

[Your Company's] Communications Audit Table

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Purpose	Channels	Stop Words & No-Nos
<i>Define the purpose of the message you're analysing</i>	<i>Make a scope of the communication channels you choose to look at</i>	<i>While you're looking at the specific texts, compile a list of the destructive communication practices, words or phrases that should disappear from your company's messages, in your expert opinion</i>
1. informative	1. newsletter	1. passive voice
2. sales-persuasive	2. press release	2. bureaucratic language
3. image-relationship-making	3. social media publication	3. aggressiveness
4. warning	4. internal communications message	4. obscurantism (deliberate obscurity)
5. other	5. mobile message	5. unacceptable emotionality
	6. banner ad	6. bad/inappropriate humour
	7. outdoor ad	7. disrespectful attitude, arrogance
	8. other	8. other

	Audit parameters	Audited example 1	Audited example 2
	Sample ID (Comes in handy to identify the pieces of text you've already analysed — just in case you'll need to come back to those particular examples)	001_Email_request	002_Web_Ad
	Content (What is the message about?)	Requesting to pay the outstanding loan amount	Get a 24-h business loan and save time!
	Short description (In a few words, define what the message is about.)	The company requests the client to pay back the outstanding loan and warns of the legal consequences if this request is not met.	Invitation for businesses to try new product
	Purpose (See the list of different communications purposes above)	4	2
	Clarity of purpose and call to action (Is the message understandable to a client? Are clients guided to a particular result?)	Yes, the message is understandable	Yes — get the 24h loan to save time. However, what “24h loan” implies is not clear.
	Suitability for the chosen channel (Length, emotionality/intimacy, possibility to act upon the CTA, etc.)	Yes	Yes
	Audience (Who is the main target audience for this message?)	retail clients	business clients
Audience	How well does this message suit its target audience? (What tells us about the way in which it has respected (or not) its audience? What does the choice of words convey about how the audience is perceived?)	No special characteristics/adjustments	Clients’ needs are addressed: “Try this loan for businesses”, “Save your time”
	Emotion (Does it deliver 1-good, 2-bad or 3-neutral news to the client?)	2	1
	If 2, does the message handle the bad news with empathy? (Empathy is a key relationship-building element and it’s essential to understand if and how it’s integrated into a company’s communications.)	No, it didn’t	—
	How can the TOV be described? (You can also analyse here if a message’s TOV is within the defined TOV of the company, or choose your own wording to define the tone.)	Lawyer-like speak — the brand is a bureaucratic organisation that executes a formal approach, similar to a tax authority	“Business casual”
	The brand conveys a feeling of XXXXXX. How do you define your brand’s TOV? (State what you perceive to be your brand’s essential TOV)	No, it does not offer any follow-up options for the client.	Yes
	Stop words and ‘no-nos’ (See the list of different destructive communications practices above — define those that best suit the company you’re analysing, add your own if necessary.)	1, 2, 4	—
	Mistakes (Grammatical and stylistic)	The message lacks a comma after the address.	—
Standard text (Evaluate consistency and correspondence to a company’s TOV when analysing standard parts of a message)	Greeting	—	—
	Address	Mr. XXX	—
	Closing (Valediction/Signature)	—	—
	Brand titles (Does a company’s/ brand’s name appear consistently in all communications?)	The Brand (incorrect)	—
	Quality of localization (If relevant, are you able to evaluate a localization quality for that message? Do so here.)	—	Good
	Other notes (Write down any thoughts that might be relevant for the presentation of the audit findings you’re going to give to your client.)	When should a company start using a formal and bureaucratic tone with a client?	What exactly a ‘24h loan’ involves is not immediately clear.
	Rewriting proposition (You’ll often see a necessary improvement to wording or structure right after you’ve analysed a piece of text. By jotting down your idea straight away, you’ll make sure you don’t lose that bright idea.)	—	Get a 24-h business loan and save time — the required funds will appear in your account the very same day!