

ESSENTIAL EDITORIAL TOOLS: ARTICLE BRIEF

Article brief checklist

Objectives

- What is it you want the article to do?
- How will you use it?

Audience

- Who are the target readers and why should they read the article?
- What level of knowledge do they have on this topic?

Key messages

- What do you want readers to remember?
- How do you want the readers to think/ behave differently after reading the article?

Storyline

- What's the main story summarised?

Main points

- What are the main points supporting the argument?

Keywords

- What are the keywords and phrases that are relevant for this topic?

Interviewees (internal / external)

- Who will provide the firm's view?
- Who will provide the client view?
- Will any third-party views, such as industry bodies or key influencers, be needed?

Word count

- How long should the article be? Be specific.

Media and format

- What format will the article take? e.g opinion piece, listicle, Q&A.
- What is the expected output?

Call to action

- What is it you want readers to do after reading?

Graphics required

- Do you require an image for the website for example?
- What format should supporting charts / tables be supplied in?

Related and competitor articles

- What is out there that will help the writer?
- What should they quote (or not quote)?

Deadline

- Be specific. Include key milestones such as first draft, reviews and sign-off.

Editorial style guide

Competitive positioning

- What is your competitive differentiation?
- How does this look from a client's perspective?

Corporate messaging

- What are the key messages the firm wants to communicate?

Editorial style

- Will the article be bylined to the journalist or ghostwritten on your behalf?

Tone of voice

- What tone should be adopted? Provide examples.

Template

- Be specific, including required lengths of title and standfirst.