

Nike+

Developer Portal

VOICE & TONE GUIDE
25 August 2014

Introduction

WHAT IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This is guidance for the voice and tone we'll use on the Nike+ Developer Portal, both in the short and long-term.

This version will be used by anyone who contributes to content in the 2014 Developer Portal refresh, including [copywriters](#), [technical writers](#), [copy approvers](#) and [editors](#).

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Here you will find:

Information about our **target audiences**, the content we'll use for each and the specific ways in which content must serve them.

4 guiding principles for the Nike+ Developer Portal voice and tone.

The **8 web writing rules** we will adhere to in everything we do (including visuals and video when applicable).

Key dos and don'ts, including naming conventions and grammar rules.

You will not find:

Content strategy – The Content Strategy Brief provides that specific view.

Content maintenance calendar and plan – This is a post-refresh deliverable.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

developer.nike.com

The Nike+ Developer Portal hosts proprietary API documentation that selected partners can use to develop unique experiences.

The Developer Portal must tell the story, encourage partner interest, engage and motivate developers and provide contacts and support along the way.

NikeFuel

NikeFuel is a currency of movement developed by top scientists in Nike's state-of-the art performance lab, to inspire a “**Do More**” whole body well-being.

This is not a fitness tracker. This is a cutting-edge approach to well-being– and no one else is thinking about movement this way.

Our audience

WHO IS THE DEVELOPER PORTAL FOR?

Today's target audience

Johnny Dev – Approved Developer

“Get me to the API status, help me use and understand it... and don't get in my way.”

Brian Startsky – Interested Business Partner

“Show me what NikeFuel could mean for my business and get me excited about partnering with you.”

In the future

Cindy Syntax – Interested Developer

“Show me the possibilities of the API, and let me connect with you.”

ENGAGING OUR AUDIENCE

Johnny Dev - Technical content

Engages developers, inspiring them to create amazing experiences.

- **Accurate:** checked and double-checked.
- **Authentic:** reflecting standard API conventions.
- **Respect intelligence:** clear without over-explaining the basics.
- **Respect their time:** streamlining the journey and keeping documentation free of marketing.

ENGAGING OUR AUDIENCE

Brian Startsky - Marketing content

Engages potential business partners, crisply telling our story to drive engagement.

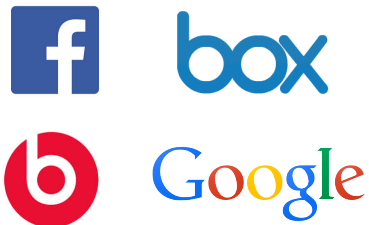
- **Impactful:** distilling messages into meaningful bits.
- **Brief:** arming this audience with elevator pitches.
- **Bottom line:** driving home financial benefits.
- **Aspirational vision:** mapping to boundless possibilities and blue sky innovations.

WHO ELSE IS TALKING TO OUR AUDIENCE?

Our developers and partners are working with other APIs all the time.

Competitive comparative sites:

- Facebook
- Box
- Beats
- Google



Voice & tone findings:

Bigger developer sites (Facebook & Google) seem to be speaking to the press or their peers more than developers. And all sites seemed skewed to speaking to one audience or the other.

That gives us a unique opportunity: **no one is connecting with our two core audiences the way that Nike can.**

Guiding principles

1

KEEP IT BRIEF AND MEANINGFUL

2

AIM HIGHER

3

KNOW OUR BRAND VOICE

4

KNOW (AND LOVE) OUR AUDIENCE

WE KEEP IT BRIEF AND MEANINGFUL

Our key audiences expect us to respect their time.

They want us to get to the point quickly... and stay out of their way. This means we banish clutter, we keep our tone direct and authentic, and we make sure we have a great reason for saying anything at all.

In other words:

“If it’s not exceptional, don’t do it.”

— Greg Hoffman, Vice President Nike Global Brand Design & Communications

WE AIM HIGHER

Our key audiences are smart, and they expect to be treated that way.

We do not target the least common denominator. We target influencers.

That means we assume intelligence— without falling back on jargon or making things more complicated than they need to be.

WE KNOW OUR BRAND VOICE

The Nike voice is confident, conversational and positive.

We talk to and with our audiences, not at them.

Our tone is modern and cool, but also humble and respectful.

We don't over-hype or over-sell.

In other words:

Reverence always, irreverence sometimes. Cockiness never.

— The OneNike Content Guide, 2/11/13

WE KNOW (AND LOVE) OUR AUDIENCE

The Nike+ Developer Portal must inspire our audience to use NikeFuel to make amazing experiences.

- Assume an interest in NikeFuel and its possibilities.
- Assume a desire to help shape a fitness revolution.
- Assume an understanding of, and respect for, the Nike brand.
- **But resist sports jargon.**

We are targeting technology developers and entrepreneurs.

Writing for the web

1

AVOID SELF-CONGRATULATION

Show me, don't tell me.
And back it up with facts.

NikeFuel is exceeding all expectations as a benchmark metric of movement.
100,000 users will measure their movement with NikeFuel this year.

2

USE THE ACTIVE TENSE

Avoid the passive voice.

It's not just a dull read, it's also off brand.

~~John is being chased by two men.~~

Two men chase John.

3

NO EXCLAMATION POINTS!

You already knew that one.

No shouting.

4

NO CLICHÉS

Especially not sports clichés.

We want to speak the language of innovators.

~~Challenge yourself.~~

~~Raise the bar.~~

~~Epic.~~

~~Game-changer.~~

5

THE LONGER A LINE GETS, THE WORSE IT GETS

Remember, our users expect us to respect their time.
Don't make them hunt for the point.

Utilization.
Procure.
Obfuscate.

6

WHAT MARK TWAIN SAID

“Don’t use a five-dollar word when a fifty-cent word will do.”

Being direct and authentic works best for us.
If there’s a simpler way to say it, let’s use it.

Challenge yourself.
Raise the bar.
Epic.
Game-changer.

7

SOLVE THE PROBLEM WITHIN THE CONTAINER

We aim to complement visuals and the experience with impactful, enchanting copy.

So whatever we write must elegantly fit in its home.

8

STAY OUT OF THE USER'S WAY

Before we write anything down, we know who the page is for, and what its users want to accomplish there.

Everything we do must support this journey.

On an API page, we don't lead with marketing copy.
On a page explaining the benefits of NikeFuel, we don't try to explain the API.

Dos and don'ts

NAMING CONVENTIONS:

- NikeFuel

Not Nike Fuel. Not Fuel.

- Nike+

Not Nike Plus, or Nike +.

- Nike+ FuelBand

Not NikeFuelBand. Not Nike FuelBand.

- Nike+ Fuel Lab

Not Nike+ FuelLab.

- Nike+ API

Not Nike+API.

- OAuth

Not oauth. Not O Auth.

GRAMMAR GUIDANCE:

- Serial comma? No, no and no.
- Fragment sentences? OK. If that's the best way to make your point.
- CTAs are never “Learn more,” “Find out how,” etc. (SEO will flip.) Instead we can say, “Learn more about NikeFuel” or “See how NikeFuel works.”
- Email, not e-mail.
- Not Internet, internet.

THANK YOU

Sources

THIS DECK WAS INFORMED BY:

- Nike Voice Digital (v_4-1)
- OneNike Content Guide
- NikeFuel Book 2
- Nike Partner API
- Developer Portal Personas Deck (12/13)
- Nike Stakeholder Interview Findings (2/14)
- Nike+ FuelLab Deck (2/14)
- Razorfish Content Strategy Brief (8/14)
- Razorfish internal developer review (8/14)
- Razorfish Competitive Comparative (7/14)

If you haven't read these, you probably should.