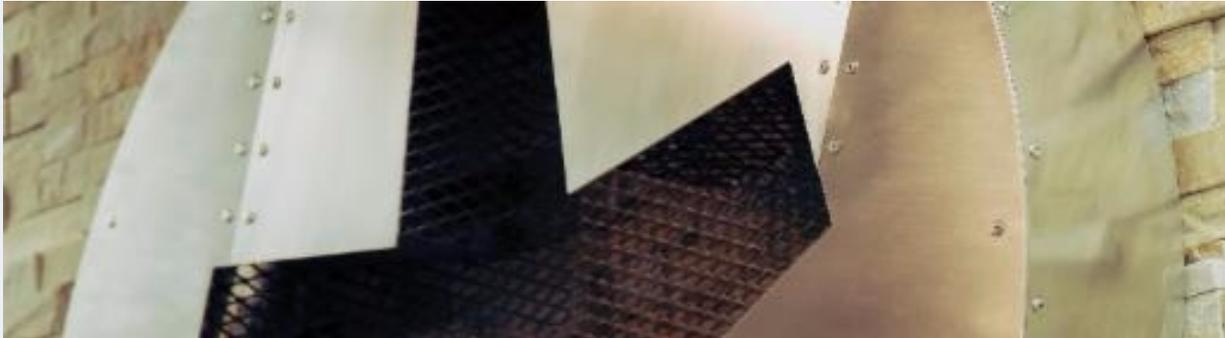
Avoid digits at the start of a sentence.

If your sentence is, "Ascribe is turning 10," the use of digits is fine. If you prefer to say, "Ten years is a long time to be typing," use the word instead.

Whatever you do, be consistent.

Choose a style guide and decide how you want to treat numbers before you get writing, and stick to the rules throughout.

moments in storytelling*



Milestones in the Ascribe story from 2007 to today.

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|--|---|---|---|--|
| <p>2007
We hang our shingle - well, star -- at 1390 Prince of Wales Drive and hire our first editorial assistant</p> | <p>2009
Committed to capacity, we bring on the dynamic duo of Steve McCutchen and Al Kratina and launch our event coverage service</p> | <p>2009
The first Ascribe General Mingle welcomes clients and partners for a night of networking, food, drink and wordplay</p> | <p>2010
We formalize and expand our copyediting support service, helping more clients publish high-quality, error-free content</p> | <p>2010
Daylite software becomes our "nerve centre", allowing us to manage a complex mix of projects for a growing set of local and international clients</p> |
| <p>2011
Ascribe "spaces out", expanding its footprint and replanning the office to optimize creativity and productivity</p> | <p>2011
Our team gets learning with "Ascribe U" -- an ongoing professional development program for the writers</p> | <p>2013
Ascribe gets cred, with Dale Morris named to the PROFIT/Chatelaine W100 list of Canada's Top Female Entrepreneurs</p> | <p>2015
We build our core team of project managers, writers and flex associates to meet clients' evolving needs</p> | <p>2017
Ascribe continues to thrive on telling the strategic stories of clients across a multitude of sectors</p> |

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