

# Nuance Style Guide

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## Preface

This style guide was created to help those who write copy for the Nuance website and provide textual information for Nuance, for its customer-facing presentations, and for use in marketing.

**This style guide addresses the issues and language that are specific to Nuance, with the goals of:**

- Creating a tone and voice for Nuance content, based on its branding.
- Promoting consistency in the use of language, including technology and new media terms.
- Providing guidelines and setting standards for grammatical and punctuation usage.
- Defining language, abbreviations and acronyms used by Nuance.

Only general principles of grammar are discussed here, other than examples pertinent to Nuance. This style guide serves principally as a supplement, not as a comprehensive study of modern English usage.

Refer to “AP Style” (“The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual”) and “The Elements of Style” by William Strunk, Jr. & E.B. White for more detail about modern English usage and guidance into some of its more complex rules.

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# Introduction to Nuance

## The Nuance Difference

Nuance is the speech company that listens.

Deeply attentive to the needs of its customers, its new solutions have pioneered a fast-growing industry that lets the human voice talk to and be heard by computers, automobiles, phones and consumer electronics.

A multinational software and technology corporation, Nuance has led the way in providing speech and imaging applications with products that focus on server and embedded speech recognition. It also creates telephone call-steering systems, automated telephone directory services, medical transcription software and systems, optical character recognition software, and desktop imaging software, among other innovative products.

### **Nuance is:**

- A speech company.
- An imaging company.
- A user interface/user experience company.
- The innovation leader in the industry.
- Experienced, with a history of success and reliability.
- A customer first/customer-focused company.
- Global.

### **Nuance delivers:**

- The full potential of customers' devices, applications and information systems.
- Solutions for thousands of companies and millions of users in over 50 languages.
- Vital information that increases productivity and lets business be conducted worldwide.

## The Nuance Brand Image

Nuance is the industry standard by which every other speech and user interface company must be measured.

Known for its experience and history of excellence, Nuance is the most innovative speech and user interface company working in healthcare, mobility and telecommunications, among other areas of enterprise.

It is the trailblazer, renowned internationally for creating platforms for dialogues between people and the technology they depend on. It knows how to turn words into action.

Nuance stands above the rest. It is the innovation leader in the industry and has an abundance of experience and a proven track record, so it has shown itself to be trustworthy and reliable.

Nuance interfaces people with machines in some of the world's most complex technologies, services and processes.

Just as it provides technology for its customers to interface with machines and platforms, it interfaces with its customers.

Nuance always puts customers first by listening to their needs and implementing whatever programs are necessary to address them. It is considered to be one of the most user-friendly companies operating today, treating the user responsibly and empathetically.

As the speech industry continues to proliferate at a rapid rate, Nuance's global reach and premier status becomes more widely recognized.

It is honored for achieving the highest standard for innovation and quality in its products, respected for its global reach, and trusted for its depth of experience in the speech industry.

That's why Nuance is known simply as **The Voice of Industry**.

## Brand Attributes

**The following attributes are applicable to Nuance:**

- Experienced
- Innovative
- Global
- Trustworthy
- Leader
- Customer-friendly
- Proven

**These attributes embody the tone with which Nuance expresses itself:**

- Professional
- Friendly
- Calm
- Patient
- Mature
- Empathetic
- Expert

## The Voice of Nuance

As the premier innovative speech and user interface company in the world, Nuance always presents itself with confidence. The language it uses to describe its products reflects the attitude of a company possessing a remarkable blend of experience and innovation through which it has earned an extraordinary level of trust as well as consumer loyalty and cross-industry respect.

At Nuance, the customer always comes first, and so the language is inclusive—it invites the customer to understand what is being presented.

### **Nuance language is:**

- Clear
- Elegantly simple
- Direct
- Empathetic
- Precise
- Professional

### **Nuance language is never:**

- Obscure because of technical language usage (all technical words and acronyms are clearly defined)
- Written in business-speak
- Laden with heavy marketing messaging
- Ostentatious
- Exclusive

### **Nuance always:**

- Is empathetic to the user and takes responsibility for the user's experience.
- Keeps the user's concerns at the top of its concerns.
- Explains its products and offers helpful suggestions about their usage.
- Speaks to the novice user, as well the educated user and business.

The voice of Nuance, as it is presented in all its writings, reflects the clear manner that Nuance consistently speaks through its products.

Nuance's voice is **The Voice of Industry**.

## Content Strategy

Nuance web sites are designed around the principle of “Progressive Disclosure,” which refers to the way copy flows throughout the online experience.

Developed through extensive testing into user preferences, Progressive Disclosure demonstrates a methodology that results in increased user satisfaction.

Progressive Disclosure is based on the idea that information is best received when it is presented in progressively more detailed levels. That way, the user can select partial, relevant information or can choose to delve into their subject of interest in greater depth.

Presented in informative language, the user is motivated both to find pertinent information and also to take actions requisite to realizing the business goals.

For Progressive Disclosure to work at its optimal capability, it is essential that employment of copy elements, adherence to copy rules and maintenance of consistency in usage occur throughout the site.



# Copy Elements

## Headlines, Subheads, Titles and Headings

### Headlines

- Objective: To capture the attention of the user and inform them about what will be discussed in detail on the page.
- Content: Contains high-level information in a succinct statement.
- Usage: Informs the user of what the topic is.
- Style: Captivating language that both informs and compels the user to learn more. Avoid superfluous text, like “Welcome to...”
- Format: Brief, concise, ideally only one line long and under 80 characters, including spaces.

### Subheads

- Objective: To extrapolate on the headline and expand its meaning.
- Content: Contains high-level information that is meant to inform.
- Usage: Explains in some detail what to expect on the page.
- Style: Marketing; persuasive language.
- Format: Brief, concise, ideally no more than two lines in length and under 160 characters, including spaces.

### Page Titles

- Objective: To get the web page to rank high as well as attract people to it.
- Content: Contains keywords that best describe what's on the page.
- Usage: Optimizes search so that users can find the page.
- Style: Short, plain, informative and descriptive language.
- Format: Put keywords at front of page title. Maximum character count (English and International): 65-70 characters, including spaces.

### Navigational Titles

- Objective: To identify actions that a user can employ on the site.
- Content: Contains simple information that explains how to navigate the site.
- Usage: Provides easy access to interactive activities.
- Format: Brief, no more than one to three words.

### Category Titles

- Objective: To indicate clearly a section of the page.
- Content: Contains simple information that describes an area of interest.
- Usage: Indicates a place where pertinent information can be readily accessed.
- Format: Brief, no more than one to three words.

### Headings and Heading Tags

- Objective: To indicate clearly a section of the page and summarize info to come.
- Content: Contains information that describes an area of interest.
- Usage: Indicates the topic of a section of the page.
- Style: Clear and compelling language employing keywords. The heading tags are give more weight by search engines than regular body copy.
- Format: Succinct, no more than one line, and under 80 characters., including spaces.

# Copy Elements

## Types and Lengths of Body Copy

### Brief Descriptions

- Objective: To provide a short summary of the material. Sometimes, to entice the user to click for greater detail.
- Content: Contains high-level information in an abbreviated summary statement.
- Usage: Answers the most basic user questions.
- Style: Be aware of keywords to use, but avoid stuffing the copy with them.
- Format: Contains no more than one complex sentence or two simple sentences. Maximum character count (English): 225 including spaces.

### Detailed Descriptions

- Objective: To provide a decision-making level of information. Sometimes, persuading the user to choose further action.
- Content: Conveys specific information that answers user's questions.
- Usage: Provides a more complete description of the product or process.
- Style: Be aware of keywords to use, but avoid stuffing the copy with them.
- Format: Contains no more than three complex sentences or four simple sentences (or a combination of both) that relay the full intent of the product or process, including the explanation of it, any activity required and specific features of it in fleshed-out descriptions. Taglines might be included. Maximum character count (English): 450 including spaces.

### Instructional Navatorial

- Objective: To provide instructions that tells users how to use the site in terms of functionality, telling the user exactly what to do in precise language. Sometimes, explaining what the result of taking the action is.
- Style: Direct, succinct and scannable language addressed directly to the user in the present tense.
- Use of Symbols: When writing navitorial copy, the symbols "<>" are used to indicate a field that is dynamically generated.
- Format: No specific length required, but the goal is to make the language short and clear.

## Copy Elements

### Links and CTA Button Copy

#### Links

- Objective: To provide the user access to greater detail. Sometimes, the user is enticed to click for greater detail.
- Content: Contains information about what is being accessed in abbreviated form. Sometimes, call-to-action language is used; other times, the language is simply informational.
- Usage: Takes user to another level where a more detailed description is offered.
- Style: Avoid using “click here” and other language that describes the requested action, as that limits the search optimization capacity on the page.
- Format: Contains no more than one short sentence, and ideally would have only one or two words.

#### CTA Buttons

- Objective: To provide a compelling reason for user to click for more information or to take action
- Content: Instructional language that calls on user to take immediate action.
- Usage: Takes user to another level where a more detailed description is offered.
- Style: Use call-to-action language. Avoid using “click here” and other language that describes the requested action.
- Format: Contains no more than one to three words. Maximum under 25 characters in English and 30 Internationally, including spaces.

## Copy Rules

### Numbers

Use consistency in the way numbers are presented, as indicated below in the following guidelines.

#### Numerals

- Use numerals for ages (e.g., 2, 6).
- Use numerals for numbers over 9 (e.g., 10, 63); spell out the numerals until the number 10 is reached (e.g., “one,” “two,” etc.).
- Use a hyphen in texts where a range is shown, (e.g., 3-5 customers).
- Put a comma after the first digit when in the thousands (e.g., 1,000).

#### Dates

- Spell out dates (e.g., April 22, 2010)
- Don't use a comma if mentioning only a month (e.g., “April, 2010” is incorrect; :April 2010“ is correct)

#### Percentages

- Use percentage sign (“%,” not “percent”).

#### Phone Numbers

- Use parentheses and hyphens to show a phone number clearly (e.g., (888) 888-8888).

#### Times

- Use a.m. and p.m.
- Put a space after the last digit in the time (e.g., 5:00 p.m.)

# Copy Rules

## Punctuation

### Colon

- Capitalize text that follows a colon if it could be a full sentence on its own.

### Commas

- In a series of three or more terms with a single conjunction, use a comma after each term except the last (e.g., “red, white, and blue.”)

### Ellipsis

- Avoid use of ellipsis, unless indicating words omitted in a quotation.

### En Dash

- Use en dashes in:
  - Headlines
  - Subheads

### Em Dash

- Use en dashes in copy blocks

### Exclamation Point

- Avoid use of explanation points.

### Quotation Marks

- Use quotation marks for the following:
  - Titles
  - Words that are to be defined
  - Quotations

### Parenthesis

- Use the parenthesis sparingly.

## Copy Rules

### Typefaces

#### **Bold**

- Use sparingly for emphasis.

#### **Italics**

- Avoid italics. They can be virtually illegible online.

#### **Underline**

- Avoid using an underline, since that indicates a link. For actual links, use hyperlinks.

# Copy Rules

## Capitalization

### Upper Case

- The following words should be capitalized:
  - A word beginning a sentence, no matter whether or not it is capitalized in other contexts (e.g., “E-commerce is great.”)
  - A proper noun, whether name, place or thing
  - A product
  - A headline, subhead or title
  - At the beginning of each word in a bulleted list

### Lower Case in Headlines, Subheads and Titles

- The following words should be lowercased unless they are the first word, which is always capitalized:

a	for	on
an	from	onto
and	in	or
as	into	the
at	nor	to
by	of	with

## Copy Rules

### Hyphenation: Compound Modifiers

#### Compound Modifiers – The General Rule

- Use a hyphen to separate an adjectival modifier from the object noun or verb (e.g., “next-generation application”).
- If the compound modifier ends in –ly, it should never be hyphenated (e.g., “incredibly versatile program”).

#### Prefixes

- Hyphenate the following prefixes, or words when they are used as prefixes, as demonstrated in the examples:

Prefix	Examples, Notes
Built-	Built-in
Click-	Click-through
Computer-	Computer-generated, computer-aided
Cost-	Cost-effective
Cross-	Cross-platform
Data-	Data-driven
Front-	Front-end
High-	High-performance, high-tech, high-level, high-availability
In-	In-game
Low-	Low-tech
Next-	Next-generation
On-	On-demand, on-screen
One-	One-click
Re-	Re-creation (only hyphenate when there is an already existing non-hyphenated word with a different meaning; in this case, “recreation”)
Real-	Real-time
Self-	Self-service

- Do not hyphenate the following prefixes, or words when they are used as prefixes, as demonstrated in the examples:

Prefix	Examples, Notes
Auto	Autoloading, autostructured
Co	Coprocessor, coauthor



Prefix	Examples, Notes
Hyper	Hyperthreading
Meta	Metadata, metatag
Micro	Microprocessor
Multi	Multifunctional, multipage, multimodal, multitenancy, multiplatform, multilanguage
Non	Nonperishable, noninvasive (Hyphenate in instances where it would be unreadable. Don't use in place of "not," as in the incorrect "non-editable.")
Post	Postdelivery
Pre	Prerecord, predefine, predelivery, precertification
Re	Reuse, relistening
Sub	Subdialog
Work	workflow, workspace

### Suffixes

- Hyphenate or don't hyphenate, as indicated, when using the following suffixes:

Suffix	Example, Notes
-based	Speech-based, web-based, IP-based, evidence-based, standards-based, XML-based, device-based, DSP-based
casting	Broadcasting, webcasting
-critical	Mission-critical
-enable	Voice-enable, speech-enable
-free	Hands-free
grade	Carrier grade
-independent	Device-independent
-leading	Marketing-leading, industry-leading
wide	Businesswide, companywide, industrywide, enterprisewide
-winning	Award-winning

### One or More Words/Hyphenated or Not Hyphenated

- See the correct way to handle the following words:

One or More Words/Hyphenated or Not Hyphenated	Examples, Notes
All-in-one	
Already impressive	Two words, no hyphen
Autoformatting	One word
Bandwidth	One word
Best in class	Three words, no hyphens
Best of breed	Three words, no hyphens
Braille keyboard	Two words
Call to action, (v.) Call-to-action (adj.)	Only hyphenate if used as a modifier ("call-to-action button")
Click-through	Plural: "click-throughs"
Checkbox	One word
Closed loop	Two words
Cross-platform	
Decision making (n.), decision-making (adj.)	
Desktop	One word
Download	One word
Drop-down	
Easy-to-use (adj.)	Hyphenate only when used as a modifier ("an easy-to-use manual")
e-business	
e-commerce	
email	One word
e-money	
End-to-end	
End user (n.), end-user (adj.)	
Filename	One word
File system	Two words
Full cycle	Two words
Gigabyte	
High-end	
High-speed	
home page	Capitalize "Home page" when referring to the actual page title.
In-house	
Kickoff (n.), kick off (v.)	
Low-level	
Log in (v.), login (adj. or n.)	Two words for a verb, one word for an adjective or noun
Log off (v.), logoff (adj. or n.)	Two words for a verb, one word for an adjective or noun

One or More Words/Hyphenated or Not Hyphenated	Examples, Notes
Log on (v.), logon (adj. or n.)	Two words for a verb, one word for an adjective or noun
Megabyte	
Multimedia	Never hyphenate “multi”
Natural sounding	Two words
Not editable	Two words. Note: the negative is “not editable” rather than “non-editable.”
Ongoing	
Online	
On-screen	
Paper to digital (n.), paper-to-digital (adj.)	
Peer review	No hyphen
Point-of-sale	
Pull-down	
Real time (n.), real-time (adj.)	
Reusable	
Single vendor	No hyphen
State of the Art (n.), state-of-the-art (adj.)	
Test case	
Text-to-speech	
Third party (n.), third-party (adj.)	
Toll-free	
Touchscreen	
Turn-by-turn	
Turnaround	No hyphen
Website	

## Abbreviations and Acronyms

### General Rule

At the first mention on every page, use the full words, followed by the acronym or abbreviation in parentheses. For example, write “Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR).”

**The following are commonly used abbreviations and acronyms used by Nuance and what they represent:**

- ACR = American College of Radiology
- ADA = Automated Directory Assistance
- AHDI = Association for Healthcare Documentation Integrity
- ASP = Application Server Provider
- ASR = Automatic Speech Recognition
- BPA = Business Process Automation
- CAMT = Computer-Assisted Medical Transcription
- CAP = College of American Pathologists
- CMT = Certified Medical Transcriptionist
- CPOE = Computerized Physician Order Entry
- CTRM = Critical Test Result Management
- CTR = Critical Test Result
- DMS = Document Management System
- DSN = Decision Support Numbers
- DSP = Digital Signal Processing
- EHR = Electronic Health Records
- EMR = Electronic Medical Records
- HTDI = High Technology Diagnostic Imaging
- IM = Instant Message
- IP = Internet Protocol (also, in another context, can refer to Intellectual Property)
- IS = Information Systems

- JCAHO = Joint Commission
- MFP = Multifunctional Peripherals
- MT = Medical Transcriptionist
- MVC2 = Model-View-Controller paradigm
- NLP = Natural Language Processing
- NLU = Natural Language Understanding
- OCR = Optical Character Recognition
- ODMA = Open Document Management API
- OEM = Original Equipment Manager
- OSD = Open Speech Dialog
- OSDM = Open Speech Dialog Module
- PACS = Picture Archiving and Communication System
- PDA = Personal Digital Assistant
- QA = Quality Assurance
- QA&M = Quality Assurance & Management
- ROI = Release of Information
- SDK = Software Development Kit
- SMS = Short Message Service
- TAT = Turnaround time
- TTS = Text to Speech
- WAP = Wireless Application Protocol
- XML = Extensible Markup Language

## Glossary

### **Alphanumeric**

—*adjective*

The combined set of all letters in the alphabet and the numbers 0 through 9.

### **Architecture**

—*noun*

The architecture of a system always defines its broad outlines, and may define precise mechanisms as well.

### **Artifact**

—*noun*

Erroneous or extraneous data introduced either by the methodology used in data collection or by the process (such as scanning) used in data capture.

### **Assistive technology**

—*noun*

Devices, equipment or systems that enhance, increase or maintain the physical and/or mental capabilities of people with disabilities. Also called adaptive technology.

### **Auto Attendants**

—*noun*

In private branch exchange (PBX) phone systems an auto assistant, also called an auto attendant or reception assistant is a feature of the system that distributes or forwards calls without requiring any human intervention. The auto assistant may also provide a company directory listing for inbound callers. An automated answering service which routes calls to the appropriate place, based on user-defined steps and responses to prompts.

### **Automatic speech recognition**

—*noun*

Automatic speech recognition (also known as speech recognition or computer speech recognition) converts spoken words to text.

### **Batch convert files**

—*verb*

Change loads of files into a number of formats offered.

### **Braille keyboard support**

—*noun*

an adaptive device which facilitates inputting to a computer through Braille

### **Business rule logic**

—*noun*

A method of reasoning based on a set of assumptions, principles and interrelationships that underlies a business and informs the way that perception and information are processed as well as how it functions.

### **Cache, Caching**

—*noun*

A special high-speed storage mechanism. It can be either a reserved section of main memory or an independent high-speed storage device. Two types of caching are commonly used in personal computers: memory caching and disk caching.

**Call flow***—noun*

Definition of the behavior of an interactive voice response application. The call flow describes how the caller enters the application, the options and inputs (key presses) that are provided to the caller, and the application's response to these inputs.

**Carrier grade***—noun*

In telecommunication, a "carrier grade" or "carrier class" refers to a system, or a hardware or software component that is extremely reliable, well tested and proven in its capabilities. Carrier grade systems are tested and engineered to meet or exceed "five nines" high availability standards, and provide very fast fault recovery through redundancy (normally less than 50 milliseconds).

**Coding-by-synthesis architecture***—noun*

The framework for high-quality audio coding using analysis-by-synthesis technique.

**Context***—noun*

The surroundings, circumstances, environment, background or settings in which activities can take place.

**Continually***—adverb*

Very often.

**Continuously***—adverb*

Without cessation.

**Cross-platform***—noun*

The term cross-platform refers to applications, formats, or devices that work on different platforms.

**Deployment***—noun*

The installing, setting up, testing and running of computer programs and processes; implementation.

**Desktop dictation***—noun*

The conversion of spoken sounds into written words through a computer.

**DSP-based speech***—noun*

Speech based on DSP (Digital Signal Processor), which refers to manipulating analog information, such as sound or photographs that have been converted into a digital form. DSP is a special type of coprocessor designed for performing the mathematics involved in DSP. Most DSPs are programmable, which means that they can be used for manipulating different types of information, including sound, images, and video.

**Dynamic prompt***—noun*

A symbol on a display screen that takes place at the moment it is needed rather than in advance indicating that the computer is waiting for input.

### **Edutainment**

—noun

Entertaining education (slang).

### **Efficiency**

—noun

The result of minimizing resources or time needed to complete a process.

### **Embedded**

—adjective

A specialized computer system that is part of a larger system or machine. Some embedded systems include an operating system, but many are so specialized that the entire logic can be implemented as a single program.

### **Full duplex acoustic echo cancellation solution**

—noun

A solution required to address different acoustic and noise control environment issues, which is incorporated into full duplex speakerphones.

### **Full lifecycle transcription solution**

—noun

Support throughout a full lifecycle: from dictation, transcription, medical records, to coding, billing and case management.

### **Hyper-threading**

—noun

A technology developed by Intel that enables multithreaded software applications to execute threads in parallel on a single multi-core processor instead of processing threads in a linear fashion.

### **Industry standard**

—noun

A definition or format that has been approved by a recognized standards organization or is accepted as a de facto standard by the industry.

### **Infomatics**

—noun

a broad academic field encompassing information science, information technology, algorithms, and social science; the study, design, development, implementation, support, or management of computer-based information systems.

### **Information-capturing platform**

—noun

The underlying software that allows the saving of a particular state of a program in a computer and the storage of the captured information.

### **In-game communication**

—noun

The communication that happens in real-time with other players in your game.

### **Interface**

—noun, verb

(n.) A boundary across which two independent systems meet and act on or communicate with each other. In computer technology, there are several types of interfaces.



- user interface - the keyboard, mouse, menus of a computer system. The user interface allows the user to communicate with the operating system.
- software interface - the languages and codes that the applications use to communicate with each other and with the hardware.
- hardware interface - the wires, plugs and sockets that hardware devices use to communicate with each other.

**(v.)** To connect with or interact with by means of an interface.

### **Mobile recognition**

*—noun*

A mobile phone system that recognizes the voice of the user and performs specific actions based upon the speaker's words.

### **Natural Number**

*—noun*

A positive integer.

### **ODMA content manager standard**

*—noun*

Short for Open Document Management API, an open industry standard that enables desktop applications to interface with a document management system (DMS).

### **Open platform**

*—noun*

An accessible, public hardware or software.

### **Platform**

*—noun*

The underlying hardware or software for a system. A platform defines a standard around which a system can be developed.

### **Point and click data**

*—noun*

Data derived from point and click interfaces, in which a user points to an object on the screen and then clicks a button on the mouse to signify their selection.

### **Predictive text**

*—noun*

An input technology most commonly used on mobile phones, and for accessibility, which allows some common words to be entered by a single keypress for each letter, as opposed to the multiple keypress approach used in the older generation of mobile phones. The intent is to simplify the writing of text messages, e-mail, and other entries.

### **QA&M tasks**

*—noun*

Tasks involving quality assessment and management.

### **Scalable**

*—adjective*

Refers to how well a hardware or software system can adapt to increased demands.

**Small footprint system**

—noun

A small-sized computer or other system. Footprint can also refer to the amount of disk space required by an application.

**Speaker verification**

—noun

A solution to protect voice services from fraud by using the unique characteristics of each customer's voice to confirm quickly and automatically caller's identity.

**Speech automation**

—noun

A type of automated customer care system.

**Static prompt**

—noun

A symbol on a display screen requiring user action that is in itself fixed and not capable of action or change. The opposite of “dynamic.”

**Text processing**

—noun

A process by which words, lines, and pages can be manipulated; usually stored as ASCII codes (that is, without any formatting).

**Text-to-speech synthesis**

—noun

Refers to a computer's ability to produce sound that resembles human speech. Speech synthesis systems can read text files and output them in a very intelligible voice.

**Voice portals**

—noun

Voice portals are the same as web portals, only they are accessed via the voice; they are also known as “links pages,” which present information from diverse sources in a unified way.

**Wireless network infrastructure**

—noun

The infrastructure that utilizes specific equipment in place of wires for connectivity, allowing there to be communication between sender and receiver.

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