Content Style Guide Template

Here's a comprehensive **Content Style Guide Template** to ensure consistency in tone, style, and messaging across all your brand's content. This guide will help maintain a unified brand voice, whether you're creating blog posts, social media updates, marketing emails, or any other form of content.

#1. Brand Overview

- **Brand Name:** (e.g., Acme Inc.)
- **Mission Statement:** (e.g., "To empower small businesses with innovative tech solutions.")
- **Core Values:** (e.g., Integrity, Innovation, Customer-Centricity)
- **Brand Personality:** (e.g., Friendly, Authoritative, Fun, Inspirational)
- **Tagline:** (e.g., "Empowering Your Success")

#2. Brand Voice & Tone

- **Overall Brand Voice:** (e.g., Warm, conversational, and witty)
  - **Do:** Use approachable and engaging language
  - **Don't:** Use overly technical jargon or a formal tone
- **Tone Variations by Platform:**
  - **Website:** Professional but approachable
  - **Blog:** Informative and conversational
  - **Social Media:** Casual, fun, and engaging
  - **Emails:** Personalized and helpful

#3. Audience Persona

- **Primary Audience:** (e.g., Small business owners, 25-45 years old, tech-savvy)
- **Secondary Audience:** (e.g., Marketing professionals, freelancers)
- **Key Interests:** (e.g., Digital marketing, entrepreneurship, productivity tools)
- **Pain Points:** (e.g., Lack of time, limited budgets, tech overwhelm)

#4. Grammar & Usage

- **Preferred Language:** (e.g., American English, British English)
- **Voice:** (e.g., Active voice preferred over passive voice)
  - **Do:** "Our tool simplifies your workflow."
  - **Don't:** "Your workflow is simplified by our tool."
- **Tense:** (e.g., Present tense for instructional content)
- **Point of View:** (e.g., Use second person "you" for direct engagement)
- **Contractions:** (e.g., Allowed: "We're here to help.")

#5. Writing Style

- **Sentence Length:** (e.g., Aim for concise sentences, 15-20 words max)
- **Paragraph Length:** (e.g., Keep paragraphs short, 2-4 sentences)
- **Bullet Points & Lists:**
  - Use bullet points for clarity and ease of reading
  - Use numbered lists for step-by-step instructions
- **Headings & Subheadings:**
  - Use **Title Case** for H1 (e.g., "How to Boost Your Marketing Strategy")
  - Use **Sentence case** for H2 and below (e.g., "How to get started")

#6. Formatting Guidelines

- **Font Style:** (e.g., Arial, 12pt for web content)
- **Line Spacing:** (e.g., 1.5 for better readability)
- **Text Alignment:** (e.g., Left-aligned)
- **Bold & Italics:**
  - Use **bold** for emphasis
  - Use *italics* for quotes, book titles, or emphasis on specific terms

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#7. Punctuation & Symbols

- **Oxford Comma:** (e.g., Use the Oxford comma: "red, white, and blue")
- **Quotation Marks:** (e.g., Use double quotation marks " " for quotes)
- **Hyphens vs. Dashes:**
  - Hyphen (-) for compound words (e.g., "well-known")
  - En dash (–) for ranges (e.g., "10–20 minutes")

- ○ Em dash (—) for breaks in thought (e.g., "Our product is the best—no doubt about it")
- **Numbers:**
    - ○ Spell out numbers one through nine
    - ○ Use numerals for 10 and above

#8. Visual Elements

- **Images:**
    - ○ Use high-resolution images (minimum 1080px width)
    - ○ Include alt text for accessibility (e.g., "A person using our software on a laptop")
    - ○ Preferred file types: JPG, PNG
- **Infographics:**
    - ○ Follow brand color palette and fonts
    - ○ Include a brief description below the infographic
- **Videos:**
    - ○ Preferred format: MP4
    - ○ Include captions for accessibility
    - ○ Video length: Keep under 2 minutes for social media

#9. Brand-Specific Terminology

- **Approved Brand Terms:**
    - ○ Company name: (Always use "Acme Inc." not "Acme")
    - ○ Product names: (e.g., "Acme Toolkit," "Acme Pro Plan")
    - ○ Tagline: ("Empowering Your Success")
- **Industry Jargon:**
    - ○ Use accessible language, explain jargon where necessary
    - ○ Avoid acronyms unless widely recognized (e.g., SEO, ROI)

#10. SEO Guidelines

- **Primary Keywords:** (e.g., "small business software," "marketing automation")
- **Secondary Keywords:** (e.g., "best productivity tools," "digital marketing tips")
- **Keyword Density:** (e.g., Aim for 1-2% keyword density)
- **Meta Descriptions:** (e.g., Limit to 150-160 characters, include target keyword)
- **Alt Text:** (e.g., Include descriptive, keyword-rich alt text for images)

#11. Content Approval Process

- **Draft Submission:** (e.g., Writers submit drafts via Google Docs)
- **Review Stages:**
  - First review by content manager
  - Second review by SEO specialist
  - Final review by editor-in-chief
- **Feedback Loop:** (e.g., Use comments in Google Docs for revisions)
- **Final Approval:** (e.g., Content manager signs off before publishing)

#12. Content Distribution & Promotion

- **Publishing Schedule:** (e.g., Blog posts published every Tuesday and Thursday)
- **Social Media Guidelines:**
  - Hashtags: Use 3-5 relevant hashtags per post
  - Tagging: Always tag partners and relevant influencers
- **Email Newsletter:**
  - Subject lines: Keep under 50 characters
  - CTA (Call-to-Action): Include a clear CTA in every email

#13. Compliance & Legal

- **Copyright Guidelines:** (e.g., Only use licensed or original images)
- **Disclaimers:** (e.g., "Results may vary" for case studies)
- **Privacy Policy:** (e.g., Include a link to your privacy policy in emails)

#14. Style Guide Examples

- **Good Example:** (Provide a sample of well-written content that aligns with the brand voice)
- **Bad Example:** (Show a sample of content that deviates from brand guidelines)

#15. Continuous Improvement

- **Review & Updates:** (e.g., Review this guide quarterly)
- **Feedback:** (e.g., Encourage team members to suggest updates)

- **Training:** (e.g., Conduct style guide training for new hires)

This **Content Style Guide Template** ensures consistency across all your brand's communications and helps streamline your content creation process. By following these guidelines, you can strengthen your brand voice, engage your target audience more effectively, and maintain a professional and cohesive brand presence.

Feel free to adapt and expand upon this template to suit your specific business needs!