

# Avalanche Creative Style Guide

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## 1. Content Basics

### Standard Document Format

Please follow the instructions on our [Standard Document Formatting guide](#) to create a piece of content using our standard fonts (Open Sans, Poppins), weights, and spacing.

### Spelling & Grammar

Use [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#) as your authority on correct or accepted spelling/usage.

We follow [AP Style](#) except for the following rules:

- Use the Oxford comma.
- Use singular “they” instead of “he or she.”

### Word Count

We aim for a minimum of 1,000 words per blog post. Some posts may far exceed 1,000 words, such as guides or 101 pieces. Exceeding the minimum word count is rarely a problem—in fact, it is often encouraged!

Certain pages, such as a client’s contact page, may have far fewer words. Pages that are expected to have fewer words than normal will be flagged as such. Otherwise, if you’re struggling to meet the 1,000-word minimum, please notify the Content Lead.

### Keywords

Make sure to use each keyword provided is used two to three times throughout the piece, and make sure to use them in headings, too. Avoid overusing the keyword to prevent keyword stuffing.

### Calls to Action

Generally, always include a call to action. If possible, include it at a natural point within the content piece. Add a dedicated CTA at the end of the piece if not previously mentioned elsewhere. Make sure it has its own H2 header.

## Client Style

Check the client overview document for each client (located in the client's folder in the Team Drive) for guidance on industry-specific terminology, client voice, and other information regarding client style.

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## 2. Formatting

### Bulleted or Numbered Lists

Use bulleted lists instead of numbered lists unless you are outlining a specific step-by-step process in which the order is important. Bulleted lists are great to use and encouraged, since Google can use them for featured snippets.

Feel free to expand upon a bullet point by bolding the introductory phrase and including one to three sentences after it. If you need four or more sentences to explain the item in full, get rid of the bulleted list and change your list into separate H3s or H4s with full paragraphs beneath them.

- **Example of a bulleted item:** You can format your bulleted item by bolding the first phrase. Make sure nothing is capitalized in the bolded phrase except for the first word.
- **When to use subheaders:** If you need more than a few sentences to explain each item, change it from a list into sections with their own subheaders.

### Acronyms & Registered Terms

When introducing a new or branded term, refer to it in its entirety, including any registration marks, during your first reference. Include the acronym in parentheses following the term. Then, feel free to use the acronym in every following reference. For branded terms, feel free to drop the registration mark, trademark, copyright symbol, or other marking in every following reference.

- **Acronym example:** We specialize in search engine optimization (SEO). SEO can help your website.
  - **Registered term example:** Invisalign® can help straighten your teeth. Many of our patients love Invisalign.
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## 3. Headers

### Order

Use normal order of headers (H2, then H3, then H4, etc.), saving H1 for the title. Use the same header weight for sections of similar educational weight (e.g., “What Is SEO?” and “What Is Keyword Research?” both being H2, even if one immediately follows the other).

### Capitalization

Capitalize all words of a title, header, or subheader except for:

- Articles (a, an, the)
- Coordinating conjunctions (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so)
- Prepositions fewer than five letters (at, from, with, etc.)

### Bold & Italics

Feel free to use bold body text to organize your content when you cannot use headers or subheaders, such as bolding main ideas before they are explained in a bulleted list. Do not use italics as organizational formatting; use it only for emphasis, and use it sparingly.

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## 4. Links

### Internal Links

Use two to four internal links to the client’s site (related blog posts or pages are great) that provide more value for the reader, not just sign-up or contact links. For example, link to a glossary term or additional blog post for “search engine optimization,” not our contact page.

### External Links

Make sure to set any external links to open into new tabs. Use two to three high-quality sources, and NEVER link to direct competitors. Using statistics and other valuable data from highly authoritative external sources is a great way to add more SEO value to the piece.

### Anchor Text

Avoid using words like “click here” as anchor text. Specify where the link will take them and use that as the anchor text. (E.g., “We follow [AP Style](#)” instead of “We follow AP Style. [Click here to view the guide.](#)”)

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## **5. Metadata**

### **Meta Title**

Meta titles should be 50–60 characters, use the main keyword, and use compelling title structures (e.g., How To, Ultimate Guide, 10 Tips, Top 5, etc.) without being clickbait.

### **Meta Description**

Meta descriptions should be 130–160 characters, use the main keyword, and use additional keywords if appropriate. They should describe what the piece accomplishes. Consider using your headers for inspiration for what to cover in the meta description.

### **Slug**

Try to limit the slug for the page or post to four or five words. Eliminate stopper words (the, a, and, etc.), especially if they aren't necessary for the keyword phrase we are targeting.